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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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October 15, 2026

Katie Metraux, General Plan Manager
Department of Parks and Recreation
Post Office Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296
Katie.Metraux@parks.ca.gov

Subject: Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area General Plan Update, Preliminary General Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2022030810, San Joaquin and Alameda Counties

Dear Katie Metraux:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Partially Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area General Plan Update (Project). CDFW previously reviewed and submitted comments to the originally circulated Draft EIR for the Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area General Plan Update (Project) on March 14, 2024.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect fish and wildlife resources of the State. Please be advised, by law, CDFW may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW is providing the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), as the Lead Agency, with specific detail about the scope and content of the environmental information related to CDFW's area of statutory responsibility that must be included in the EIR (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15082, subd. (b)).

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's **Trustee Agency** for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State. (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a).) CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species. (*Id.*, § 1802.) For purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically

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on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW is also submitting comments as a **Responsible Agency** under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.) CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority over the Project pursuant to the Fish and Game Code. For example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) regulatory authority, if the Project impacts the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake within the State (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.). Likewise, to the extent the Project may result in "take" as defined by State law of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.), the project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

California Endangered Species Act

Please be advised that a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) must be obtained if the Project has the potential to result in "take" of plants or animals listed under CESA, either during construction or over the life of the Project. Issuance of a CESA ITP is subject to CEQA documentation; the CEQA document must specify impacts, mitigation measures, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program. If the Project will impact CESA listed species, early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to the Project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA ITP.

Lake or Streambed Alteration

Pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq., an LSA notification is required for any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow; change or use material from the bed, channel, or bank including associated riparian; or deposit or dispose of material where it may pass into a river, lake or stream. The Project proponent should submit a 1602 notification covering all activities subject to Fish and Game Code 1602 authority. CDFW will consider the CEQA document for the Project and may issue an LSA Agreement. CDFW may not execute the Final LSA Agreement (or ITP) until it has complied with CEQA as a Responsible Agency.

Fully Protected Species

Fully protected species, such as white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except as follows. The take is for necessary scientific research, efforts to recover a fully protected, endangered, or threatened species, live capture and relocation of a bird species for the protection of livestock, or if they are a covered species whose conservation and

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management is provided for in a Natural Community Conservation Plan 0(Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, & 5515). Specified types of infrastructure Projects may be eligible for an ITP for unavoidable impacts to fully protected species if certain conditions are met (Fish & G. Code §2081.15). Project proponents should consult with CDFW early in the Project planning process.

Raptors and Other Nesting Birds

CDFW has jurisdiction over actions that may result in the disturbance or destruction of active nest sites or the unauthorized take of birds. Fish and Game Code sections protecting birds, their eggs, and nests include sections 3503 (regarding unlawful take, possession or needless destruction of the nests or eggs of any bird), 3503.5 (regarding the take, possession or destruction of any birds of prey or their nests or eggs), and 3513 (regarding unlawful take of any migratory nongame bird).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: California Department of Parks and Recreation, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

Project Description: The Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area (SVRA) is a 1,575-acre off-highway vehicle (OHV) park overseen by the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division and operated by the Diablo Range District of State Parks. A General Plan update will provide a comprehensive framework for future SVRA development and use, and provide management objectives for the Park, identify formal boundaries, and make recommendations for the classification of all of the Park's acreage. The purpose of the Recirculated Draft EIR, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, is specifically focused on revisions to the Alternatives chapter to evaluate a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives to the proposed project.

A General Plan is the primary management document for each park unit within the State Park System and establishes the park unit's primary purpose and management direction. An approved General Plan is required before State Parks can move forward with site-specific improvements that are beyond minor capital outlay Projects.

A summary of the objectives of the Carnegie SVRA General Plan are as follows:

- Manage Carnegie SVRA for the protection of sensitive natural and cultural resources while providing recreational experiences;
- Manage the SVRA in accordance with the purpose of acquisition and classification;
- Promote public health and safety at Carnegie SVRA;

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- Anticipate future demand for OHV recreation opportunities and identify strategies to accommodate the increase in demand at Carnegie SVRA;
- Provide management options for operating all portions of Carnegie SVRA in keeping with California's OHMVR Act of 2003, as amended;
- Increase the diversity of OHV opportunities at Carnegie SVRA;
- Provide interpretive opportunities for biological and cultural resources;
- Provide for adaptive management of park operations and resources;
- Plan orderly implementation of long-term capital improvements at Carnegie SVRA;
- Guide the enhancement of recreation opportunities that support family and community-oriented use;
- Provide a framework for the provision of adequate facilities for Carnegie SVRA management operations; and
- Comply with resource protection requirements, including air quality plans, stormwater management plans, and regulations protecting biological and cultural resources.

Location: Carnegie SVRA is located within unincorporated Alameda and San Joaquin Counties, approximately 15 miles east of the City of Livermore and 12 miles west of the City of Tracy. To the north is the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory property. Open space and rural residential areas (ranchland) are located to the east, west, and south. Carnegie SVRA lies south of Corral Hollow Road/Tesla Road and is largely located on a northern hillside. Approximate GPS Coordinates 37.634135, -121.543642.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

According to Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) records, the Project site contains positive detections of several special-status species and has the potential to support numerous special-status species and their associated habitat. Species that can be considered to be endangered, rare or threatened as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15380, with potential to occur on-site include, but are not limited to:

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
Amsinckia grandiflora	Large-flowered fiddleneck	State rank S2, CRPR[1] 1B.2
Ambystoma californiense	California tiger salamander	CESA listed as threatened; Central California Distinct Population Segment ESA listed as threatened
Ammodramus savannahrum	Grasshopper sparrow	California SSC
Anniella pulchra	Northern California legless lizard	SSC
Aquila chrysaetos	Golden eagle	California Fully Protected species; Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
Arizona elegans occidentalis	Glossy snake	SSC
Athene cunicularia	Burrowing owl	CESA Candidate
Blepharizonia plumosa	Big tarplant	S2, CRPR 1B.1
Buteo swainsoni	Swainson's hawk	CESA listed as threatened
Campanula exigua	Chaparall harebell	S2, CRPR 1B.2
Caulanthus Lemmonii	Lemmon's jewelflower	S3; CRPR 1B.2
Corynorhinus townsendii	Townsend's big-eared bat	SSC
Delphinium californicum spp. Interius	Hospital Canyon larkspur	S3, CRPR 1B.2
Elanus leucurus	White-tailed kite	California Fully Protected species
Emys marmorata	western pond turtle	SSC
Eschscholzia rhombipetala	Diamond-petaled California poppy	S1, CRPR 1B.1
Hesperolinon breweri	Brewer's western flax	S2, CRPR 1B.2
Lanius ludovicianus	Loggerhead shrike	SSC
Madia radiata	Showy golden madia	S3, CRPR 1B.1

[1] CRPR rank definitions are available in CDFW's *Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List* (https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=109383&inline) and on the California Native Plant Society website (https://www.cnps.org/rare-plants).

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
Masticophis flagellum ruddocki	San Joaquin coachwhip	SSC
Masticophis laterallus eruyxanthus	Alameda whipsnake	CESA listed as threatened, ESA listed as threatened
Phrynosoma blainvilli	Coast horned lizard	SSC
Rana boylii	Foothill yellow-legged frog (west/Central coast clade)	CESA listed as endangered
Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog	SSC, ESA listed as threatened
Spea hammonidii	Western spadefoot	CESA Candidate, ESA proposed as threatened
Taxidea taxus	American badger	SSC
Vulpes macrotis mutica	San Joaquin kit fox	CESA listed as threatened; ESA listed as endangered

CRPR = California Rare Plant Rank; ESA= Endangered Species Act; FE = Federally Endangered; FT = Federally Threatened; SE = State Endangered; ST = State Threatened; SFP = State Fully Protected; SSC = State Species of Special Concern

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Plant Ranks

- 1A = Presumed extinct in California
- 1B = Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere.

CNPS Threat Ranks

- 0.1-Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.2-Moderately threatened in California (20-80 percent occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat).

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Sufficient information regarding the environmental setting is necessary to understand the Project's, and its alternative's (if applicable), significant impacts on the environment (CEQA Guidelines, §§15125 & 15360). CDFW recommends that the CEQA document prepared for

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the Project provide baseline habitat assessments for special-status plant, fish and wildlife species located and potentially located within the Project area and surrounding lands, including all rare, threatened, or endangered species (CEQA Guidelines, §15380). Fully protected, threatened or endangered, candidate, and other special-status species that are known to occur, or have the potential to occur in or near the Project site, include, but are not limited to the species listed above.

Habitat descriptions and species profiles should include information from multiple sources: aerial imagery, historical and recent survey data, field reconnaissance, scientific literature and reports, and findings from "positive occurrence" databases such as California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). Based on the data and information from the habitat assessment, the CEQA document can then adequately assess which special-status species are likely to occur in the Project vicinity.

CDFW recommends that prior to Project implementation, surveys be conducted for special-status species with potential to occur, following recommended survey protocols if available. Survey and monitoring protocols and guidelines are available at: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Survey-Protocol.

Botanical surveys for special-status plant species, including those listed by the California Native Plant Society (http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/inventory/), must be conducted during the blooming period for all sensitive plant species potentially occurring within the Project area and require the identification of reference populations. Please refer to CDFW protocols for surveying and evaluating impacts to rare plants available at: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Plants.

IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The CEQA Guidelines (§15126.2) necessitate the recirculated Draft EIR discuss all direct and indirect impacts (temporary and permanent) that may occur with implementation of Project alternatives. This includes evaluating and describing potential impacts in the Alternatives section such as:

- Land use changes that would reduce open space or agricultural land uses and increase residential or other land use involving increased development;
- Potential for impacts to special-status species;
- Loss or modification of breeding, nesting, dispersal and foraging habitat, including vegetation removal, alternation of soils and hydrology, and removal of habitat structural features (e.g., snags, roosts, overhanging banks);

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- Permanent and temporary habitat disturbances associated with ground disturbance, noise, lighting, reflection, air pollution, traffic or human presence;
- Obstruction of movement corridors, fish passage, or access to water sources and other core habitat features; and
- Impacts both from construction and operation of the proposed Project alternative.

When assessing project alternatives, the CEQA document also should identify existing and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the Project vicinity, disclose any cumulative impacts associated with these projects, determine the significance of each cumulative impact, and assess the significance of the Project's contribution to each impact (CEQA Guidelines, §15355). Although a project's impacts may be insignificant individually, its contributions to a cumulative impact may be considerable; a contribution to a significant cumulative impact (e.g., reduction of available habitat for a listed species) should be considered cumulatively considerable without mitigation to minimize or avoid the impact.

The CEQA Guidelines direct State Parks, as the lead agency, to consider and describe in the EIR all feasible mitigation measures to avoid and/or mitigate potentially significant impacts of the Project on the environment based on comprehensive analysis of the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Project. (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15021, 15063, 15071, 15126.2, 15126.4 & 15370.) This should include a discussion of take avoidance and minimization measures for special-status species, which are recommended to be developed in early consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service and CDFW. These measures can then be incorporated as enforceable Project conditions to reduce potential impacts to biological resources to less-than-significant levels.

FILING FEES

CDFW anticipates that the Project will have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary (Fish and Game Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089). Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW.

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP in order to assist State Parks in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources.

If you have any questions, please contact Mia Bianchi, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), at Mia.Bianchi@wildlife.ca.gov; or Sara Kern, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), at Sara.Kern@wildlife.ca.gov.

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Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Erin Chappell
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Erin Chappell
Regional Manager
Bay Delta Region

ec: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (SCH No. 2022030810)
Melissa Farinha, CDFW Bay Delta Region – Melissa.Farinha@wildlife.ca.gov