### 3.13 Recreation

This section analyzes the proposed project's and non-clustered scenario's potential impacts on recreation facilities. The analysis provides a description of the existing recreational facilities within the project area, relevant policies pertaining to recreation, analyzes potential impacts and proposes mitigation measures as needed.

# 3.13.1 Environmental Setting

### **Regulatory Framework**

### **Quimby Act (Government Code 66477 and County Ordinance 7-9-523)**

State Subdivision Map, Section 66477 (Quimby Act) allows the legislative body of a City or County, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land, the payment of in-lieu fees, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition of approval for a final tract map or parcel map. The Quimby Act requires that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. The goal of the Quimby Act is to require developers to help mitigate the impacts of property improvements. The County of Orange requires 2.5 acres of park area, or the proportional share thereof, for each 1,000 residents. This requirement may be met by dedication of land, payment of in lieu fees or a combination of both as defined by the County's Local Park Code pursuant to Section 7-9-523.

#### **Orange County General Plan**

#### **Chapter 7. Recreation Element**

Local Parks Component

- Goal 1 Provide adequate local park sites to meet the recreation needs of existing and future residents and preserve natural resources within unincorporated Orange County.
- Objective 1.1 Designate local park sites which provide recreation development potential for existing and future County residents.
- Policy 2.32 To acquire park lands by requiring residential developers to provide a minimum of 2.5 net acres of usable local park land (i.e., park land that is relatively level, served by utilities, for multipurpose playfields, court sports, etc.) [or the proportional share thereof] for each prospective 1,000 residents. In no case shall the credit given for park land and improvements exceed the total requirements under the Local Park Code. No credit banking shall be permitted when a developer provides full requirement in acreage and also provides improvements.
- Policy 2.4 To acquire local park lands in unincorporated areas to provide active recreation facilities to meet the needs of present and future residents through dedications, or irrevocable offers of dedication, in fee title from residential developers.

#### Master Plan of Regional Riding and Hiking Component

- Goal 1 Provide a useful, enjoyable, safe, and efficient public regional riding and hiking trail system to meet the needs and desires of the citizens of the entire County.
- Policy 1.1 The dedication and acquisition of trail right-of-way and construction of public regional riding and hiking trails and improvements shall be pursued as a condition of approval of development projects (i.e., irrevocable offers of recreation easements) consistent with the Master Plan.
- Policy 1.3 Regional riding and hiking trails shall, to the extent possible, be designed and constructed to enhance public safety by affording access to law enforcement, fire, emergency, public utility and maintenance vehicles.

### Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan

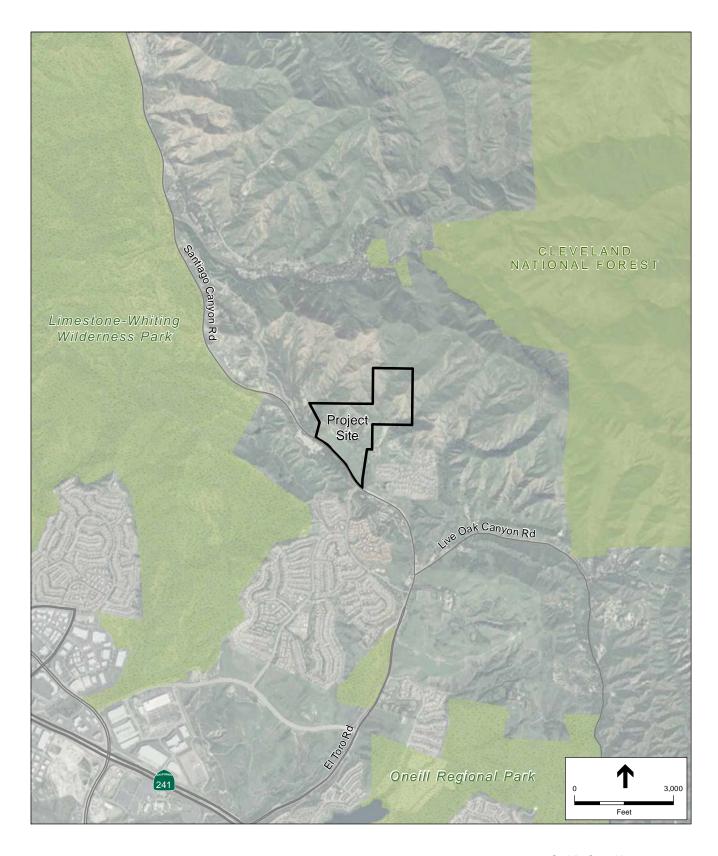
The F/TSP includes objectives consistent with the Orange County General Plan to ensure the provision of adequate parkland within the specific plan area, and to provide equestrian and other recreational opportunities. In particular, the F/TSP refers to the County Local Park Code requirement for the land or fee payments, or a combination of both, as a means of meeting local park and recreation needs of present and future residents. The Local Park Code requires residential developers to provide a minimum of 2.5 net acres of usable local park land, or the proportional share thereof, for each prospective 1,000 residents. Additionally, the F/TSP outlines implementation of local riding and hiking trails, which is summarized below.

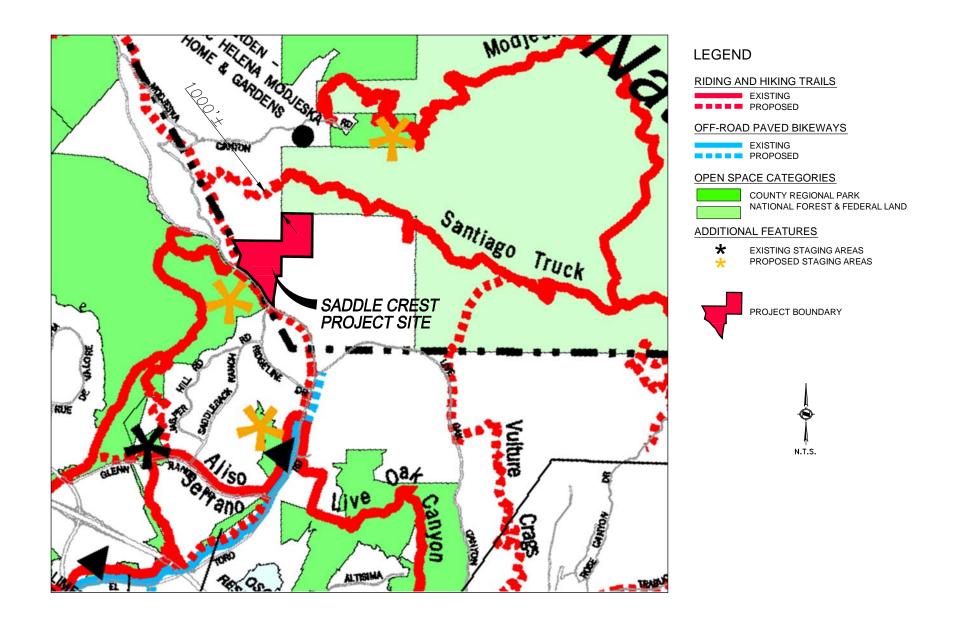
As stated in the Recreation Component, Section II.E.5.1, *Implementation of Local Riding and Hiking Trails*, of the F/TSP, property owners with parcels adjacent to local riding and hiking trails depicted on the F/TSP's Recreation Plan shall be required to dedicate a 16-foot-wide recreation easement for local riding and hiking trail purposes. Developers shall be required to design, improve and maintain the local trails in conformance with a plan approved by the Manager, EMA-Harbors, Beaches and Parks/Program Planning Division.<sup>1</sup>

## **Existing Conditions**

A number of regional recreational facilities are located in the immediate vicinity of the project site, including the Cleveland National Forest, O'Neill Regional Park, Limestone-Whiting Wilderness Park, and several community parks. **Figure 3.13-1** identifies the major recreation facilities in the project vicinity, and **Figure 3.13-2** identifies major riding and hiking trails, and off-road paved bikeways.

It should be noted that subsequent to completion of the F/TSP, any approval regarding local trails will now be required by OC Planning, in consultation with OC Parks, not EMA-Harbors, Beaches and Parks/Program Planning Division.





SOURCE: Orange County Resources and Development Management Department, 2008; Hunsaker & Associates, 2011.

#### Cleveland National Forest

The project site is located adjacent to the Cleveland National Forest, which consists primarily of open space (though some recreational and residential uses are allowed in specific areas) and is mostly held in public ownership. It is the southernmost of the national forests in California. The forest borders a portion of the project site's northern boundary, which would be dedicated as open space, under the proposed project. The forest spans Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties; and includes approximately 567,000 acres with elevations ranging from 460 to 6,671 feet.

#### Limestone-Whiting Wilderness Park

Limestone-Whiting Wilderness Park is located one-mile west of Santiago Canyon Road, opposite the project site property and north of the Portola Hills residential community and contains approximately 1,600 acres. Amenities include 15 miles of graded roads and single-track trails for hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. A public equestrian facility is located immediately west of project site. The park is open daily from 7:00 A.M. to sunset. The former McFadden Ranch House is utilized for the park office and interpretive center, and features a trail rest stop for the Aliso Creek Regional Trail, cultural and natural history exhibits, and park information.

#### O'Neil Regional Park

O'Neill Regional Park is located approximately three miles south of the project site situated in Trabuco and Live Oak Canyons and includes approximately 3,100 acres. Recreational amenities include day picnic use, barbecues, a large turf area, playground equipment, overnight camping, an equestrian campground, an arena, and 18 miles of riding trails. Approximately 3.5 acres are available to recreational vehicle groups. The park is open year round for day use, 7:00 A.M. to sunset, and it is available to campers 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

#### **Community Parks**

There are several community parks in the vicinity of the project site. Unincorporated Orange County has 63 developed local parks and 20 additional parks that have been offered to the County, but have not yet been developed, containing approximately 116.56 acres (Orange County, 2011). The parks provide both active and passive uses ranging from playgrounds, hiking trails, sports fields, and picnic tables. The closest community parks within the vicinity of the project site include the Foothill Ranch Community Park totaling 16 acres, located in the City of Lake Forest (1.58 miles southwest of the project site); Pinecrest Park encompasses 15.3 acres, located in the City of Mission Viejo (approximately two miles and a half miles south of the project site); Altisima Park totals 15.5 acres, located in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (approximately two miles south of the project site); and the Orange County Great Park located in the City of Irvine, totaling 200 acres (approximately five miles west of the project site).

#### Riding and Hiking Trails

Two regional riding and hiking trails, as designated on the County's Master Plan of Regional Riding and Hiking Trails, are aligned along Santiago Canyon/El Toro Road in the vicinity of the project site (see Figure 3.13-2). The Aliso Creek Regional Trail commences east of Laguna Beach and proceeds northeast into the F/TSP area, running parallel to El Toro Road. This trail

transitions to the Santiago Creek Regional Trail one mile north of Cook's Corner and proceeds northwest along Santiago Canyon Road and into the Silverado Modjeska area. A 16-foot wide recreation easement for regional riding and hiking trail purposes was dedicated by the Santiago Estates Development which adjoins the project site, and would be provided with the project. Additionally, the F/TSP identifies the Santiago Truck Trail which is further from the project site, and roughly parallels the northern boundary of the F/TSP. This trail is classified as a Cleveland National Forest Trail, and proceeds eastward from Modjeska Grade Road, climbing 1,800 feet to 2,400 feet.

The Master Plan of Countywide Bikeways contained in the General Plan Transportation Element identifies Santiago Canyon Road as a Class-II (on-road) trail. This trail is located off-site and immediately west of the project site, it begins at Cook's Corner and proceeds north along Santiago Canyon Road, eventually reaching the City of Orange.

# 3.13.2 Thresholds of Significance

The criteria used to determine the significance of impacts related to recreation are based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* and the County of Orange Environmental Analysis Checklist, which states that a project would have a significant impact related to parks and recreation if it would:

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational
  facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be
  accelerated; or
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

These issue areas were eliminated from further consideration in the NOP/Initial Study (see Appendix A.1); however, due to public comments gathered during the public scoping meeting (see Appendix A.3), a detailed analysis has been included in the Draft EIR.

# 3.13.3 Methodology

This analysis is based on a review of information about Orange County parks and recreational facilities. Additionally, Orange County policies and programs were reviewed for project applicability. Potential recreation impacts associated with the proposed project and non-clustered scenario are evaluated based on the proximity of the project site to designated recreational facilities and the project's potential contribution to demand for future facilities.

# 3.13.4 Project Design Features

The following project design feature has been included for the proposed project and would also apply to the non-clustered scenario. All project design features will be included in the Mitigation

Monitoring and Reporting Program and will be monitored to ensure completion, in the same manner as the project's mitigation measures.

PDF-28

The existing bi-directional Class-II bikeway (on-road striped lanes with parking prohibited) within Santiago Canyon Road will be reconfigured within Santiago Canyon Road to accommodate the turning lanes being provided for the project entry and will vary between five to eight feet, and a 16-foot-wide easement would be provided along the Santiago Canyon Road frontage for the riding and hiking trail.

## 3.13.5 Project Impacts

**Impact 3.13.1:** Increase use of recreational facilities resulting in physical deterioration.

**Significance Standard for Impact 3.13.1:** Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated?

## **Proposed Project**

The proposed project would increase the population of Orange County by introducing new homes onto the project site. Unincorporated Orange County applies the Quimby Act standards to new residential developments, which require applicant's for residential development to dedicate 2.5 acres of parkland, or the proportional share thereof, per 1,000 residents or pay an in-lieu fee. The proposed project would add 208 new residents<sup>2</sup> to the project site and would therefore, be required to provide a minimum of 0.52 acre of parkland in order to meet the dedication requirement of 2.5, or the proportional share thereof, acres per 1,000 residents.

The additional 208 residents is not a significant increase in population that could cause substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. The Orange County General Plan provides a county-wide recreation network of sufficient size, with facilities in dispersed locations and recreation amenities to meet the major recreation needs of present and future residents of Orange County. The County includes roughly 32,000 acres in more than 20 urban and wilderness parks (Orange County, 2011). Currently, the County provides an average of approximately three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The project is located in southern Orange County, which has approximately eight acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (Orange County, 2011). Furthermore, unincorporated Orange County has 63 developed local parks and 20 additional parks have been offered to and accepted by the County, but are not yet developed (County of Orange, 2005).

In addition, almost 25 percent of the local parks that have been accepted by the County remain undeveloped; approximately 25 percent (116.56 acres) of the net local park acreage is undeveloped. The parks in the project vicinity that residents would use for active and passive

Based on an average household size of 3.2 persons/household for unincorporated areas of Orange County. It should be noted that the average household size for all of Orange County is 3.0 persons/household (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

recreation are within three miles of the project site, including Limestone-Whiting Wilderness Park, O'Neil Regional Park, and several community parks. Because of the proximity of the project site to existing recreational resources, including active recreation opportunities, sufficient park and recreation opportunities are available for the additional 208 residents. In addition, the proposed project would include Project Design Feature PDF-28, which would require improvements to the existing bike and recreational trails. The proposed project would be consistent with the F/TSP and County's goal of providing adequate park sites to meet recreations of existing and future residents and requiring dedication of parkland or payment of an in-lieu fee.

The applicant would also be required to provide for dedication of land or payment of the in-lieu fee for the continued provision and maintenance of park and recreation facilities, consistent with County policies. For these reasons, the project would not result in an increase in the use of recreation facilities in a manner that physical deterioration of recreational facilities would not occur or be accelerated with development of the proposed project.

**Impact Determination:** The proposed project would result in an addition 208 new residences in the area that would use recreational facilities, which is not a significant increase in population that could cause substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. Project Design Feature PDF-28 would further reduce any impacts on bike and recreational trails at the project site. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

#### **Non-Clustered Scenario**

Similar to that described above for the proposed project, the non-clustered scenario would not directly impact existing recreational facilities, including Cleveland National Forest, Limestone-Whiting Wilderness and O'Neill Regional Parks. Since the non-clustered scenario would generate the same amount of residents as the proposed project, impacts would be similar to those described above. Furthermore, like the proposed project, the non-clustered scenario would be required to provide the payment of in-lieu fees to address the provision of adequate parkland.

**Impact Determination:** The non-clustered scenario would result in an addition 208 new residences in the area that would use recreational facilities, which is not a significant increase in population that could cause substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. Project Design Feature PDF-28 would further reduce any impacts on bike and recreational trails at the project site. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

**Impact 3.13.2:** Include or require expansion of recreational facilities.

**Significance Standard for Impact 3.13.2:** Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

## **Proposed Project**

The introduction of 65 single-family homes would result in approximately 208 new residents who would incrementally increase park and recreation demand in the area. The project site is located along the Santiago Creek Regional Trail which commences one mile north of Cook's Corner and proceeds northwest along Santiago Canyon Road. This trail would be preserved and enhanced along the project border to include a 16-foot-wide easement for bicyclists and hikers. The project site is in close proximity to several regional parks and community parks (see Impact 3.12.1 discussion above), several of which have active recreation facilities. In addition, the developer would be required to provide payment of a fee, consistent with County and F/TSP policies, requiring an in-lieu of directly providing park and recreation facilities.

The proposed project would expand the existing riding and hiking trail along Santiago Canyon Road (see Figure 2.12), as described in Project Design Feature PDF-28. Impacts from the construction of this expansion would be limited, adjacent to the existing roadway within the grading impact areas shown in Figure 2.5. The applicant would comply with applicable County requirements for the payment of in-lieu fees to address provision of adequate recreation facilities County-wide. Thus, the proposed project would be consistent with the County's General Plan goal and policy to provide the public with regional riding and hiking trails and the project is consistent with the policy to meet the county's recreational needs through the dedication of a regional riding and hiking trails. Therefore, with the implementation of Project Design Feature PDF-28, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on parks and recreation facilities.

**Impact Determination:** Impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant with implementation of Project Design Feature PDF-28 and no mitigation is necessary.

#### Non-Clustered Scenario

Similar to the proposed project, the non-clustered scenario would expand the existing riding and hiking trail along Santiago Canyon Road, impacts from the construction of this expansion would be limited. Similar to the proposed project, the non-clustered scenario would include Project Design Feature PDF-28. The applicant would comply with applicable County requirements for the payment of in-lieu fees to address provision of adequate recreation facilities County-wide. Thus, the non-clustered scenario would have a less than significant impact on parks and recreation facilities.

**Impact Determination:** Impacts associated with the non-clustered scenario would be less than significant with implementation of Project Design Feature PDF-28 and no mitigation is necessary.

## 3.13.6 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project or non-clustered scenario impacts in conjunction with other cumulative development in the project area would increase urbanization and the loss of open space within the UAR, which is considered to be the geographic area in which cumulative effects to recreational facilities could occur. Deterioration of parks and recreational facilities within the region as a result of regional population growth would be repaired and replaced with funding such as in-lieu fees for parks or donation of parkland (pursuant to the Quimby Act).

The proposed project or the non-clustered scenario in conjunction with other cumulative projects such as Saddleback Meadows, Crocker Property, Lang Property, and Cook's Corner projects (along with their associated population increases) that are listed in Table 2-2 would also be required to pay development fees or provide 2.5 acres, or the proportional share thereof, per 1,000 residents ratio. Development of the proposed project or the non-clustered scenario along with the other cumulative projects would result in additional development in the F/TSP area and require additional recreation space. However, the County would maintain its current parkland ratio and neither the proposed project nor the non-clustered scenario would contribute to a cumulative impact on the County's recreational resources. Furthermore, each project within the County of Orange is required to comply with the County's parkland dedication requirements as contained in the General Plan and F/TSP; resulting in new parks and trails that would be developed as residential development occurs.

**Impact Determination:** Neither the proposed project nor the non-clustered scenario, in conjunction with all related development, would create a cumulatively significant impact with regards to recreational facilities.

# 3.13.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

# 3.13.8 Impact Determination

The proposed project and non-clustered scenario would result in an addition 208 new residences in the area that would use recreational facilities, which is not a significant increase in population that could cause substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. Project Design Feature PDF-28 would further reduce any impacts on bike and recreational trails at the project site. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary.