



P.O. BOX 8, SILVERADO, CA 92676

SMRPD Draft Master Plan of Trails, Adopted Oct. 14, 2004

The Master Plan of Regional Riding and Hiking Trails Component is countywide in scope. It is a public trail system which traverses the entire county without regard for jurisdictional boundaries and, therefore, intergovernmental coordination is necessary for successful implementation.

-from the Recreation Element of the Orange County General Plan

The Silverado Modjeska Community Plan and EIR (DEIR 096), prepared by the Environmental Planning Agency and distributed on November 23, 1976, included a variety of non-paved multi-use riding and hiking trails which were in place and inventoried at the time of the DEIR's adoption. The plan allowed for the addition of recreational trails as proposed by the community.

In 2002, under the jurisdiction of the Silverado Modjeska Recreation and Parks District (a State sanctioned Independent Special District), the community and the SMRPD worked together to create an updated Master Plan of Riding and Hiking Trails. As a conceptual plan, it is considered a general expression of community values and is abstract in nature.

Purpose

The purpose of the Silverado Modjeska Master Plan of Trails is to provide goals and objectives to direct the development and operation of a District-wide public trail system that serves the recreational needs of equestrians, pedestrians (walkers, hikers and joggers), and mountain bikers (non-motorized).

Goals

Goal 1: Provide a useful, enjoyable, safe, and efficient riding and hiking trail system for the District and to meet the needs and desires of the community.

Goal 2: Create trail linkages between open space and recreation facilities, between community, municipal, state, and federal trail systems, and create connectivity to surrounding communities.

Goal 3: Create partnerships between governing agencies, land owners and Conservancies which overlap the District, ensuring the implementation of the Master Plan of Trails, and allowing for efficient acquisition, development, and operation of the trail system.

Objectives

Objective 1: Implement and maintain a District riding and hiking trail system as depicted conceptually on the Trails Map.

Objective 2: Develop a District trail system to meet the recreational needs of equestrians, pedestrians (walkers, hikers and joggers), and mountain bikers (non-motorized).

Objective 3: Coordinate with other local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies regarding trail development and maintenance.

Objective 4: Accept irrevocable offers to provide trail links that allow for implementation of the District trail system in a logical immediately usable fashion.

Objective 5: Create a strategy for the sequencing of trail development in order to maximize scarce funding.

Policies

The District Riding and Hiking Trails system shall be developed and operated as follows:

1. The dedication and acquisition of trail right-of-way and construction and improvements shall be pursued as a condition of approval of development projects (i.e., irrevocable offers of recreation easements) consistent with the Master Plan.
2. The anticipated cost of acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation shall be considered in the process of making decisions.
3. The District shall actively pursue public and private funding (Developer Endowments), including grants and gifts as a source of funding to implement District Trail Plan.
4. The design and location of trails shall be sensitive to cultural and natural resources such as archaeological sites, wildlife corridors, plant habitats, rare and endangered species, etc.
5. Whenever possible the use of the County of Orange Riding and Hiking Trails Design Manual, specifically the "steep terrain single track trails" guidelines shall be considered.
6. Where appropriate and feasible (i.e. Truck Trails and existing ranch roads) in rural areas District trails may serve as fuel breaks and as vehicular access for law enforcement, fire, emergency and public utility vehicles.
7. Safety shall be a primary consideration for allowing/restricting the use of trails by equestrians, pedestrians (walkers, hikers and joggers), and mountain bikers, respectively.

Description of Trails

Orange County Regional Trails within the Silverado Modjeska Recreation and Parks District

Hicks Canyon Trail: This trail follows the existing haul road from Irvine Lake to Jeffrey Road. Currently it is being negotiated into the East Orange Development. This trail will begin at the intersection of Santiago Canyon Road and the Haul Bridge (Bat Bridge) and could offer connectivity out of the District and to destinations such as Irvine Lake and the Great Park. It is on the County Master Plan of Riding and Hiking Trails, the Sil-Mod Master Plan of Riding and Hiking Trails and must also be coordinated with the joint powers of authority such as City of Orange, City of Irvine, Irvine Ranch Land Reserve and OCFA.

This trail is not considered challenging. It is a wide existing road with the potential for an existing grade separated crossing at Santiago Canyon Road. It is ideal for all types of trail users. 6 miles of easements are needed from the Irvine Company to complete this trail.

Holy Jim Trail: This trail may cross several private properties at its base, but lies primarily in the congressional boundary of the Cleveland National Forest (CNF). Although it is on the County's Master Plan, it is under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. The Trail begins at the Holy Jim Road fork of Trabuco Canyon Road, just a few miles from the main entrance of O'Neil Park. The trail begins by paralleling Holy Jim Creek, then climbs swiftly up the ridge to the west, eventually terminating at the Main Divide Trail. This trail is 3.4 miles long. This trail is steep and challenging, and often suffers washouts during seasons of heavy rain. It provides connectivity from O'Neil Park to the CNF and the Main Divide Road.

Joplin Trail: The Joplin Trail is on the County Master Plan of Trails and the Foothill Trabuco Specific Plan/Trails, but lies entirely within the boundary of the Cleveland National Forest. It is considered a connector trail, in which it provides connection from the Santiago Truck Trail to Rose Canyon and eventually to Live Oak Canyon Road. This trail is approximately 1.8 miles long and is considered challenging.

Ladd Canyon Trail: This trail is currently on the Regional Riding and Hiking Trail Map for the County of Orange. Although it is considered some of the most beautiful scenery in the Santa Ana Mountains, it offers almost insurmountable obstacles as a multi-use trail, in the upper portion of the canyon. The exception is the lower trail portion traveling along the northern edge of Silverado Canyon Road. The trail originates at the Main Divide Road and is an old abandoned Forest Service road. Due to the presence of endangered species, the Federal Government has elected to abandon this road/trail and does not promote trail use in this area. Currently, the SMRPD along with the County of Orange have reached a memorandum of understanding with a property owner (CCRC Farms) which includes a staging area, additional connector trails and the implementation of the county trail across the front of the development. The Ladd Canyon Trail could be reasonably reduced to originating at the staging area on Silverado Canyon Road at the "Riviera", continuing east alongside the road creating connectivity to the Silverado Truck Trail and the Irvine Ranch Land Reserve (IRLR). At the boundary of the IRLR the trail should veer north away from the road following the creek, making use of an existing haul road, continuing to the mouth of Silverado Canyon and connecting to the Santiago Creek Trail. This trail also provides connectivity to Baker and Black Star Canyons. This reduced trail could consist of 2 miles of relatively easy multi-use trail and is only 3 dedications away from completion.

Main Divide Trail: This trail is entirely within the boundary of the CNF and is under Federal jurisdiction. It traverses the crest of the Santa Ana Mountains from the northern Sierra Peak to the southern Ortega Highway. It travels over 38 miles in its entirety and is considered the origination or destination point for a "mountains to the sea" trail effort. Important connector trails originating within the District would be: Black Star Canyon Road, Maple Springs Road, Silverado Truck Trail, Modjeska Canyon Trail/Harding Truck Trail, Santiago Truck Trail/Joplin Trail, Holy Jim Trail.

Modjeska Canyon Trail/ Harding Truck Trail: This trail originates at the Tucker Wildlife Bird Sanctuary on Modjeska Canyon Road. It is currently complete and is widely used. As of late, it is completely under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. It is 4 miles long, travels due east and zigzags through several canyons. It makes possible loop trips with the Santiago Truck Trail/ Joplin Trail and it connects to the Main Divide Trail.

Santiago Creek Trail: This trail parallels Santiago Canyon Road from Trabuco Canyon Road (Cook's Corner) to Irvine Lake. Currently the County of Orange/Sil-Mod Recreation and Parks District/ City of Orange and The Irvine Company are negotiating the final alignments. Although the County will have the ultimate say, the alternatives currently being considered are both the north side and the south side of Irvine Lake, terminating at Irvine Park. It is the desire of the District to see a trail follow Santiago Creek into the backside of Irvine Park. This trail will include 15 miles of trail in its entirety. The Irvine Company in conjunction with the East Orange Project will dedicate half of those miles. This trail will be easily accessible and easy to use, built to County standards.

Santiago Truck Trail: This trail is 6.2 miles in length and originates at the highest point of the Modjeska Grade Road. The road is a public right-of-way across one mile of private land. This trail terminates at Old Camp, an old CCC Camp from the 1930's. It is at this junction that the trail connects to the Joplin Trail, which continues down into Rose Canyon or up to the Main Divide Trail. This Trail is quite popular as a multi-use trail, and is included on the County Master Plan of Trails and the SMRPD Master Plan of Riding and Hiking Trails.

Vulture Crags Trail: This trail is on the County Master Plan of Trails. It is at the very southern portion of the Silverado Modjeska Recreation and Parks District (SMRPD) boundary and is included in the Foothill Trabuco Specific Plan as a riding and hiking trail. It connects Santiago Truck Trail to Live Oak Canyon Road near the

Hamilton Truck Trail. Total trail miles are 2.4, of which 1 mile still needs to be constructed (to a County level of acceptance), however it is currently in use by trail users, to access upper Santiago Truck Trail.

Silverado Modjeska Recreation and Parks District Master Plan Trails

Fremont Canyon Trail: This trail originates at Santiago Creek just northwest of the sharp right turn on Black Star Canyon Road (Beyond the locked gate). It travels north and terminates in upper Fremont Canyon and is actually an Edison Service Road. This trail creates connectivity to the northern alignment of the Santiago Creek Trail (North side of Irvine Lake) which is currently being explored by the joint powers of authority. It is the intent of the Silverado Modjeska Recreation and Parks District to either continue the Ladd Canyon Trail beyond the mouth of Silverado Canyon to parallel Santiago Creek to reach Irvine Park, or combine efforts with the County of Orange to detour the Santiago Creek Trail away from Santiago Canyon Road, taking it behind Irvine Lake.

Black Star Trail/ Black Star Canyon Road: This trail begins at the junction of Black Star Canyon Road and Silverado Canyon Road. It is adjacent to the road, which is currently a public right-of-way. 1.1 miles north of the Silverado Junction, the County of Orange has installed a locked gate, limiting vehicular access to landowners and emergency vehicles. This has also limited trail users and eliminated equestrian access. It is the goal of the SMRPD to meet the needs of all trail user groups. Black Star Canyon Trail begins in lower Black Star Canyon then gains in elevation through a series of switchbacks to the Main Divide Trail above Hidden Ranch near Beek's Peak. This trail creates vital connectivity to Riverside County via Skyline Drive. It is 7.9 miles in length.

Baker Canyon Trail: This trail originates at Baker Canyon Rd. (near the power line crossing) and travels north to upper Black Star Canyon Road. Thus creating a large loop trail outside of Baker Canyon. This trail follows the current existing fire road and travels across several large parcels of private property. This trail has the potential to connect the Flying B Ranch Camp Ground/ RV Park with Black Star Trail/ Main Divide Trail and Fremont Canyon.

Baker Canyon Loop Trail: The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is currently using this trail with docent lead hikes. The Baker Canyon Loop originates at the junction of Black Star Canyon Road and Baker Canyon Road. The staging area is behind a locked gate off Baker Canyon Road. The trail itself starts at the mouth of Baker Canyon and travels along Black Star Canyon Road, then begins to gain in elevation traveling east, reaching the Edison Connector trail (at the highest electrical tower). Then the trail travels north dropping in elevation to the bottom of Baker Canyon, paralleling the creek and arriving back at the mouth of Baker Canyon and Black Star Canyon Road.

Edison Connector Trail: This trail creates connectivity between the Ladd Canyon Trail and the Baker Canyon Loop Trail. Although within the congressional boundary of the CNF, it is entirely on the Irvine Ranch, specifically on the Irvine Ranch Land Reserve (IRLR). This trail makes use of the existing ranch road and Edison Service Road. It creates connectivity to existing County staging at Carbondale Ranch, additional staging for the SMRPD at the "Riviera" via the Ladd Canyon Trail. It creates connectivity to Black Star Canyon, Fremont Canyon, etc.

Stable Loop: This single track trail originates at Silverado Creek behind the equestrian center and travels north on several parcels of private property then turns east to connect to the West Ridge and the Old Holtz Trail at Holtz Ranch. This site (Holtz Ranch) is currently under plan for development and may interrupt some trail usage. A memorandum of understanding has been reached by the SMRPD, the County of Orange and the Developer to establish equitable trails on the southern side of the property across Silverado Canyon Road. The current language does not preclude the later development of these trails.

Mustang Springs Trail: This trail originates at Mustang Springs in Ladd Canyon and travels north up the west fork. The terrain is vigorous because of the "reef" formation, and may be difficult to meet multi-use standards. This trail has unknown connectivity.

Silverado-Ladd Ridge Trail: This trail originates behind the Silverado Post office on private property, and travels along the ridge between the northern rim of Silverado Canyon and the southern rim of Ladd Canyon on the east fork. This trail connects Silverado Canyon Road (near downtown) to the Silverado Motorway, it allows for recreational trail users to parallel Silverado Canyon Road with out having to travel on it.

Silverado Motorway: This trail originates near the Forest Service Gate at the bottom of the Maple Springs Truck Trail. On the northern side of the road, it switchbacks up to the Main Divide at Bedford Peak. Although this road was traditionally viewed as a fuel break for Silverado Canyon residents for many years, it has fallen into disrepair and neglect due to Forest Policy changes through out the years. This trail provides valuable connectivity to the Main Divide Trail, the Silverado-Ladd Ridge Trail, and Maple Springs Truck Trail/ Silverado Canyon Road.

Silverado Truck Trail: This trail traverses the entire length of the southern rim of Silverado Canyon for about 8 miles. It originates at Santiago Canyon Road near the Silverado Children's Center traveling east toward the Main Divide within the boundaries of the Cleveland National Forest. This trail was originally built jointly by the County of Orange and the Federal Government. It served as both a truck trail for the forest as well as a fuel break for the community of Silverado, and was up until the bankruptcy, maintained by the California Division of Forestry and the Orange County Fire Authority. Although this trail has suffered major erosion from the recent heavy rains, and has suffered from a number of private gates being placed along it, it continues to be the most popular trail in Silverado and Williams Canyon. The Irvine Company has recently expressed an interest in building a new staging area to access this trail near Santiago Canyon Road at the junction of the County's proposed Santiago Creek Trail. There is an unpassable slide at Bear Flats, and the Federal government has been requested to add the removal of the slide to the 20 year management plan for the CNF. Currently this idea has gained much momentum, as it qualifies as a multi-use "mountains to the sea" trail, the County of Orange has recently considered upgrading this trail to its Master Plan of Riding and Hiking Trails. There are several access points from Silverado Canyon Road and Williams Canyon Road.

Mesa Trail: This trail connects the Ladd Canyon Trail at Silverado Canyon Road to the Silverado Truck Trail on the Irvine Mesa. There is currently a private property gate, which allows equestrian, hiking and biking access. This trail is 1/4 mile in length and is a wide dirt road sharing limited vehicular access.

White's Canyon: This trail originates at Silverado Canyon Road just east of the Silverado Café. It shares vehicular access on private roads, across private property. The original community residents established this trail as a shared easement. It is currently a popular access trail to the Silverado Truck Trail but has absolutely no potential to improve below the property of John Ibarra. At best it serves as a popular and convenient access for local residents.

Williams Canyon Ridge Connector: This trail starts at Williams Canyon Road near the water tower and travels north along a steep ridge terminating at the Silverado Truck Trail. It is very steep and has been severely damaged by illegal off-road use. It is approximately one mile in length.

Wild Oat: This trail connects Williams Canyon Road with the Silverado Truck Trail. It is currently used as vehicular access to several parcels of private property, but is commonly used by all trail user groups. It is mid-way through Williams Canyon with switchbacks that make it an ideal trail, creating connectivity to Silverado Canyon. Shaw's: This trail is at the end of Williams Canyon traveling to the north connecting with the Silverado Truck Trail at the Shaw's property. It is a popular connection from Silverado Canyon to Williams Canyon.

Williams Canyon Road: This road travels along the bottom of Williams Canyon and is one lane. It has no potential for improvement and must be shared use with vehicular traffic, however due to the limited residents, it makes it possible for on road trail use. This road creates connection to the Santiago Creek Trail along Santiago Canyon Road, and creates connection to both Silverado and Modjeska Canyons. Currently a gated entrance is under construction at the mouth of Williams Canyon, however, the residents have allowed for an equestrian/hiking/biking entrance to be added.

Mark Road: This trail travels from Williams Canyon Road near the development of Williams Springs Estates, through a series of switchbacks and terminates at Markeson Road in Modjeska Canyon. It is critical for connection from Williams Canyon to Modjeska Canyon and should be open to all user groups. Trail users can access the Modjeska Creek Trail near the area of Shadowland Estates.

Tamale Canyon: This trail connects Mark Road Trail to Modjeska Canyon Road. Access to the Modjeska Creek Trail is possible through Croatian Way via an 'at grade' crossing. Combined with Mark Road, it creates a valuable loop trail for the residents of Modjeska Canyon.

Modjeska Creek Trail: This trail runs along the Modjeska Grade Road traveling over steep topography and eventually joining Modjeska Creek just prior to its joining Santiago Creek. It is a difficult trail to complete between the Grade Road and the creek bottom. There are currently easements in place, which double as Edison easements at the top of the Grade Road. A single-track trail could be put into place connecting the top of the Grade to the Creek bottom. This trail would be challenging, but would create vital connection for local residents to both the County's Santiago Creek Trail and the Federal Government's Santiago Truck Trail. The most crucial point of connection is the intersection of Modjeska Creek and Santiago Canyon Road. This trail should travel under the current overpass to take advantage of an existing grade separated crossing. It provides for connectivity from Modjeska Canyon into the County Regional Park of Limestone Canyon. It should continue on the west side of Santiago Canyon Road until it meets Hangman's Trail.

Irvine Ranch Land Reserve/Limestone Regional Park Trails

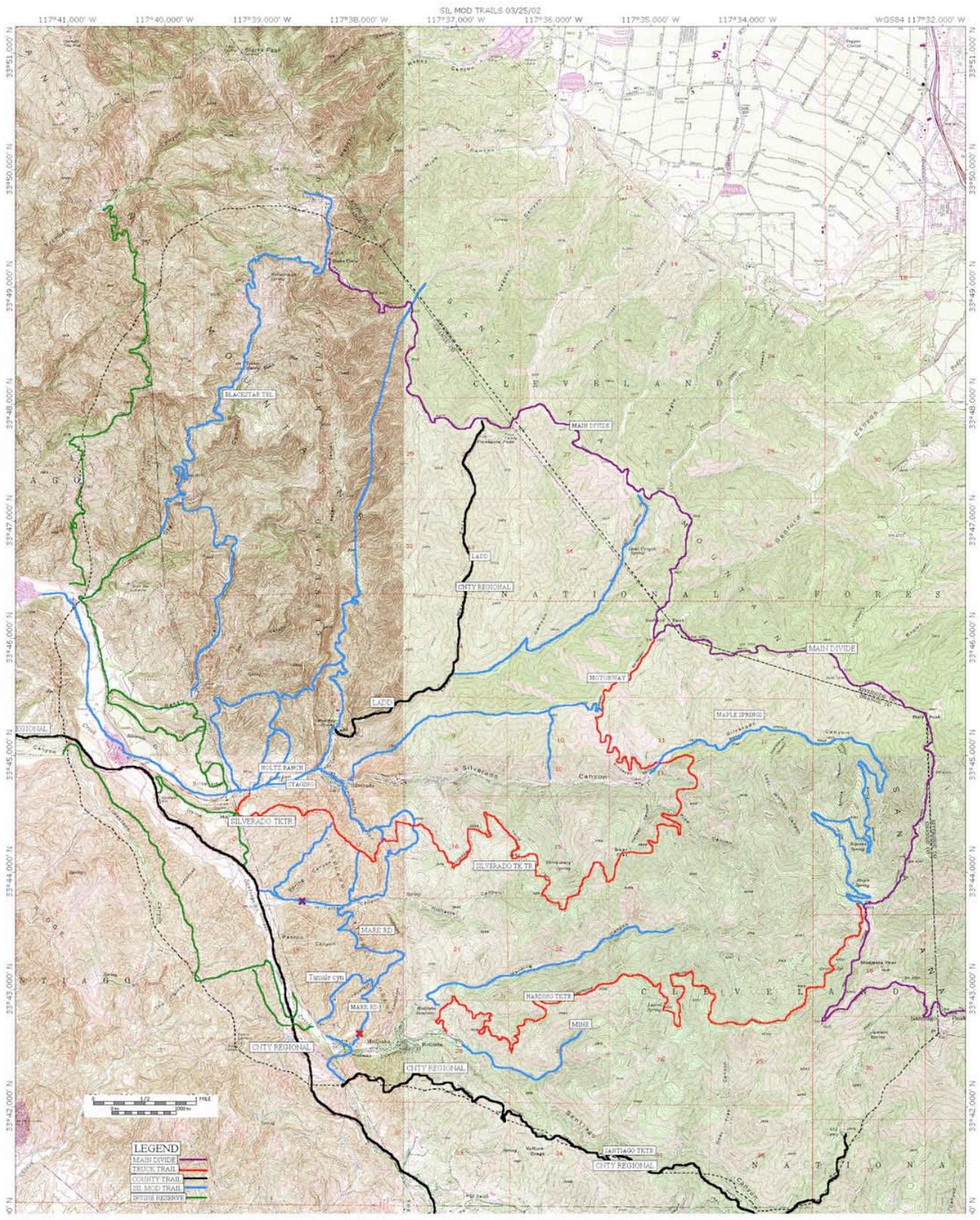
Sinks Trail: This trail begins behind the locked gate at the Hangman's Tree Spur Road parking area, near the mouth of Modjeska Canyon. It proceeds up Hangman's Tree Spur Road to the Sinks, a geological formation consisting of eroded sandstone, where the land drops off sharply into Agua Chinon Canyon. Used as either an out-and-back trail on the existing road, or usable also as a loop trail utilizing a footpath down a ridge just north of the road, it is 2 ½ miles long.

Dripping Springs Trail: This loop trail starts at the parking area behind the locked gate near Santiago Canyon Road, drops down into the bottom of Limestone Canyon, proceeds up the canyon to a tributary canyon just north of Elephant Peak, then heads west uphill to Dripping Springs, one of the only year-round springs in the county. From the springs it continues uphill on an old Irvine Ranch road to a ridge west of Limestone Canyon, then down into the canyon again and back to the parking area. Mileage is 3 ½ miles.

Descriptions for **Limestone Canyon and Loma Ridge Trail, Hangman's Canyon and Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park Trail, Agua Chinon Canyon Trail, Hicks Haul Road Trail, and Legal Language for IRLR Trails** are all Works in Progress.



At the Oct. 14, 2004 meeting, the District Board of Directors unanimously approved Resolution 101404-1, adopting the Draft District Master Plan of Trails, which is now a legal document describing existing and proposed Class 1, 2, and 3 trails within the District, some of which are within the East Orange Planned Community Areas 2 and 3. This plan was prepared by Trails Committee Volunteer Dana Judd, with assistance from Director Mike Boeck.



**SILVERADO-MODJESKA RECREATION AND PARKS DISTRICT
MASTER PLAN OF TRAILS, 2004**