

Pinnacles National Park News Release

For Immediate Release

APRIL 1, 2016

National Park Service releases Environmental Assessment for West Side Trail Construction Project

Pinnacles National Park has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the construction of two new trails from the West Side Visitor Contact Station (VCS). The proposed action is to construct an accessible trail at the VCS and construct a second trail that connects the VCS to trailheads located at the Chaparral Day Use Area.

The project is needed because there are currently no trails in the vicinity of the recently built VCS, which detracts from the visitor experience and results in resource damage. Without a formalized trail, visitors hike around the VCS and create their own 'social' trails, which results in damage to native vegetation, contributes to erosion, and threatens the cultural landscape of nearby historic sites. Visitors that park at the VCS currently cannot reach the other trails within the park by foot unless they walk along a one lane, winding, and shoulder-less road to the Chaparral Area. This road was not designed to accommodate pedestrian use and is unsafe for hiking. Additionally, there are limited opportunities for an accessible visitor experience. Providing an accessible trail with informational panels will open up the visual, cultural and natural resources to those unable to negotiate the more strenuous trails.

The EA is available for public review and comment from April 1-April 30, 2016. A public meeting on the project will be held on Monday, April 11, 2016 at the Soledad City Council Chambers, 248 Main Street, Soledad, CA. There will be an opportunity to talk informally with park staff from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. A presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m.

All comments are due by April 30, 2016. The public may review and comment on the EA online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/westsidetrails>. Hard copies are available at Soledad Branch Library, King City Library, and San Benito County Library and the park visitor centers. You may also request a copy by calling (831) 389-4286.

Comments may also be submitted by mail to: National Park Service, Attn: Karen Cantwell, Pinnacles West Side Trail Project, 333 Bush Street, Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94104-2828.

For more information:

- Contact Karen Beppler-Dorn, Superintendent at (831)389-4486, ext. 233 or karen_beppler-dorn@nps.gov
- Debbie Simmons, Facility Manager at (831) 389-4286 or at debbie_simmons@nps.gov
- View the project web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/westsidetrails>

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