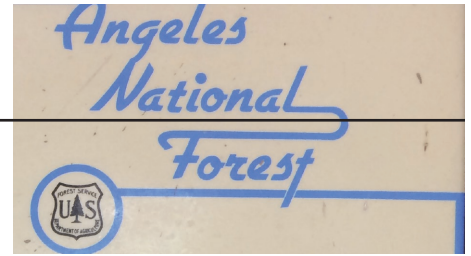


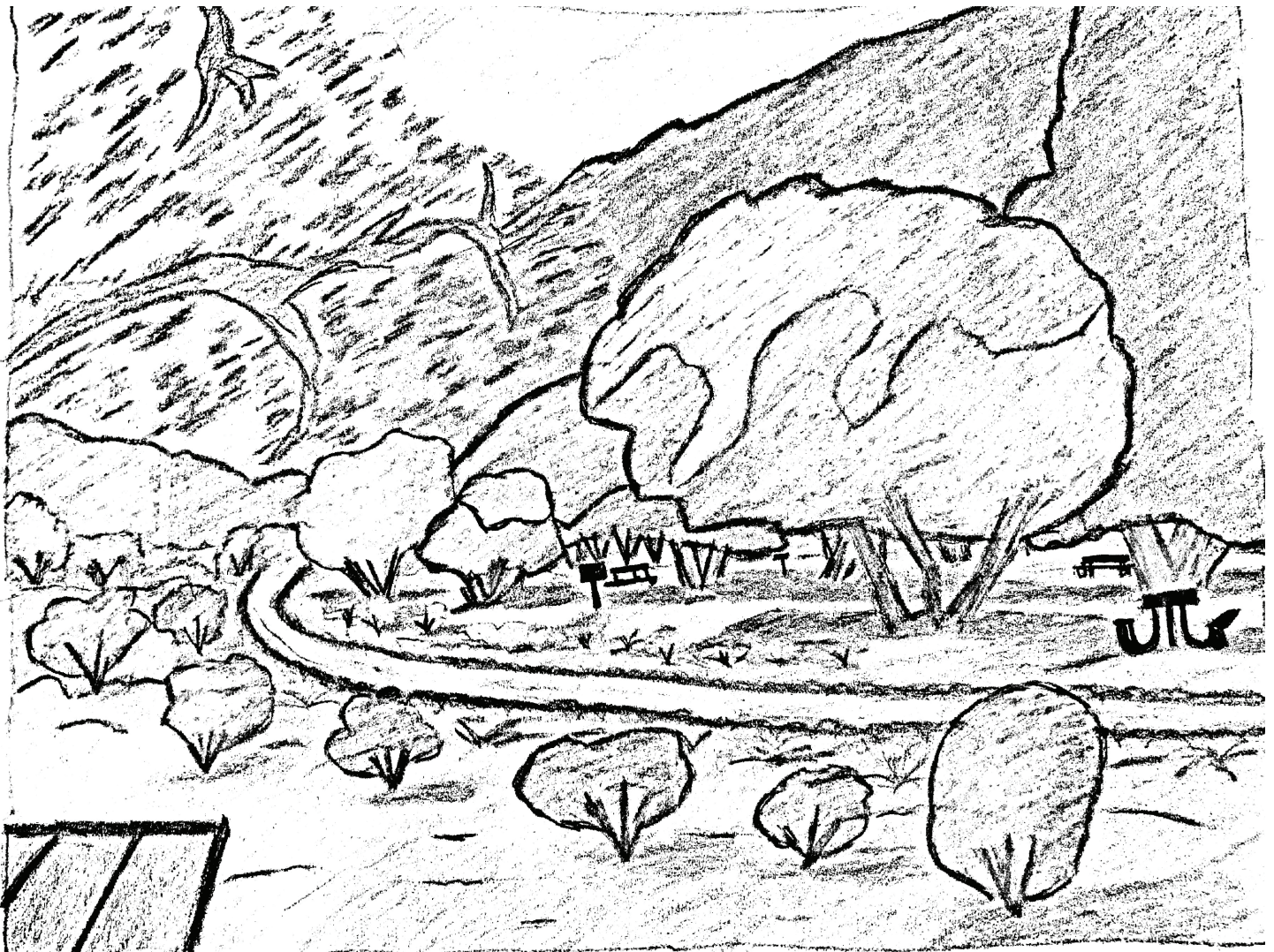
Redesigning Vogel Flat Angeles National Forest, California

WRPI Watershed Management Internship 2017
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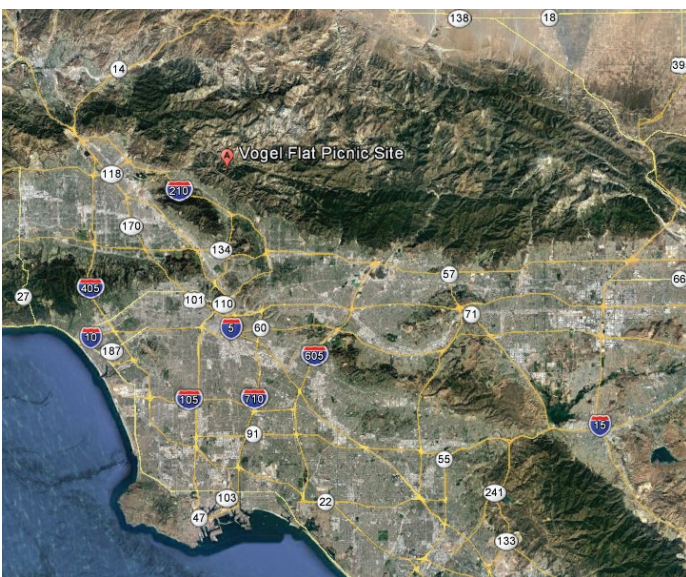


Executive Summary

This project is related to the field of landscape architecture, and the specific USDA position of forest landscape architect. The project gives an example of how multiple fields within the forest service work together to find solutions. I worked in collaboration with fellow WRPI intern, Rafael to come up with a plan to redesign the Vogel Flat picnic area in the Angeles National Forest. My focus was on the main design and providing safe access to the creek while Rafael focused on ways to improve the culvert and drainage adjacent to the site. This project includes a site analysis and a new site plan for the picnic area. The design plan offers a way to better work with the unpredictability of nature and the elements while providing a safe place for the public to enjoy the forest.

Project Objectives

Vogel Flat is located in the Angeles National Forest off Big Tujunga Creek Road adjacent to the Big Tujunga Fire Station. Many recreation sites in the Angeles National forest are along waterways, which are often the most sensitive habitats. A major issue of this project was dealing with the tradeoff of how to provide public access while minimizing harmful effects to the environment. Many residents of Los Angeles county, a county which is considered park poor, rely on the Angeles National forest for recreation opportunities. The Angeles National Forest represents 78 percent of the open space in LA County, and over 17 million people live within a 90 minute commute of the forest. Reopening Vogel Flat will provide a safe place for the public to recreate in a popular section in the forest. Project tasks first involved researching the site, site visits, site analysis, and design of the picnic area. We visited the site a total of 3 times, used Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map out existing picnic sites, and addressed the problem of sediment build up in the site. We also discovered an informal access trail leading the Big Tujunga Creek.



A map showing the location of the picnic site and an aerial view. Source: Google Earth

Overview of the Site

- Location: Off Big Tujunga Canyon Road adjacent to Big Tujunga Fire Station
- Area heavily impacted by the Station Fire
- Sediment build up throughout the site
- Picnic area is in close proximity to a culvert and drainage channel
- Non-Native and invasive vegetation is present
- Mixed use site, private residences in close proximity to the picnic area
- Nearby Big Tujunga Creek is Santa Ana sucker habitat



A



B



C



D

Image A: the entry way into the picnic area, Image B: sediment build-up around the oaks, Image C: view of the parking lot and restroom, Image D: Non native vegetation present on the site *Nerium oleander*

Project Outcomes

With a redesign of the Vogel Flat Picnic area, the public will have access to the outdoors with minimal environmental impact. Vegetation around the picnic area and near the informal access trail to the creek will also be restored. This will restore the natural aesthetics of the site while also restoring habitat. The raised walkway will provide opportunities for people to get up close and interact with the creek while projecting the sensitive riparian habitat.

Conclusion

Redesigning the Vogel Flat picnic area is very important because it provides a developed recreation area in one of the most highly visited national forests in the nation. Reopening this picnic area will reduce environmental impacts and reduce crowding at other recreation sites. The newly designed trail takes the visitor on a trip through the Southern California oak woodland plant community. Interpretive signage will be placed along the trail educating visitors about the special habitat and rich history. Excess sediment buildup at the site will be removed and the channel will be restored using natural techniques. There will be an addition of a shaded play area at the picnic site. A shade structure will provide relief from the sun over the play area. New trees will also be planted to provide more shade in the picnic area.



Concept Design Rendering

Conceptual Plan Graphic

