



**California Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc.**

*Over 55 years advocating for recreation*

November 18, 2018

California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Attn: Katie Metraux, Acting OHMVR Planning Manager  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Sacramento, CA 95816

Dear Planning Team:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the California 4 Wheel Drive Association (C4WDA) and its membership concerning the request for scoping for the *California Department of Parks and Recreation Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Revision*. C4WDA represents clubs and individuals within the State of California that are part of the community of four-wheel drive enthusiasts.

While the main focus of C4WDA is to protect, promote, and provide for motorized recreation opportunities on public and private lands, many of our members participate in multiple forms of recreation; including but not limited to hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, horseback riding, bicycle riding, and gem and mineral collection.

We recognized the positive health and social benefits that can be achieved through outdoor activities. We also recognize that motorized recreation provides the small business owners in the local communities a significant financial stimulus. And, our members are directly affected by management decisions concerning public land use.

Our members subscribe to the concepts of: 1) public access to public lands for their children and grandchildren; 2) condition and safety of the environment; and 3) sharing our natural heritage. The general public desires access to public lands now and for future generations. Limiting access today deprives our children the opportunity to view the many natural wonders of public lands. The general public is deeply concerned about the condition of the environment and personal safety. They desire wildlife available for viewing and scenic vistas to enjoy. They also want to feel safe while enjoying the natural wonders. Lastly, the public desires to share the natural heritage with friends and family today as well as in the future. How can our children learn and appreciate our natural heritage when native species are allowed to deteriorate and historic routes are routinely blocked or eradicated from existence?

Many C4WDA members routinely visit the Red Rock Canyon State Park and adjoining region since the early 1950s and are concerned with pending changes to the regional access. We encourage the Planning Team to fully consider the continued motorized access in Red Rock Canyon SP and maintain the existing network of motorized routes within the park, with special consideration for the routes that cross the boundaries of adjacent public lands historically used by motorized recreation.

**8120 36th Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95824  
Office@cal4wheel.com**

**[www.cal4wheel.com](http://www.cal4wheel.com)**

**(800) 4X4-FUNN  
(916) 381-8300  
Fax (916) 381-8726**

In 1994, the California Desert Protection Act (CDPA) was signed into law. The law provided for certain lands within the California Desert Conservation Area, administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), to be transferred to the State of California and incorporated with the existing Red Rock Canyon State Park. The intent of this action as defined by the CDPA, was to provide protection of the region's outstanding scenic and scientific values.

Following the CDPA, the BLM began the process of transferring 20,500 acres (Last Chance Canyon Addition) to California State Parks. The result of which effectively tripled the size of the Park. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between the two agencies so that land not yet conveyed, or not able to be immediately conveyed due to encumbrance of unpatented mining claims, might be properly managed. The MOU gave the Department of Parks and Recreation management responsibility for all 20,500 acres, regardless of the status of conveyance, with the exception of the mining claims.

Of particular interest to motorized recreation is the Last Chance Canyon, Nightmare Gulch, and Dove Springs section.

Red Rock Canyon State Park issued an Emergency Closure of Nightmare Gulch on October 9, 2013. The Emergency Closure was issued as a result of summer storm damage which rendered the canyon impassable to vehicles. While the closure is temporary, before any trail repair can be performed an environmental assessment is required. The storm damage on the Nightmare Gulch section was negligible and easily corrected while the storm damage to Last Chance Canyon area was significant and not as easily corrected.

While it is understood that some factors (raptor breeding season and Dove Springs is a permanent spring, a desert rarity) are involved that may potentially limit access, consideration of establishing a loop route which provides access to Dove Springs should be part of the draft plan developed.

Historically, the desert region is subject to periodic monsoon events which over time, along with geomorphic events, have altered the geologic landscape of the region and helped create the unique features of the region. Human interaction has also been part of the region, including filming/movie production, mining and recreation. The vegetation growth varies depending on annual rainfall which recovery quickly following disturbances. Over time, the terrain has changed and existing motor route conditions vary.

Please give full consideration to an access route for motor vehicles within the future of the park to allow visitors with varying mobility issues to view the wonders of the Red Rock Canyon State Park.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide comments for consideration of the Red Rock Canyon State Park General Plan Revision.



John Stewart  
Natural Resources Consultant  
California 4 Wheel Drive Association