REC 2 – RECREATION FACILITY USE ASSESSMENT
INTERIM TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

KERN RIVER NO. 1 HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT
FERC PROJECT NO. 1930

PREPARED FOR:

December 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF MAPS

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

DLA	Draft License Application
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Forest Service	United States Forest Service
KR1	Kern River No. 1
NVUM	National Visitor Use Monitoring
Project	Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project Relicensing, FERC Project No. 1930
QR Code	Quick Response Code
REC 2 TSP	REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Technical Study Plan
SCE	Southern California Edison
SPD	Study Plan Determination
SR-178	State Route 178
TSP	Technical Study Plan
TWG	Technical Working Group

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Interim Technical Memorandum provides the methods and findings of the REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Technical Study Plan (REC 2 TSP). The REC 2 TSP was conducted in support of Southern California Edison's (SCE) Kern River No. 1 (KR1) Hydroelectric Project (Project) relicensing, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 1930. The REC 2 TSP was included in SCE's Revised Study Plan submitted to FERC on February 13, 2024 (SCE 2024). In its March 14, 2024, Study Plan Determination (SPD), FERC approved the REC 2 TSP with modifications (FERC 2024).

The recreation facility use assessments began in May 2024 and are ongoing. Data collection and analysis through June 2025 is summarized below.

2.0 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the recreation facility use assessment, as outlined in the REC 2 TSP (SCE 2024), include the following:

- Characterize recreation use at the developed public recreation facilities in the Project vicinity (non-Project facilities).
- Characterize dispersed recreation use at undeveloped sites along the bypass reach accessible from State Route 178 (SR-178) (non-Project facilities).
- Characterize recreation use along Project trails that provide access to the lower Kern River or to an existing United States Forest Service (Forest Service) trail in the vicinity of the Project.
- Estimate future recreation use in the vicinity of the Project using existing use data and published recreation trends information.
- Document potential public safety issues and existing programs and measures that are implemented by SCE to protect public health and safety.

3.0 STUDY AREA AND STUDY SITES

The study area includes the four developed day use areas in the vicinity of the Project (non-Project facilities), five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 (along the bypass reach)[1] (non-Project facilities), and five Project trails; a total of 14 sites. Refer to Maps 3-1a–g depicting the location of the following study sites.

[1] A bypass reach is a segment of a river downstream of a diversion facility where Project operations divert a portion of the water from the river.

The four non-Project developed day use facilities are:

- Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site
- Upper Richbar Day Use Area
- Lower Richbar Day Use Area
- Live Oak Day Use Area

The five non-Project undeveloped river access points along SR-178 (from upstream to downstream):

- River Access Site 1 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 24.0)
- River Access Site 2 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 21.0)
- River Access Site 3 (Between SR-178 postmile KER 18.0 and KER 19.0)
- River Access Site 4 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 18.0)
- River Access Site 5 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 17.0)

The five Project trails[2] are:

- Democrat Gage Trail
- Cow Flat Creek Trail
- Lucas Creek Trail
- Dougherty Creek Trail
- Stark Creek Trail

[2] The REC 2 TSP included “Steel Flume Trail” as a Project trail that connects to the Powerhouse Trail. In August 2024, field staff confirmed that the portion of the Steel Flume Trail that connects to SR-178 is no longer present on the landscape (was not visible/identifiable).

4.0 METHODS

Study implementation followed the methods described in the REC 2 TSP (SCE 2024).

4.1 STUDY PLAN VARIANCES

There are two variances from the REC 2 TSP approved with modifications in FERC's SPD (FERC 2024):

- The REC 2 TSP stated that survey technicians would use a form with questions for two user groups: day users and whitewater boaters. In practice, the survey form included a single set of questions for all day users, with a prompt asking whether respondents were whitewater boating. For those who answered "yes," the form included one follow-up question about how river flows affect their boating experience. The form did not include the full set of questions identified in the REC 3 – Whitewater Boating TSP. Those objectives were instead addressed through implementation of the REC 3 study, which involved an online structured interview survey and follow-up interviews with individuals experienced in boating the bypass reach. Results of that study are presented in the REC 3 – Whitewater Boating TM.

- The REC 2 TSP indicated that on each day a vehicle count is conducted, survey technicians would complete the count during two of three randomly selected shifts per day and would conduct the counts twice per shift: once while travelling west to east (upstream) on SR-178, and once while travelling east to west (downstream) on SR-178. Due to factors of both safety and timing, survey technicians conducted counts once per shift, using the following methodology: begin at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and conduct counts and intercept surveys at each consecutive site heading west (downstream) on SR-178 until reaching the KR1 Powerhouse. Survey technicians then turn around and return to the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site to prepare for their next shift. This methodology allows for safe access to each of the river-side (right side of the road) developed and undeveloped recreation areas to complete the counts. As a result, vehicle counts are conducted once per shift rather than twice per shift.

- The REC 2 TSP specified that, on each day vehicle counts were conducted, technicians would complete counts during two of three randomly selected shifts per day, with counts conducted twice per shift: once traveling west to east (upstream) on SR-178 and once traveling east to west (downstream). In practice, due to safety and timing constraints, technicians conducted counts once per shift Counts were initiated at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and continued at each consecutive site while traveling west (downstream) on SR-178 to the KR1 Powerhouse. Technicians then returned to the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site to prepare for the next shift. This approach ensured safe access to river-side (right side of the road) recreation areas, but resulted in one vehicle count per shift rather than two.

4.2 CHARACTERIZE RECREATION USE AT DEVELOPED RECREATION FACILITIES AND AT UNDEVELOPED LOCATIONS IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL RIVER ACCESS POINTS ALONG THE BYPASS REACH

To characterize recreation use at developed recreation facilities and at undeveloped locations identified as river access points along SR-178/the bypass reach, SCE has done the following:

- Utilized existing information to characterize likely recreation use activities undertaken by visitors at developed public recreation day use facilities and at undeveloped river access points along the SR-178.

- In collaboration with the Recreation Technical Working Group (TWG), confirmed five undeveloped river access points along the SR-178 at which to conduct vehicle counts and opportunistic in-person intercept surveys.

- In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, developed survey forms (in English and Spanish) to collect information from day users at developed recreation sites at the undeveloped river access points along SR-178. Refer to Appendix A for the day use survey forms.

Following the above steps, SCE initiated field surveys involving (1) on-the-ground vehicle counts and (2) opportunistic in-person intercept surveys (intercept surveys), at the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178. In addition, SCE installed a tamper-proof survey box at each of the day use facilities (four survey boxes in total). SCE initiated vehicle counts and intercept surveys on May 15, 2024. The vehicle counts and intercept surveys were implemented until the end of the survey period in April 2025 (counts were conducted several times each month for one year). SCE installed the survey boxes in January 2025. The following describes the methodology used to conduct the vehicle counts and intercept surveys and provides additional information about the survey boxes.

- **Vehicle Counts:**

  – During the vehicle counts, the following information is being collected: date, time, and number of vehicles parked at each facility.

  – The vehicle counts were conducted as follows:

    ➢ At developed recreation sites that are open year-round: Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and Upper Richbar Day Use Area

      ▪ Survey technicians counted the number of vehicles observed on four days per month (two randomly selected weekdays and two randomly selected weekend days) for one year, May 2024–April 2025 (total of 48 days).

- Survey technicians also counted the number of vehicles observed on Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024), Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024), and Labor Day Weekend (September 2, 2024), bringing the total days surveyed over the course of the study period to 51.

- Survey technicians worked in teams of two: one person driving and one person counting.

➢ At developed recreation sites that are open only for part of the year (generally May to October): Lower Richbar Day Use Area and Live Oak Day Use Area

- Survey technicians counted the number of vehicles observed on four days per month (two randomly selected weekdays and two randomly selected weekend days) when the sites were open.[3]

- Survey technicians also counted the number of vehicles observed on Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024), Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024), and Labor Day Weekend (September 2, 2024), bringing the total days surveyed over the course of the study period to 31.

- Survey technicians worked in teams of two: one person driving and one person counting.

➢ At the undeveloped river access points along SR-178:

- Survey technicians counted the number of vehicles observed on four days per month (two randomly selected weekdays and two randomly selected weekend days) for one year, May 2024–April 2025 (total of 48 days).

- Survey technicians also counted the number of vehicles observed on Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024), Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024), and Labor Day Weekend (September 2, 2024), bringing the total days surveyed over the course of the study period to 51.

- Survey technicians worked in teams of two: one person driving and one person counting.

[3] Lower Richbar Day Use Area and Live Oak Day Use Area were closed during the first three survey periods in May 2024 (May 15, 17 and 19). Both day use areas were open during vehicle counts and intercept surveys conducted on May 25, 2024 and during counts/intercept surveys conducted through late October. Both sites were closed during the first counts in November and remained closed through the last surveys conducted in April 2025.

- The selected days per month during which data was collected did not include days when it was raining, when substantive precipitation was forecast, or when SR-178 was closed.[4]

- On each day a vehicle count was conducted, the vehicle count was completed during two of three randomly selected shifts:

  - Shift 1 (7 a.m. to 11 a.m.)

  - Shift 2 (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

  - Shift 3 (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.)

– The vehicle count was conducted once per shift, with in a total of two vehicle counts conducted per site on each of the survey days.[5] Generally, survey technicians begin each shift at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and drive west (downstream).

- **Opportunistic in-person intercept surveys:**

  – Opportunistic in-person intercept surveys were conducted by two bilingual (Spanish/English) survey technicians. Opportunistic in-person surveys were conducted on the same day and using the same methodology as the vehicle counts (i.e., two of three randomly selected shifts/day), but by a different pair of survey technicians than those conducting the vehicle counts. Surveys were conducted using a survey intercept form (in Spanish and English).

  – Survey technicians opportunistically intercepted recreation users in parking lots or other safe-to-access locations during the vehicle counts to conduct surveys using the day use survey form. The following describes the methodology for conducting the surveys at both the developed recreation sites and the undeveloped river access points along SR-178.

    - At the developed day use sites:

      - The survey technicians parked at the developed recreation site and completed a walking circuit of the parking lot facilities (picnic tables and barbeques), and adjacent river locations to seek recreationists to participate in the survey.

[4] On May 15, 2024, vehicle counts were conducted at all sites just once (during one shift) due to a mid-day closure of SR-178 after a fire ignition up canyon from Democrat Dam.

[5] During some of the initial vehicle count survey days in May (May 15, 17 and 19) technicians counted vehicles more than twice per day at some sites (up to three times) and only once per day at some sites. By May 25, survey technicians had established a standard methodology for completing the counts (once per shift/ two shifts per day).

- Survey technicians remained at the site for at least 15 minutes if there were scant visitors present, and up to 30 minutes if the developed recreation area was busy. If a survey technician was conducting a survey that extended beyond the 30-minute period, the technician finished the survey before departing.

- If a recreationist declined to participate in the survey, the field technician recorded the declined survey and distributed a postcard-size version of the survey flyer (in English and Spanish) with an online access code (Quick Response Code or QR code).

➢ At the undeveloped river access points along SR-178:

- During each vehicle count shift, survey technicians conducted opportunistic in-person surveys once at each of the five locations if it was safe to pull to the shoulder to conduct the survey.

- If deemed safe, survey technicians would seek recreationists in and around the parking area and adjacent river locations to participate in the survey. If a recreationist declined to partake in the survey, the field technician recorded the declined survey and distributed a postcard-size version of the survey flyer (in English and Spanish) with an online access code (QR code).

- **Survey Boxes**

  – SCE received approval from the Forest Service to install tamper-proof survey boxes (survey boxes) at each of the developed recreation sites on December 16, 2024. The survey boxes were installed January 23, 2025 and included self-survey forms in English and Spanish (refer to Appendix A). The box signage also included a QR code to allow visitors to complete the survey form online, if preferred. The survey boxes will be maintained for one year (365 days).

4.3 CHARACTERIZE RECREATION USE AT SELECT PROJECT TRAILS

To characterize recreation use at select Project trails, SCE completed the following:

- In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE confirmed five trailhead locations for the survey boxes.[6]

- In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE developed survey forms (in English and Spanish) to collect information from trail users. Refer to Appendix A for the

[6] The five trails are: Democrat Gage Trail; Cow Flat Creek Trail; Lucas Creek Trail; Dougherty Creek Trail; and Stark Creek Trail. The trails leading up to the KR1 Forebay (Penstock/Forebay Trails across SR-178 from the KR1 Powerhouse) were considered as a location for installation of a trail survey box, but after further review, these trails were excluded as an installation location due to security and safety concerns. The Penstock/Forebay Trails are included on the Project trail survey form and in the survey box map included in the lid of each trail survey box so that individuals have the opportunity to note if they used those trails in the past.

Project trails survey forms. SCE also developed a set of maps to include beneath the lid of each survey box to support accurate trail survey results.

- To characterize recreation use at select Project trails, SCE continues to collect data via the following methods:

  – Temporary infrared trail cameras (TrafX trail counters): SCE installed TrafX trail counters on November 14, 2024, along each select Project trail within approximately 400 yards of the trailhead. SCE is collecting the TrafX trail counter data for a 12-month period (through November 15, 2025). The TrafX trail counters are regularly serviced by SCE, and the data from each TrafX trail counter is downloaded into a database.

  – Self-survey boxes: Concurrent with the installation of the survey boxes at the four developed recreation sites (see Section 4.2 above), SCE installed survey boxes along each of the Project trails in January 2025. The survey boxes include self-survey forms in English and in Spanish (refer to Appendix A), maps to orient trail users to their location relative to the questions on the survey forms, and signage to direct trail users to complete the survey form within the survey box. The signage also includes a QR code to allow visitors to complete the survey form online, if preferred. The survey boxes will be maintained for one year (365 days).

  – Interviews: SCE contacted Sequoia National Forest personnel and other interested stakeholders who frequent the Project area to request their impressions of visitor use. Refer to Section 5.2.3.

4.4 ESTIMATE FUTURE RECREATION USE AND DEMAND

To estimate future recreation use and demand, SCE will:

- Utilize census data and information available in relevant federal, state, and local comprehensive plans (including the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and supporting survey information) to identify population projections and to document outdoor recreation use trends and needs.

- Utilize the recreation use data collected in this study along with trends and population projections to estimate future recreation needs over the license period (assumed to be 50 years).

- Determine whether future public recreation needs can be met in the vicinity of the Project.

This information will be provided in the revised draft REC 2 Technical Memorandum to be included in the Draft License Application (DLA).

4.5 DOCUMENT PUBLIC SAFETY

To document public safety, SCE will:

- Identify and describe existing programs and measures implemented by SCE to protect public health and safety (i.e., buoy lines, fencing, signage, and alarms). The inventory will include a description of the condition of the existing safety features.

- Characterize the number, type, and location of safety incidents related to recreation that have occurred in the vicinity of the Project over the past ten years, by reviewing records maintained by FERC and the Forest Service, and by consulting with SCE staff.

This information will be provided in the revised draft REC 2 Technical Memorandum to be included in the DLA.

5.0 RESULTS SUMMARY

This section describes the results from the following data gathering efforts:

- Vehicle counts at the four day-use areas and at the undeveloped river access points (complete year of data).

- Survey data from the four day-use areas at the undeveloped river access points. This data is comprised of a complete year of intercept in-person surveys, as well as data from the ongoing surveys from the survey-boxes and responses to QR codes attached to the survey boxes.

- Trail use and survey data from the TrafX trail counters installed on Project trails, as well as from surveys administered via the trailhead survey-boxes and responses to QR codes attached to the survey boxes (survey data collection ongoing).

5.1 RECREATION USE AT THE FOUR DAY-USE AREAS AND UNDEVELOPED RIVER ACCESS POINTS

Vehicle counts and day use surveys began in May 2024 and were conducted every month for a 12-month period, through April 2025. Surveys were conducted at least four times per month—two weekdays and two weekends—and were also conducted on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, on the Fourth of July, and on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. The counts and surveys were conducted at:

- The four developed day use facilities: Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site; Upper Richbar Day Use Area; Lower Richbar Day Use Area; and Live Oak Day Use Area

- The five undeveloped river access points along SR-178.

5.1.1 Vehicle Count: Data Summary

Survey technicians counted vehicles parked at one of four developed day use areas or at one of five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 on a total of 51 survey days between May 15, 2024, and April 11, 2025. A total of 864 vehicles were recorded during these vehicle counts, an average of 17 vehicles counted per day.[7]

Distribution of vehicles by weekday, weekend, and holiday: Vehicles were counted on 23 weekend days, 25 weekdays, and three holiday days. On average, 19 vehicles were counted on a weekend day, 6 vehicles were counted on a weekday, and 60 were counted on a holiday-weekend day. A total of seven vehicles counted over the survey period had boat racks on the vehicle.

Distribution of vehicles by month: Based only on weekend days and weekdays (not holiday days), more vehicles were counted on the average day in June than during the other months in the survey period. Table 5-1 provides the average number of vehicles counted per day by month, excluding holiday weekends.

Distribution of vehicles by location: More vehicles were parked at Upper Richbar Day Use Area than at other sites (36 percent of the total vehicles), followed by Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site (24 percent of total vehicles), Lower Richbar (10 percent of total vehicles), and Live Oak (5 percent of total vehicles). Collectively, 26 percent of the total vehicles counted were parked at the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178. Table 5-2 illustrates the total number of vehicles parked at each developed day use facility and at each of the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 on weekends, Table 5-3 illustrates the total number parked on weekdays, and Table 5-4 illustrates the total number parked on a holiday weekend.

Volume of vehicles compared to capacity: Across all developed recreation day use facilities, there are a total of 91 designated parking spaces (refer to REC 1 – Facility Condition Assessment for details on parking capacity per facility). Additionally, the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 are estimated to accommodate up to 25 vehicles. Therefore, in total, surveyors tracked the occupancy of 116 parking spaces during their observations. Based on the average number of vehicles counted per survey day (17), 15 percent of the total parking capacity was occupied on an average day when vehicle counts occurred.

- At the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site, between 4 percent and 21 percent of the estimated parking were filled on average (Table 5-5).
- At Upper Richbar Day Use Area, between 3 percent and 26 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-6).

[7] This total represents the aggregate of vehicle counts per site per day. On most days the vehicle count was completed at each site once per each of two shifts. For example: Shift 1, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and Shift 2, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- At Lower Richbar Day Use Area, between 3 percent and 21 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-7).

- At Live Oak Day Use Area, between 1 percent and 6 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-8).

- Among the undeveloped river access points along SR-178, between 6 percent and 75 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-9).

The data indicates that surveyors never observed any of the developed day use parking lots fill to capacity.

5.1.2 Day Use Survey Form Data Summary

From May 2024 to April 2025, survey technicians collected or received 374 survey forms representing 1,251 individual day users. In addition, from January 23, 2025, to June 26, 2025, survey technicians collected or received 34 survey forms representing 76 individual day users from the self-survey boxes (and from QR Codes attached to the self-survey boxes).

The following summarizes the results of data collected either from the intercept in-person surveys, from QR Codes, or from physical forms submitted between May 2024 to June 2025.

5.1.2.1 Results

Peak visitation occurred during the month of July, followed by September. The average group size of day users was three to four people. Figure 5-1 illustrates the number of day users surveyed by month.

Table 5-10 indicates the number of respondents who participated in the survey at each developed day use area, and Table 5-11 indicates the number of respondents who participated at each river access site. As shown, 38 percent of surveys at day use areas were completed by users encountered at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site, 43 percent at Upper Richbar Day Use, 12 percent at Lower Richbar Day Use, and 7 percent at Live Oak Day Use. The breakdown of surveys completed by users encountered at river access sites is as follows: 7 percent at River Access Site 1; 11 percent at River Access Site 2; 19 percent at River Access Site 3; 33 percent at River Access Site River Access Site 4; and 30 percent at River Access Site 5.

On average, respondents reported they had visited the lower Kern River about 7 times over the last 12 months. Only 36 of the 408 survey respondents had no previous recreation trips in the last 12 months to the lower Kern River.

- **Demographics:** The survey results from May 2024 to June 2025 yielded the following information about day users:

  – There was a wide age range of survey respondents, from under 16 to over 70, though more respondents indicated their age as between 30-39 years or between 40-49 years of age (24 percent and 23 percent respectively) than other categories (Table 5-12).

  – Most respondents identified their ethnicity as White (47 percent) or Latino (47 percent), followed by Asian (5 percent), other ethnicity (1 percent), and Black (less than 1 percent) (Table 5-13).

  – Sixty-five percent (65 percent) of respondents indicated their total household income was between $41,000 and $80,000 (Table 5-14), while approximately 20 percent indicated their household income was less than $40,000, and approximately 14 percent indicated their household income was greater than $81,000.

  – Approximately 53 percent of respondents elected to identify their home zip code. All zip codes but one (a respondent from Kentucky) were within California. Of respondents who identified their home zip code, 65 percent indicated a zip code in the Bakersfield area (zip codes 93301-93390). An additional 10 percent were within the Lake Isabella/Kernville area (zip codes 93240 and 93238).

- **Primary Recreation Activity:** Picnicking was the most described primary recreation activity (39 percent), followed by fishing (20 percent), and hiking, walking, or trail use (19 percent). Twenty-four percent (24 percent) of respondents indicated they were participating in a water-related activity, primarily fishing (20 percent). Just 3 percent of respondents indicated their primary activity was whitewater rafting or boating (respondents were taking-out rafts at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site, refer to the “Whitewater Boating” discussion below), and 1 percent indicated their primary activity was swimming or wading. Of respondents who identified a water-related activity as their primary recreation activity that day, eight survey respondents reported that flows had a negative impact on their experience (13 people did not respond to how flows impacted their experience). Two of the surveys stated that flows were too low for ideal fishing, although they were still able to fish. Four people stated the flows were too low with no additional explanation, and two stated the flows were too high with no additional explanation. See Table 5-15 for a complete list of the day user primary activity by percentage.

- **Scenic Quality:** Ninety-seven percent (97 percent) of respondents rated the scenic quality of the lower Kern River area in general as “good” or “very good”. One percent (1 percent) of respondents rated the scenic quality as “neutral”, “poor”, or “very poor”. Two percent (2 percent) of respondents did not respond to this question.

- **Day User Satisfaction:** Most respondents listed their satisfaction in all areas as neutral, satisfied, or very satisfied. Primary complaints in satisfaction included cleanliness of bathrooms and maintenance of the road down to the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site. See Table 5-16 for the satisfaction of day users by percentage.

- **Anglers:** In the angler-specific portion of the survey, 134 of the 408 respondents indicated they had previously fished on the lower Kern River. Of the anglers surveyed, the majority used spin rods with bait or lures as their gear and tackle. Respondents fished most frequently during the fall (36 percent), and only slightly less frequently in the winter (32 percent) and spring (27 percent). Significantly fewer respondents indicated they fished in the summer, only 5 percent. Sixty percent (60 percent) of respondents indicated that while they may eat the fish they catch, they were primarily fishing for fun, while 40 percent of respondents indicated that while they enjoy fishing, they are primarily fishing for food. Eleven surveys indicated that flows negatively affected an anglers experience. Table 5-17, Table 5-18, Table 5-19, and Table 5-20 summarize responses to the angler-specific portion of the survey.

- **Whitewater Boating:** Two surveys were collected from individuals who indicated that whitewater boating was their primary recreation activity. These two surveys represented two large groups of people (one group of 28 people and one group of 9 people) who were taking out at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site following a rafting trip above the impoundment. Over the course of the year of in-person intercept surveys, no survey respondents indicated they were whitewater boating the bypass reach.

5.2 RECREATION USE AT PROJECT TRAILS

5.2.1 Trail Use

Trail use is being characterized via (1) infrared trail counters (TrafX trail counters) and (2) voluntary user surveys administered via the self-survey boxes installed at trailheads. TrafX trail counters were installed and became operational on November 15, 2024. Survey boxes were installed on January 23, 2025. Both trail counter data and surveys will continue to be collected for one year from the date of installation. The data presented below reflect counts collected through June 24, 2025.

Democrat Gage Trail is an out and back trail, and therefore each user is expected to pass the TrafX counter twice during a visit. This is likely the type of use along the other trails as well given the length and logistical challenges for a round-trip visit (e.g. would require travel for some distance along the Powerhouse Trail and along the highway for the return trip to a vehicle parked at the trailhead). Therefore, in general, it is reasonable to assume that two counts generally represent one individual. Trail counts (with the exception of the Stark Creek Trail) also include SCE personnel who use the trails to access infrastructure and perform trail maintenance. The approximate per-month use by SCE varies by trail

and by season; details by trail are described in Sections 5.2.1.1—5.2.1.5 below. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

Over the 223-day period of trail counter operation, the Cow Flat Creek Trail recorded the highest use, followed by the Dougherty Creek, Stark Creek, and Democrat Gage trails. The Lucas Creek Trail recorded the lowest use. Figure 5-2 illustrates total counts by trail. Monthly trail counts are summarized in Table 5-21, with aggregate monthly counts for all trails in Table 5-22. Table 5-23 provides average weekday and weekend counts by trail.

With the intention of collecting trail use data to accurately reflect real visitation patterns that provide a reliable basis for assessing recreational use, TrafX data were subjected to a quality assurance process. Outliers were identified and removed where clear anomalies were present. For the purposes of this study, an anomaly is defined as a data point that deviates significantly from trail use patterns and is inconsistent with known visitation levels. Non-human TrafX count triggers identified during the study included wind-blown vegetation (i.e., branches passing in front of the camera) and livestock movement.[8] In total, 2.7 percent of TrafX data was removed due to anomalous readings. Specifically:

- 14 days were removed from Democrat Gage Trail.
- 1 day from Cow Flat Creek Trail.
- 9 days from Lucas Creek Trail.
- 5 days from Dougherty Creek Trail.
- 1 day from Stark Creek Trail.

In cases where survey form data exceeded TrafX counts or where anomalous TrafX data were removed, data from corresponding hard copy survey forms were used to correct or replace the trail count values. These replacements accounted for less than one percent of the total TrafX Trail Count dataset.

5.2.1.1 Democrat Gage Trail

Refer to Figure 5-3 for a visualization of daily trail counts along the Democrat Gage Trail over time. Given the out-and-back nature of the Democrat Gage Trail—i.e., it does not provide a round-trip route—each user is expected to pass the TrafX counter twice during a visit. Therefore, two counts should generally be interpreted as representing one individual.

Across the dataset, the average daily trail count was 2.1, with a median of 2 and a mode of 0. Trail counts include SCE personnel who use the Democrat Gage Trail not for recreational purpose, but rather to access project infrastructure, conduct flow monitoring,

[8] Branches that were suspected as causing count triggers on windy days were trimmed when identified. For example, user counts recorded along Dougherty Creek Trail exceeded 600 on 02/21/2025 and exceeded 1,500 on 02/22/2025. Branches suspected of causing these count triggers were trimmed on 2/26/2025; TrafX counts subsequently fell to four (4) on 02/27/2025.

and perform trail maintenance. On average, six to 12 SCE personnel use the trail each month. This includes hydrographers who typically visit 1–2 times per month and civil maintenance crews who visit about once per month. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

In mid-April, trail damage was observed at a location upstream of the TrafX counter, though the trail remained passable. SCE personnel fixed the trail in late April 2025.

5.2.1.2 Cow Flat Creek Trail

Refer to Figure 5-4 for a visualization of daily trail counts along the Cow Flat Creek Trail over time. Though the Cow Flat Creek Trail is not strictly an out-and-back trail because it connects to the Forest Service's Powerhouse Trail, it is likely that many users hiked up the trail and then back down during a single day, to, for example, regain access to their vehicle (likely parked near the trailhead). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that many (or most) visitors passed the TrafX counter twice during a visit and that, therefore, two counts should often be interpreted as representing one individual.

Across the dataset, the average daily trail count was 4.3, the median count was 5, and the mode was 0. Trail counts include SCE personnel who use the Cow Flat Creek Trail to access infrastructure, conduct flow monitoring, and perform trail maintenance. Approximately four to 10 SCE personnel use the Cow Flat Creek Trail for non-recreational purposes each month, including hydrographers and civil maintenance crews. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

Cattle frequent the area above the counter on this trail but are not seen frequently at or below the counter.

5.2.1.3 Lucas Creek Trail

Refer to Figure 5-5 for a visualization of daily trail counts along the Lucas Creek Trail over time. Like the Cow Flat Creek Trail, the Lucas Creek Trail is not strictly an out-and-back trail because it connects to the Forest Service's Powerhouse Trail. However, it is likely that many users hiked up the trail and then back down during a single day, to, for example, regain access to their vehicle (likely parked near the trailhead). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that many (or most) visitors passed the TrafX counter twice during a visit and that, therefore, two counts should often be interpreted as representing one individual.

Across the dataset, the average daily trail count was 1.9, the median count was 2, and the mode was 0. Trail counts include SCE personnel who use the Lucas Creek Trail for non-recreational purposes, to monitor infrastructure and perform trail maintenance. Approximately two to six SCE personnel use the Lucas Creek Trail a month, including the civil maintenance crews. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

Cattle frequent the area below the counter and are likely captured to some degree in the trail counts at this location. The Lucas Creek Trail was likely used by fire personnel during the mitigation of the Democrat Fire that occurred in May 2025.

5.2.1.4 Dougherty Creek Trail

Refer to Figure 5-6 for a visualization of daily trail counts along the Dougherty Creek Trail over time. Across the dataset, the average daily trail count was 3.4, the median count was 3, and the mode was 0. Trail counts include SCE personnel who use the Dougherty Creek Trail for non-recreational purposes, to monitor infrastructure and maintain the trail. Approximately two to six SCE personnel access the Dougherty Creek Trail a month, including the civil maintenance crews. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

Cattle frequent the area but are not usually seen at the counter location. Firefighters were observed using this location for training by survey technicians at the end of January 2025.

5.2.1.5 Stark Creek Trail

Refer to Figure 5-7 for a visualization of daily trail counts along the Stark Creek Trail over time. The Stark Creek Trail extends north-south and parallel to SR-178 above the river. It begins at the terminus of Stark Creek Road and extends south for more than one mile before connecting to the Powerhouse Trail. The TrafX counter is not located along Stark Creek Trail, but along an informal (not maintained by SCE or the Forest Service) trail near the base of Stark Creek Road that provides direct access up to the Stark Creek Trail. The location for the TrafX counter was chosen with the intention of capturing the greatest number of trail users. The informal trail where the counter is located extends from the base of Stark Creek Road to the middle of Stark Creek Trail and provides a significantly more efficient route to access the Stark Creek Trail than heading up Stark Creek Road (0.82 mile) before heading south along the trail. Because of its location, users that walked or biked up Stark Creek Road as an alternative to using the informal trail are not captured by the TrafX counter data (however self-survey forms indicate some recreation users did travel up the Stark Creek Road).

Trail counts are not assumed to include SCE personnel at this location; SCE is able to access the Stark Creek Trail via driving up Stark Creek Road (the road is gated, prohibiting public vehicles from access). SCE personnel that use the road to access Stark Creek Trail bypass the location of the TrafX counter. Approximately two to six SCE personnel use the Stark Creek Trail a month, including the civil maintenance crews.

Across the dataset, the average daily trail count was 3.7, the median count was 3 and the mode was 0. Cattle frequent the area above the camera but are not usually seen at the counter location. Firefighters were observed using this location for training by survey technicians at the end of January 2025.

5.2.2 Trail Use Survey Form Data Summary

The self-survey boxes were installed at Project trailheads on January 23, 2025. Between January 23, 2025 and June 26, 2025, survey technicians collected or received 128 survey forms representing 344 individual day users on project trails. More than half of the survey forms collected (56 percent) were collected from users of the Cow Flat Creek Trail. Table 5-24 reflects the percentage of surveys collected by project trail location.

The following bullets summarize information about trail users based on survey forms submitted between January 23, 2025 and June 26, 2025.

- **Group Size:** The average group size of project trail users was two to three people.
- **Demographics:**
  - Survey respondents ranged in age from under 16 to over 70. The age group sizes varied from 6 percent (for Under 16) to 18 percent (for the 50-59 and the 60-69 groups) of the total individual day users. Refer to Table 5-25.
  - Most respondents identified their ethnicity as White (66 percent), followed by Latino (22 percent), Asian (4 percent), other ethnicity (5 percent), and Black (less than 1 percent). Other ethnicities listed included Native American and mixed race. Refer to Table 5-26.
  - Fifty-four percent (54 percent) of respondents indicated their total household income was above $81,000, while approximately 25 percent indicated their household income was between $41,000 and $80,000, and approximately 17 percent indicated their household income was less than $40,000. Refer to Table 5-27.
  - Eighty-eight percent (88 percent) of respondents indicated a home zip code within California. Seventy-two percent (72 percent) indicated a home zip code within the Bakersfield area (available zip codes 93301-93390). Five percent (5 percent) of respondents did not provide a home zip code.
- **User Activities:** Hiking or walking was described as 90 percent of respondents' main activity; followed by biking (2 percent), and no response on activity (8 percent). The average length of time respondents planned to use the trail was 2.4 hours. Thirteen percent (13 percent) of respondents reported using project trails to access another trail. Respondents reported visiting project trails in the last 12 months, most frequently during the spring (35 percent of visits), followed by the winter (27 percent of visits) and the fall (26 percent of visits). Fewer respondents indicated they used the project trails in the summer (12 percent of visits).
- **Trail Experience:** Most respondents rated their experience on their current trail as the same, better, or much better compared to other trails along the lower Kern River, regardless of which of the five trails they were on. Respondents consistently stated the reason for their rating was related to wanting more maintenance of and access to other trails on the lower Kern River. Eighty-four percent (84 percent) of respondents would consider returning to the trail they accessed, and 14 percent of respondents did not answer whether they would return to the trail they accessed. Fifty-four percent (54 percent) of respondents would recommend improvements for the trail they accessed.

- **Purpose of Visit:** Twenty-five percent (25 percent) of respondents did not state what their main purpose of visit was. The most frequent reported main purpose was exercise (29 percent), followed by scenery or wildlife viewing (23 percent). For their secondary purpose of visit, most respondents stated exercise, scenery/wildlife viewing, or time with family and friends (64 percent). Table 5-28 shows the primary purpose of respondents' visits by percent.

- **Surrounding Landscapes:** Nearly half of all respondents selected general scenery as the main scenic feature that attracted them to their trail of choice (49 percent), followed by scenic views (17 percent). In general, most respondents (75 percent) rated the scenic quality of the area as seen from the trail as good or very good.

5.2.3 Impressions of Use

During a REC TWG[9] Meeting on April 24, 2025, SCE reminded attendees of SCE's interest in collecting information about observations of trail use from individuals familiar with the area. SCE followed-up with an email to the REC TWG on April 29, 2025 requesting that TWG members familiar with the trails in the area indicate their interest in sharing their impressions and/or share contact information of others they know familiar with the area who would be interested in sharing their impressions. SCE sent a reminder email regarding the request to the REC TWG on May 14, 2025. To date, no one has responded to the email or otherwise reached out to share impressions of use.[10]

5.3 FUTURE RECREATION USE AND DEMAND

The Forest Service's National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) program has two goals: (1) produce estimates of the volume of recreation visitation to national forests and grasslands and (2) produce descriptive information about that visitation, including activity participation, demographics, visit duration, measures of satisfaction, and trip spending connected to the visit (Forest Service 2025a). The most recent visitor use report for the SQF (January 11, 2025) summarizes data collected during fiscal year 2016 (Forest Service 2025b). The following is a summary of results of that report.

Total visits to the SQF in fiscal year 2016 are estimated at approximately 777,000 individuals. Many people frequent more than one site during their visit, so estimates are further broken down by site visits. Site visits in 2016 totaled approximately 1.0 million. Compared to prior SQF NVUM data (available for 2006 and 2011) the total number of visits to the SQF increased over the decade (2006–2016) by approximately 21 percent (Forest Service 2022) and sets trend expectations that the number of forest visits will continue to rise over time. This expectation is supported by population growth projections

[9] The REC TWG includes individuals who work for government agencies including the Sequoia National Forest, National Parks Service, and State Water Resources Control Board; individuals affiliated with groups and non-profit organizations including American Rivers, Kern River Boaters and the Kern Gateway Trail Committee; individuals who are members of Tribal Nations; and individuals who are otherwise interested in the relicensing Project and/or the recreation opportunities (including angling opportunities) in the vicinity of the lower Kern River.

[10] SCE decided not to include SCE personnel familiar with the area (e.g. civil crews who regularly use the trails for operation and maintenance) to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

for Kern County, where most visitors to the lower Kern River area originate (per data collected during the REC 2 study 75 percent of visitors to day-use sites and 90 percent of trail users are local to Kern County). Recent demographic forecasts suggest a modest increase in population of the county over the next quarter century. The household population of Kern County in 2024 was 890,000. This number is projected to increase to 998,000 by 2050, a 12 percent growth rate (Kern Council of Governments 2024). As such, it is reasonable to assume that the number of individuals heading to the lower Kern River canyon to recreate will also continue to grow moderately over time.

In 2016 the most frequented site or area associated with the SQF was general forest area (609,000 visits), followed by overnight use developed (223,000 visits), day-use developed (189,000 visits), and designated wilderness (25,000 visits). Site visits are further broken down by each activity in which the individual participated during that visit. The most common activities selected by survey participants were hiking/walking, relaxing, viewing natural features, and driving for pleasure. Of those, hiking/walking was chosen the most frequently as the main activity by survey participants.

5.3.1 Meeting Public Recreation Needs in the Vicinity of the Project

The three developed day-use areas along the bypass reach and the raft take-out site on the impoundment (four day-use sites in total) currently provide capacity to meet present recreation demands. REC 2 study results show that even on summer holiday weekends no site reached parking capacity and that, on average, only about 15 percent of available parking was occupied on monitored days (at least two weekend days and two weekdays each month from April 2024 through May 2025). Likewise, based on REC 2 survey data collected so far, roads and trails in the vicinity of the Project have light recreation use: use along Project trails averaged only two to three users per trail per day over the study period, indicating that current capacity is adequate and overuse is not an issue. As such, recreation amenities in the vicinity of the Project are adequate to meet current demand and foreseeable future demand (e.g., associated with a 12 percent increase in Kern County's population by 2050).

5.4 PUBLIC SAFETY

SCE maintains a Public Safety Plan for the Project that identifies the location of public safety measures and signage at Project facilities. The goal of the plan is to reduce the potential for any accidents near or within locations where SCE facilities are present. Key safety features identified in the plan were observed to be in working order during the 2024 and 2025 field seasons and include the following:

- In the area of Democrat Dam:
  - Chain link fences around the intake and sandbox and locked gates at the entry points to the intake flume walkway
  - Orange flotation boom barriers (boat barrier) in the impoundment 300 feet upstream from the dam (spanning 175 feet across the Kern River)

  - Emergency safety ropes parallel to the boat barrier. These ropes are suspended across the river 15 feet above the normal water line with cables and ropes that extend into the water
  - Signs discourage trespassing and warn of dangers associated with the drain vortex (at the intake), spillway, and tunnel

- In the area of the Forebay:
  - Chain link fences around the forebay infrastructure and locked gates at the entrance
  - Signs discourage trespassing and warn of potential water release dangers

- In the area of the Powerhouse:
  - Chain link fences around the Powerhouse and parking area and locked gates at the entrance
  - All buildings at the Powerhouse and Forebay Operations Area (across SR-178 from the Powerhouse) are locked
  - Signs discourage trespassing, and warn of the dangers associated with high voltage, loud noise, and alarms

- In the area of the Stark Flume:
  - A handrail is provided on both sides of the walkway adjacent to the flume
  - Signs discourage trespassing and warn of dangers associated with the flume infrastructure

- In the area of the Cow Creek Flume:
  - A handrail is provided on both sides of the walkway adjacent to the flume
  - Signs discourage trespassing and warn of dangers associated with the flume infrastructure

In addition, SCE maintains an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the Kern River No. 1 Forebay, Adit 17/18, and Stark Flume pursuant to 18 CFR § 12.20(a). The Project forebay is classified by FERC as having "significant" hazard potential due to the possibility for disruption of an important transportation artery (SR-178) in the event of an uncontrolled release of water. Democrat Dam is classified by FERC as having a "low" hazard potential. As such, SCE is exempt from filing an EAP for Democrat Dam.

The EAP defines responsibilities and provides procedures designed to identify unusual and unlikely conditions which may endanger the Project infrastructure. The EAP is

intended to provide procedures to take mitigative action and to notify the appropriate emergency management officials of possible, impending, or actual failure of infrastructure. The plan may also be used to provide notification when flood releases can create major flooding.

There are no known records of injury or death to the public within the Project boundary within the last 10 years.

6.0 STUDY SPECIFIC CONSULTATION

The following study-specific consultation was conducted:

- **Day use area intercept survey form and Project Trail survey form:** In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE developed survey forms (in English and Spanish) to collect information from (1) day users at developed and undeveloped river access points and (2) from visitors utilizing the select Project trails. Refer to Appendix A for the day use and Project trail survey forms.

- **Identification of undeveloped river access points to survey:** In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE confirmed five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 at which to conduct vehicle counts and opportunistic in-person intercept surveys.

- **Survey boxes.** SCE received approval from the Forest Service to install survey boxes at each of the developed recreation sites and at trailheads on December 16, 2024 (refer to Appendix B). In collaboration with the Recreation TWG SCE confirmed the five trailheads at which to install the survey boxes.

- **Trail cameras**: SCE received approval from the Forest Service to install infrared trail cameras (model used are the TrafX trail counters) to monitor activity on the five Project trails on October 22, 2024 (refer to Appendix B).

7.0 OUTSTANDING STUDY PLAN ELEMENTS

Two outstanding study plan elements remain for the Recreation Facility Use Assessment:

- **Trail Count Data Compilation and Reporting:** On November 15, 2024, SCE installed infrared trail cameras (TrafX trail counters) at five discrete locations to capture use. These TrafX trail counters were serviced and data was collected through November 15, 2025. This data will be compiled and reported-out in the final memo to be distributed with the Final License Application.

- **Survey Boxes:** Nine survey boxes were installed at both trailheads and developed day use areas on January 23, 2025. The survey boxes will be maintained, and data collected, for one year (through January 24, 2026). The data will be compiled and reported-out in the final technical memorandum to be distributed with the Final License Application.

The anticipated schedule to complete the outstanding study plan elements are identified in Table 7-1.

8.0 REFERENCES

FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). 2024. Study Plan Determination for the Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project. March 14.

Forest Service (United States Forest Service). 2022. Final Environmental Impact Statement for Revision of the Sequoia and Sierra National Forests Land Management Plans, Pre-objection Version. R5-MB-327-A. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region. Available online: https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=3375. Accessed October 2022.

———. 2025a. Forest Service – National Use Visitor Monitoring Program, webpage. Accessed September 2025. Available online: https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/nvum.

———. 2025b. Forest Service – Visitor Use Report, Sequoia National Forest, National Visitor Use Monitoring Data collected FY 2016.

Kern Council of Governments. 2024. Regional Growth Forecast and Demographic Forecast, 2024-2050. Prepared by Placeworks for the Kern Council of Governments, April 18, 2024. Available online: https://www.kerncog.org/estimates-and-projections/.

SCE (Southern California Edison). 2024. Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 1930) Revised Study Plan. February 13.

TABLES

Table 5-1. Average Number of Vehicles Parked Per Day by Month

Month (May 2024–April 2025)	Average Number Vehicles Counted Per Day
May	19
June	23
July	16
August	20
September	20
October	22
November	9
December	8
January	9
February	8
March	10
April	9

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.
Note: Average excludes vehicles counted during holiday weekend days.

Table 5-2. Number of Parked Vehicles by Site on Weekends, including Informal Parking Spots

Month (May 2024–April 2025)	Total Vehicles	Site								
		Dem	URB	LRB	LO	RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
May	49	4	25	5	1	3	4	0	7	0
June	64	13	19	11	4	0	0	6	6	5
July	50	11	17	6	3	5	2	1	1	4
August	57	11	17	9	5	0	2	4	4	5
September	48	11	18	8	4	0	0	1	4	2
October	50	17	20	4	2	0	0	0	3	4
November	19	9	5	0	0	1	1	0	2	1
December	19	6	4	0	0	2	4	0	0	3
January	21	3	6	0	2	1	1	2	5	1
February	20	4	5	1	1	1	1	1	5	1
March	22	6	8	3	1	0	1	0	0	3
April	24	3	2	4	0	0	4	2	0	9
May 2024–April 2025 Weekend Totals	**443**	**98**	**146**	**51**	**23**	**13**	**20**	**17**	**37**	**38**

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.
Note: Three cars with boat racks were observed on weekends from May 2024-April 2025. Two at Democrat and one at River Access Site 4.
Key: Dem = Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site
URB = Upper Richbar Day Use
LRB = Lower Richbar Day Use
LO = Live Oak Day Use
RS1 = River Access Site 1
RS2 = River Access Site 2
RS3 = River Access Site 3
RS4 = River Access Site 4
RS5 = River Access Site 5

Table 5-3. Number of Parked Vehicles by Site on Weekdays, including Informal Parking Spots

Month (May 2024-April 2025)	Total Vehicles	Site								
		Dem	URB	LRB	LO	RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
May	25	3	6	1	1	10	2	0	2	0
June	29	13	8	3	1	0	0	0	2	2
July	14	4	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0
August	21	4	6	4	0	1	0	1	2	3
September	30	9	6	3	2	0	1	2	4	3
October	36	10	18	2	2	0	2	1	0	1
November	16	3	6	0	0	1	2	1	1	2
December	14	3	3	0	0	0	1	2	1	4
January	16	4	5	1	1	1	0	1	1	2
February	13	3	5	0	0	2	0	0	2	1
March	17	1	8	0	0	0	0	2	3	3
April	10	0	7	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
May 2024–April 2025 Weekday Totals	**241**	**57**	**83**	**17**	**9**	**15**	**8**	**11**	**20**	**21**

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.
Note: Three cars with boat racks were observed on weekdays from May 2024-April 2025. One at Democrat and two at Upper Richbar.
Key: Dem = Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site
URB = Upper Richbar Day Use
LRB = Lower Richbar Day Use
LO = Live Oak Day Use
RS1 = River Access Site 1
RS2 = River Access Site 2
RS3 = River Access Site 3
RS4 = River Access Site 4
RS5 = River Access Site 5

Table 5-4. Number of Parked Vehicles by Site on Holidays, including Informal Parking Spots

Holiday	Total Vehicles	Site								
		Dem	URB	LRB	LO	RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024)	70	10	36	4	4	4	2	0	3	7
Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024)	79	30	30	9	3	1	0	0	3	3
Labor Day Weekend (Monday, September 2, 2024)	31	11	12	3	0	4	0	1	0	0
Holiday Totals	**180**	**51**	**78**	**16**	**7**	**9**	**2**	**1**	**6**	**10**

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.
Note: One car with a boat rack was observed on July 4, 2024 at Democrat.
Key: Dem = Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site
URB = Upper Richbar Day Use
LRB = Lower Richbar Day Use
LO = Live Oak Day Use
RS1 = River Access Site 1
RS2 = River Access Site 2
RS3 = River Access Site 3
RS4 = River Access Site 4
RS5 = River Access Site 5

Table 5-5. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site (22 Parking Spots)

	Weekends	Weekdays	Holidays
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	9%	4%	21%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	36%	14%	73%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.

Table 5-6. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Upper Richbar Day Use Area (42 Parking Spots)

	Weekends	Weekdays	Holidays
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	7%	3%	26%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	36%	10%	55%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.

Table 5-7. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Lower Richbar Day Use Area (11 Parking Spots)

	Weekends	Weekdays	Holidays
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	8%	3%	21%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	55%	27%	64%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.

Table 5-8. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Live Oak Day Use Area (16 Parking Spots)

	Weekends	Weekdays	Holidays
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	2%	1%	6%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	13%	6%	19%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.

Table 5-9. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Undeveloped River Access Points Along SR-178 (cumulative)

	Weekends	Weekdays	Holidays
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	14%	8%	27%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	133%	250%	150%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to April 2025.

Note: Among the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178, there is an estimated capacity for 25 vehicles to park. Parking capacity estimates were surpassed at River Access Site 1 (parking capacity 2 vehicles) and River Access Site 3 (parking capacity 3 vehicles) on some survey days.

Table 5-10. Number of Respondents that Participated in the Survey by Day Use Site

Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site		Upper Richbar Day Use Area		Lower Richbar Day Use Area		Live Oak Day Use Area	
People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent
496	38%	506	43%	142	12%	87	7%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-11. Number of Respondents that Participated in the Survey by River Access Site

River Access Site 1		River Access Site 2		River Access Site 3		River Access Site 4		River Access Site 5	
People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent
7	7%	11	11%	19	19%	34	33%	30	30%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-12. Day User Age Distribution by Percent

U16	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
12.1%	8.1%	14.8%	24.2%	23.0%	13.8%	3.6%	0.4%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-13. Day User Ethnicity by Percent

Latino	White	Asian	Black	Other (Mixed Ethnicity)
46.5%	46.8%	5.4%	0.2%	1.1%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-14. Day User Total Household Income by Percent

Less than $40,000	$41,000-$80,000	$81,000 and above	Did not respond
20%	65%	14%	1%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-15. Day User Primary Recreation Activity

Type of Activity	Percentage of Day Users Participating in Activity	Number of Day Users Participating in Activity
Picnicking	39%	520
Fishing	20%	260
Hiking/Walking/Trail use	19%	257
Scenic Driving	15%	193
Whitewater boating/rafting	3%	37
Swimming/wading	1%	26
Viewing Wildlife	1%	20
No Response	1%	14

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-16. Day User Satisfaction by Percent

Category	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall satisfaction of your trip	0.5%	0%	0.7%	67.9%	30.9%
Satisfaction of your primary activity	0.5%	0.2%	0.5%	57.1%	41.7%
Cost of facility access fee	0.3%	0.5%	5.5%	62.9%	30.8%
River access	0.2%	1.0%	4.2%	63.9%	30.7%
Number of people encountered/crowdedness	0.5%	0%	3.5%	67.6%	28.4%
Available parking when you arrived	0.7%	0.5%	1.3%	64.8%	32.7%
Feeling of safety	0.5%	0.2%	1.5%	72.7%	25.1%
Adequacy of site access for persons with disabilities	1.0%	0.7%	7.2%	63.4%	27.7%
Scenery at this site/area	1.0%	0.2%	2.0%	67.1%	29.7%
Maintenance (physical condition) of facilities	1.5%	2.2%	26.4%	48.8%	21.1%
Cleanliness of facilities	1.0%	4.2%	30.3%	43.7%	20.8%
Access to restrooms, shower, and drinking water	0.5%	0.8%	17.0%	63.2%	18.5%
Informational/educational opportunities	0.8%	0.3%	11.9%	68.9%	18.2%
Flows in the river	0%	0.2%	4.3%	73.8%	21.7%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-17. Anglers' Tackle Type by Percent

Spin Fish with Lures	Spin Fish with Bait	Fly Fish
35%	40%	25%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-18. Fishing Frequency by Season

Spring (March–May)	Summer (June–August)	Fall (September–November)	Winter (December–February)
27%	5%	36%	32%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-19. Primary Reason for Fishing by Percentage

Food	Fun
40%	60%

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-20. Whitewater Boating Responses

Survey Date	Recorded Primary Activity	Location	Group Size
6/25/24	Whitewater boating or rafting	Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site	28
6/30/24	Whitewater boating or rafting	Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site	9

Source: Survey data collected from May 2024 to June 2025.

Table 5-21. Monthly Trail Counts by Project Trail

Month	Democrat Gage Trail	Cow Flat Creek Trail	Lucas Creek Trail	Dougherty Creek Trail	Stark Creek Trail
November 2024	7	19	18	45	24
December 2024	32	61	45	123	74
January 2025	40	62	53	177	95
February 2025	62	150	66	44	134
March 2025	117	182	122	108	183
April 2025	78	173	21	57	78
May 2025	52	211	47	94	37
June 2025	51	103	47	103	29

Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

Table 5-22. Project Trail Counts by Month

November 2024 to June 2025	Number of Counts on Project Trails
November	113
December	335
January	427
February	456
March	712
April	407
May	441
June	333

Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

Table 5-23. Project Trail Weekend vs Weekday Total Counts and Averages by Project Trail

Trail	Total Counts		Average Counts	
	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday
Democrat Gage Trail	115	324	1.8	2.1
Cow Flat Creek Trail	403	558	6.3	3.5
Lucas Creek Trail	153	266	2.3	1.7
Dougherty Creek Trail	283	468	4.4	3.0
Stark Creek Trail	330	324	5.2	2.1

Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

Table 5-24. Percentage of Survey Forms Collected by Location

Democrat Gage Trail	Cow Flat Creek Trail	Lucas Creek Trail	Dougherty Creek Trail	Stark Creek Trail
0.5%	55.7%	15.6%	13.6%	14.6%

Table 5-25. Trail User Age Distribution by Percent

U16	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
6.1%	11.9%	9.6%	13.7%	14.2%	18.3%	17.5%	8.7%

Source: Survey data collected from January 2025 to June 2025.

Table 5-26. Trail User Ethnicity by Percent

Latino	White	Asian	Black	Other Ethnicity
22.1%	66.0%	4.1%	0.6%	4.6%

Source: Survey data collected from January 2025 to June 2025.

Table 5-27. Trail User Total Household Income by Percent

Less than $40,000	$41,000-$80,000	$81,000 and above	Did not respond
17%	25%	54%	4%

Source: Survey data collected from January 2025 to June 2025.

Table 5-28. Trail User Primary Visit Purpose

Primary Purpose of Visit	Percent of Trail Users
Exercise	28.9%
Viewing scenery/wildlife	23.4%
Spending time friends/family	10.9%
Exploring new areas/trails	5.5%
River access (Democrat Gage Trail only)	0.8%
Other	5.5%
No response to primary purpose	25%

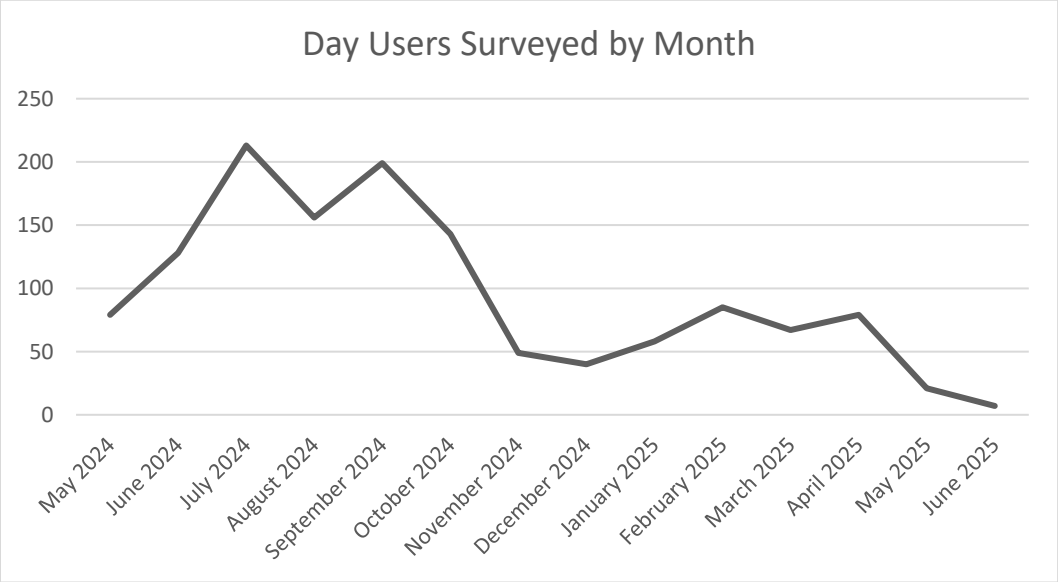
Source: Survey data collected from January 2025 to June 2025

Table 7-1. Schedule for Completion of Outstanding Study Plan Elements

Date	Activity
January 2026	Completion of survey box study plan element
February 2026	Removal of survey boxes at trailheads and developed day use areas
May 2026	Distribute final technical memo in the Final License Application, inclusive of all data

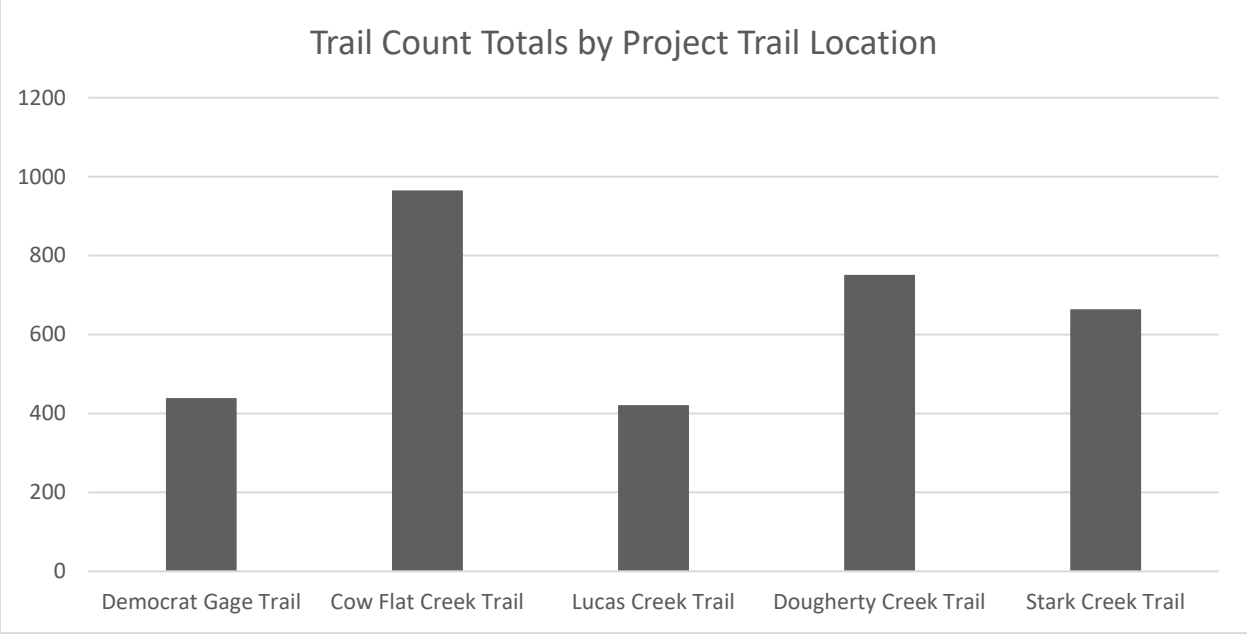
FIGURES

Figure 5-1. Day Users Surveyed by Month, May 2024-June 2025



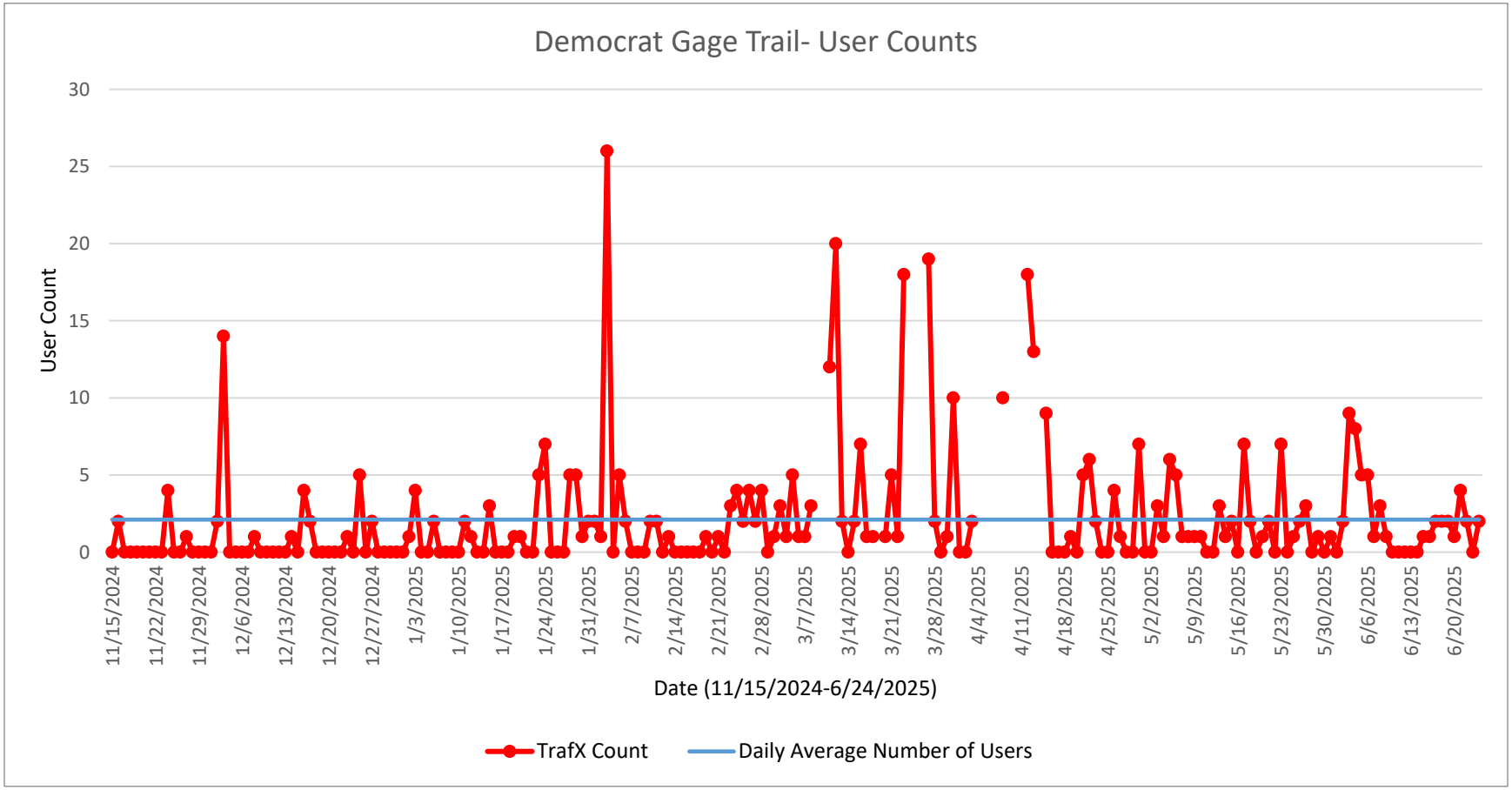
Source: Data collected via the intercept in-person survey process from May 15, 2024 to April 13, 2025, and from QR codes or physical forms April 14 through June 25, 2025.

Figure 5-2. TrafX Trail Count Totals by Project Trail, November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days)



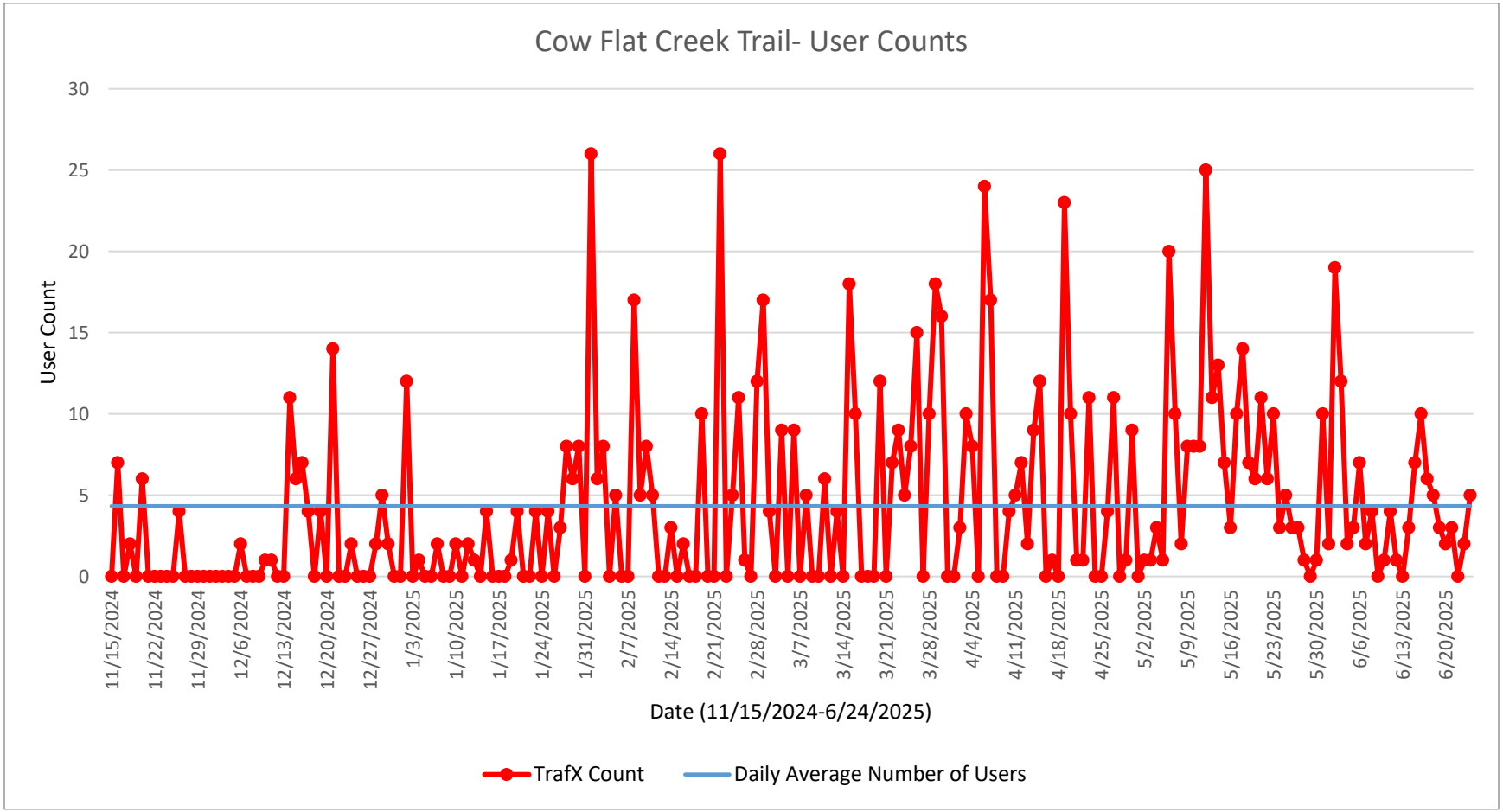
Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

Figure 5-3. TrafX Counts at Democrat Gage Trail November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025



Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).
Note: Democrat Gage Trail does not provide a round-trip route—each user is expected to pass the TrafX counter twice during a visit, therefore, two counts should be interpreted as representing one individual. Trail counts include SCE personnel. On average, six to 12 SCE personnel use the trail each month. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

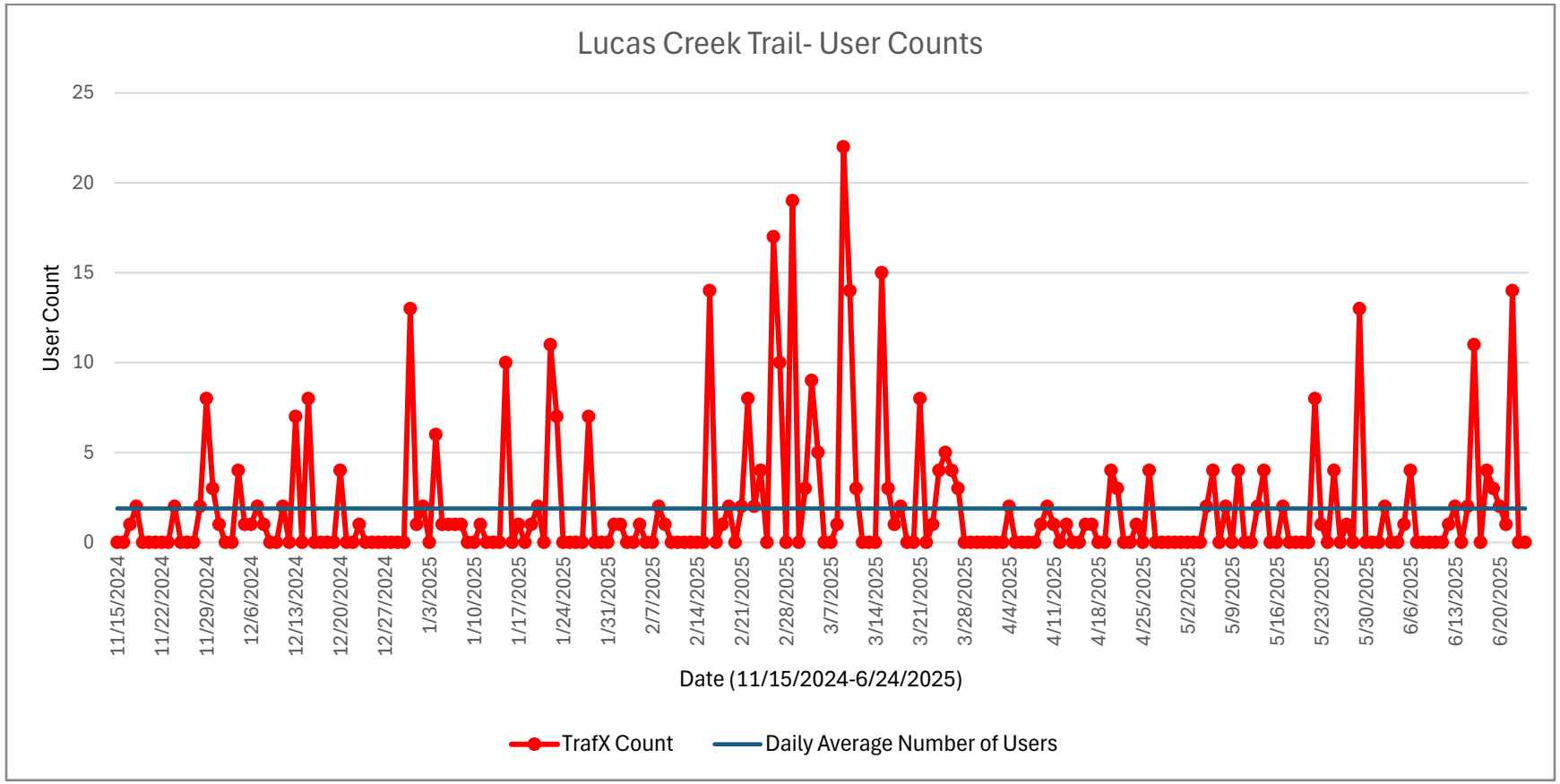
Figure 5-4. TrafX Counts at Cow Flat Creek Trail November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025



Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

Note: Cow Flat Creek Trail is not strictly an out-and-back trail, however it is likely that many users hiked up the trail and then back down during a single day, therefore, two counts should often be interpreted as representing one individual. Trail counts include SCE personnel who use the trail. Approximately four to 10 SCE personnel use the Cow Flat Creek Trail a month. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

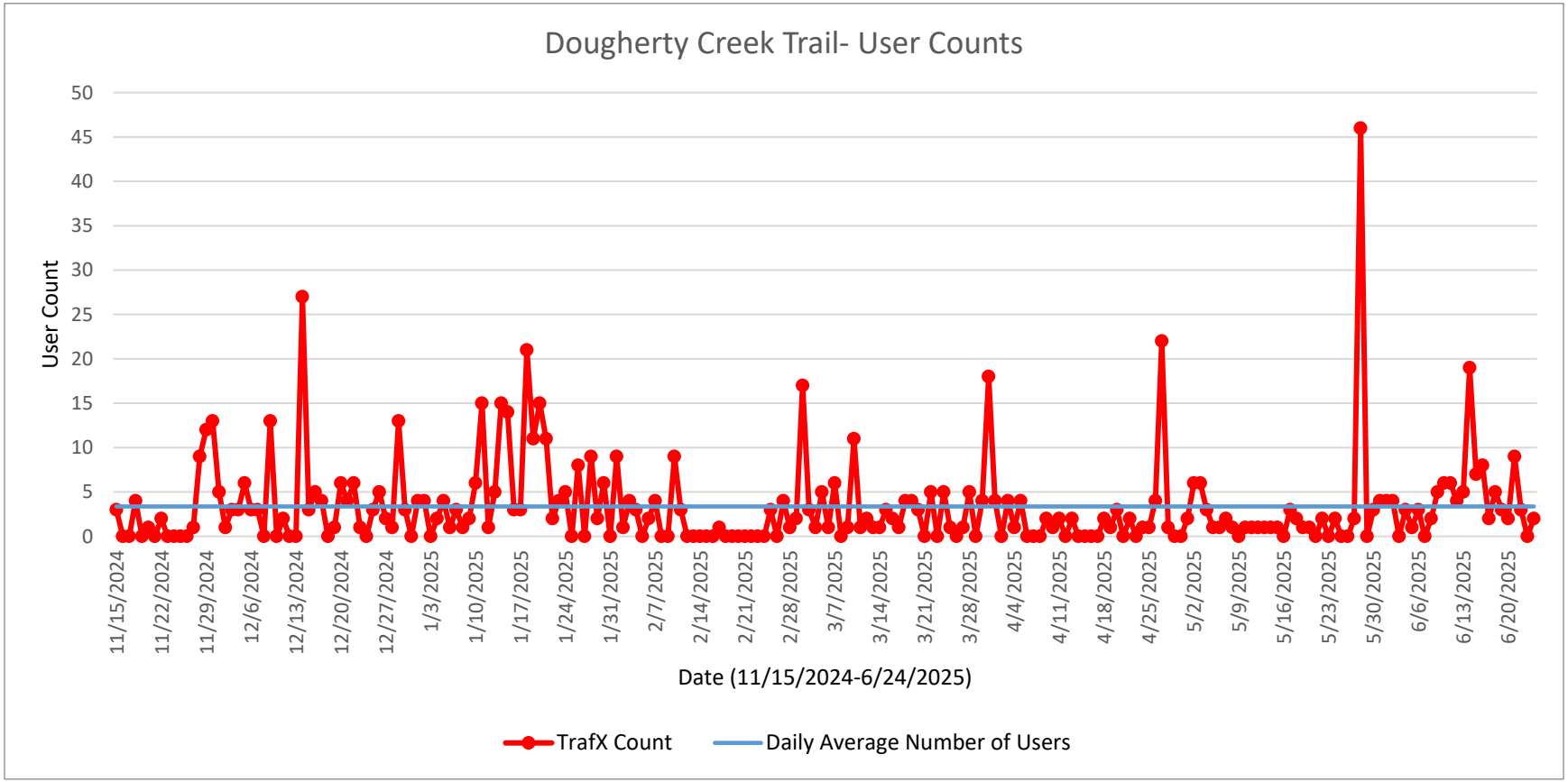
Figure 5-5. TrafX Counts at Lucas Creek Trail November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025



Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

Note: Lucas Creek Trail is not strictly an out-and-back trail, however it is likely that many users hiked up the trail and then back down during a single day, therefore, two counts should often be interpreted as representing one individual. Trail counts include SCE personnel. Approximately two to six SCE personnel use the Lucas Creek Trail a month. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

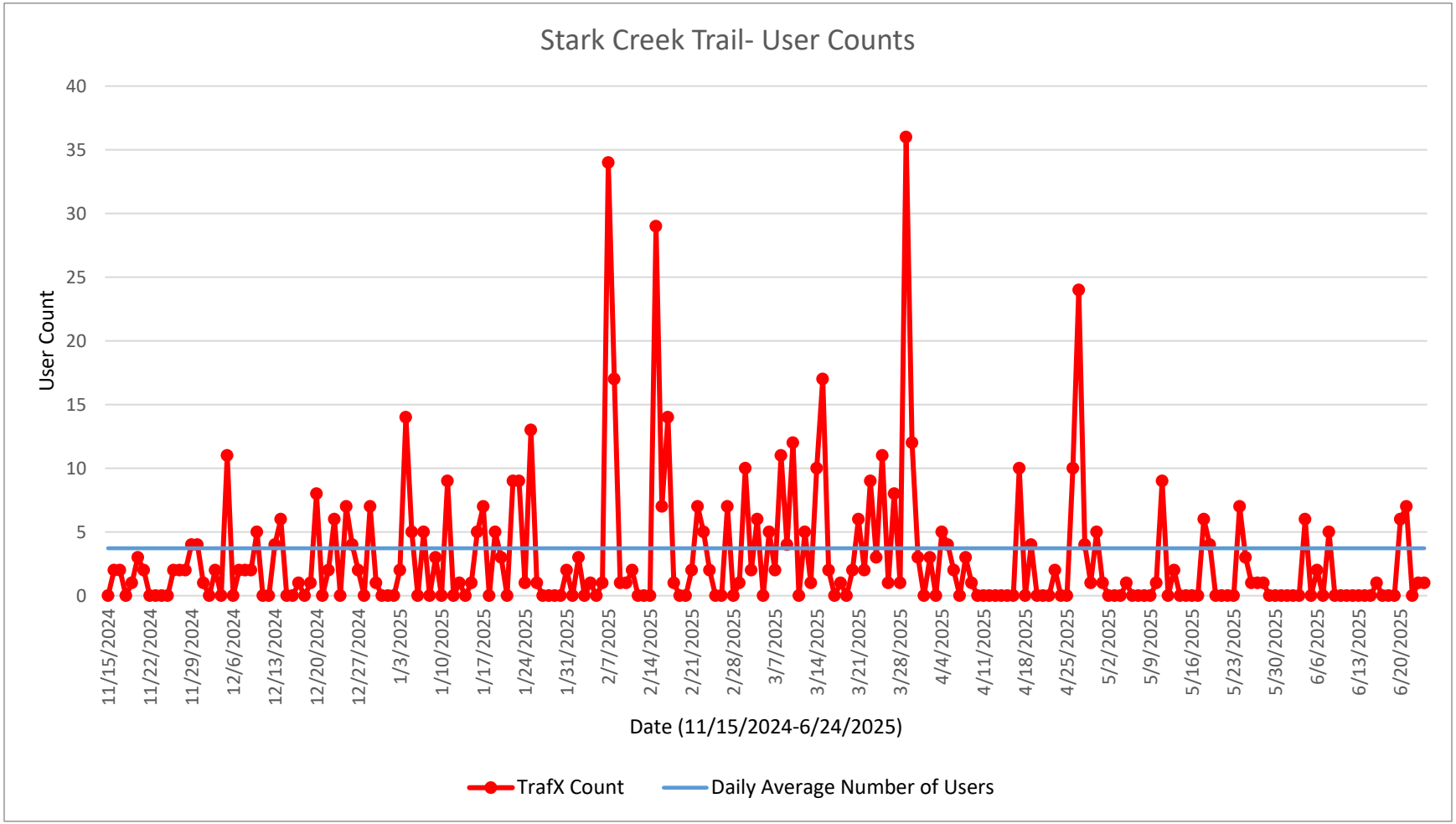
Figure 5-6. TrafX Counts at Dougherty Creek Trail November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025



Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).

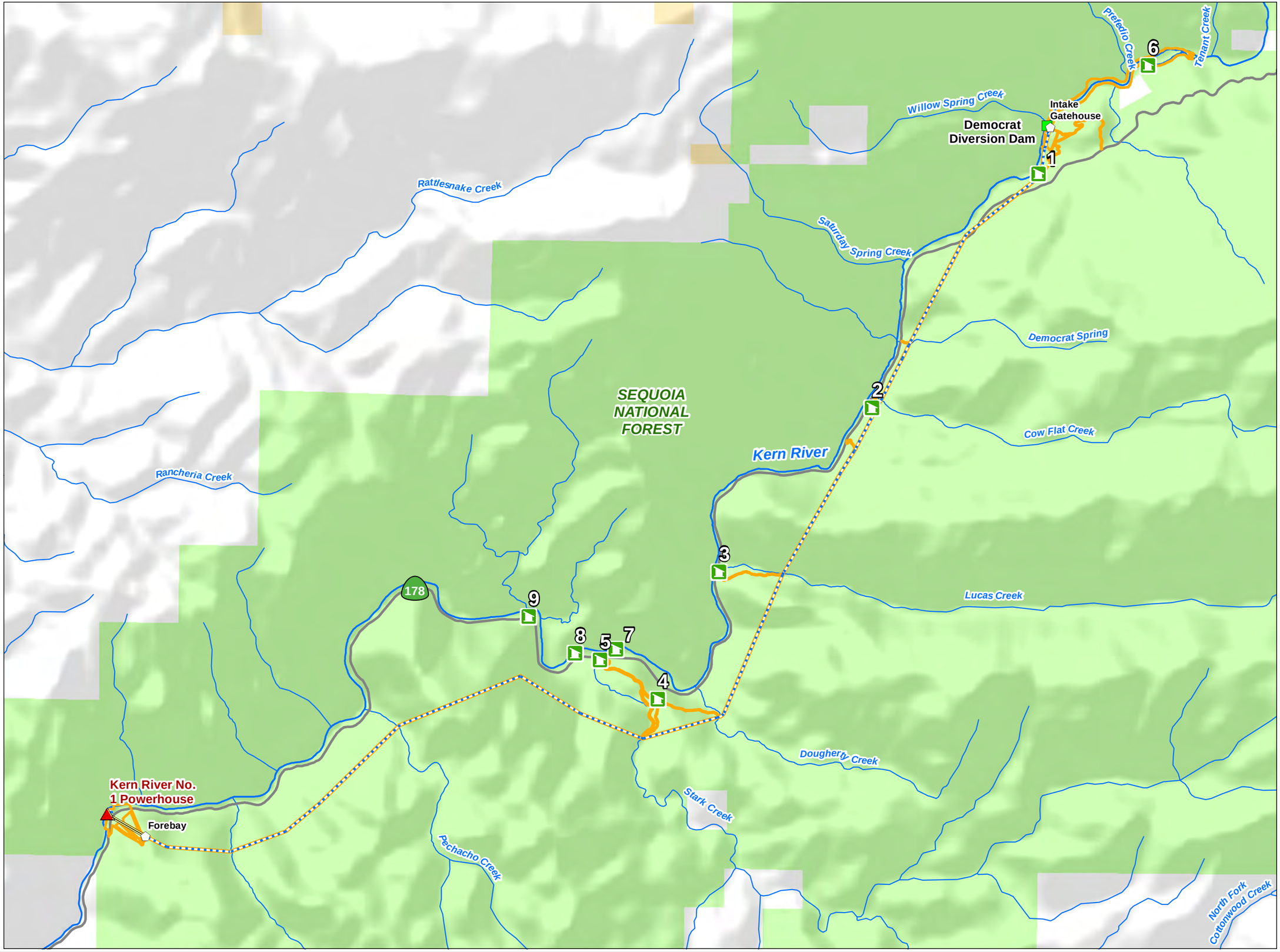
Note: Trail counts include SCE personnel. Approximately two to six SCE personnel use the Dougherty Creek Trail a month. During a single visit, SCE personnel may pass the counter multiple times.

Figure 5-7. TrafX Counts at Stark Creek Trail November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025



Source: TrafX trail counts from November 15, 2024-June 24, 2025 (223 days).
Note: Trail counts are assumed not to include SCE personnel.

MAPS



Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Flowline
- Penstock
- FERC Boundary

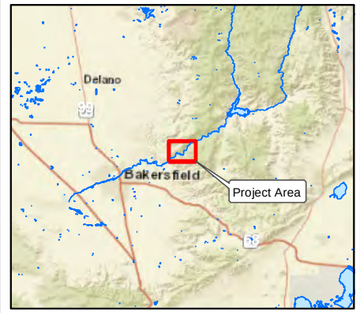
Other Features

- Watercourse
- Highway
- Self-Survey Box

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- Private (Blank)

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1

Location of Recreation Survey Sites

0 0.25 0.5
Miles

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 8/1/2025

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_SelfSurveyBoxes_17i11i_02.mxd

Democrat Dam Impoundment
Prefedio Creek
Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site
6
Democrat Beaches Road
Democrat Hotsprings (private)
Willow Spring Creek
Democrat Trail
178
Buoy Line
Democrat Dam
Drainage Tower
Intake Gatehouse
Conduit No. 1
Drainage Tunnel
Drainage Tunnel Outlet
Tunnel No. 1
Powerline Road
Willow Spring Creek Road (also referred to as Democrat Dam Road)
Democrat Dam Access Walkway
Sandbox
Sandbox Drainage Channel
MIF Release Point
Intake Gatehouse to Flume No. 1 Powerline
Flume No. 1
1
Kern River
Flume No. 1 Road
Conduit No. 2
Stilling Well No. 1
11192500 (SCE 409)
Gaging Cableway
Democrat Gage Trail
Tunnel No. 2

Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

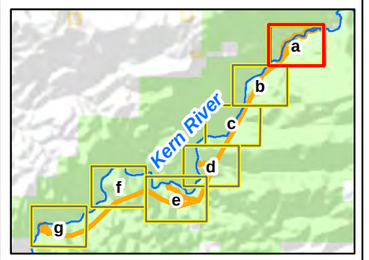
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1a

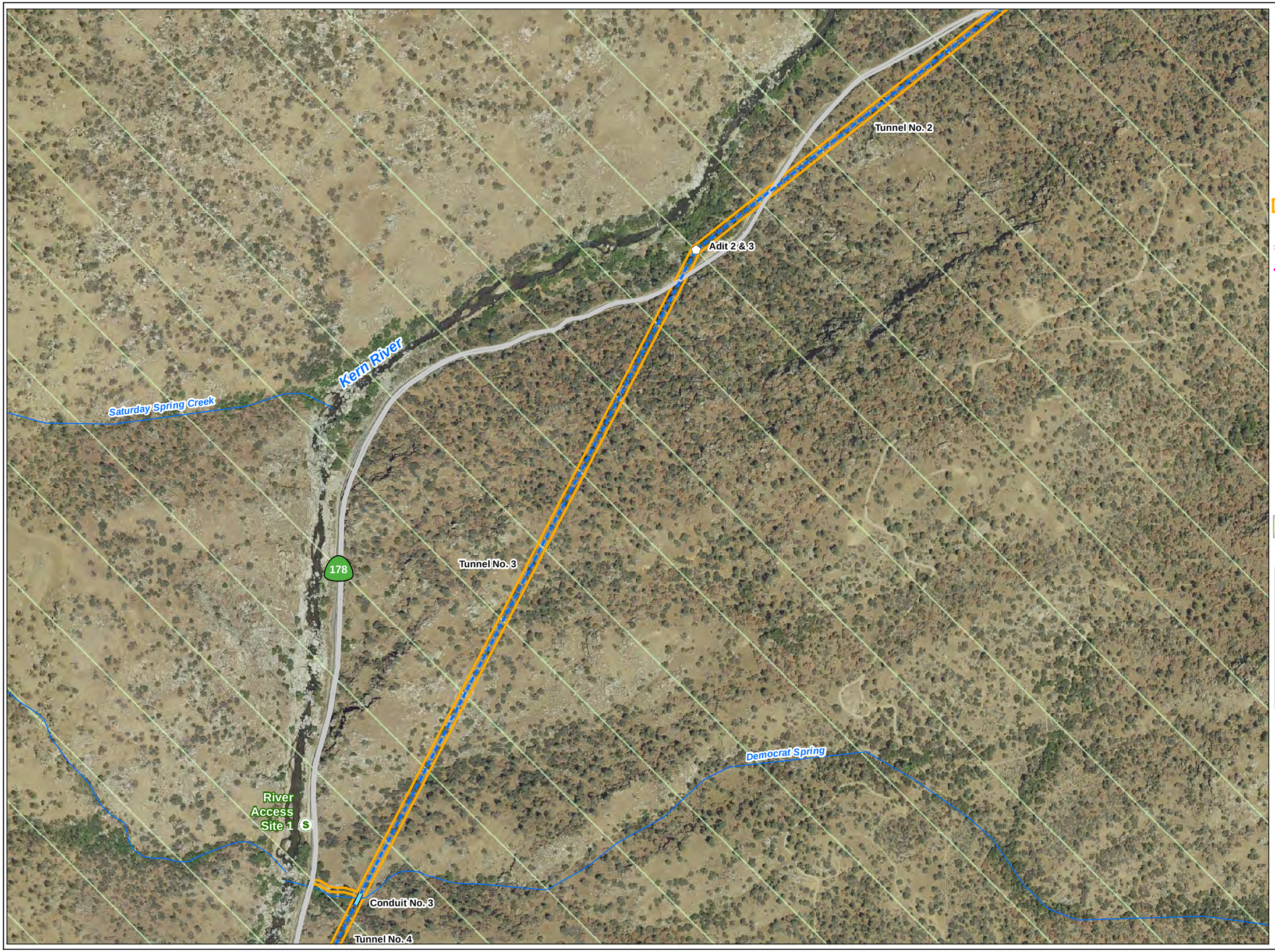
Location of Recreation Survey Sites

Date: 8/1/2025

0 250 500
Feet

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd



Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

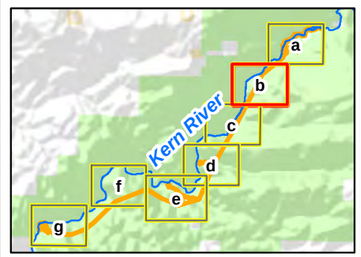
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1b

Location of Recreation Survey Sites

0 250 500
Feet

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 8/1/2025

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd

Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

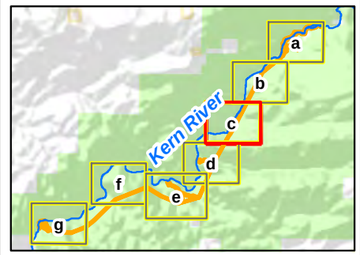
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1c

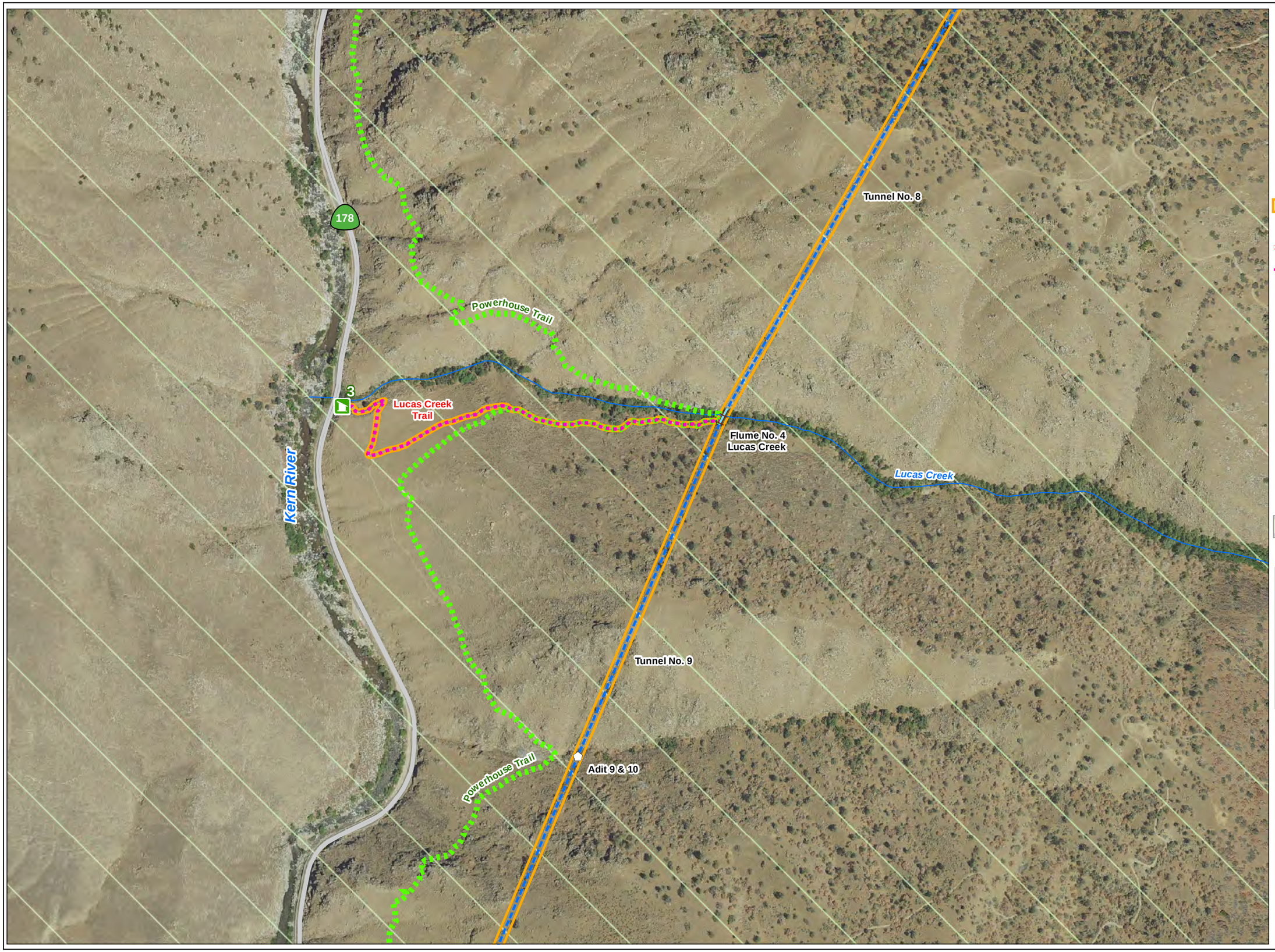
Location of Recreation Survey Sites

0 250 500
Feet

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 8/1/2025

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd



Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

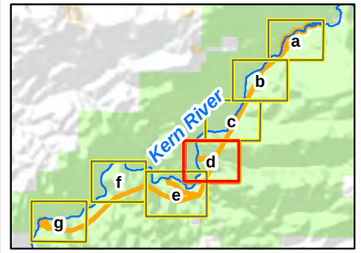
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1d

Location of Recreation Survey Sites

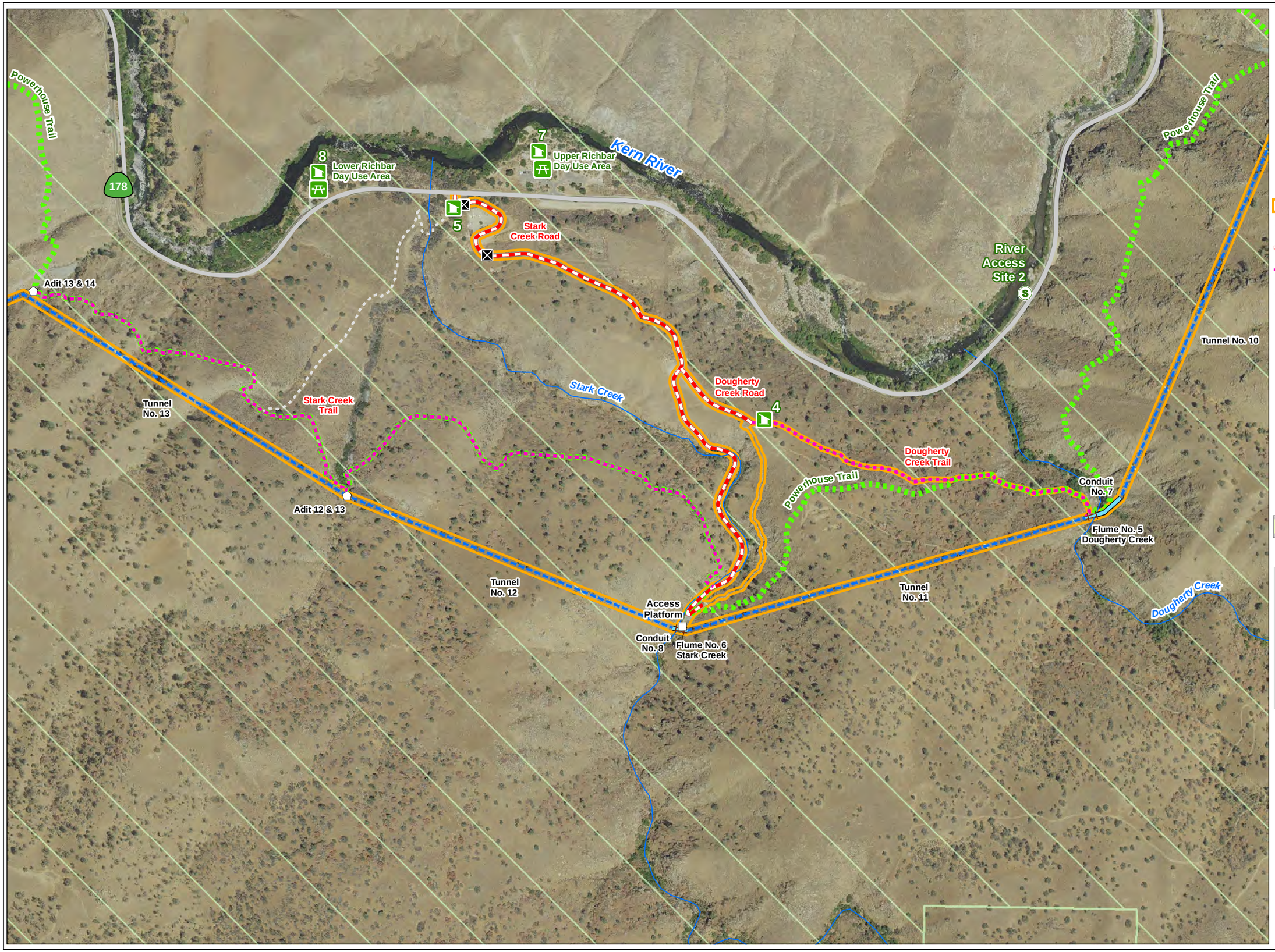
N
W E
S

0 250 500
Feet

Date: 8/1/2025

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd



Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

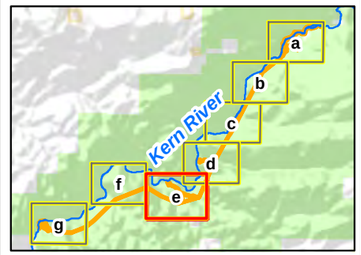
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1e

Location of Recreation Survey Sites

0 250 500
Feet

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 8/1/2025

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd

Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

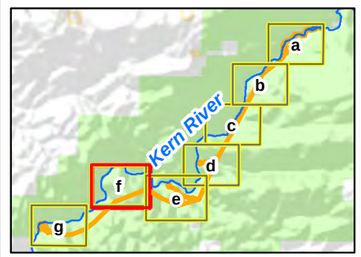
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
Energy for What's Ahead

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1f

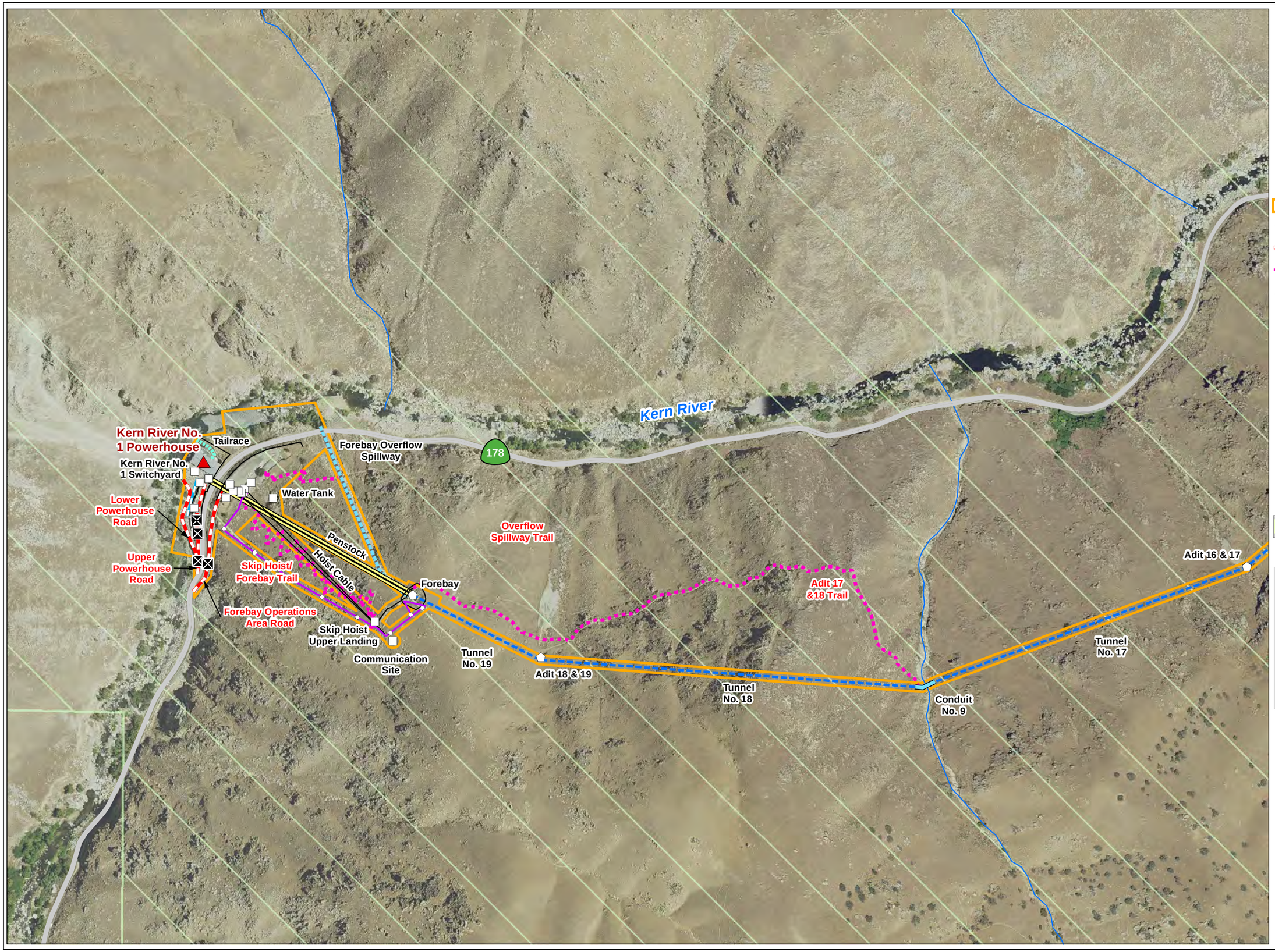
Location of Recreation Survey Sites

0 250 500
Feet

Date: 8/1/2025

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd



Facilities

- Dam
- Powerhouse
- Water Conveyence Feature
- Tunnel
- Flume
- Conduit
- Sandbox
- Penstock
- Spillway
- Tailrace
- Gage
- Ancillary Facility
- Ancillary Feature
- Powerline
- Communication / Powerline
- FERC Boundary

Transportation

- Project Road
- Other Road
- Project Trail of Focus
- Gate

Other Features

- Watercourse
- SCE-identified Parking Areas with Potential River Access
- Self-Survey Box

Forest Service Recreation Facilities

- Raft Takeout
- Day Use Area
- USFS System Trail

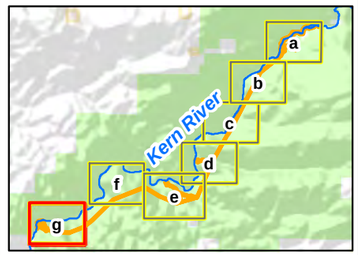
Private Recreation Facilities

- Democrat Hotsprings

Land Jurisdiction*

- U.S. Forest Service

*SOURCE: BLM 2021



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON®
Energy for What's Ahead™

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project
FERC Project No. 1930

Map 3-1g

Location of Recreation Survey Sites

0 250 500
Feet

Projection: UTM Zone 11
Datum: NAD 83

Date: 8/1/2025

C:\GIS\237800343\map\Kern River 1\RecreationMaps\SCE_Kern1_ProjTrails_Focused_17i11i_05.mxd

APPENDIX A

Day Use Survey Forms (English and Spanish)

English

Kern River No. 1 Recreation Sites

Day-Use Survey (day use sites)

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 1930)

Southern California Edison (SCE), in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service is soliciting input from day users along the lower Kern River to better understand recreation use. This recreation study is part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of the Kern River No.1 (P-1930) Hydroelectric Project. We request your help by completing the survey below. If you are traveling with multiple people, only one person in your party needs to fill out the survey. Participation is voluntary and responses will remain anonymous.

Date: _____ **Time at beginning of trip:** _____ **a.m./p.m.**

Select Current Day Use Facility Location:

☐ Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site ☐ Upper Richbar Day Use Area
☐ Lower Richbar Day Use Area ☐ Live Oak Day Use Area

Section 1 – Demographics

1. What is your home zip code? _____
2. List the number of individuals in your group that fall within each of these age categories:

   ____ Under 16 ____ 16–19 ____ 20–29 ____ 30–39 ____ 40–49 ____ 50–59 ____ 60–69 ____ 70+
3. What is your ethnicity?
   ☐ Spanish/Latino Origin ☐ Black ☐ White ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander ☐ Other:_____
4. What is your total household income?
   ☐ Less than $40,000 ☐ $41,000–$80,000 ☐ 81,000 and above

Section 2 – User Activities

5. What is the primary recreation activity that you are undertaking today? Circle one.

   Fishing Hiking/Walking/Trail use Whitewater boating/rafting Swimming/wading

   Picnicking Scenic driving Viewing wildlife

Please write-in your secondary recreation activity (as applicable) and any activity you are undertaking not listed.

_____

6. How would you rate your overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your recreation experience today?

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1. Overall satisfaction of your trip					
2. Satisfaction of your primary activity					
3. Cost of facility access fees					
4. River access					
5. Number of people encountered/crowdedness					
6. Available parking when you arrived					
7. Feeling of safety					
8. Adequacy of site access for persons with disabilities					
9. Scenery at this site/area					
10. Maintenance (physical condition) of facilities					
11. Cleanliness of facilities					
12. Access to restroom/shower/drinking water					
13. Informational/educational opportunities					
14. Flows in the river					

Continue on the other side please →

If you marked Very Dissatisfied (1) or Dissatisfied (2) for any above, please explain:

_____

7. How many recreation trips have you made to the lower Kern River in the past 12 months?

   _____ trip(s) in the last 12 months

8. If you participated in a water-related activity, did the flows in the river affect your ability to participate? Circle one.

   YES (select reason below) **NO** flow did not affect planned activities **NA**-did not partake

   If yes, circle one: flow was too high flow was too low other explain:_____

Section 3 – Surrounding Landscapes

9. How would you rate the scenic quality of the lower Kern River area in general?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very Good
General scenic quality of area					

If your rating was Very Poor (1) or Poor (2), please explain:

_____

Section 3 Angling Experiences

10. Have you fished along the lower Kern River before?
    ☐ **Yes** (please respond to the following questions) ☐ **No** (survey complete)

    a. What type of fishing tackle do you typically use to fish in the lower Kern River? (Circle all that apply)

       Spin Fish with Lures Spin with Bait Fly Fish

    b. Do you fish for fun or to catch food to eat (check one)? If you plan to eat your fish but are mostly fishing for fun, circle **Fun**. If you enjoy fishing but are mostly fishing to catch food, circle **Food**.

       Food Fun

    c. What was your primary reason for selecting this location to fish?

       _____

    d. How often have you fished this reach, the lower Kern River, in each season over the past 12 months?

       ☐ Spring (March – May) # _____ ☐ Summer (June – August) # _____
       ☐ Fall (September – November) #_____ ☐ Winter (December – February) # _____

11. Have river flows affected your angling experience in the lower Kern River? Circle one.

    YES NO

12. If yes, please indicate in which season your experience has been affected and provide a reason.

    a. Spring (Mar–May) Reason: too low / too high / other:_____
    b. Summer (Jun–Aug) Reason: too low / too high / other:_____
    c. Fall (Sep–Nov) Reason: too low / too high / other:_____
    d. Winter (Dec–Feb) Reason: too low / too high / other:_____

English

Áreas de Recreación del Río Kern No. 1

Encuesta sobre uso diurno (lugares de uso diurno)

Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No. 1 (FERC No. 1930)

Southern California Edison (SCE), en colaboración con el Servicio Forestal de los Estados Unidos, está solicitando la opinión de los usuarios diurnos del río Kern para entender mejor su uso para fines recreativos. Este estudio de recreación es parte de la renovación de la licencia de la Comisión Federal Reguladora de Energía para el Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No.1 (P-1930). Solicitamos su ayuda respondiendo a la encuesta de abajo. Si su paseo es con varias personas, solo una persona de su grupo debe llenar la encuesta. La participación es voluntaria y las respuestas permanecerán en el anonimato.

Fecha: _____ **Hora al inicio del paseo:** _____ **a.m./p.m.**

Seleccione la actual ubicación de la instalación de uso diurno:

☐ Área de punto de llegada de balsas Democrat ☐ Zona de uso diurno Upper Richbar
☐ Zona de uso diurno Lower Richbar ☐ Zona de uso diurno Live Oak

Sección 1 – Datos demográficos

1. ¿Cuál es el código postal de su domicilio? _____
2. Indique el número de personas en su grupo que calzan dentro de cada una de estas categorías etarias:
   ____<16 ____16–19 ____20–29 ____30–39 ____40–49 ____50–59 ____60–69 ____ >70
3. ¿Cuál es su etnicidad?
   ☐ latina/hispana ☐ negra ☐ blanca ☐ asiática/isleña del Pacífico ☐ otra:_____
4. ¿Cuál es el ingreso total de su hogar?
   ☐ Menos de $40 000 ☐ $41 000–$80 000 ☐ $81 000 o más

Sección 2 – Actividades del usuario

5. ¿Cuál es la actividad recreativa principal que está realizando hoy? Encierre en un círculo una.

   Pesca Senderismo/caminata/uso de sendero Rafting/canotaje en rápidas

   Nado/vadeoPicnic Conducción escénica Observar la vida silvestre

Por favor, indique su actividad de recreación secundaria (según corresponda) y cualquier actividad que esté llevando a cabo no listada arriba._____

6. ¿Cómo calificaría su satisfacción o insatisfacción general respecto a su experiencia recreativa de hoy?

	Muy insatisfecho	Insatisfecho	Neutro	Satisfecho	Muy satisfecho
1. Satisfacción general de su paseo					
2. Satisfacción con su actividad principal					
3. Costo de entrada a instalaciones					
4. Acceso al río					
5. Número de personas que encontró/aglomeraciones					
6. Estacionamiento disponible al llegar					
7. Sensación de seguridad					
8. Adecuación del acceso al lugar para personas con discapacidad					
9. Paisaje en este lugar/zona					
10. Mantenimiento (estado físico) de las instalaciones					
11. Limpieza de las instalaciones					
12. Acceso a baños/duchas/agua potable					
13. Oportunidades informativas/educativas					
14. Caudales del río					

Continue on the other side please →

Si marcó Muy insatisfecho o Insatisfecho en cualquiera de las anteriores, por favor explique por qué:

_____

7. ¿Cuántos paseos recreativos a la parte baja del río Kern ha hecho en los últimos 12 meses?

   _____ paseo(s) en los últimos 12 meses

8. Si participó en una actividad asociada con agua, ¿los caudales del río afectaron su capacidad de participar? Encierre en un círculo una.

   SÍ (seleccione abajo el motivo) **NO,** el caudal no afectó las actividades planeadas **NA,** no participé

   Si respondió SÍ, encierre en un círculo una de estas opciones:

   El caudal era muy alto El caudal era muy bajo Otra (explicar):_____

Sección 3 – Paisajes circundantes

9. ¿Cómo calificaría la calidad escénica de la zona de la parte baja del río Kern en general?

	Muy mala	Mala	Neutro	Buena	Muy buena
Calidad escénica general de la zona					

i su calificación fue Muy mala o Mala, por favor explique por qué:

_____

Sección 3 Experiencias de pesca con caña

10. ¿Ha pescado antes a lo largo de la parte baja del río Kern?
    ☐ Sí (por favor, responda a las preguntas a continuación) ☐ No (aquí termina la encuesta)

    a. ¿Qué tipo de aparejos de pesca suele utilizar para pescar en la parte baja del río Kern? (Encierre en un círculo todos los que apliquen)

       Spinning con señuelos Spinning con carnada Mosca

    b. ¿Está pescando por diversión o para comer (marcar una)? Si piensa comer sus pescados pero mayormente está pescando por diversión, encierre en un círculo **Diversión**. Si le gusta la pesca, pero principalmente pesca para **comer**, encierre en un círculo **Comida**.

       Comida Diversión

    c. ¿Cuál fue la razón principal para elegir este lugar para pescar?

       _____

       ¿Con qué frecuencia ha pescado en este tramo de la parte baja del río Kern en cada temporada en los últimos 12 meses?

       ☐ Primavera (Mar–May) _____ veces ☐ Verano (Jun–Ago) _____ veces
       ☐ Otoño (Sep–Nov) _____ veces ☐ Invierno (Dic–Feb) _____ veces

11. El caudal del río ha afectado su experiencia de pesca en la parte baja del río Kern? Encierre en un círculo una.

    SÍ NO

12. Si respondió SÍ, indique en qué temporada se vio afectada su experiencia y señale el motivo.

    a. Primavera (Mar–May) Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro:_____
    b. Verano (Jun–Ago) Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro:_____
    c. Otoño (Sep–Nov) Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro:_____
    d. Invierno (Dic–Feb) Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro:_____

English

Kern River No. 1 Recreation Project Trails

Day-Use Survey (trails)

Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 1930)

Southern California Edison (SCE), in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service is soliciting input from day users of trails along the lower Kern River to better understand recreation use. This recreation study is part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of the Kern River No.1 (P-1930) Hydroelectric Project. We request your help by completing the survey below. If you are traveling with multiple people, only one person in your party needs to fill out the survey. Participation is voluntary and responses will remain anonymous.

Date: _____ **Time at beginning of trip:** _____ **a.m./p.m.**

Select Current Trail Location:

☐ Democrat Gage Trail ☐ Cow Flat Trail ☐ Lucas Creek Trail ☐ Dougherty Creek Trail
☐ Stark Creek Trail ☐ Penstock/Forebay Trails

Section 1 – Demographics

1. What is your home zip code? _____
2. List the number of individuals in your group that fall within each of these age categories:

   ____ Under 16 ____ 16–19 ____ 20–29 ____ 30–39 ____ 40–49 ____ 50–59 ____ 60–69 ____ 70+
3. What is your ethnicity?
   ☐ Spanish/Latino Origin ☐ Black ☐ White ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander ☐ Other:_____
4. What is your total household income?
   ☐ Less than $40,000 ☐ $41,000–$80,000 ☐ 81,000 and above

Section 2 – Trail Experience

5. How would you rate your experience on this trail compared to other trails along the lower Kern River?

	Much Worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much Better
Experience on this trail compared to other trails in the area					

6. What is the reason for your rating?

   _____
7. Would you consider returning to this trail ☐ YES ☐ NO

   What is the basis for your answer?

   _____
8. Are there any improvements that you would recommend for this trail? ☐ YES ☐ NO

   What improvements do you recommend?

   _____
9. Do you have any additional comments about the trail?

   _____

   _____

Section 3 – User Activities

Continue on the other side please →

10. On this trip are you? ☐ Hiking/Walking ☐ Biking ☐ Horseback Riding ☐ Other: _____
11. How long are you planning to hike today? _____
12. Are you using this trail to get to another trail today? If so, what other trail: _____
13. What is the purpose of your visit today? (Check only one main activity in the first column.)

Check only one main activity	Check all other activities	Type of activities
		Exercise
		Viewing scenery/wildlife
		Spending time with friends/family
		Exploring new areas/trails
		River access (Democrat Gage Trail only)
		Other (please specify below)

If you selected "other" please describe the recreation activity or activities that you are undertaking.

_____

14. In the last 12 months, have you utilized any of the trails listed in the table below (see map beneath lid of survey box)? If yes, please indicate in the table the number of times you visited each site during each season.

Trail	Number of Visits				
	Spring (Mar–May)	Summer (Jun–Aug)	Fall (Sep–Nov)	Winter (Dec–Feb)	Total #
Democrat Gage Trail					
Cow Flat Trail					
Dougherty Creek Trail					
Lucas Creek Trail					
Stark Creek Trail					
Penstock/Forebay Trails					

Section 3 – Surrounding Landscapes

15. What scenic feature most attracted you to this trail? Select top feature:

☐ General scenery such as rock outcrops, mountains, and valleys
☐ Views of the lower Kern River
☐ Scenery was not a consideration when selecting this location
☐ Other: _____

16. In general, how would you rate the scenic quality of the area as seen from the trail?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very Good
General scenic quality of area					

If your rating was Very Poor (1) or Poor (2), please explain:

_____

_____

Español

Senderos del Proyecto de Recreación del Río Kern No. 1

Encuesta sobre uso diurno (senderos)

Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No. 1 (FERC No. 1930)

Southern California Edison (SCE), en colaboración con el Servicio Forestal de los Estados Unidos, está solicitando la opinión de los usuarios diurnos de los senderos del río Kern para entender mejor su uso para fines recreativos. Este estudio de recreación es parte de la renovación de la licencia de la Comisión Federal Reguladora de Energía para el Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No.1 (P-1930). Solicitamos su ayuda respondiendo a la encuesta de abajo. Si recorre la zona con varias personas, solo una persona de su grupo debe llenar la encuesta. La participación es voluntaria y las respuestas permanecerán en el anonimato.

Fecha: _____ **Hora al inicio del paseo:** _____ **a.m./p.m.**

Seleccione la ubicación actual del sendero:

☐ Sendero Democrat Gage ☐ Sendero Cow Flat ☐ Sendero Lucas Creek ☐ Sendero Dougherty Creek
☐ Sendero Stark Creek ☐ Senderos Penstock/Forebay

Sección 1 – Datos demográficos

1. ¿Cuál es el código postal de su domicilio? _____
2. Indique el número de personas en su grupo que calzan dentro de cada una de estas categorías etarias:
   ____<16 ____16–19 ____20–29 ____30–39 ____40–49 ____50–59 ____60–69 ____ >70
3. ¿Cuál es su etnicidad?
   ☐ latina/hispana ☐ negra ☐ blanca ☐ asiática/isleña del Pacífico ☐ Otra: _____
4. ¿Cuál es el ingreso total de su hogar?
   ☐ Menos de $40 000 ☐ $41,000–$80,000 ☐ $81,000 o más

Sección 2 – Experiencia con los senderos

5. ¿Cómo calificaría su experiencia en este sendero en comparación con otros senderos a lo largo de la parte baja del río Kern?

	Mucho Peor	Peor	Igual	Mejor	Mucho Mejor
Experiencia en este sendero en comparación con otros senderos del área					

6. ¿Por qué motivo dio esa calificación?

   _____

7. ¿Consideraría regresar a este sendero? ☐ SÍ ☐ NO
   ¿En qué se basa su respuesta?

   _____

8. ¿Hay alguna mejora que recomendaría para este sendero? ☐ SÍ ☐ NO
   ¿Qué mejoras recomienda?

   _____

9. ¿Tiene algún comentario adicional sobre el sendero?

   _____

   _____

Sección 3 – Actividades del usuario

Continue on the other side please →

10. ¿Qué está haciendo en este paseo? ☐ Senderismo/caminata ☐ Ciclismo ☐ Cabalgata
    ☐ Otro: _____

11. ¿Cuánto tiempo tiene planeado caminar hoy? _____

12. ¿Está utilizando este sendero para llegar a otro hoy? De ser así, ¿cuál es el otro sendero?: _____

    _____

13. ¿Cuál es el propósito de su visita de hoy? (Marque solo una actividad principal en la primera columna)

Marque solo una actividad principal	Marque todas las demás actividades	Tipo de actividad
		Hacer ejercicio
		Observar el paisaje/la naturaleza
		Pasar tiempo con amigos/familia
		Explorar nuevas áreas/senderos
		Acceder al río (solo el sendero Democrat Gage)
		Otra (especifíquela a continuación)

Si seleccionó "Otra", describa la actividad o actividades recreativas que está realizando.

_____

14. En los últimos 12 meses, ¿ha utilizado alguno de los senderos indicados en la tabla de abajo (ver el mapa que está debajo de la tapa de la urna de la encuesta)? En caso afirmativo, indique en la tabla el número de veces que visitó cada lugar durante cada temporada.

Sendero	Número de visitas				
	Primavera (marzo–mayo)	Summer (Jun–Aug)	Primavera (marzo–mayo)	Winter (Dec–Feb)	Primavera (marzo–mayo)
Sendero Democrat Gage					
Sendero Cow Flat					
Sendero Dougherty Creek					
Sendero Lucas Creek					
Sendero Stark Creek					
Senderos de la tubería forzada/cámara de carga					

Sección 3 – Paisajes circundantes

15. ¿Qué elemento escénico le atrajo más a este sendero? Seleccione la principal:
    ☐ Paisaje general como afloramientos rocosos, montañas y valles
    ☐ Vistas de la parte baja del río Kern
    ☐ El paisaje no fue un factor que se consideró a la hora de seleccionar esta ubicación
    ☐ Otra: _____

16. En general, ¿cómo calificaría la calidad escénica del área que se ve desde el sendero?

	Muy mala	Mala	Neutra	Buena	Muy Buena
Calidad escénica general de la zona					

Si su calificación fue Muy mala o Mala, sírvase explicar por qué:

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

Forest Service Approval of Infrared Trail Camera Installation

Forest Service

Sequoia National Forest
Giant Sequoia National Monument

220 East Morton Avenue
Porterville, CA 93257
559-784-1500
TDD: 559-781-6650
FAX: 559-781-4744
www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia/

File Code: 2720
Date: October 22, 2024

Meg Richardson
Hydro Relicensing Project Manager
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue
Rosemead, CA 91770

RE: **Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (P-1930) Relicensing: REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Trail Camera Prop**

Dear Ms. Richardson:

I reviewed your proposal for the temporary installation of infrared cameras as a means of capturing trail use along the lower Kern. This data collection is need for the REC 2 - Recreation Facility Use Assessment Technical Study Plan (REC 2 TSP) for the Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project Relicensing (Project) and was approved by FERC in March 2024.

The REC 2 TSP proposes the temporary installation of infrared cameras as a means of capturing trail use along the lower Kern River between the Democrat Dam impoundment (upstream) and the SCE KR1 Powerhouse (downstream). The temporary infrared cameras are located on United States Forest Service Sequoia National Forest (USFS-SQF) lands outside of the FERC Project boundary. At each of five Project trails (trails established by and/or used primarily by SCE to access Project infrastructure) one infrared camera is proposed to be installed by placing it on the ground within 400 yards of the trailhead at a discrete location. No ground disturbance is anticipated; trimming of ground cover may be required to ensure the infrared cameras capture recreation use. Infrared cameras are to be installed for one year. The objective is to characterize recreation use along Project trails that provide access to the lower Kern River or to an existing Forest Service trail in the vicinity of the Project.

As described, this proposal falls within a category of actions that are normally excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) [40 CFR 1501.4 and 36 CFR 220.5(a)]. Decisions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an EIS or EA when they are within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR part 1b.3. This proposal falls within category 7 CFR 1b.3(a)(3) which includes inventories, research activities, and studies, such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity. Based on an assessment of resource conditions, there are no extraordinary circumstances that would preclude use of a categorical exclusion; therefore, the project is categorically excluded from documentation. A case file or decision memo is not required.

After reviewing your proposal for compliance with regulations found at 36 CFR 251.50(e), I have determined that your proposed use, as you have described, will have nominal effects on the lands,

resources, and programs of the National Forest, therefore a special use permit is not required.

If your proposed use changes from what you have described, please contact Special Use Permit Administrator Marie (Angie) Attencio at (760) 549-9978 so that we may determine whether your use continues to qualify for a permit waiver. Likewise, if any factor associated with National Forest System lands, resources, or programs (such as the discovery of an endangered species in the area) changes and there is no longer a basis for the nominal effects determination, I or someone from my office will contact you in writing to rescind the nominal effects determination. If this happens, there may be alternative mechanisms to permit your activity.

If you propose to conduct the same activity next year, please contact my office again to ensure that your use continues to qualify for a permit waiver.

As a reminder, your use must comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies. We ask that you pay special attention to current Kern River Ranger District fire restrictions. I recommend you carry a copy of this letter with you to verify that I have determined that your use, as described above, does not require a special use authorization.

Please contact my office if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

ANTHONY EDWARDS
Digitally signed by ANTHONY EDWARDS
Date: 2024.10.22 22:59:53 -07'00'

ANTHONY EDWARDS
Forest Supervisor

cc: Brian Block/Acting District Ranger, Kern River Ranger District;
Billy Brown; Karen Miller