



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division  
PO Box 942896  
Sacramento, California 94296  
Telephone: (916) 902-8598

Armando Quintero, *Director*

## OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tracy, CA

October 24, 2024

**STAFF REPORT:** Planning Program Update  
**STAFF:** Katie Metraux, Strategic Planning and Recreation Services Division  
**SUBJECT:** Status of Planning Efforts for State Vehicular Recreation Areas

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### Summary

Several planning efforts are underway within State Vehicular Recreation Areas (SVRAs). Carnegie SVRA, Ocotillo Wells SVRA, and Hungry Valley SVRA are updating their park general plans. Several OHV-related studies are also in progress, including an economic and demographic study and a study to expand OHV recreation in the State. This report describes each plan's purpose, process, and current milestones.

The end of this report provides an overview of general plans, management plans, and studies and how they are utilized for reference.

### Discussion

Following is a summary of recent SVRA/OHV general plan developments.

#### ***Carnegie SVRA General Plan Update:***

The Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) were circulated for public review and comment from January 16 through March 1, 2024. The General Plan and Final EIR will be brought to the OHMVR Commission in October 2024 for consideration and action.

Copies of the Draft General Plan and Final EIR may be reviewed online at the [project website](#). This proposed General Plan Update and EIR are limited to the 1,533-acre original Carnegie SVRA and exclude the Expansion Area, which was the subject of a lawsuit. The classification of and planning for the Expansion Area (referred to as the Alameda-Tesla Property) will be addressed in the future under a separate planning effort. Please visit the Carnegie SVRA General Plan Update webpage for project updates and to sign up to receive project email announcements.

Alameda-Tesla Classification and General Plan

More than two decades ago, State Parks acquired the Alameda-Tesla Property (ATP) with the intent of expanding the adjacent Carnegie SVRA. After challenges to this plan in 2021, SB 155 (PRC sec. 5090.42) authorized planning work to determine the best land use. It specified that the property shall not be designated as an SVRA or be considered for any future expansion of OHV recreation. This project includes classifying and naming the property as a new park unit within the State Parks system and developing a general plan and environmental impact report. These planning efforts will determine land use and public access and guide future management.

The Alameda-Tesla Classification and General Plan Project was originally proposed in two phases: Park Classification and Naming and General Plan and EIR development. Over the last year, State Parks has been gathering and receiving public input and resource data, undertaking consultations with California Native American tribes, meeting with stakeholders, surveying and inventorying the property, along with receiving, acquiring, and accessing natural, cultural, and Tribal resources data, while identifying site assets, constraints, and opportunities for ATP.

Due to robust community feedback emphasizing the importance of the natural, cultural, and Tribal resources and the interest in assuring appropriate public recreational uses for this State Parks property, State Parks has decided to integrate the classification/naming process into the general plan effort, rather than pursuing two separate efforts. This practice has been successful for newer state park properties over the years.

State Parks' current assessment is that several viable options for state park unit classification could be considered and justified. The leading candidates for the property are the "state park" and "state reserves" classifications. One key benefit of this approach is that the various classification options will receive full environmental assessment and review during the development and approval of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance required in the general plan process.

Community outreach efforts to support the planning efforts will begin this Fall, 2024, as originally planned. Public workshops and other stakeholder engagement during the planning process will discuss classification and naming considerations and feedback on land use management concepts for developing the general plan. State Parks will submit a complete General Plan, PEIR, and Classification and Naming Report to the State Park and Recreation Commission in the future. During the ensuing planning process, the public will have multiple opportunities to share input that will inform project outcomes, as shown on the Participate page of the project webpage ([www.alamedateslaplan.com](http://www.alamedateslaplan.com)).

### ***Hungry Valley SVRA General Plan Update:***

The Hungry Valley SVRA General Plan has a project website at [www.PlanHungryValley.com](http://www.PlanHungryValley.com) to facilitate public involvement and communication. Interested parties should visit the project website and register to receive email notifications regarding project progress. The planning team is preparing the administrative draft general plan and EIR for public review in Fall/Winter 2024/2025.

### ***Ocotillo Wells SVRA Plan:***

Ocotillo Wells SVRA and the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) El Centro Field Office are developing a joint general plan for the Ocotillo Wells SVRA/Ocotillo Wells Special Recreation Management Area. This joint planning document will meet the State Park's General Plan and BLM land management requirements respectively for a California State Park unit General Plan, a BLM Recreation Management Plan, and a California Desert Conservation Area Land Use Plan Amendment. The latter two plans are federal planning documents. The combined Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) will meet the requirements of both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the State and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the federal agency. The core team working on the joint plan comprises staff from State Parks, BLM, and AECOM (consultants).

### ***Prairie City SVRA Road and Trail Management Plan***

The purpose of this Prairie City Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) is to provide specific guidance and direction for implementing the goals and guidelines of the 2016 Prairie City SVRA General Plan. The RTMP is a comprehensive planning document that examines the SVRA's existing system of roads and provides specific direction for their long-term construction, maintenance, and management. It considers current and potential public use, park operations, and the protection and enhancement of cultural and natural resources to ensure recreational trail opportunities are available at their fullest potential. Comprehensive trail planning also considers regional recreational opportunities and connectivity and includes extensive public outreach and input into designing new trails and experiences. The CEQA process for the Proposed Plan is now complete, and finalizing the plan will continue through the fall of 2024.

Visit the Prairie City RTMP [webpage](#) to learn more about the RTMP. Please send any other project-related questions or concerns to [trails@parks.ca.gov](mailto:trails@parks.ca.gov).

### ***OHV Access Initiative***

In September 2021, [Senate Bill 155](#) (Ch. 258, Statutes of 2021) amended Public Resources Code (PRC) Section (§) [5090.42](#), directing the California Department of Parks and Recreation, popularly known as State Parks, to explore the acquisition and development of properties and opportunities to expand off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation in new and existing facilities. This bill also recommended prioritizing opportunities that serve large urban areas such as the Bay Area and Central Valley and offer potential recreational opportunities for OHV recreation and motorized access to nonmotorized recreation. State Parks have many options for expanding OHV recreation throughout the state – through acquisition, lease, land swap, partnership, donation, transfer, legislation, and other means as established in PRC §5005, 5006, et seq.

Since November 2022, State Parks has held six public meetings for the OHV Access Project and a workshop with the OHMVR Commission. The last workshop in this series was held virtually in December 2023. The project next steps include:

- Meetings with land managers (BLM, USFS, etc.) – Spring to Summer 2024
- Refine list of potential sites based on results of site suitability analysis and feedback from stakeholders.
- Prepare a preliminary report with a list of potential regions.
- Community workshops to report back on project outcomes.

State Parks has a [website](#) for the OHV Access Project that provides more information about the planning process and ways to participate.

## **General and Management Plans Overview**

This section describes the purpose of general plans and management plans.

### **General Plans**

The General Plan defines the park’s primary purpose and establishes a management direction for its future. It guides day-to-day decision-making by providing a clear purpose and vision, guidance on long and short-term goals, and guidelines. It also serves as the basis for developing focused feasibility and management plans, specific project plans, and other management actions necessary to implement the goals of the general plan. The development of the general plan includes a complete programmatic Environmental Impact Report, which is considered a project under CEQA.

The general plan is primarily a “goal-based” rather than an “objective-based” document. General plan goals and associated guidelines define park managers' and system operators' ultimate purpose and intention but stop short of defining a specific accomplishment and timeframe for accomplishing those goals. Subsequent planning documents, such as management or specific project plans, develop this level of specificity. The development of a general plan includes a complete programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR), considered a project for CEQA (California Public Resources Code (PRC) Division 13. Environmental Quality, Chapter 1, Commencing with [Section 21000](#)). See PRC Section [5002.2](#) and PRC Section [5090.15 - 5090.24](#) about General Plans and related State Park and Recreation Commission and OHMVR Commission’s duties for reviewing and approving general plans.

### **Management Plans**

Management plans provide specific guidance and direction for implementing the goals and guidelines of a park unit’s general plan. These plans typically implement one resource of the general plan’s goals and guidelines, such as cultural and natural resource management, facilities, interpretation and education, or trails. For example, road and trail management plans examine a park’s existing road system and provide

specific direction for its long-term construction, maintenance, and management. An environmental review document may be required per CEQA compliance.

**Commission Action**

For information only.

**Attachments**

SVRA General Plans chart