

Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study

Public Workshop #2 Summary

A public workshop was held at Arroyo Vista Charter Elementary School, in the city of Chula Vista, on June 20, 2018 in an effort to engage members of the public early in the trail planning process. A total of 65 members from the general public and local interest groups, as well as approximately 25 additional agency representatives, attended the meeting. Stakeholder groups that attended the meeting included local community planning groups, user groups, private developers, and environmental organizations including members from San Diego Mountain Biking Association, SoCal Hiking Sisters, Backcountry Riders, Bonita Bikers, Bonita Valley Horsemen, North American Trail Rider Conference Competitive Trail, Sierra Club, South Bay Rod and Gun Club, Jackson Pendo, Baldwin & Sons, and the Jamul Community Planning Group. A presentation was given that provided an overview of trail planning efforts within the study area and an overview of the trails under consideration by the study, followed by an open house.

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To provide further opportunities for the public to learn about the vision for the trail system and provide input, the workshop included six interactive stations including four stations representing the different quadrats of the study area, a Multiple Species Conservation Program station, and a geographic information systems (GIS) station. The stations included survey questionnaires and comment cards for the public to provide comments. The comments received are included in Attachment 1. Key points are summarized below.

- Numerous commenters requested staging areas be designed to accommodate equestrians, specifically to include multiple pull through parking spaces for trailer staging. Equestrian staging was requested at the Otay Valley Regional Park Active Recreation Area, Echo Valley, Proctor Valley, Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve, and near Lower Otay Reservoir.
- Numerous comments were received requesting that the single-track, fisherman's access trails on the west side of Lower Otay Reservoir remain open. Several commenters from the San Diego Mountain Biking Association also requested that a nature-based, single-track trail be incorporated that spans the entire west, north, and east sides of the reservoir. Several additional commenters also requested to have the loop completed around the south side of the reservoir.
- Summit trails were requested by numerous commenters, with numerous comments noting recent closures of unauthorized ridge trails in the area. Multiple commenters requested access to the Mount Miguel summit and the Jamul Mountains summit (behind Village 13/ above Upper Otay Reservoir).
- Additional trails requested by the public include:
 - Using the roads in the former Salt Creek Golf Course to provide additional connections to San Diego National Wildlife Refuge and Upper Otay Reservoir;
 - Additional single-track trails in the Otay River Valley;
 - A trail connection from the Otay River Valley to EastLake III park through Salt Creek;
 - A single-track trail along the northern side of Upper Otay Reservoir (in lieu of Proctor Valley Road Pathway);
 - Trail connections from Pio Pico Recreational Vehicle (RV) Resort to Dulzura, Barrett Lake junction, and the Sycamore Canyon area of the Bureau of Land Management Public Lands; and
 - Additional connections from Lower and Upper Otay Reservoir to Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area.
 - The San Diego Trails Alliance requested the California Riding & Hiking Trail be considered for the trails plan, or a re-route if the alignment is not considered feasible due to environmental reasons.

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- Numerous commenters expressed support for the expansion of the Mother Miguel trail system on San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, and the completion of the loop through San Miguel Habitat Management Area.
- Several commenters expressed support for multi-use trails that can accommodate hiking, biking, and equestrian use.
- Several commenters requested that single-track trails for bike riding be prioritized. Commenters from the San Diego Mountain Biking Association suggested that the trail width be minimized to less than 4 feet for the Otay Ranch village perimeter trails.
- Bicycle and equestrian access were requested at Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve.
- Trail maintenance was a concern for many citizens. Multiple commenters also mentioned the need for better maps and signage.
- For the ‘Top 3 Staging Area Priorities’ comment card, the following staging area locations were most commonly identified as top ranked priorities:
 - Lower Otay Reservoir;
 - Otay Ranch Village 13 and 14; and
 - Pio Pico RV Resort (North and South).
- For the ‘Top 3 Trail Priorities’ comment card, the following trail priorities were most commonly identified:
 - Re-open the Jamul Mountains ridge line trail behind Village 13 that provides views of Upper Otay Reservoir;
 - Incorporate staging areas that can accommodate trailers; and
 - Prioritize trail connections to/from Upper and Lower Otay Reservoir to other areas within the study area. Connections that were identified include Otay Valley Regional Park, San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area, and the community of EastLake.
- The following revisions were requested to the trail figures:
 - From Sweetwater Authority: The Sweetwater Authority recommends either completely removing the trails shown outside the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study boundary, or to revise the map figures to show all existing/proposed trail systems in the vicinity of Sweetwater Reservoir. In addition, the trail shown in the vicinity of the Sweetwater Reservoir South Dike (“Riding and Hiking Trail”) is being re-aligned and should be revised on the maps.
 - From the South Bay Rod & Gun Club: The Donahoe Spur trail is incorrectly labelled as Otay Mountain Truck Trail and should be revised accordingly. In addition, the portion of this trail that is shown as ‘Existing’ crosses the gun club property and may need to be revised.
- Jackson Pendo noted that the trails depicted as “Otay Ranch Village Perimeter/Connector Trails” within Otay Ranch Village 14 and Planning Area 16/19 are not yet approved trails and will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors as a possible option when the Otay Ranch Village 14 project comes before the Board.

ATTACHMENT 1

Public Workshop Comments	
Name	General Comments
Individual	Don't close the fishermen trails on the west side of lower Otay lakes! :(
Individual	Please think about equestrian use: trails and staging areas
Individual	Station 1: Dulzura The existing trail in Dulzura ends at a locked gate on Marron Valley Road. Will parking be added there? We hope <u>NOT!</u> This is an area that has burned a dozen times in the last 10 years and needs a decade to recover.
Individual	Official Chris Rice is superb. Connectivity is good. Protect the sensitive cultural areas. Limit vehicular access to Otay Mountain, Marron Valley, and Chicken Ranch Road. Get the Border Patrol to stay on trails.
Individual	With the gun club BLM hunting there is <u>WAY</u> too much gunfire noise and danger in Dulzura. Those people also drive wange vehicles with abandon. <u>MORE</u> hikers, horses + bikes. <u>LESS</u> motorized vehicles.
Individual	What a lot of amazing work you have done/are doing! Please have "pull through" trailer parking spaces (truck & horse or bike trailers) at staging areas. Thank you!
Individual	For the Rockhouse Trail if we could communicate with City of SD Park Rangers and CA Dept. F&W and get their input on trail design, environmental impact, trail usage, etc. on Cowles Mtn & Mt. Woodson. Also enlisting groups like Sierra Club, REI, Veteran Groups, student environmental clubs
Individual	Certain trails need repairs. For example the areas between Main & Beyer Blvd. in Chula Vista. Is there any comprehensive website to guide residents what, not only having a complete trail system, having access means. In other words, how is that information available? I've looked for maps and the particular trails are hard to find. I'm talking about an easy to use map that helps someone to hike to hike these trails + know how to see the trails not only included in the study but those adjoining + surrounding efforts. A complete pathway system guide or map.
Individual	Trails on the west side of Lower Otay Lakes are some of the most popular in the whole region. If you close them people will continue to hike + bike them anyways! Just saying.
Individual	*Proposed trails on west side of Lower Otay: need to consider adopting the existing singletrack into the plan. The singletrack being considered as part of the plan on the East side of lower Otay is comparable to those on the west side. The trail experience is similar and one of the most well loved parts of trail in the South bay is this section of singletrack on the <u>west side</u> of the lake. Option of using <u>only</u> wide community pathways is not acceptable.
Individual	Really need to set an implementation schedule to focus work + make this plan believable right now. It seems unlikely that anything will happen in less than 5-10 years
Individual	There is a bad rumor going around that they are considering closing the fisherman trails on the west side of Otay Lakes. These are the best trails in all of the county. DON'T CLOSE THEM!!!
Individual	Keep giving access to the west side of Lower Otay Lake trails. This will ultimately connect to the Otay River Valley (which needs better connection from the east side of Hwy 805 to the lower Otay Lake dam.) Also, thank you to Jill at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the Bonita Bikers for establishing the new trail to Rockhouse. It's going to be a great trail.
Individual	There does need to be more trails to include mountain bikes especially for high school teams to ride

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Individual	We need <u>staging areas</u> for Echo Valley, Lower Otay Reserves, Proctor Valley - not only for use Jamulians but for group rides with more than <u>3</u> horse trailer spaces. We belong to horse clubs who would like to branch out to various trails.
Individual	We need staging areas for multi horse trailers Proctor Valley Area - already horse gates available but no place to park.
Individual	When fees are charged in parking areas, I think a drop box would be very helpful so fees could be paid easily, on site
Individual	Please open RJER to hikers + equestrians ASAP. Keep sewer out of Jamul. No land swap with Village 14
Individual	Thanks to the great work on getting this far. I represent North American Trail Ride Conference. We sanction competitive trail rides with from 30 to 50 mile rides over two days. To put on a ride we also need to camp, possible on a special event basis, as we do not need a formal campground. We are a sport that is not a race, but a timed event. Any information on long loops or even out and back with the opportunity to overnight camping would be appreciated. Thanks Bob Insko
Individual	As a mountain biker, I would really like to see further development of the lower Otay lakes trails. Ideally to have a trail system all the way around the reservoir. I'm also looking forward to a connecting trail on the back side of Mother Miguel to be able to create a loop around the south side.
User Affiliation	Top 3 Staging Area Priorities
Biker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lower Otay Reservoir—a very popular staging area for cyclists and hikers 2. Otay Ranch Village 13—potential as a popular staging area 3. Pio Pico South—potential staging for long distance rides at Otay Mountain
Equestrian, Wildlife Viewer	Horse Trailers require lots of space—trucks, trailer, and 10 to 20 feet behind trailer to load horses
Equestrian	Staging areas capable of accommodating horse trailers whenever feasible
Hiker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proctor Valley—trail is top of mountain 2. Mother Miguel—loop trail through refuge
Hiker, Wildlife Viewer	1. North end of Otay Lake
Hiker, Wildlife Viewer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chicken Ranch Road should not be a trailhead 2. Put in additional gates in Donovan Flats area that are not vehicles, please make gates for hike, horse + bike pass through only 3. Chris Rice is a great BLM ranger in the Dulzura Area
Biker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (5) Upper Pio Pico would be great especially for the proposed trail systems in the Ranch Jamul Area. 2. (8) Lower Otay Reservoir for easy access to the existing trails at Lower Otay. 3. (11) O.R. Village for access to proposed connecting trails in the area
N/A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Echo Valley 2. Pio Pico—into Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve 3. Otay Ranch Village 14
Hiker, Biker, Wildlife	1. WEST side trails @ Otay Lakes are the most popular in the area. You can close them BUT people will

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Viewer	continue to hike + bike them!!! Just saying...
Equestrian, Wildlife Viewer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pull thru rig parking for trucks & horse trailers 2. Water available at trailheads 3. Volunteer available at trailheads to answer questions + report violators. First aid important at trailhead—volunteers maybe
Hiker, Biker	1. Am 70 years old & started mt bike riding 3 years ago. The BEST trails @ Otay Lakes are on the WEST side. Removing these trails would damper to secentic view of the lake at trail. Hiking is more enjoyable on the WEST side. Removing this trail partially would create hardships on hikers & bikers alike
User Affiliation	Top 3 Trail Priorities
Equestrian, Wildlife Viewer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trails that have some elevation changes 2. Trails that do not have fast bicycles tearing around every corner and scaring horses
Equestrian	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I support multi-use trails as much as possible 2. Connectivity is important for equestrians and mtn. bikers as they are capable of covering a lot more group than hikers
Hiker, Biker, Wildlife Viewer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please put effort (soon) to connect the Otay River Valley trail system to the Lower Otay Lake area. From 805 east its lost. 2. Keep the trails open on the west side of Lower Otay Lake. Used for training NICA riders (middle & high school age) & athletes. 3. Create better trails from Lower/Upper Otay lakes to the Hollenbeck Recr area. It's doable in many ways.
Hiker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please reopen Mount Miguel 2. And Proctor Valley we need new trail for hiking
Hiker	1. We need new trails open for hiking
Biker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There needs to be a nature base trail connector from S.D. National Wildlife to Upper Otay lake, there is an old one there already. 2. Trails from the corner of Wueste Rd and Olympic Pwy south to the fishing dock along the lower Otay need to be included. 3. Too many existing fire roads on the new plan, we want more new nature based singletrack trails.
Hikers	1. Please reopen the ridge trail in Jamul Hills
Hiker, Biker, Equestrian	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staging for horse rigs in Ranch Jamul is needed. 2. Staging for equestrian rigs where horses are allowed. 3. Trail connections for multi-use.
Equestrian	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heritage Active - make room for equestrian staging + trails 2. Mark trail switchbacks on Mother Miguel (with arrows) 3. Staging Areas need to all be trailer friendly + large
From	E-mailed Comments
Individual - Chula Vista Resident	I'm grateful for your efforts at creating this San Diego National Wildlife Refuge in Chula Vista. I am aware that you are in the midst of planning.

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	<p>I am resident and avid hiker of San Diego County and with our growing population, hiking trails are more and more difficult to find. Chula Vista is my backyard, I need to be able to enjoy the outdoors for my sanity. I love to see these spaces being preserved. But, hikers are not this land's enemies. I long have been preserving these spaces; picking up trash, respecting nature, sharing these spaces with loved ones and educating our youth on how to do the same.</p> <p>I can't believe some of my favorite hikes have been closed and signs are posted that fees will be charged to hikers trespassing. This is unacceptable. People should be encouraged to get outdoors, exercise, enjoy Nature and create a lasting bonds and respect or her.</p> <p>I am all for preservation but, can we come to a better compromise. Especially, so early on in the planning process. Please let me know how I can be informed of future meetings and participate in these discussions.</p> <p>Thank you once again for your service. It is greatly appreciated</p>
<p>Individual - Chula Vista Resident</p>	<p>Council Member Patricia Aguilar</p> <p>I know you have the power to keep this trails Open please be our HERO. As a regular hiker who lives in Chula Vista, I'm requesting that the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge master plans that are being developed keep open the 3 summit hikes in the southern part of San Diego County.</p> <p>I request that the plan manage the needs of both nature preservation along with hikers. Reserve plans have successfully been able to accomplish this balance in other parts of the county.</p> <p>Hikes #1 and #2 below are key because they provide important physical exercise for fitness purposes because the peaks are higher than #3. These hikes compliment the other flatter (easier) hikes in the South Bay. In addition, closing the peaks is forcing hikers to travel further north in the county to obtain similar exercise.</p> <p>#1 - Mount Miguel – a very active hiking trail was closed a few years ago (aka Towers) – please reopen.</p> <p>#2 - Upper Otay Lakes peak - trailhead starts in Proctor Valley Reserve. This beautiful hike overlooks Otay Lakes and towards Otay Peak to the south. This very active hiking trail was recently closed!</p> <p>#3 - The peak (aka Rock House) is still open – but is now very busy with hikers. Parking in the neighborhood is congested early in the morning where the trailhead is. This park overlooks busy and noisy freeways (125 and 54), the Sweetwater reservoir, and Spring Valley. Please add my name to the email list to be notified of meetings. We are committed as hikers to respect and take care of the reserve to ensure nature preservation. I</p>

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	<p>would welcome the opportunity to provide input on why access to hiking to these peaks is so important for the quality of life in Chula Vista!</p>
<p>Individual - Chula Vista Resident</p>	<p>Council Member Patricia Aguilar</p> <p>As a regular hiker who lives in Chula Vista, I'm requesting that the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge master plans that are being developed keep open the 3 summit hikes in the southern part of San Diego County. I request that the plan manage the needs of both nature preservation along with hikers. Reserve plans have successfully been able to accomplish this balance in other parts of the county.</p> <p>Hikes #1 and #2 below are key because they provide important physical exercise for fitness purposes because the peaks are higher than #3. These hikes compliment the other flatter (easier) hikes in the South Bay.</p> <p>In addition, closing the peaks is forcing hikers to travel further north in the county to obtain similar exercise.</p> <p>#1 - Mount Miguel – a very active hiking trail was closed a few years ago (aka Towers) – please reopen.</p> <p>#2 - Upper Otay Lakes peak - trailhead starts in Proctor Valley Reserve. This beautiful hike overlooks Otay Lakes and towards Otay Peak to the south. This very active hiking trail was recently closed!</p> <p>#3 - The peak (aka Rock House) is still open – but is now very busy with hikers. Parking in the neighborhood is congested early in the morning where the trailhead is. This park overlooks busy and noisy freeways (125 and 54), the Sweetwater reservoir, and Spring Valley.</p> <p>Please add my name to the email list to be notified of meetings. We are committed as hikers to respect and take care of the reserve to ensure nature preservation. I would welcome the opportunity to provide input on why access to hiking to these peaks is so important for the quality of life in Chula Vista!</p>
<p>Individual(s) - Chula Vista Resident(s)</p>	<p>I'm writing to you all today after a morning romp in the Upper Otay area off Proctor Valley Rd. I'm not quite sure the name of the trail, but there's an area just adjacent to a vineyard with a few parking spots, a gate, an informational map, and a well-defined trail to the top of a mountain. My dad and I noticed a letter written by another hiker concerning the city's involvement in the closure of the Upper Otay trail and the others in the Otay watershed.</p> <p>I've been away from my Eastlake hometown studying environmental science at college, so I am certainly an enthusiast of wildlife preservation and efforts to protect sensitive habitat. In the meantime, I was sad to discover all but one of my local trails were closed. My dad and I used to be able to walk from our house to three different summits. However, this hiker's notice brought up an interesting argument against the closure; the endangered Quino butterfly responsible for the closure apparently appeared when the trail was open and uses</p>

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	<p>the trail itself to lay larvae. It would seem, then, that the hiking trail has not posed a threat to the butterfly. Plus, most of the erosion of the trails occurred at the one Mother Miguel trail leftover from the closures. The hiker’s letter shared that few community members have reached out to show their support of the Otay trail, so I would like to add mine and my dad’s name to the list of local people who use the Otay trail and would like it to remain useable.</p> <p>I’d also like to mention that except for this hiker’s notice, my family has been blindsided by these recent closures. What was effective about this hiker’s notice was that it was clearly visible and posted at the trailhead in question. The city’s decisions and plans seem far less accessible; a search on your website revealed a 245 page outline of the plans. I wonder why the city couldn’t have—like the hiker—drafted a notice to be posted at the trailheads warning or, better yet, inviting users to learn about and participate in the ideas being discussed behind closed doors. I have a suspicion the people who use the trail for exercise and peace are not the type to rely on city websites and 245 page plans for news about their local trails. How many of the elected officials actually making the decisions interact with these trails and their frequent neighborhood users?</p> <p>A final remark: the Eastlake environment has been becoming more and more built every year. My dad and I were born and raised in Bonita and in our lifetimes we’ve seen what was once a rural area transition to a commercial suburbia riddled with shopping malls and apartments. The foot of Mt. Miguel and the Upper Otay trail are also congested with new housing developments near the trailheads. This being said, I understand the need to protect the land as the influx of new neighbors creates more traffic and invites people without knowledge and respect for trail etiquette. On the other hand, I’d like the city to consider how it’s own history of bureaucratic decisions regarding new business projects, commerce, and land use degrade the land and precipitate the traffic which causes erosion and the need for closures. For most of my childhood before the closures, the Upper Otay trail and the Mt. Miguel trail were once relatively unknown gems—my dad and I could summit without seeing a soul. Specifically, the Upper Otay summit trail was a ghost town; the only indication that people had been to the top was the two foot wide trail itself. Accessible nature opportunities are, in my opinion, essential to a valuable human experience, especially today. Those of us who require outdoors to escape the upcoming Eastlake hustle and bustle need somewhere to go. Thus, it follows that the Mother Miguel trail is becoming eroded as all of the hikers are concentrated in one place. Now, though we can see these two other summit choices from our windows, the trails are unused and the locals who have grown up appreciating the underrated beauty of our great Otay outdoors and its species are forced to go on hikes around Otay Ranch Mall.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration and efforts.</p>
<p>Individual - Chula Vista Resident</p>	<p>Thanks for allowing me to comment:</p> <p>My comments focus largely on the ability for all CV residents, especially those 40+ to actively exercise in the</p>

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	<p>open spaces. It concerns me deeply that the current plan working through the planning process regarding the Proctor Valley/Otay reserve (trail connectivity) is so restrictive and does not allow residents to ascend the hills. Based on my knowledge of the issues it appears that this project is being guided by a “manage for the 2% of bad actors” instead of leading for the 98%. While there are important environmental considerations in these areas they should not drive a permanent closure of huge portions of this outdoor treasure. Staff appear to be taking easy path of closure and denial rather than educating and developing flexible access that protects critical species but allow public enjoyment of the vistas and benefits of healthy activities that come from being able to ascend the hills. Being confined to the valley floors greatly reduces the health benefits of walking and hiking.</p> <p>A key element in the current restrictive trail design is Staffs concern for the protection of sensitive or endangered species. These concerns are legitimate and important. That said when weighed against the certain development of Villages 13 and 14, not allowing the public to ascend the hills and ridges on preexisting trails with a history of responsible public use is laughable. This flies in the face of the Counties Motto “For the Greater Public Good”. Staff can and should develop a plan that allows for greater public access to the hills and ridges while educating the public, implementing temporary closures and creating a model of limited access for biking (Dry seasons only or 3 days a week for example). Under the current plan enforcement is required every day. Under a more open model enforcement cost would be less.</p> <p>Overall, I do applaud this effort. I believe that Staff has must rethink the plan and give more credit to the public’s ability to comply and respect a more open but environmentally responsible model.</p>
<p>Individual - Chula Vista Resident</p>	<p>Honorable Mayor Salas,</p> <p>Good morning, today I took a great hike up to the summit of the upper Otay lake trail. It is truly one of the best hikes around the county. I feel so fortunate that such an experience exist in my immediate backyard. As I was taking my hike I ran into a letter that had been left by community conscious individuals requesting we reach out to you to express our desire to keep this trail open to hikers. I am aware Proctor Valley will be developed and most likely the road will be then paved to connect to Jamul, in addition some paths will be designated for trail use as well. I've seen this trail used by Border Patrol and I believe it serves as a fire break as well. I would ask that it continue to be available for hikers as well and be recognized in the final plan. It would be a shame for it to be closed similar to Mt. Miguel.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
<p>Individual - SDMBA Member</p>	<p>As a trail enthusiast, conservationist, environmental professional, and mountain biker (and SDMBA member), thanks to you and to SD County Parks for helping to provide critical recreational opportunities in San Diego. The health and economy of our rapidly growing county depends on outdoor recreation.</p> <p>I am excited to see that more trails are proposed in the Otay region, as it is one of my favorite places for my</p>

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	<p>family to ride and provides for nice connections to other trails and parks. I am also pleased that trail guidelines call for minimal widths and natural surface, as wider trails and extensive use of materials such as DG degrades both the environment and the user experience.</p> <p>In sum, I agree that the primary focus of parks should be protection of resources, but that responsible recreation is rarely in conflict with that goal. Indeed, recreational opportunities are absolutely essential in generating the cooperation of user groups that become the biggest proponents and protectors of natural resources. SDMBA is a prime example of this; they are a user group that has worked successfully with land managers throughout the county to improve trails, generate user interest, reduce misuse, and protect delicate resources. I strongly suggest that SD County Parks work with SDMBA as much as possible, as I'm sure you do.</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to comment, as I cannot make the June 20 meeting.</p>
Individual	<p>Thanks again for putting on the open house last Wednesday for the Otay regional Trail Alignment Study. The forum was well done with plenty of agency participation and lots of community involvement. I do have one comment for the record.</p> <p>The BLM lands adjacent to the Border Patrol checkpoint on the 94 highway have a long history of trail use particularly by equestrians. I have ridden there many times and the trails extend all the way from Pio Pico to Dulzura, Barret Lake junction and beyond. The trails were used for years by the local ranchers for grazing cattle and include some nice scenic spots such as Sycamore Canyon. These trails and ranch roads should be included on the trail alignment study and I was surprised that were not identified. I also commented in the first workshop that a staging area should be created opposite the checkpoint at a spot commonly referred to as "the Pink Gate". In fact this gate was previously opened And I have staged out of there with some of my local equestrian friends in years past. Thanks for taking my comment and please contact me if you need any further information.</p>
Individual	<p>To whom this may concern this is my opinion about singletrack trails versus fire Road or wide walking trail I ride mountain bikes and would rather be on a singletrack trail for mountain bikers then any other trail I do appreciate any trails that can be made legal thank you.</p>
Individual	<p>The Otay Regional trail alignment meeting was very informative . And Thank you for adding biking to the list for Lower Otay Lakes trail system. It is one of our best loved trails for beginners and for the whole family to enjoy.</p>
Individual - County Resdient	<p>There's a very big issue that impacts trails, as well as traffic in Jamul.</p> <p>Otay Village 14 developers would like to force a Land Swap with State Fish & Wildlife. What they propose is to drop off Areas 16 & 19 in exchange for adding 500 more homes in Village 14. Unfortunately, Proctor Valley Rd north of Village 14 and SR 94 cannot handle the 1100 homes already proposed in Village 14, much less an additional 500.</p>

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	<p>AND, for the same reasons as well as that Areas 16 & 19 are proposed to be added onto the sewer lines for Village 14, and they are in Jamul, and Jamul's Charter says NO sewer lines in Jamul: No, don't bother building Areas 16 & 19 ever, so no need for a Land Swap.</p> <p>The Land Swap with State F & W would disturb wildlife corridors and make it much less likely that Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve will be opened for public trails. Trail riders in Jamul and Bonita are working with State F & W to open this area up for trails, however if the Land Swap is forced onto the Reserve, this will not happen. Can your office help?</p> <p>Thanks!</p>
Individual - SDMBA Member	<p>I would like to thank County DPR for facilitating this exercise. San Diego County DPR has been incredibly proactive by bringing all land managers to the table to try and work through this process. The result of this process and my opinion does not reflect DPR's efforts. Failures of other land managers outlined below are simply an inability to adapt to a changing County.</p> <p>Part 2 Otay Valley Area (Otay Lake)</p> <p>I would like to start out by noting that currently there are abundant popular trails around the West, North and East of the lake. They have commonly been referred to fishermen trails, but in truth are community trails that have existed for 20 plus years. They're popular primarily among mountain bikers and beginner riders. The idea that the current proposal within City of San Diego Public utilities property will receive community buy-in is unlikely.</p> <p>Further my understanding is the County has offered to assist with maintenance in perpetuity and I assume will also assist with enforcement as well. I would recommend that the County does not participate in enforcement activities on PUD land. This will lead the County into a place where they are directly in conflict with the community.</p> <p>The trails that currently exist may not fall within the PUD's unrealistic trail guidelines, but they are consistent with practices of other water authorities across the County. The idea that a simple trail near the waters edge is a biological, hydrological or security concern is just unrealistic. There are many trails across San Diego that provide a much more significant and impactful presence around a lake and have little to no security. The impact currently already exists and if further research was done I am sure that the impact and trails existed before the San Diego MSCP and the induction of PUD lands into the MSCP Cornerstone Program.</p> <p>There should be a nature based trail that exists from the West, to the North and to the East around the lake. This would not only provide a legal opportunity for the community, but provide much needed education and</p>

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stewardship of the watershed. This would leave the sensitive Southeast and South side secure and without significant impact.

Although not a scientific measurement of use the below map characterizes level of use based on a activity monitoring app. Although used by hikers and bikers the below map shows bike use in the area of Otay Lake. Several trails and redundant trails can be noted along with heavy levels of use that rival or exceed use on existing bike lanes in the area.

Part 3 Eastlake Area

We appreciate the Otay Water Authority and the Refuges participation in this regional trail study, but noted that the projection of needed trail in this area do not take into account the likely outcome of the closure of the existing golf course. With additional several thousand residents nestled against the refuge it is likely the community will look to recreate in the refuge.

This could potentially cause significant resource damage or heavy use of existing double track that are not open to the public. Significant effort should be made to avoid a repeat of rockhouse and realize that communities tend to recreate in their backyard and simply hoping people will stay on trail is not enough.

A connector up to the refuge could be designed utilizing existing roads and trails that would not only provide a connector for a future community on the east side of the golf course and a loop around the north end.

Part 4 Jamul Area

This may be the most frustrating part of this plan. Although we acknowledge that County DPR does not have control over other land managers involved in this planning process the State of California has modeled and created a completely deficient plan. Not only have they ignored the current and historical bike use on their Rancho Jamul ER they have simply ignored the future of Proctor Valley. There are currently a number of developments planned in Proctor Valley that have significant implications for trails. CDFW currently has planned a number of trails that connect to a highly populated area and a future development site that will have thousands of residents. The idea that people will not attempt to recreate on State Property because it has been identified as an Ecological Reserve instead of a Wildlife Area lack foresight.

CDFW has continued to show a lack of ability to plan for recreational facilities, recreational needs of the surrounding communities and an inability to manage access or trails on their property. In most cases this has been a non-issue in rural unpopulated areas, but in a number of preserved lands their lack of planning and rigid adherence to no bikes has led to abundant creation of unauthorized trails and a lack of connection to the community.

I would encourage the County and other landholders to push back on the current planned routes within the ER. Further I would either plan for bike access on these trails or attempt a land swap or management agreement with an adjoining landowner who can allow bikes on trails.

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San Diego Mountain Biking Association
Official Comment Letter

Dear Ms. Tylke:

The following are comments on the Otay Regional Trails Alignment Study submitted by on behalf of the San Diego Mountain Biking Association.

Part 1 Otay-Dulzura Area

SDMBA advocates that the Village 13 perimeter trails should be narrow (less than 4 feet wide, natural surface trails that allow for a natural trail experience.

Part 2 Otay Valley Area (Otay Lake)

SDMBA would like to note that currently there are abundant popular trails around the West and North of the lake. They have commonly been referred to fishermen trails, but in truth are community trails that have existed for 20 plus years. There are popular primarily among mountain bikers and beginner riders as well as hikers and trail runners. The idea that the current proposal within City of San Diego Public utilities property will receive community buy in is unlikely.

Further our understanding is the County has offered to assist with maintenance in perpetuity and we assume will also assist with enforcement as well. We would recommend that the County does not participate in enforcement activities on PUD land.

The trails that currently exist may not fall within the PUD’s unrealistic trail guidelines, but they are consistent with practices of other water authorities across the County. The idea that a simple trail near the water’s edge is a biological, hydrological or security concern is just unrealistic. There are many trails across San Diego that provide a much more significant and impactful presence around a lake and have little to no security. The impact currently already exists and if further research was done we are sure that the impact and trails existed before the San Diego MSCP and the induction of PUD lands into the MSCP Cornerstone Program.

There should be a nature based, singletrack trail that is approved in the plan on the West, to the North to the East around the lake. This would not only provide a legal opportunity for the community, but provided much needed education and stewardship of the watershed. There are redundant trails on the west side of the lake, some of which are farther from the water, which would allow for options when determining the approved alignment. This would leave the sensitive far Eastside and Southside secure and without significant impact. Although not a scientific measurement of use the map below characterizes level of use based on a activity monitoring app. These trails are highly valued by the community. Runners, hikers, bird watchers, cyclists, dog walkers and others enjoy these trails daily as does the Eastlake High School Mountain Bike Team and are also accessed by athletes training at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training

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Facility. Although heavily used by hikers, fishermen, and bikers the map below shows bike use in the area of Otay Lake. Several trails and redundant trails can be noted along with heavy levels of use that rival or exceed use on existing bike lanes.

In addition the Trail(yellow on planning map) that starts from the Otay River restoration area should not end at Hunte Parkway. Instead it should keep going north in the preserve and connect at Olympic Parkway. The south side of the Otay River Valley trail from the 805 freeway to Lower Otay Lake should have small loop, singletrack trails in addition to the current access fire roads in the canyons and linking overlooks, narrow, nature based primitive type trails.

Part 3 Eastlake Area

We appreciate the Otay Water Authority and the Refuges participation in this regional trail study, but noted that the projection of needed trail in this area do not take into account the likely outcome of the closure of the existing golf course. With an additional several thousand residents nestled against the refuge it is likely the community will look to recreate in the refuge.

This could potentially cause significant resource damage or heavy use of existing double track that are not open to the public. Significant effort should be made to avoid a repeat of Rockhouse Trail and the resulting habitat destruction and realize that communities tend to recreate in their backyard and simply hoping people will stay on trail is not enough.

A connector up to the refuge could be designed utilizing existing roads and trails that would not only provide a connector for a future community on the east side of the golf course and a loop around the north end. There should be a trail to connect the SD National Wildlife Refuge area with Upper Otay Lake trails. From the north end of the Salt Creek golf course property via the east side and all the way to Proctor Valley Rd. We need two trails on Otay Water District property, the one to loop Mother Miguel on the west side and one to link to Upper Otay Lake on the east side. Upper Otay Lake should be a complete loop around the perimeter of the reservoir and preferably NOT use part of Proctor Valley Road as a trail.

Part 4 Jamul Area

This may be the most frustrating part of this plan. Although we acknowledge that County DPR does not have control over other land managers involved in this planning process the State of California has modeled and created a completely deficient plan. Not only have they ignored the current and historical bike use on their Rancho Jamul ER they have simply ignored the future of Proctor Valley. There are currently a number of developments planned in Proctor Valley that have significant implications for trails. CDFW currently has planned a number of trails that connect to a highly populated area and a future development site that will have thousands of residents. The idea that people will not attempt to recreate on State Property because it has

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	<p>been identified as a Ecological Reserve instead of a Wildlife Area lack foresight. CDFW has continued to show a lack of ability to plan for recreational facilities, recreational needs of the surrounding communities and an inability to manage access or trails on their property. In most cases this has been a non-issue in rural unpopulated areas, but in a number of preserved lands their lack of planning and rigid adherence to no bikes has lead to abundant creation of unauthorized trails and a lack of connection to the community.</p> <p>SDMBA would encourage the County and other landholders to push back on the current planned routes within the ER. Further SDMBA would request that there is either a plan for bike access on these trails or an attempt at a land swap or management agreement with an adjoining landowner who can allow bikes on trails. SDMBA advocates that the Village perimeter trails should be narrow (less than 4 feet wide, natural surface trails that allow for a natural trail experience. Thank you for your time and effort on this project. Please know that SDMBA is here to provide insight into our trails community and expert trail planning input. We want what is best for the public's future recreation opportunities while at the same time creating a sense of stewardship of our precious open spaces.</p> <p>SDMBA President</p>
<p>Individual - SDMBA Member</p>	<p>Hello, Here are some of my comments, will try to be as specific as I can.</p> <p>OTAY-DULZURA AREA: The only comment I have is that the Otay Village 13 perimeter trail should be 4 ft or less wide, primitive nature based trail and connect with future neighborhood parks as well as to existing trails in the south side of Otay Lakes Rd.</p> <p>OTAY VALLEY AREA: This area es extremely popular with families and new riders, hikers and walkers. The west side of Lower Otay Lake has a singletrack trail that you could check on any trail app how popular is, it needs to be included in the plan. Again, this is very important for the community including all type of trail users. See maps attached.</p> <p>There is also a trail that links the west-east side of the lake and is just south of Otay Lake Rd bellow grade near the Upper Otay Lake dam area. Is very important to include this trail for safety reasons. People use this trail to avoid riding on Otay Lake Rd to ride to and from the east side of the lake since is so dangerous and Village 13 will make it worst. See attached map and photos for location. The proposed trail that starts from the Otay River restoration area should not end at Hunte Parkway, instead should be going north thru the Eastlake III Park on existing trail that end at Olympic Parkway, see attached map. That is a very well use route and the trail is being there for many years.</p> <p>EASTLAKE AREA: There is a need for a trail to make a loop at the Mother Miguel aka RockHouse trail. This</p>

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	<p>can be done on an existing trail that is on Otay Water District property on the now closed Salk Creek Golf course. There is also a need for a connecting trail between the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge and Upper Otay Lake area, there is an existing trail on the east side of the Salk Creek golf course that needs to be included on this plan. Upper Otay Lake proposed trail should be a complete loop by itself and not to include the Proctor Valley pathway or road, should all be singletrack primitive style as the one existing now.</p> <p>JAMUL AREA: Is very important that Village 14 includes singletrack type of trail around the perimeter. There is a very popular loop that includes the this area of the Proctor Valley and links with the SD National Wildlife, see attached map. We need to keep this loop uninterrupted. The Rancho Jamul proposed trails should be open to ALL trail users including bikes. There is no real reason to not be able to ride on those existing 20 feet+ wide dirt roads. This "trails" can be a link between the Lower Otay Lake trails, the Hollenbeck Canyon and the Proctor Valley area, currently there is no trails to link this areas, only via the very unsafe Otay Lake Road and Highway 94</p> <p>I hope this information and maps can be useful and I appreciate all your hard work on this project. Thanks so much.</p>
Sweetwater Authority Official Comment Letter	<p>Dear Ms. Tylke:</p> <p>Thank you for sending Sweetwater Authority (Authority) staff an invitation to attend the second public workshop for the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study (OTAS), which took place in the City of Chula Vista on June 20, 2018. The Authority understands that OTAS's main purpose is to have "a multi-agency planning effort to create a coordinated and sustainable trail system that enhances recreation and provides trail connections while balancing the need to protect sensitive environmental resources." This letter addresses comments made during the public workshop and the information shared by the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department with the general public on June 29, 2018.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The map figures shown on the workshop presentation, including figures titled Existing Trails & Pathways; Trails Proposed by Other Efforts; Pathways Under Consideration; and Trails Under Consideration, include some of the existing and proposed trails located outside of the OTAS boundary area (i.e. trails within the Authority's property at Sweetwater Reservoir). Many other trails exist or may be proposed adjacent to the OTAS boundary, however, these other trails are not shown in any of the map figures, making these map figures incomplete. The Authority recommends to either completely remove those trails shown outside the OTAS boundary, or to revise the map figures to show a more complete picture of all the trail systems in the vicinity of the OTAS area (e.g. Otay Valley Regional Park trails, etc.). 2. The trail located within the Authority's property at Sweetwater Reservoir, which currently connects the Sweetwater Regional Park to the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge is being realigned in two different places:

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- a. Trail crossing vernal pool complex: by looking at the prepared map figures, this trail realignment appears to be addressed correctly by OTAS.
- b. Trail in the vicinity of the Sweetwater Reservoir South Dike ("Riding and Hiking Trail"): this trail is shown adjacent to the South Dike on both the existing and proposed trail alignments, but the trail will soon be relocated away from the South Dike structure. The Authority recommends correcting this mapping error in your map figures.

3. To clarify the allowed recreational uses of the Sweetwater Reservoir property and Sweetwater Reservoir Shoreline Fishing Program (Fishing Program):

- a. The Fishing Program is currently open to the public on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays and is closed during major holidays. Days and hours of operation can change due to seasonality, staffing constraints, project activities, or unanticipated events. The Authority reserves the right to operate the Fishing Program as it deems appropriate.
- b. There are no existing or proposed trail connections between the Fishing Program and any of the trails located within the OTAS boundary. When open to the public, the Fishing Program has its own designated points of entry. Any other access route to the Fishing Program facilities is considered unauthorized.
- c. No pets, horses or off-road vehicles are allowed within the boundaries of the Fishing Program.
- d. A fee is paid for accessing the Fishing Program. For more information on the Fishing Program, please visit the Authority's website at <https://www.sweetwater.org/258/Sweetwater-Reservoir>.

4. Due to potential contaminant generating activities, the Authority supports any proposed trail alignment that fully complies with the setbacks (horizontal buffers) described in Guideline 2. 1 for aquatic resources. These setbacks include (a) 2,500 feet from reservoir outlets, (b) 1,000 feet from reservoir high water line, and (c) 200 feet from major tributary streams. Because of the risk of impacting the reservoirs' water quality, appropriate justification should be provided at any point where those setbacks cannot be met.

5. The Sweetwater Reservoir, a source of drinking water, collects runoff from the middle Sweetwater River watershed. While the Sweetwater Reservoir may be outside of the OTAS area, there may be OTAS trails, staging areas, and associated activities with the potential to impact drainage areas and tributaries that ultimately discharge their waters on the Sweetwater Reservoir. Any environmental constraints studies,

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	<p>including those studies performed to comply with CEQA and/or NEPA, must properly evaluate and disclose any potential impacts from the proposed facilities and activities to downstream drinking water reservoirs, including the Sweetwater Reservoir, and propose proper mitigation measures. Please keep Authority staff informed of any project developments and public meetings related to OTAS. Should you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Israel Marquez, Environmental Project Manager, at (619) 409-6759 or imarquez@sweetwater.org.</p>
<p>Jackson Pendo Development Company</p>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the County’s Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study. We appreciate all the work that County staff has put into this effort and we applaud the ongoing multi-agency cooperation underpinning the plan.</p> <p>As the owner and project applicant for the Otay Ranch Village 14 and Planning Area 16/19 project, Jackson Pendo Development Company fully supports the effort to provide for a connected regional trail system. In fact, a significant part of the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study is the 4.5 mile Community Pathway between Chula Vista and Jamul that we will be providing as part of our community in Proctor Valley.</p> <p>We did want to make one very quick comment with regard to the study. Please note that the trails depicted as “Otay Ranch Village Perimeter/Connector Trails” within Otay Ranch Village 14 and Planning Area 16/19 are not yet approved trails. They will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors as a possible option when the Otay Ranch Village 14 project comes before the Board.</p> <p>Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment and look forward to working with you in the future.</p>
<p>Individual</p>	<p>Otay Regional Trail Alignment Project-</p> <p>First, and very briefly, my background: At age 65, I have been a long time active outdoor enthusiast, enjoying hiking, bird watching, back packing, traditional bow hunting, mountain biking, scuba diving and camping. I have also been actively engaged in helping where I can with environmental issues. For example, I was involved with a core group of people successfully establishing the Wright’s Field Preserve located in Alpine, where I had resided for 25 years. I was also involved in several Alpine community activities, notably serving on the school board for two terms. I moved to Coronado ten years ago, where I currently reside. I semi-retired four years ago from Grossmont College where I still work part time. With more time available, I hike the Otay Valley Regional Park trails several times a week.</p> <p>It is because of my conservation and outdoor background, along with history of working with bureaucracies, that I feel so very appreciative of all the efforts by so many over the years to shepherd the ORTAP through to this point. Thank you for your exceptional public service.</p> <p>Nonetheless, I do have some points of disagreement with the alignment project that I wish to offer. My primary concern is closing all but one long established summit trails. (The Rock House Trail remains open.) While</p>

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lowland trails may likely attract dog walkers, those strolling to escape city life, or mountain bikers, summit trails are far and away the most sought trails for hikers. Attached is a map identifying the three summits with established trails.

Of the 23 endangered species identified by the ORTAP only one, the quino butterfly, has been sited in upland trail areas, specifically the Upper Otay Lakes Trail. OVRP biologists suggest that the quino butterfly showed up due to the heavy rains from the year before and that this occurred while the trails were in use. So of course the question is, why close the trails? Swings in annual climate patterns have nothing to do with trail use. Biologists go on to cite that the quino butterfly likes to lay eggs in open ground, such as that created by hiker trail use. Again, why penalize hikers for creating habitat? The same biologists state the important role that vernal pools play. It should be noted that there are no vernal pools in the upland trail areas.

More recently the ORTAP suggests that closing upland trails to hikers would protect a pair of golden eagles recently sited in the area. While I am excited to learn of this, I am not sure why the golden eagle is brought into the discussion of balancing habitat preservation with recreational land use. The golden eagle is not listed as an endangered species. In fact it is listed as “stable.” It is listed as a protected species under the Golden and Bald Eagle Protection Act and Migratory Bird Treaty. However, these acts only protect the eagles from being killed, captured, trapped, collected, possessed, sold, purchased or transported. So closing well-established trails is not warranted under the statutes of these two acts.

There has been some expressed concern about erosion, caused by hikers. Yet there is almost no erosion evident except on the Rock House Trail where there are already mitigation efforts occurring with help from hikers and mountain bikers. Moreover, concentrating all hikers onto one summit trail accelerated this erosion. See attached picture of heavy trail use on the Rock House Trail that dramatically escalated after the closures of the other two summit trails in the area.

The Rock House Trail, the one upland trail that remains open, is within the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge. Consequently, it aligns its local efforts with that of the National Refuge Association criterion. These criterion specifically require implementation and opening the refuge to a full range of wildlife-dependent recreational uses. In doing so, the San Diego chapter aligns itself with every other refuge and preserve in the County such as the two largest, the Daily Ranch and Mission Trails Preserves. As far as I can tell, no other refuge in the County closed long established trails. Instead, they manage trail use. At this time, the ORTAP is an outlier.

Managing trail use at these other preserves and refuges to protect natural habitat is done by rerouting trails around sensitive areas, imposing dog leash laws and that owners pick up after their pets, prohibiting hikers and bikers from leaving established trails, and forbidding the take of any natural flora or fauna.

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The San Miguel Mountain trails have been closed to hikers for over three years. The closing of the Upper Otay Lakes Trail was done late last year. It is the latter that is most upsetting to many local and county residents. Regular Upper Otay Lakes Trail hikers include families, Navy Seals and Fire Fighters, a large group of college students from out-of-area colleges meet and hike this trail twice a year in tribute to their good memories doing the same as friends in high school, and of course retired people and those wanting to stay fit are regular users. The American flag is planted at the summit along with a memorial bench seat in honor of the deceased wife who used to hike regularly with her husband and close circle of friends. There is a picnic table carried and erected at the top for the comfort of hikers, along with a supply of water bottles.

My last point: the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Project is a wonderful concept, likely resulting in a rare gem for the South Bay area for years to come. Those involved should be proud. However, at a political level, council and board representatives should consider the fall-out of restricting constituents from their historical summit trail use in the region. This coupled with the fact that nearly all endangered species are not located in upland trail areas, should make it possible to reconsider the closure of summit trails.

Thank you for allowing me to offer my perspectives on this. Like you, I am interested in the care and well being of the OVRP and the alignment project.

San Diego Trails Alliance Official Comment Letter

Dear Ms. Tylke:

Subject: Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study

The San Diego Trails Alliance (SDTA) is made up of numerous trail organizations, businesses and volunteers representing non-motorized multi-use trail users. Our primary focus is to support to continuous trail efforts by agencies, ensuring trail connectivity and keeping trails open for all user groups.

We apologize being late with our comments in response to the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study presented at the public workshop. We hope you will still consider our comments.

We were troubled to find the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study did not incorporate all of the trails identified on the adopted County of San Diego's Regional Trails Map; specifically, the historic California Riding and Hiking Trail (CRHT).

SDTA would like to know why a County approved regional trail alignment has been omitted from the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study. Two of our members, the Lakeside Frontier Riders and the Tijuana River Valley Equestrian Association, have expressed specific concern and support for the inclusion of the CRHT in

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the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study.

This tract of CRHT alignment was approved by the City of San Diego in 1948 to follow an existing dirt road on the east side of the reservoir to the south and crossing over Savage Dam to the Otay Lakes County Park. We understand this original alignment may now be problematic, however, we do not understand why a reroute of the CRHT had not been incorporated into the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study. We hope this was an oversight and not intentional.

The City of San Diego had in the past suggested a different trail alignment was possible. The City was willing to work with County on a new alignment that could meet the needs of both the Public Utilities Department and the historic CRHT.

We request the CRHT be incorporated into the Otay Regional Trail Alignment Study so a realignment can be analyzed and County Parks and Recreation to work with the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department on an acceptable realignment.

SDTA would be happy to assist you in any way possible including the planning of a realignment for the historic California Riding and Hiking Trail.

Sincerely,
SAN DIEGO TRAILS ALLIANCE