

we all need



PNA+

APPENDIX B

RURAL STUDY

AREA PROFILES

This project was previously called the Regional and Rural Edition (RRE) to emphasize its focus on regional and rural recreation needs and priorities. This project name was used during the data collection, and community engagement and outreach phases which occurred primarily in 2021. As this report was being completed in 2022, DPR decided to rename the project the Parks Needs Assessment Plus (PNA+) to clarify and better communicate that this project complements and offers new information not previously included in the 2016 Parks Needs Assessment (PNA), such as mapping and analyses related to population vulnerability, environmental benefits, environmental burdens, and priority areas for environmental conservation, environmental restoration, regional recreation, and rural recreation. (Please note that there remains some text and graphic references to the RRE in this document because that was the project name when some components of this study were completed.)

CASTAIC/VAL VERDE RURAL STUDY AREA PROFILE

RURAL STUDY AREA ID #5 / PNA STUDY AREA ID #91

- » Study Area Description
- » Study Area Demographics
- » Population Vulnerability
- » Rural Recreation and Conservation Sites
- » Rural Recreation Site Access
- » Recreation Opportunity Types
- » Community Engagement Themes
- » Rural Recreation Priority Analysis
- » Rural Recreation Priority Areas
- » Priority Project Types

Note

This profile is not intended to stand alone. For definitions of key terms and a full description of the analysis summarized within please refer to Chapter 5 of the main report as well as Appendix C: Technical Resources.



STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

The Castaic/Val Verde Study Area is located in the Santa Clarita Valley Regional Study Area. The Castaic/Val Verde Study Area is bordered by the City of Santa Clarita to the south, the Angeles National Forest to the east, the Los Padres National Forest to the west, and the Tehachapi mountains to the north. The Study Area encompasses approximately 210 square miles. The unincorporated communities of Castaic, Val Verde, and Hasley Canyon are in the Castaic/Val Verde Study Area.

STUDY AREA CONSIDERATIONS

The Study Area has constraints, including natural hazards, such as earthquakes and limited infrastructure, including public transit service. It should be noted that the communities with the Study Area are largely connected to municipal utilities, in contrast with other rural areas. Some neighborhoods, such as those in Val Verde, are largely reliant upon shared vehicles and walking/cycling for travel. It is critical that existing communities, natural resources, and biological diversity remain protected. The desirability of suburban/rural living and the availability of affordable housing have led to population growth in Castaic and Val Verde since 2010. Some residents commute into Santa Clarita for work and recreational opportunities.

KEY ANALYSIS TAKEAWAYS

- » Transportation barriers are the most prevalent dimension of population vulnerability in the Study Area.
 - » 20% of residents live within walking distance of a rural recreation site.
 - » 13% of rural recreation sites in the Study Area are served by public transit.
- » The majority of rural recreation site area in the Study Area falls under Nature-Based Recreation Area. The Study Area contains relatively little Local Park area.
- » Many Study Area residents (over 65%) live within a 5-mile drive of each type of recreation opportunity.
- » Local proximity to rural recreation sites is the most pronounced aspect of rural recreation priority in the Study Area.

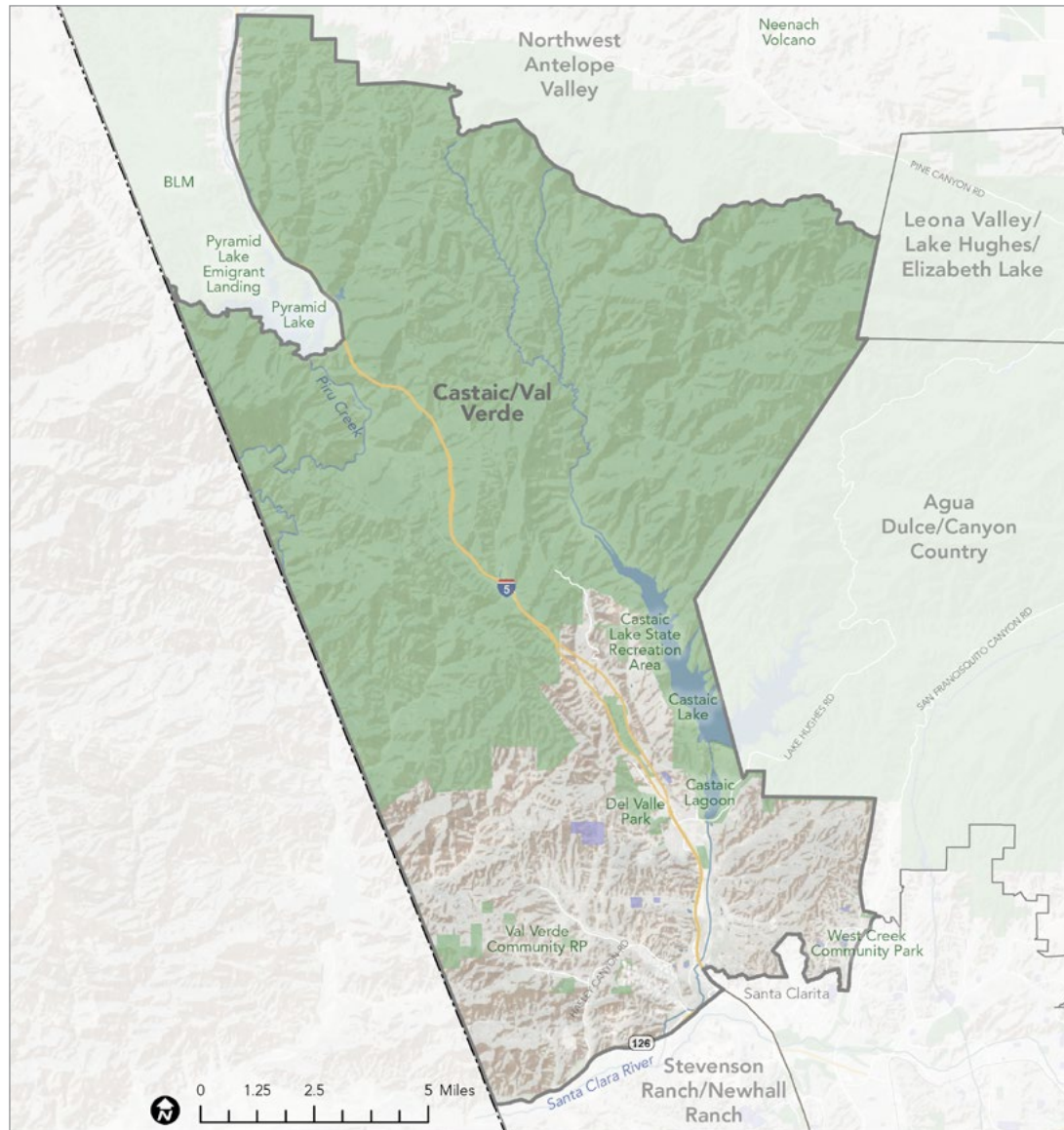
KEY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

- » Heat, distance, safety, cost and limited facilities and programming are identified barriers to park use for residents who live in the Study Area.

- » Residents say they need more recreation facilities and greenspaces nearby, and that these facilities need to be affordable and safe to access for pedestrians.
- » Greatest needs are for places to play and bring pets to exercise; gather with friends and family; and to be surrounded by nature.
- » 40% of survey respondents from the study area say they are recreating outside more due to COVID, and 90% are looking for more recreation activities closer to home.

In 2021, the Castaic Town Council provided updated information about recreation priorities. This is reflected in the list of Priority Projects that follows for this study area. The Town Council meeting discussion centered on streamlining parks projects, providing recreation opportunities through private sector projects, and the use of, and issues with, joint use agreements with schools. The Castaic Area Town Council updated its parks priority list in Fall 2021. Overall, the Town Council believes funds should be used for upgrades and renovations rather than for the creation of new parks. The list of priority projects includes providing and improving shade structures at Del Valle and Val Verde parks, improving swimming pool facilities at Val Verde Community Regional Park, improving play areas in all existing parks, and adding a dog park at the Castaic Sports Complex.

CASTAIC/VAL VERDE RURAL STUDY AREA



Map source: PNA, 2016; US Census, 2019; Esri, 2021; MIG, 2021; LAC GIS, 2021; USGS NHD, 2021

Note: All Rural Study Area Profile maps in this chapter include and refer to the sources listed here as basemap layers.

STUDY AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

Population, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Income, Age, and Education Level

Population	
Total	35,576

Race	Percentage
White	68.44%
Black or African American	5.49%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.49%
Asian	6.71%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.27%
Some Other Race	10.19%
Two or More Races	8.41%
Total	100%

Ethnicity	Percentage
Hispanic or Latino	35.2%
Not Hispanic or Latino	64.8%
Total	100%

Income	Percentage
Less than \$25,000	9.92%
\$25,000-\$49,999	12.8%
\$50,000-\$74,999	12.55%
\$75,000-\$99,999	11.88%
\$100,000-\$150,000	26.45%
\$150,000	26.42%
Total	100%

Gender	Percentage
Female	42.62%
Male	57.38%
Total	100%

Age	Percentage
Under 5 years	4.66%
5 to 9 years	6.1%
10 to 14 years	8.71%
15 to 19 years	10.04%
20 to 29 years	16.03%
30 to 39 years	12.94%
40 to 49 years	17.63%
50 to 59 years	13.91%
60 to 69 years	6.77%
70 to 79 years	3.5%
80+ years	1.44%
Total	100%

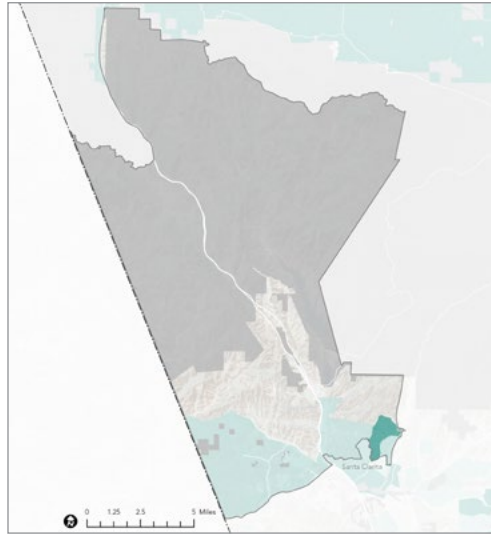
Education Level	Percentage
High School Diploma	20.81%
Some College, No Degree	27.8%
Associates Degree	8.36%
Bachelor's Degree	20.66%
Master's Degree	6.47%
Other	15.89%
Total	100%

Source: 2016 PNA, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 ACS 5-year Estimate Subject Tables, See Technical Appendix for Census Tracts included in each Study Area.

Note: At the time that this report was prepared, 2020 Census results were not available.

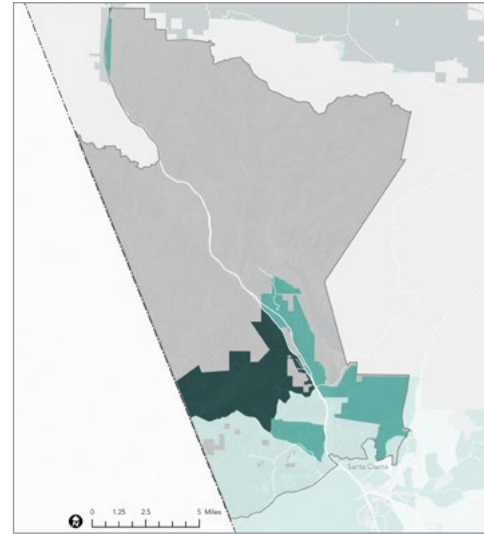
POPULATION VULNERABILITY DIMENSIONS

Social Barriers Dimension



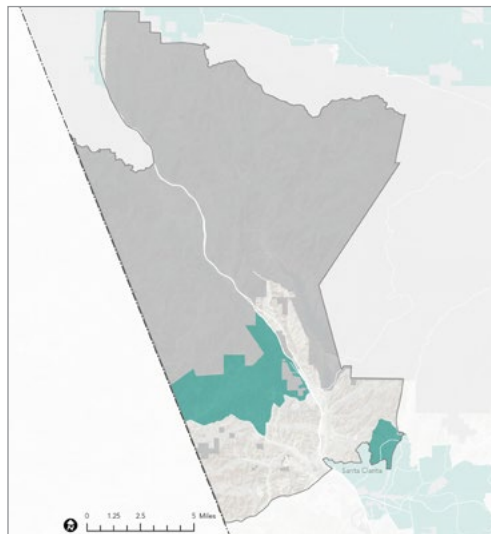
- Indicators:
- » High Poverty Rate
 - » High Unemployment Rate
 - » Majority-Minority Population
 - » High % of Young Children
 - » High % of Elderly Residents
 - » High % of Non-English-Speaking Residents
 - » Low % of Two-Parent Households

Transportation Barriers Dimension



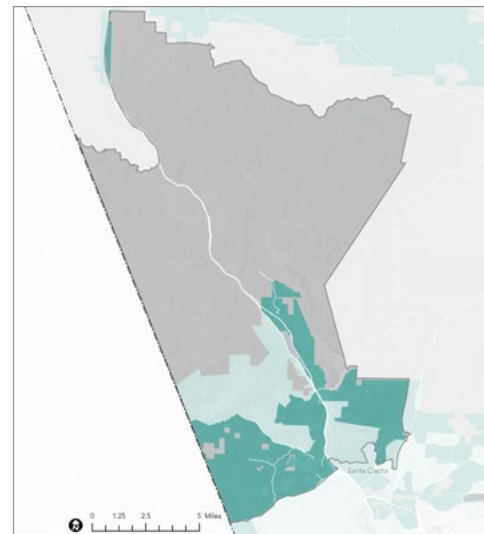
- Indicators:
- » Low Automobile Access
 - » Low Public Transit Access
 - » Low Active Commuting Rate
 - » High Traffic Density
 - » High Pedestrian Injuries

Health Vulnerability Dimension



- Indicators:
- » Low Park Access
 - » Low Tree Canopy
 - » High % Impervious Surface
 - » High Number of Excessive Heat Days
 - » High Urban Heat Island Index Score

Environmental Vulnerability Dimension

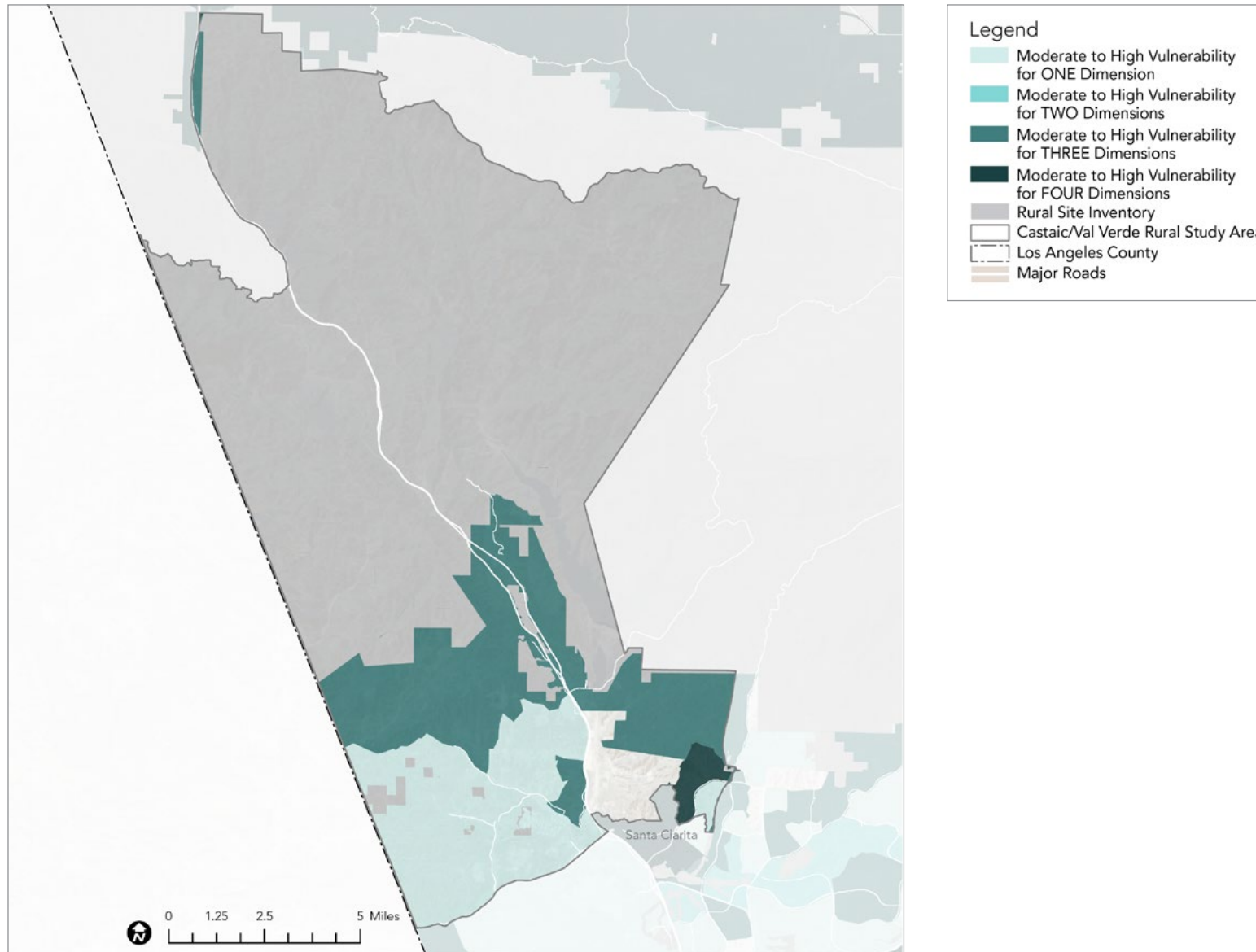


- Indicators:
- » Reduced Life Expectancy at Birth
 - » High Pollution Levels



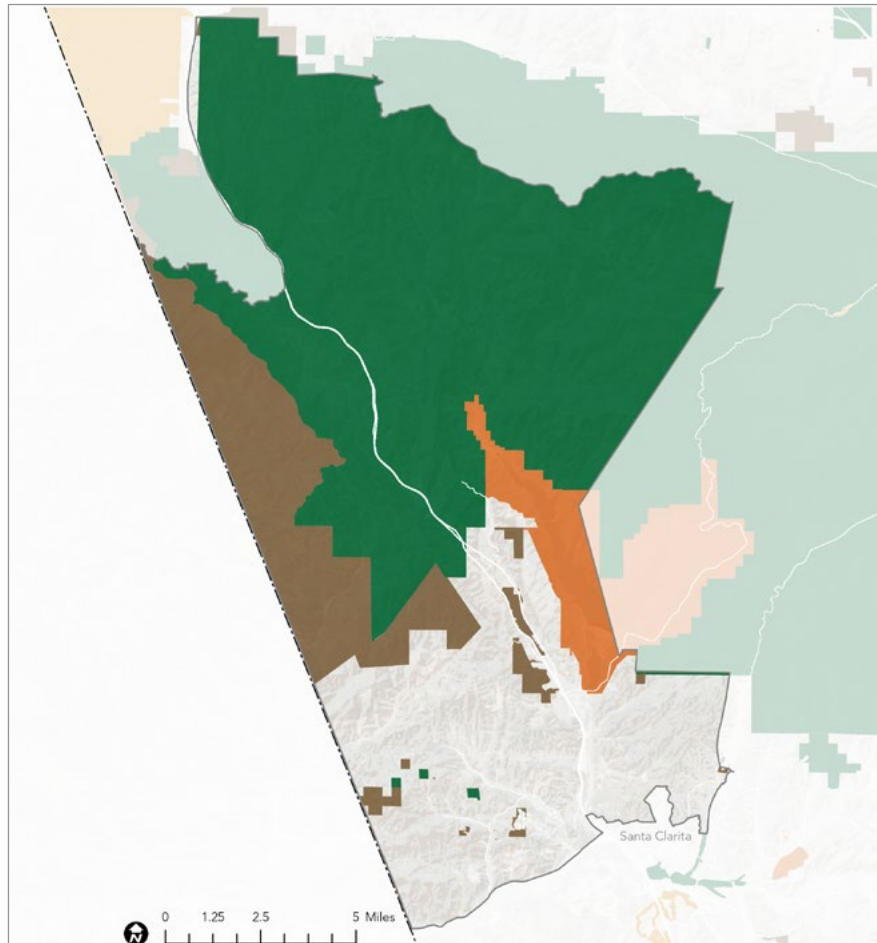
Maps source: HPI, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

COMPOSITE POPULATION VULNERABILITY





Map source: HPI, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory


RURAL SITE INVENTORY

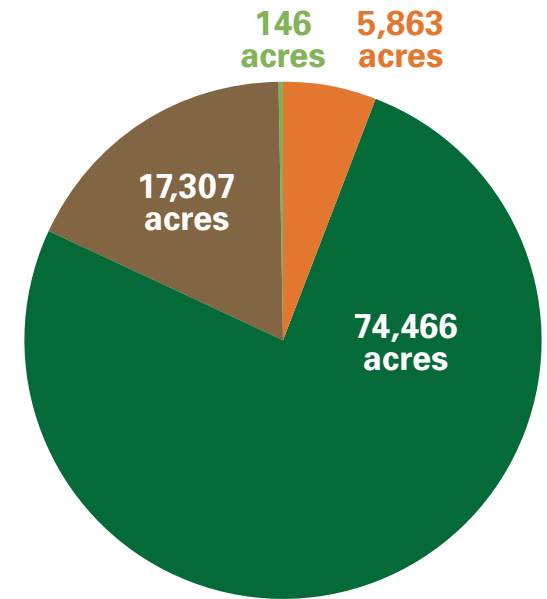


Map source: 2021 RRE Inventory


97,783
 TOTAL ACRES OF RURAL RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AREA LAND LOCATED WITHIN THE STUDY AREA


72.5%
 OF THE TOTAL LAND AREA WITHIN THE STUDY AREA IS RURAL RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AREA LAND

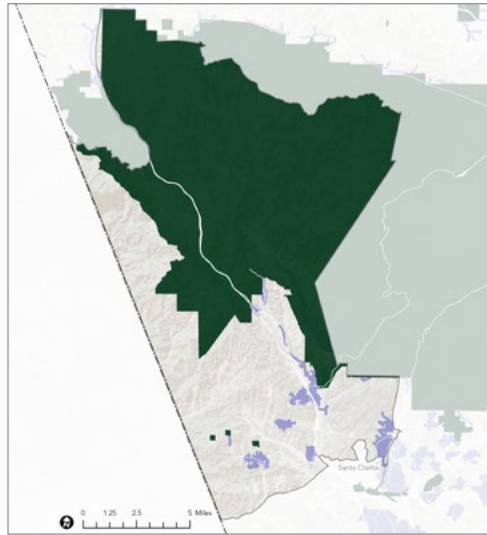

2,744
 ACRES OF RURAL RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AREA LAND PER 1000 STUDY AREA RESIDENTS



-  REGIONAL RECREATION PARKS
-  NATURE-BASED RECREATION AREAS
-  REGIONAL SPECIALIZED RECREATION AREAS
-  CONSERVATION AREAS
-  OTHER PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
-  LOCAL PARKS

RURAL RECREATION SITE ACCESS

Walking Distance (0.5 miles from entry)

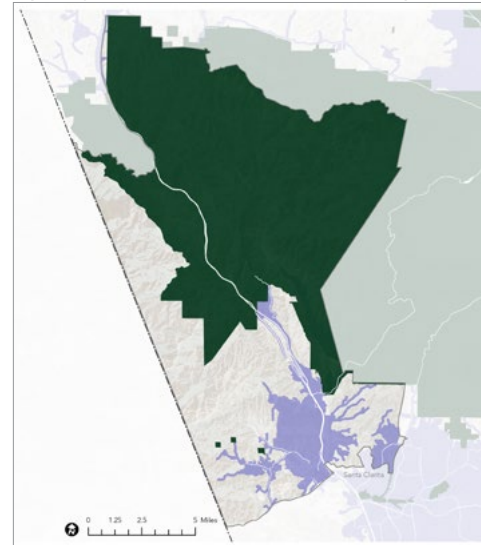


- Legend**
- Areas within a 0.5-mile walk of a Rural Recreation Site
 - Rural Recreation Site
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads

20%

OF STUDY AREA RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF A RURAL RECREATION SITE

Cycling Distance (2.5 miles from entry)

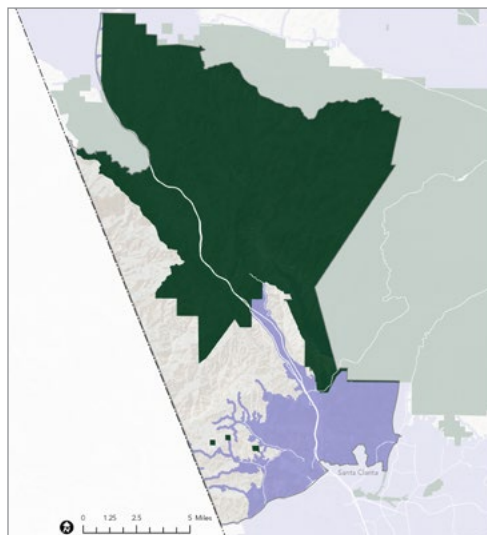


- Legend**
- Areas within a 2.5-mile bicycle ride of a Rural Recreation Site
 - Rural Recreation Site
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads

67%

OF STUDY AREA RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN CYCLING DISTANCE OF A RURAL RECREATION SITE

Driving Distance (5 miles from entry)

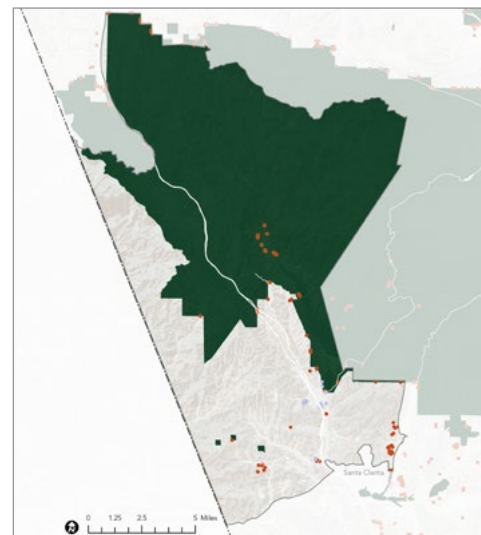


- Legend**
- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site
 - Rural Recreation Site
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads

82%

OF STUDY AREA RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN DRIVING DISTANCE OF A RURAL RECREATION SITE

Transit Service (entry is within 0.5 miles of transit stop)



- Legend**
- Entry Point Served by Public Transit (located within a half mile of a Transit Stop)
 - Entry Point Not Served by Public Transit (not located within a half mile of a Transit Stop)
 - Rural Recreation Site
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads

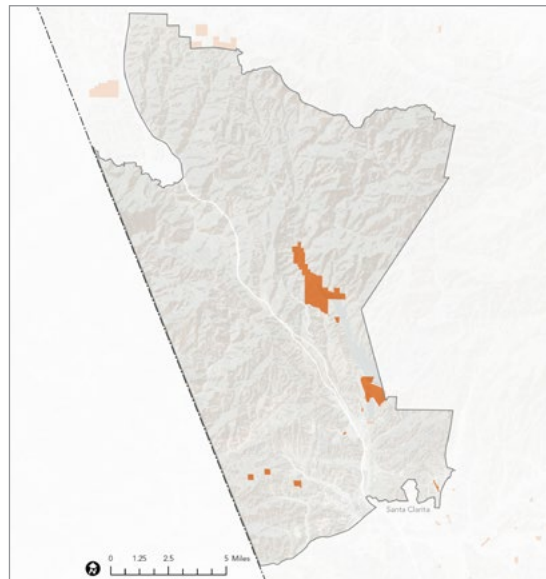
13%

OF RURAL RECREATION SITES ARE SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSIT

Maps source: ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

RURAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

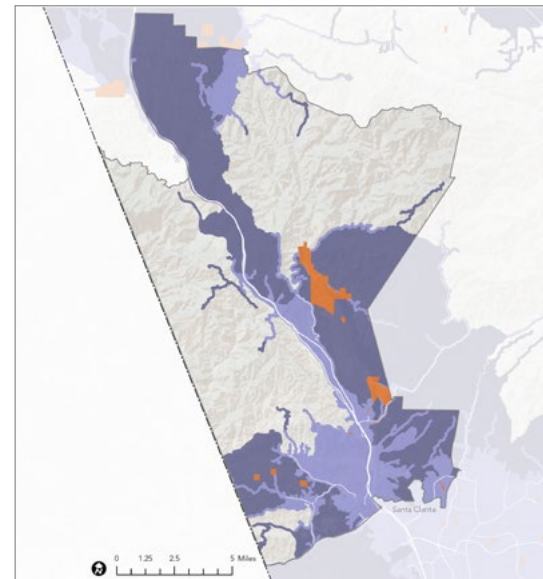
Gathering Spaces



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Gathering Spaces
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Gathering Spaces



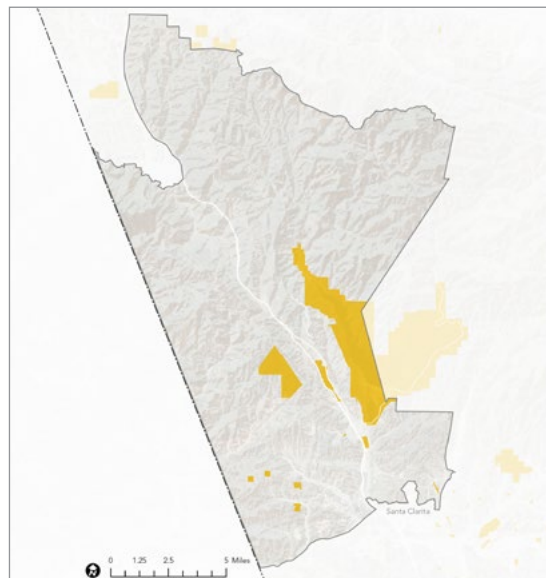
Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Gathering Spaces
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Gathering Spaces
- Rural Recreation Sites with Gathering Spaces
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

74.9%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

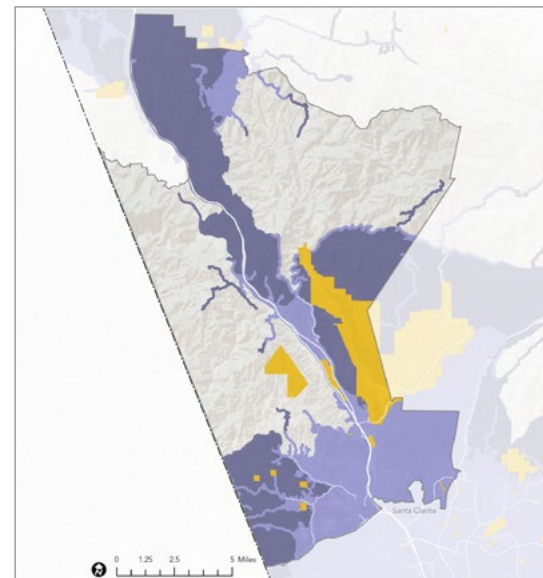
Sports Facilities



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Sports Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Sports Facilities



Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Sports Facilities
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Sports Facilities
- Rural Recreation Sites with Sports Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

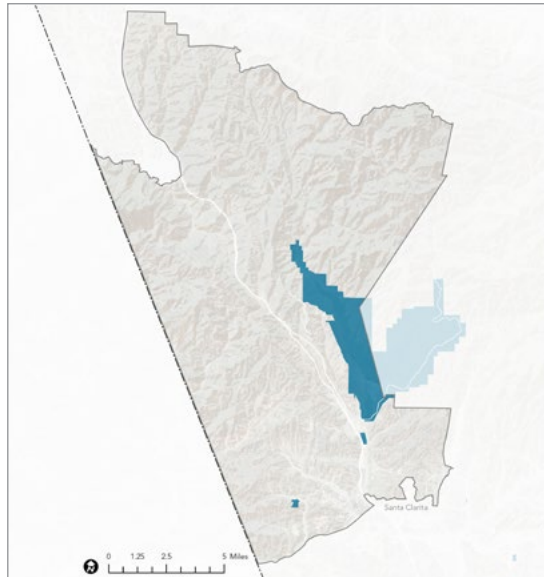
81.6%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

Maps source: PNA, 2016; ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

RURAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

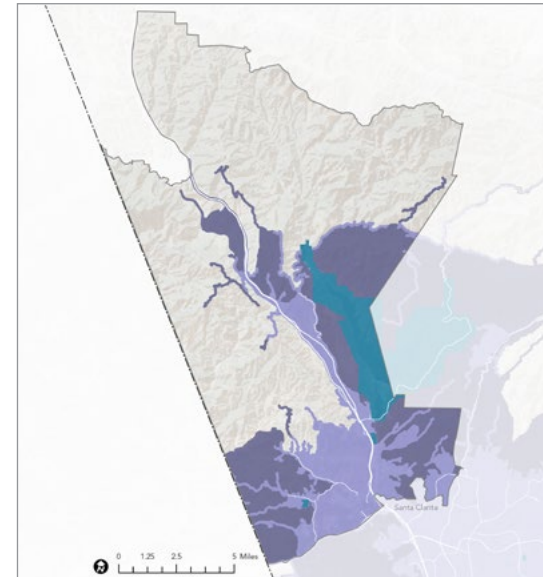
Water-Based Recreation



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Water-Based Recreation
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Water-Based Recreation



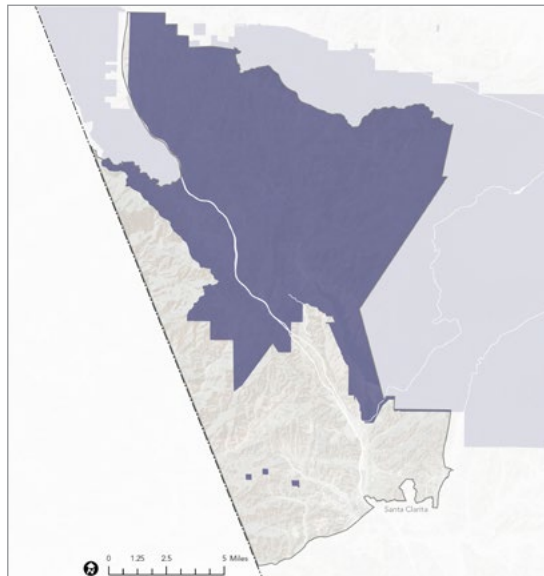
Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Water-Based Recreation
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Water-Based Recreation
- Rural Recreation Sites with Water-Based Recreation
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

74.7%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

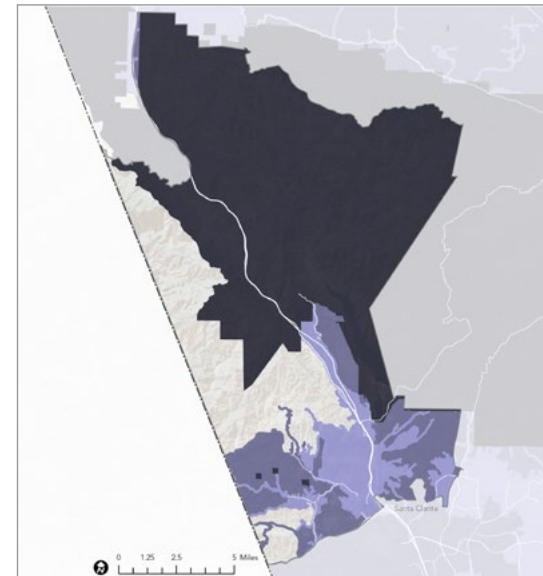
Overnight Accommodations



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Overnight Accommodations
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Overnight Accommodations



Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Overnight Accommodations
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Overnight Accommodations
- Rural Recreation Sites with Overnight Accommodations
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

68.0%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

Maps source: PNA, 2016; ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

RURAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Trails and Pathways



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Trails and Pathways
- Regional Trails
- Regional Bikeways
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Trails and Pathways



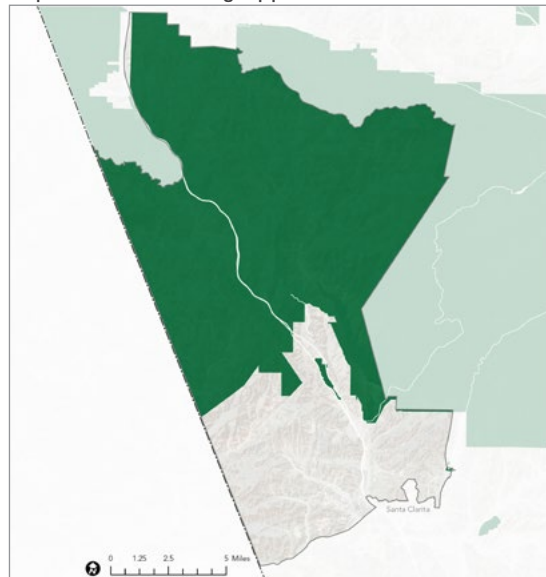
Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Trails and Pathways
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Trails and Pathways
- Rural Recreation Sites with Trails and Pathways
- Regional Trails
- Regional Bikeways
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

71.6%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

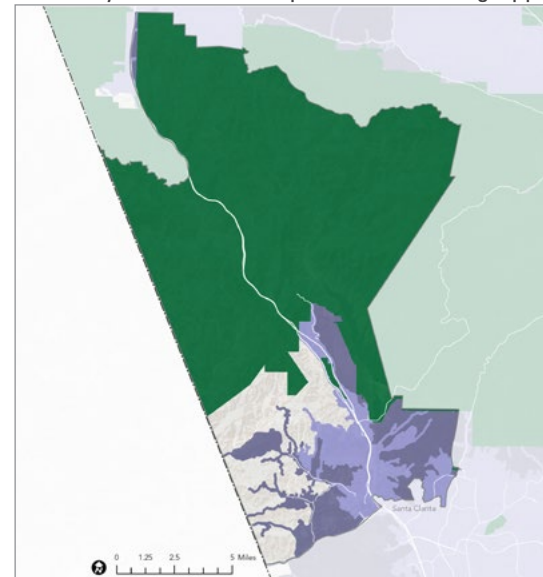
Experiential Learning Opportunities



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Experiential Learning Opportunities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Experiential Learning Opportunities



Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Experiential Learning Opportunities
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Experiential Learning Opportunities
- Rural Recreation Sites with Experiential Learning Opportunities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

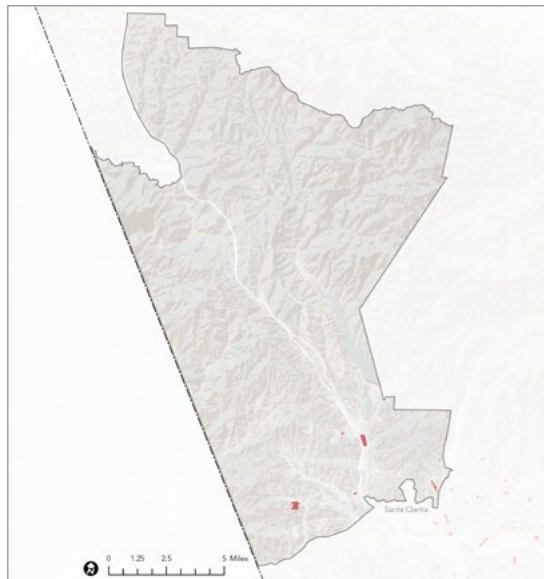
65.5%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

Maps source: PNA, 2016; ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

RURAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

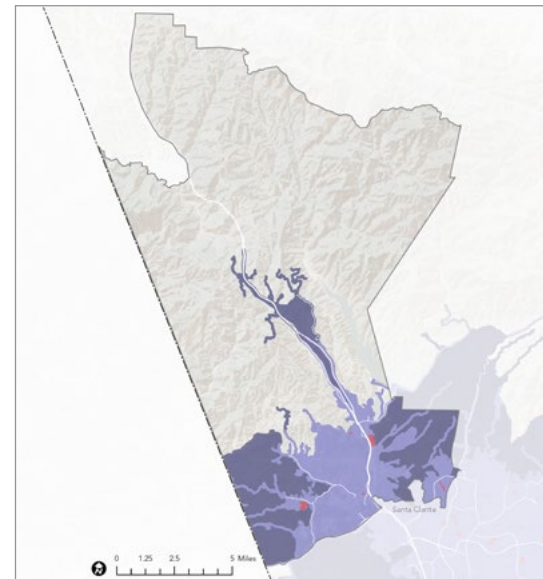
General Recreation Facilities



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with General Recreation Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With General Recreation Facilities



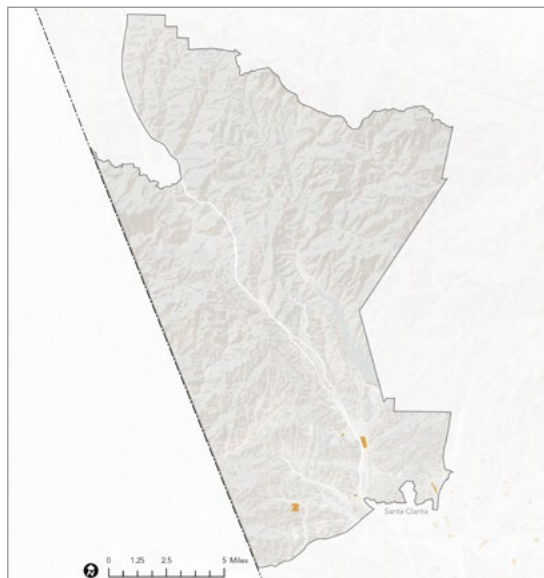
Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with General Recreation Facilities
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with General Recreation Facilities
- Rural Recreation Sites with General Recreation Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

74.3%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

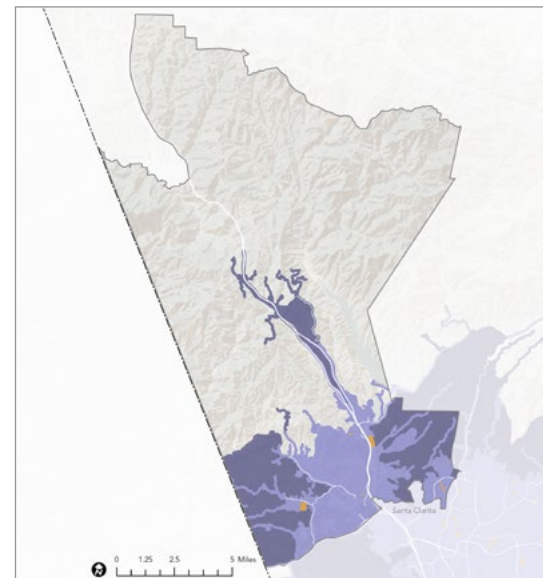
Health and Fitness Facilities



Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Health and Fitness Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Proximity to Sites With Health and Fitness Facilities



Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Health and Fitness Facilities
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Health and Fitness Facilities
- Rural Recreation Sites with Health and Fitness Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

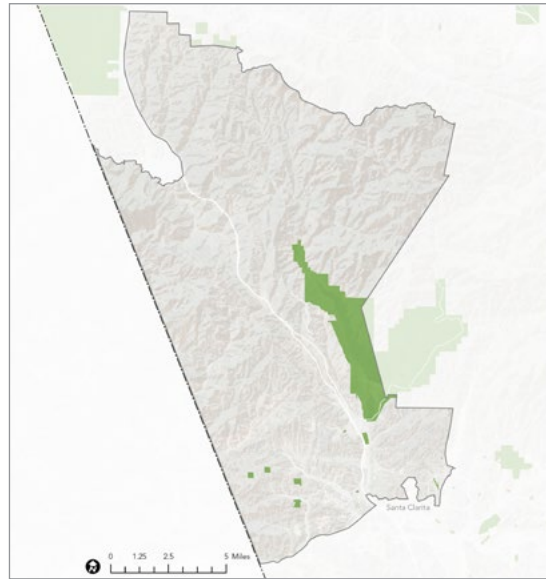
74.3%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

Maps source: PNA, 2016; ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

RURAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Support Facilities

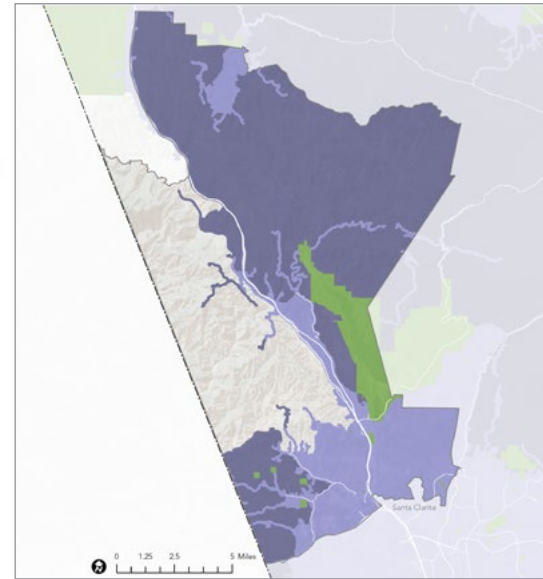


Legend

- Rural Recreation Sites with Support Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

Maps source: PNA, 2016; ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

Proximity to Sites With Support Facilities



Legend

- Areas within a 5-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Support Facilities
- Areas within a 10-mile drive of a Rural Recreation Site with Support Facilities
- Rural Recreation Sites with Support Facilities
- Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
- Los Angeles County
- Major Roads

81.6%
OF RESIDENTS LIVE
WITHIN A 5-MILE DRIVE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

BARRIERS RESIDENTS EXPERIENCE TO USING PARKS AND FACILITIES



SAFETY CONCERNS

Concern about unhoused people in parks, as well as pandemic safety precautions like social distancing and mask wearing in parks.



HEAT

Heat, especially in summer, limits what people can do outside.



COST

Facility fees make it hard for some residents to use them.



DISTANCE

Many residents and families have to travel long distances to parks and facilities.



TIME

Residents don't have time to travel to and/or use parks and facilities.



LACK OF INFORMATION

Residents do not know where parks are located, what facilities are available, or how to use and get to amenities.



NOT ENOUGH MAINTENANCE AT PARKS AND FACILITIES

Park facilities and trails need repairs, maintenance and restoration.



LACK OF CONNECTIVITY

Not enough trail networks or safe biking and pedestrian options to get to parks.



LACK OF FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING

Nearby parks lack tennis courts, sports fields, and gathering spaces, and provide few activities for residents to participate in. There is a need for more concessions, water fountains, nature centers, sports facilities, and arboreta/botanical gardens.



LIMITED HOURS

Facilities are not open when people can use them.



LACK OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AREAS

Including trails and nature-based recreation spaces, pet-friendly areas, campsites, and affordable water-based recreation.

“The fees at Castaic Lake are prohibitive for many.”

“We used to have concessions at Castaic Lake but they have been closed for a long time.”

“There is no public open space anywhere in our neighborhood, we have to drive to get to anything. This is definitely a barrier to taking as many walks and recreation opportunities with my family!”

“In Castaic, you are required to cross the I-5 freeway (barrier) to get to the Castaic Recreation center (main park)... [Another route] requires access via car as there are no dedicated bike lanes to get there.”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

COMMUNITY SUGGESTIONS TO INCREASE AND IMPROVE VISITS TO RURAL PARKS AND FACILITIES



ACCESS TO WATER

Additional and more affordable access to water facilities, and more water fountains and filling stations for users and animals in parks and along trails.



ENHANCED SAFETY MEASURES

Provide more patrols on trails, at event spaces and visitor centers. Ensure visitors are adhering to social distancing and other protective measures during the pandemic.



ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS

Expand services to support unhoused people who use parks.



BETTER ACCESS TO INFORMATION

More information about events at parks, available amenities and opportunities to provide input.



IMPROVED SIGNAGE

Provide additional and interactive wayfinding, interpretive and multilingual signage in parks and along trails.



MORE RECREATION FACILITIES

Extend facilities hours, provide more bike paths, and build additional tennis and pickleball courts, sports fields, gathering spaces, and places to exercise dogs.



IMPROVED MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Clean restrooms, trails and campsites, provide more picnic tables and seating.



BETTER ACCESS TO PROGRAMS

Provide affordable equipment and classes for all ages, especially youth and seniors.



REDUCE FACILITIES FEES

Consider more affordable facilities and user fees for low income residents.



EXPAND CONCESSIONS

Provide more concessions at parks and facilities.



MORE FACILITIES FOR EQUESTRIAN USE

Parking for horse trailers at equestrian staging areas and trailheads, and places to hold equestrian events.



EXPAND TRAILS SYSTEM

Provide a diversity of trail intensities, new and longer routes and trailheads.



ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY

Provide greenways and trail networks that connect parks and provide safe transportation corridors for bicyclists, equestrians and pedestrians.

“The water fountains at Castaic were not available during 100 degree weather. If they could add a water bottle filling station that would be helpful.”

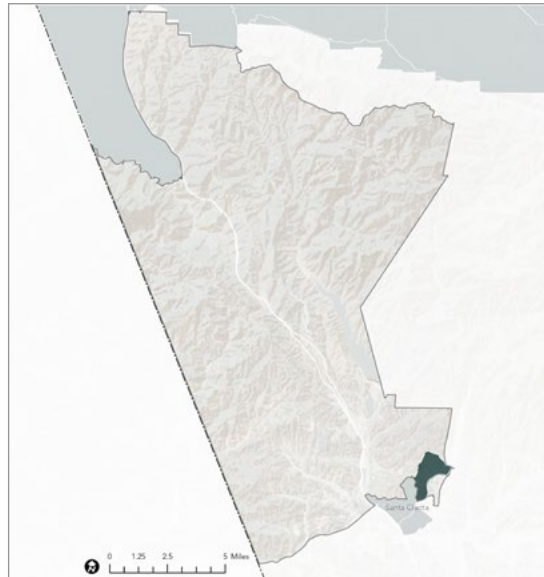
“There are no parks or public trails anywhere in my neighborhood - we are surrounded by open space but it’s all private or fenced off.”

“Additional dedicated cycling lanes, trails, routes that provide separation and safety from traffic.”

Golf doesn’t exist in my area of Castaic. No driving ranges, courses or putting greens.”

RURAL RECREATION PRIORITY ANALYSIS

Areas Experiencing the Highest Levels of Overall Population Vulnerability



- Legend**
- Areas of Moderate to High Vulnerability Across All Four Dimensions
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads



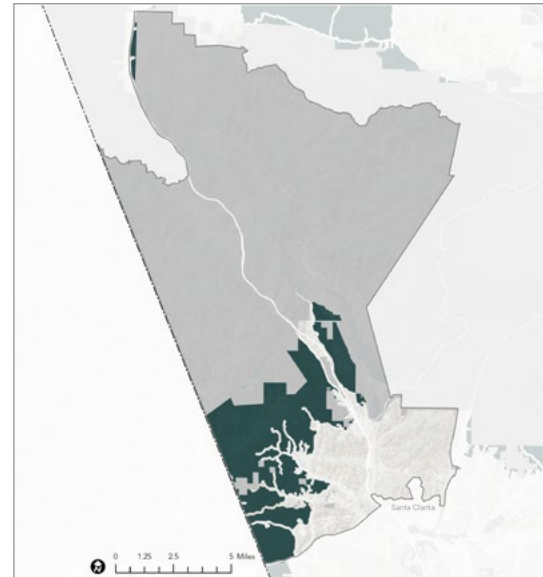
High Levels of Social and Transportation Barriers



High Levels of Health and Environmental Vulnerability

Map source: HPI, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

Areas Located in Low Proximity to Rural Recreation Sites



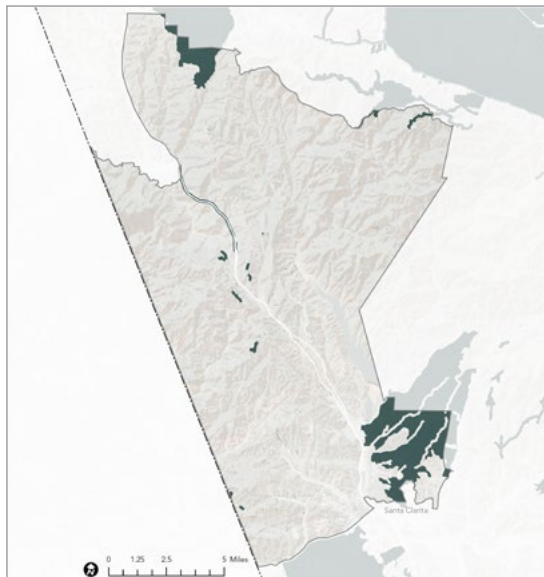
- Legend**
- Areas in Low Proximity to Rural Recreation Sites (beyond a 5-mile drive to any Regional Recreation Park Entry Points, Nature-Based Recreation Area Entry Points or Local Park Entry Points)
 - Rural Site Inventory
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads



Low Proximity to Rural Recreation Sites

Map source: ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

Areas With Access to the Fewest Recreation Opportunity Types



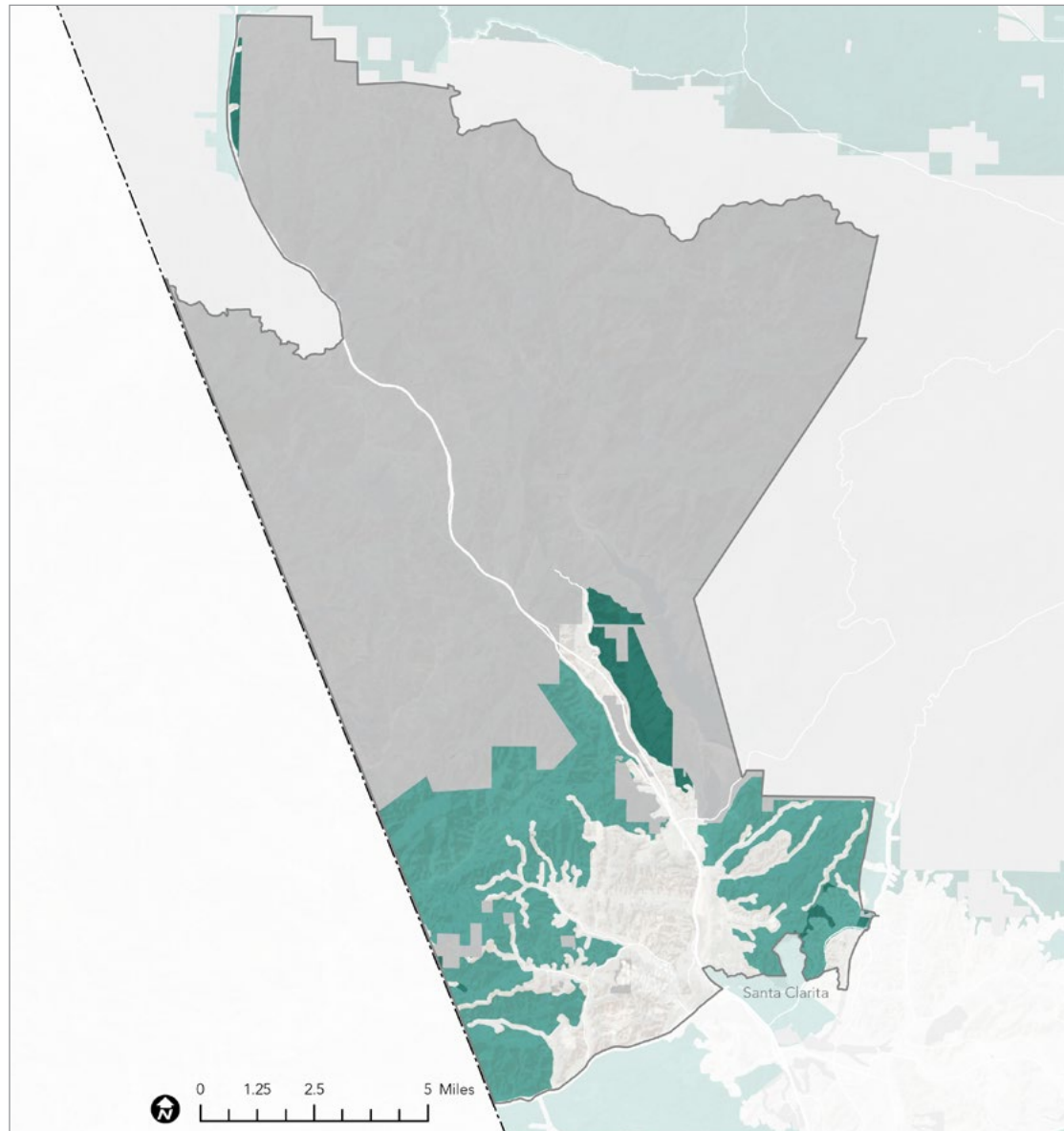
- Legend**
- Areas in proximity (5-mile driving distance) to THREE OR FEWER Rural Recreation Opportunity Types
 - Castaic/Val Verde Rural Study Area
 - Los Angeles County
 - Major Roads



Proximity to Fewest Recreation Opportunity Types

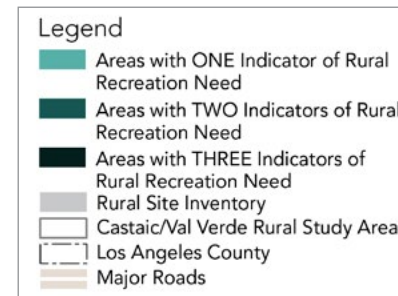
Map source: ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

RURAL RECREATION PRIORITY AREAS



Map source: HPI, 2021; ArcGIS StreetMap Premium, 2021; 2021 RRE Inventory

Areas with:











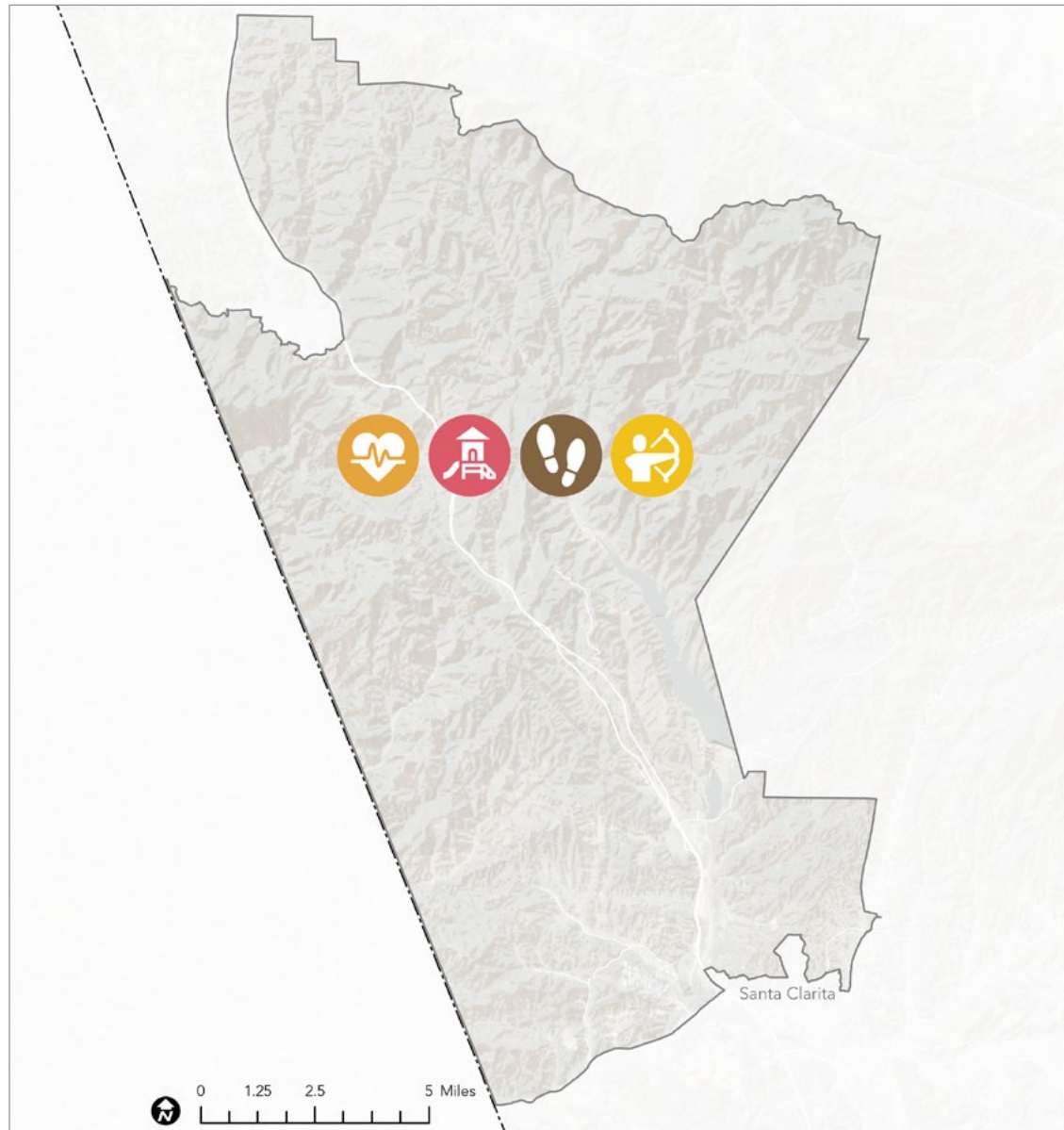
PRIORITY PROJECT TYPES

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Shade Structures for Play Areas at Del Valle and Val Verde Parks
- » Shade Structure Expansion over swings at Hasley Canyon Park
- » Swimming Pool Improvements at Val Verde Park
- » Play Area Surface Improvements at All Parks
- » Dog Park with fencing, dual water fountain, benches, shade structures, and shade trees
- » Replace wood chips in play areas with synthetic safety surfacing

Legend

-  Gathering Spaces
-  Sports Facilities
-  Experiential Learning Opportunities
-  Water-Based Recreation
-  Trails and Pathways
-  Overnight Accommodations
-  General Recreation
-  Health and Fitness
-  Support Facilities
-  Little Rock/Sun Village/Juniper Hills Rural Study Area
-  Los Angeles County
-  Major Roads



Map source: PNA, 2016

Note: Priority projects are based on lists of priority projects from the 2016 PNA and updated public input gathered as part of 2022 RRE.