

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The County of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan, a regional plan that ensures the long-term survival of sensitive plant and animal species and protects the native vegetation, and its associated Implementing Agreement (IA) establish the conditions under which the County will receive from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game certain long-term Take Authorizations. The purpose of the plan is to benefit the County, public and private land owners and other land development project proponents within its Subarea boundaries. The IA is an acknowledgment that the MSCP satisfies conditions established in the Section 4(d) Special Rule for the coastal California gnatcatcher that will allow the taking of certain Covered Species incidental to land development and other lawful land uses which are authorized by the County.

Pursuant to Section 6.3.1 of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), and Section 10.10, Preserve Management Program, of the Implementing Agreement (IA), the County of San Diego is required to submit within six months to the USFWS and CDFG for review, a draft framework management plan for that portion of the MSCP Preserve which is within the Subarea. The signature date for the IA was March 17, 1998. The six-month time frame was from March 17, 1998 to September 17, 1998. Final approval was due nine months from the effective date (December 17, 1998).

The Implementing Agreement (IA) for the MSCP is a contract between the County and Wildlife Agencies. The IA is the basis for the granting of a Section 10(a) Permit by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a Take Authorization under the Natural Communities Conservation Program Act by the California Department of Fish and Game. The IA establishes the assurances and obligations of the parties in implementing the MSCP and the Federal and State permits.

In addition, pursuant to the IA, Section 14.7, Coordination of Preserve Management, the County in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Refuge System, has established the Habitat Management Technical Committee (HMTTC). The HMTTC is comprised of preserve management personnel from the state, federal, local jurisdictions, and water utility companies. The HMTTC addresses technical issues of preserve management as identified in Section 5.8.3 of the MSCP Plan. The County of San Diego has been proposed to act as the repository for all data regarding preserved land. In this capacity the County will coordinate with the wildlife agencies to identify new monitoring methods and techniques including adaptive management.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The County has been involved in the preparation of regional open space programs, including the MSCP, for a number of years. The MSCP was initiated by the City of San Diego and is a habitat conservation plan prepared according to the requirements of State and Federal law. The Plan's provisions call for protection of large contiguous areas of habitat to benefit endangered species qualifying the Plan as a Habitat Conservation Plan under Section 10(a) of the Endangered Species

Act. The Plan provides the basis for an application for an Incidental Take Authorization for covered species, without the need for a separate Federal permit for the 85 species covered by the Plan. The State of California would also grant the County authorization to take covered species (under the California Endangered Species Act) through the Natural Communities Conservation Program Act (NCCP).

The City of San Diego was the lead agency (pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act) for the Environmental Impact Report for the MSCP. The City of San Diego and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were co-leads on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement required by the National Environmental Policy Act. The County, in approving the MSCP, is a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act. The County prepared an addendum to the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement, to reflect minor amendments to the County Subarea Plan, Biological Mitigation Ordinance, and Grading and Clearing Ordinance, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors on October 22, 1997.

The overall framework for the MSCP includes the basic biological analysis and guidance for the protection of the 85 species covered by the Plan. It outlines the standards for the identification and assemblage of the 171,920-acre preserve necessary to protect the covered species. It establishes implementation principles including recommendations for sharing responsibility for implementing the Plan between the Wildlife Agencies, local government, and property owners. Therefore, this plan was purposely prepared to be as consistent as possible with the City of San Diego's Framework Management Plan.

The total MSCP study area encompasses 12 jurisdictions and consists of 582,243 acres, of which 43% (252,132 acres) is in unincorporated areas under the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego.

The Subarea Plan defines the County's participation in the MSCP. The County of San Diego Subarea Plan encompasses three segments; Lake Hodges, South County, and Metro-Lakeside-Jamul. It establishes conservation goals and criteria for land development in the Subarea.

The Plan requires the use of specific "Adaptive Management Techniques" directed at the conservation and recovery of individual species. "Adaptive Management Techniques" refers to modifying management actions when monitoring the resources indicates that changes are needed. Such actions may include such measures as assuring fires do not occur too frequently in areas where species are sensitive to fire occurrences. The Plan also provides for biological monitoring and preparation of an annual report, which reviews the Plan's effectiveness. Based upon this review and biological monitoring effort, adjustments in the management and priorities for purchase of land can be made as necessary.

Under the MSCP Plan, the preserve is being assembled through conservation of lands already in public ownership, public acquisition of private lands from willing sellers, and private development contributions through development regulations and mitigation of impacts. Upon completion, the total MSCP preserve is anticipated to contain at least 171,920 acres. For the entire MSCP Plan (including County lands as well as lands in the other participating cities), it is anticipated that 63,170 acres will be conserved through the development process, including mitigation for impacts to biological resources outside of the preserve. Preserve management activities will include, but not be limited to, such recovery actions as enhancement, restoration, avoidance, non-native predator control, invasive

plant control, etc.

The MSCP Plan preserve system, including the County's portion of the system, will be managed by a diverse array of agencies, private foundations, and landowners. Management will be based on criteria established by this Framework Management Plan, and incorporated into Area-Specific Management Directives, under guidance the Habitat Management Technical Committee.

Area-Specific Management Directives will be developed using generally accepted practices and procedures for management of biological preserves, and will comply with the establishment processes outlined in this Framework Management Plan. Area-Specific Management Directives will be developed and implemented to address species and habitat management needs in a phased manner for logical and discrete areas, once conserved as part of the MSCP preserve, including species-specific management required in Table 3-5 or as condition of take authorization.

This diversity of preserve management will strengthen the adaptive management programs because of the variety of experience and viewpoints brought to preserve management. Communication between preserve managers will be the key to developing improved management techniques and discontinuing management practices that degrade the long-term viability of the preserve system.

The Implementing Agreement requires the County to ensure that there is adequate management of preserve lands. It also requires that Table 3-5 of the County of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan be followed. As cited above, management of the biological resources may need to include "Adaptive Management Techniques", which may be species-specific and consist of conservation measures which go beyond fencing and fuel management and are directed toward assisting a declining species to regain viability. The County will be responsible for the County-owned lands committed to the preserve. Preserved private lands that have been required as mitigation, either dedicated to the County or managed by other entities, must have the financial resources to assure long-term stewardship, e.g., fencing, litter removal, etc. The County, through the MSCP, is responsible for meeting the conditions of coverage as well as also being responsible for biological monitoring requirements of the plan. The approved biological monitoring protocol requirements are cited in the "MSCP Biological Monitoring Program" document prepared by Ogden Environmental, dated 1996. It may be necessary to periodically revise the biological monitoring protocol as new scientific information becomes available. Any revisions in the protocol will be subject to approval by the resource agencies and agreed to by the participating local jurisdictions. It is anticipated that the funding for these activities will be the responsibility of Federal, State and local agencies, excluding private property owners.

The framework management plan incorporates a requirement for the subsequent preparation and implementation of "Area-Specific Management Directives". These directives will only pertain to areas outside approved management plans (i.e., Habitat Management Plan for the Bernardo Lakes Project), County owned or managed lands, or projects where a habitat management plan is a condition of project approval. These directives are specific management actions, which are appropriate for the habitats and species found in a local area. The Directives will also take into account the particular circumstances of that given area.

The Implementing Agreement for the County Subarea Plan includes the requirement for an annual review by the Wildlife Agencies and a public workshop. County and resource agency Staff will address issues associated with the Land Development review process as part of the annual report and workshop.

If development occurs in areas designated as wetlands, Section 401 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act under the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Army Corps of Engineers and Section 1600 of the State of California Fish and Game Code permits will be required by the responsible agencies.

### **III. COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SUBAREA PLAN**

The County Subarea is located mostly in the eastern part of the MSCP study area (Figure 1). At the time that the Subarea Plan was approved, about 73% (approximately 184,000 acres) of the County Subarea provided habitat for native plants and wildlife. The remaining 27% (approximately 68,000) of the Subarea Plan is disturbed, developed, or agricultural land that is considered to have little or no habitat value. Almost 63,000 acres, approximately 62% of the total anticipated conservation level of approximately 101,268 acres, are already committed to conservation within the County Subarea.

The County Subarea Plan Objectives related to preserve design include, but are not limited to:

- Acknowledge the no-net-loss-of-wetlands standard to satisfy state and federal wetland goals, policies, and standards;
- Include measures to maximize the habitat structural diversity of conserved habitat areas, including conservation of unique habitats and habitat features (e.g., soil types, rock outcrops, drainage's, representative native plant species);
- Provide for the conservation of spatially representative (e.g., coastal versus interior) examples of extensive patches of coastal sage scrub and other habitat types that were ranked as having high and very high biological value by the MSCP habitat evaluation model;
- Create significant blocks of habitat to reduce edge effects and maximize the ratio of surface area to the perimeter of conserved habitats;
- Provide incentives for development in the least sensitive habitat areas;
- Provide for the conservation of key regional populations of the covered species, and representation of sensitive habitats and their geographic sub-associations in biologically functioning units; and
- Conserve large interconnected blocks of habitat that contribute to the preservation of wide-ranging species such as mule deer, golden eagle, and predators as appropriate.

#### **A. Preserve Management**

The requirements of Table 3-5 of the County's MSCP Plan will be incorporated into the Area Specific Management Directives, which will also include measures for fire management. As funding is allocated, the County, in coordination with the wildlife resource agencies, will initiate a baseline survey to prioritize the Table 3-5 areas where species may be under imminent or direct threat of extinction. Actions to prioritize these species will be addressed in this Framework Management Plan. The biological survey locations for monitoring were recommended in the MSCP Biological Monitoring Plan prepared by Ogden Environmental dated 1996, and will be reviewed, utilized as a guide, and modified as necessary for biological purposes. This Framework Management Plan requires the subsequent preparation and implementation of area-specific management directives, which will be prepared in a phased manner for logical discrete areas of land within the Subarea as those lands are committed to permanent preservation. Said plans will be

initiated within six months after the land has been title deeded for conservation purposes, and will incorporate and implement the General Management Directives of this Framework Management Plan (starting on page 10 of this document) as appropriate and shall be subject to County and resource agency approval. The criteria for the creation of these plans are described below. Conditions to perform adaptive management will not be placed on private projects unless a specific agreement has been reached between the property owner and the public agencies. A matrix of duties/check list to be performed will be prepared for each site-specific area. Appendix 1 is a sample that could be used for the Lakeside Archipelago, which was determined in the Biological Monitoring Plan for the Multiple Species Conservation Program as a “Regional Habitat Linkage Monitoring Location-L12 “. Included are the text and data forms for corridor monitoring from Appendix C, Biological Monitoring Plan for the Multiple Species Conservation Program.

The following activities are precluded on land that is dedicated as an open space easement to the County: grading, excavation, placement of soil, sand, rock, gravel or other material, clearing of vegetation, construction, erection or placement of any building or structure, vehicular activities, trash dumping or use for any purpose other than as open space, or planting of vegetation materials. In addition, fuel management activities on preserve lands are considered to be precluded, unless said activities are a part of an approved site specific plan or prescribed wildfire management program for the preserve. Baseline surveys will be conducted and these data will be used to create the Area-Specific Management Directives pursuant to Table 3-5. The Area-Specific Management Directives will direct appropriate levels of fuel management activities.

The exceptions to these prohibitions generally include the following:

1. Activities required to be conducted pursuant to a revegetation, habitat management, habitat restoration, recovery program for a covered species or landscaping plan approved by the Director of Planning and Land Use.
2. Vegetation removal or application of chemicals for vector control purposes where expressly required by written order of the Department of Health Services of the County of San Diego, in a location and manner approved in writing by the Director of Planning and Land Use of the County of San Diego, pursuant to the County of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan Section 1.9.
3. Existing uses and Recreational Activities identified in approved plans.
4. Policing by local, State and Federal law enforcement agencies and fire protection agencies as necessary.
5. Approved scientific research and biological uses.
6. Necessary infrastructure consistent with the requirements of the Subarea Plan.
7. Existing unpaved equestrian and hiking trails in accordance or pursuant to an approved management plan or map.
8. Nonmotorized bicycle use on specific trails in accordance or pursuant to an approved management plan or map.
9. Fire clearing as allowed under an approved site-specific plan or fire management plan.

## **B. Existing Uses**

As described above, any uses other than those specified will be prohibited. Until all of the areas of open space have been dedicated through processing of maps, there may be a continuation of existing uses within areas shown as preserve.

Existing uses may be allowed to continue, including any annual clearing, maintenance and replacement of existing facilities, roads and structures. However, there may be no expansion of such uses or the clearing of additional areas unless appropriate local, State and Federal permits have first been obtained.

## **C. Conservation/Development Areas**

The maps associated with the Lake Hodges and South County Segments delineate where habitat will be conserved and where development will occur. The Wildlife Agencies have agreed to the conservation and development areas; accordingly, projects approved by the County consistent with these two Segments of the Subarea Plan will not require additional approvals from the Wildlife Agencies and therefore are not covered by this Framework Management Plan. Wetlands impacts throughout the County Subarea will continue to be subject to Federal 404 Clean Water Act and Fish and Game Code Section 1600 provisions, as appropriate.

The Subarea Plan includes separate “Segments” for the Lake Hodges, South County, and Metro-Lakeside-Jamul areas.

Two of the Plan Segments, the Lake Hodges Segment and the South County Segment, include “hard line” preserve systems. “Hard line” preserves are those areas specifically delineated on a map. These areas include land that is either publicly owned or land that has been the subject of negotiated agreements with the property owners. The “hard lines” depict areas that will be included in the Multiple Species Conservation Program preserve and they also show the areas where development is allowed without further biological mitigation.

Although anticipated conservation levels by species and habitat type have been developed for the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment, no preserve boundaries have been designated, except for the Helix Company properties.

### ***1. Lake Hodges Segment*** (Figure 2)

The segment is based on development plans that have been approved by the Board of Supervisors or are in process (4S Ranch). For the Lake Hodges segment, these include the Rancho Cielo, 4S Ranch, Santa Fe Valley, and Madura properties. Those property owners whose land is shown as “hard lines” are in agreement with that designation. The Lake Hodges segment also shows certain lands owned by the City of San Diego, which are covered in the City of San Diego Framework Management Plan. Future management plans prepared for these developments shall consider and incorporate as appropriate the general directives of this plan and the approved Habitat Management Plan(s) identified in the Santa Fe Valley SPA, dated February 1998.

The County of San Diego is acquiring parcels of land for habitat preservation in the Lusardi Creek area of the Lake Hodges Segment. A management plan shall be prepared for the County-owned land in fiscal year 2000-2001. The management plan shall consider and incorporate the general directives of this plan, and specific management practices pursuant to Table 3-5.

## **2. South County Segment** (Figure 3)

The South County segment plan includes the Otay Ranch, Hidden Valley Estates, Las Montañas (recently purchased by the Trust for Public Land), Loma del Sol, and the Pointe San Diego properties. Future management plans prepared for these developments shall consider and incorporate as appropriate the directives of this plan. For any project not required to develop their own habitat management plan, the general guidelines of this Framework Management Plan, and specific management practices pursuant to Table 3-5, will be made a condition of project approval.

## **3. Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment**

The Metro-Lakeside-Jamul segment consists of the remaining land in the unincorporated portion of the Multiple Species Conservation Program Plan. With the exception of five separate parcels owned by the Helix Companies, the preserve areas in this portion are not shown as specifically mapped “hard line” areas.

Instead, the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul segment includes goals and criteria on the number of acres of different habitat types, which must be ultimately included in a preserve in order for the covered species in the Plan to be adequately protected. The preserve will be assembled in this area through Federal, State and local agency acquisition and through the directed mitigation of discretionary project impacts.

There are several large properties in the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment that will contribute to the assemblage of the preserve. The Boys and Girls Club, Crestridge Conservation Bank and Open Space, and Singing Hills Mitigation Banks have been or are in the process of being established. In addition, the Wildlife Agencies have acquired portions of the Daley Ranch in Jamul, and the Back Country Land Trust has acquired land in the Wright’s Field area of Alpine for preserve purposes. Since the adoption of the MSCP Subarea Plan several large properties in the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment have been acquired and will contribute to the MSCP Preserve.

Any management plans required to be prepared for these identified open space areas or future development projects should incorporate the general directives of this plan, and specific management practices pursuant to Table 3-5.

The County of San Diego is acquiring parcels of land for habitat preservation in the Lakeside Archipelago area of the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul segment. A management plan shall be prepared for the County-owned land in fiscal year 2000-2001. The management plan shall incorporate the general directives of this plan, and specific management practices pursuant to Table 3-5.

## **4. Private Lands Included in the Preserve**

Through the course of land exaction as the result of development, privately-owned lands will become part of the regional preserve system. These lands may consist of portions of parcels that collectively contribute to a block of habitat or they may consist of large separate parcels of land. Unless the County has made special agreements with a project applicant for the applicant to participate in the cost of management and monitoring, the County has committed to the management and monitoring of privately held lands. However, the process for management and the level of management will depend on the property in question. Specific considerations will include the size of the property and the habitats on the site.

In the event that the applicant maintains its own open space and its Habitat Manager fails in the performance of the Habitat Management Plan conditions, the applicant will default habitat management responsibilities and funding to the County. It is the County's intent to approach this issue of default through the appropriate channels, e.g., the inclusion of appropriate provisions in the Memoranda of Understanding, Agreements, or conditions for default related to the open space.

***Private projects requiring less than 10 acres of open space***

Management plans may not be required and/or incorporated into larger plans for projects that involve the dedication of 10 acres or less of open space for the protection of biological resources within the MSCP. The project applicant will hold fee title and will be required to carry out the stewardship responsibilities which may include fencing, signage installation, gating, fuel breaks, trash removal and limiting trespass. If there is a specific need for the application of management techniques or the preparation of a management plan on a small area of open space (i.e. for narrow endemics or unique critical populations of specific species), the County will perform that management and prepare that plan.

If it is necessary and agreeable to the County Department of Parks and Recreation, the project applicant may transfer title of said open space to the County. The County shall then bear the responsibility of stewardship management of the open space or transfer title to the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as appropriate and as mutually agreed upon, or other qualified entity.

***Private projects requiring more than 10 acres of open space***

The ownership and management process involved for projects that include the dedication of 10 acres or more of open space for the protection of biological resources within the MSCP, shall conform to the following:

1. The project applicant will hold fee title to the open space and be responsible for stewardship activities. The County will be responsible for specific management and monitoring activities as appropriate.
2. If it is necessary or appropriate, and agreeable to the County Department of Parks

and Recreation, the project applicant may transfer title of said open space to the County. The County may transfer title to the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as appropriate and as mutually agreed upon, or other qualified entity.

3. Management for open space land that is greater than 10 acres in size shall be covered and be consistent with this framework management plan. Any given project may need to establish standards which when placed as a condition of project approval will fulfill the requirements of Table 3-5. Compliance to project conditions will be the responsibility of the County. If there is a specific need for the application of management techniques or the preparation of a management plan (i.e. for narrow endemics or unique critical populations of specific species), the County will assist in the preparation of that portion of the plan, or if mutually agreed upon, perform the monitoring and management, pursuant to this Framework Management Plan.
4. When areas of open space preserve have been assembled together to form a preserve of greater than 300 acres that is a reasonable management unit, typically 300 acres in size, an area specific management directive will be prepared for that site that addresses the resources that exist in the area and fulfills the requirements of Table 3-5. Management for open space land shall be consistent with this framework management plan. It is intended that that the open space areas for projects under 10 acres will be included to compile the 300-acre preserve areas.

#### ***Basic Elements of Individual Management Plans on Preserve Land***

Basic Elements of the plans would include the following:

Public access control	Removal of invasive species
Fire management	Predator control
Fencing and gates	Restoration needs
Access road maintenance	Vehicle and facility expense
Trail maintenance	Ranger patrol
Signage and lighting	Visitor/interpretive services
Trash and litter removal	Volunteer services
Hydrological management	Poaching control
Species monitoring	Habitat Restoration
Vector control and herbicide use	Species Mgmt Conditions (Table 3-5)
Point Source drain water	Non-point source urban runoff
Biological surveys	Noise

#### **Compatibility**

Regional habitat planning requires a regional and subregional approach. Habitat management plans for a given area should incorporate as much as is feasible from other plans in the area in order to maintain compatibility between the management

plans. Particular attention should be made toward management of lands that are within the Wildlife Agency's Pre-approved Mitigation Areas.

Sensitive Species Management Requirements for Species Observed or expected in the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area

In order to conform to the proposed Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Plan, the management plans must incorporate the requirements of Table 3-5 of the revised volume I for that plan. The requirements and measures needed to implement the requirements for individual species in that table must be included in the management plans for preserve areas in which these sensitive species have been found. Monitoring should be addressed in the habitat management plans. However, monitoring is not proposed to be the responsibility of the property owner. Specific management requirements for sensitive species identified in Table 3-5 shall be incorporated into the plans and will be the responsibility of either the County or Habitat Manager, as identified in the Habitat Management Plan. Area specific management directives shall be generated that carry out the requirements of Table 3-5. These Habitat Management Plans shall be the Area-Specific Management Directives for these areas, which does not include 4S Ranch.

Cooperation/Coordination

Management for adjacent properties should be coordinated in order to carry out activities in the most efficient manner. This includes attempts at the removal of exotic and pest species of plants and animals such as cowbirds, Tamarisk or Fennel. Section 6.3.1 of volume I of the MSCP plan August 1998, outlines the preparation of a preserve management plan.

## **IV. FRAMEWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **A. Management Goals and Objectives**

The overall MSCP goal is to maintain and enhance biological diversity in the region and conserve viable populations of endangered, threatened, and key sensitive species and their habitats, thereby preventing local extirpation and ultimate extinction. This is intended to minimize the need for future listings, while enabling economic growth in the region. Where land is preserved as part of the MSCP Preserve through acquisition, regulation, mitigation or other means, management is necessary to ensure that the biological values are maintained over time and remain viable.

The County will be responsible for and will continue the management and maintenance of its existing public lands (including those with conservation easement), consistent with approved mitigation, monitoring, reporting and consistent with the MSCP plan. The County will also manage and maintain lands obtained as mitigation where those lands have been dedicated to the County in fee title or easement, and land acquired with regional funds within the County's MSCP Preserve boundaries. Likewise, the Federal and State agencies will manage, maintain and monitor their present land holdings, as well as those they acquire on behalf of the MSCP, consistent with the MSCP plan. Lands in the MSCP Preserve that are set aside as open space through the development

process but are not dedicated in fee to the County, or other acceptable entity, will be managed by the landowner consistent with approved Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Programs or Permit conditions. Private owners of land within the MSCP Preserve, who are not third party beneficiaries, will have no additional obligations for the management or maintenance of their land.

In order to assure that the goal of the MSCP Preserve is attained and fulfilled, management objectives for the County of San Diego MSCP Preserve are as follows:

1. To ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of native ecosystem function and natural processes throughout the MSCP Preserve.
2. To protect the existing and restored biological resources from intense or activities causing disturbance or incompatible within and adjacent to the MSCP Preserve while accommodating compatible public recreational uses.
3. To enhance and restore, where feasible, the full range of native plant associations in strategic locations and functional wildlife connections to adjoining habitat in order to provide viable wildlife and sensitive species habitat.
4. To facilitate monitoring of selected target species, habitats, and linkages in order to ensure long-term persistence of viable populations of priority plant and animal species and to ensure functional habitats and linkages.
5. To provide for flexible management of the MSCP Preserve that can adapt to changing circumstances to achieve the above objectives.

This section lists general management guidelines relevant to the entire County MSCP Preserve system, followed by specific guidelines and recommendations for each planned segment of the MSCP Preserve, including the aforementioned segments of the Lake Hodges, Metro-Lakeside-Jamul, and South County segments, Urban Areas, and the San Pasqual Valley. Cornerstone Lands are the responsibility of the City of San Diego. Each segment is unique in terms of its existing conditions, MSCP Preserve configuration, public or private ownership of land, the existence and location of sensitive species, and management needs.

Based on the above management objectives, the recommended management directives that follow have been identified in order of priority. It is recognized that many of these directives cannot be implemented on approval of this Framework Management Plan, but will instead occur over the life of the Plan. The ability to implement and the timing of many of the management directives will be directly related to the availability of funding in any fiscal year and on the biological priority. In addition, some of the management directives may be implemented as part of mitigation requirements for development projects both within and adjacent to the MSCP Preserve. Some of the tasks are also expected to be implemented as research efforts by the scientific and academic community at large.

The management directives are organized by priority into the following two categories. The priorities are intended to assist in the decisions on where to spend limited funds and direct mitigation efforts:

*Priority 1:* Directives that protect the resources in the MSCP Preserve, including management actions that are necessary to ensure that the Covered Species are adequately protected.

*Priority 2:* Directives other than those required for covered species status and other long-term items that may be implemented during the life of the plan as funding becomes available.

It is expected that modifications will be needed over time, based on realities encountered in the field

as the MSCP Preserve is assembled. Monitoring of selected target species and other sensitive or constrained areas within the MSCP Preserve will occur pursuant with the Monitoring Plan. The Monitoring Plan will inform MSCP Preserve managers and staff of the general trends of wildlife use and species preservation, as well as indicate areas where special management focus is needed. Cooperation between the field managers, MSCP Habitat Management Technical Committee, and the wildlife agencies, is expected to occur to review and discuss existing and new management issues and to respond with practical, case-sensitive solutions. These solutions will be documented, and this management plan should be revised as needed to reflect new information.

An integral part of the management component is the land use consideration that takes into account compatible land uses, ordinances and guidelines related to the development of land uses within and adjacent to the MSCP Preserve. These ordinances, policies and guidelines should be incorporated into projects during the land development review process. It should be noted that some of the management directives listed in the following sections may already be included as conditions of approved projects within or adjacent to the MSCP Preserve and are therefore considered part of this Subarea Plan.

Coordination of public information and education will be provided through the Habitat Management Technical Committee. These tasks will include the preparation and distribution of brochures, maps and associated educational materials.

## **B. General Management Directives**

The following general management directives apply to all areas of the County of San Diego's MSCP Subarea Plan.

### **1. Restoration**

Restoration or revegetation undertaken in the MSCP Preserve shall be performed in a manner acceptable to the County and consistent with MSCP. Where covered species status identifies the need for reintroduction and/or increasing the population, the covered species will be included in restoration/revegetation plans, as appropriate. Restoration or revegetation proposals will be carried out pursuant to a plan that includes elements addressing financial responsibility including site preparation, planting specifications, maintenance, monitoring and success criteria, and remediation and contingency measures. Wetland restoration/revegetation projects are subject to permit authorization by federal and state agencies.

### **2. Public Access, Trails, and Recreation**

Appropriate recreational activities shall be accommodated in concurrence with the goals of the MSCP and County Subarea Plans.

- a. Public access and passive recreation are permitted uses within specified areas of the preserve. Access points, new trails and facilities, and a public control plan will be included in the specific framework habitat management plans and the area-specific management directives.
- b. Riding and hiking trails will be allowed within the preserves to allow passive recreational opportunities for the public. Passive recreation includes hiking, scientific research, bird

watching, and under specified conditions and locations identified in approved projects and or management plans, mountain biking, horseback riding, sailing, sun bathing, fishing, and swimming. Equestrian, hiking, and bicycles may be allowed when in accordance with approved management plans and are consistent with the County of San Diego Subarea Plan. Other forms of public access and recreation may be determined to be consistent with the protection of the resources currently existing within the preserve. Access for hang gliding and hot air ballooning shall be limited to existing dirt roads now used for such purposes unless the roads are to be rehabilitated. Departure/take off areas for such activities are and shall remain located outside of the preserve. All recreational activities will be required to avoid impacts to narrow endemics or unique critical populations of specific species, unless the activities are in “take” authorized areas as identified or allowed under the MSCP.

***Priority 1:***

1. Identify and map narrow endemics and critical populations and all covered species populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed.
2. Provide sufficient signage to clearly identify public access to the MSCP Preserve. Barriers such as vegetation, rocks/boulders or fencing may be necessary to protect highly sensitive areas. Use appropriate type of barrier based on location, setting and use. For example, use chain link or cattle wire to direct wildlife movement, and natural rocks/boulders or split rail fencing to direct public access away from sensitive areas. Lands acquired through mitigation may preclude public access in order to satisfy mitigation requirements.
3. Locate trails, view overlooks, and staging areas in the least sensitive areas of the MSCP Preserve. Locate trails along the edges of urban land uses adjacent to the MSCP Preserve, or the seam between land uses (e.g. agriculture/habitat), and follow existing dirt roads as much as possible rather than entering habitat or wildlife movement areas. Avoid locating trails between two different habitat types (ecotones) for longer than necessary due to the typically heightened resource sensitivity in those locations.
4. In general, avoid paving trails unless management and monitoring evidence shows they are necessary. Clearly demarcate and monitor trails for degradation and off-trail access and use. Provide trail repair/maintenance as needed. Undertake measures to counter the effects of trail erosion including the use of stone or wood cross-joints, edge plantings of native grasses, and mulching of the trail.
5. Minimize new trail construction widths to reduce impacts to critical resources. For the most part, do not locate trails wider than 4 feet in core areas or wildlife corridors. Exceptions are in County Parks where necessary to safely accommodate multiple uses or disabled access. Provide trail fences or other barriers at strategic locations when protection of sensitive resources is required.
6. Limit the extent and location of equestrian trails to the less sensitive areas of the MSCP Preserve. Locate staging areas for equestrian uses at a sufficient distance (e.g. 300-500 feet) from areas with riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats to ensure that the biological values are not impaired.
7. Maintain equestrian trails on a regular basis to remove manure (and other pet feces) from the trails and preserve system in order to control cowbird invasion and predation. Design and

maintain trails where possible to drain into a gravel bottom or vegetated (e.g. grass-lined) swale or basin to detain runoff and remove pollutants.

8. Off-road or cross-country vehicle activities are considered an incompatible use in the MSCP Preserve, except for law enforcement, preserve management, and/or emergency purposes. Restore previously disturbed areas to native habitat where possible or critical, or allow to regenerate. The Subarea Plan will not allow off-highway vehicle trails within designated preserve areas in the South County and Lake Hodges Segments. If an off-road vehicle trail is proposed for this area, the Subarea Plan must be amended to remove the trail right-of-way from the Preserve. The Wildlife Agencies must approve any such amendment as being consistent with the conservation goals of Multiple Species Conservation Program.
  - a. Public off-highway recreational vehicle activity (trails, roads, parks, etc.) within MSCP preserve areas is incompatible with the goals of the MSCP. Lands preserved through the MSCP are conservation measures to mitigate and preserve habitat/species for effects and/or impacts to covered species resulting from development outside the preserve areas.
  - b. Legal access across preserve lands to private in-holdings will not change as a result of implementation of the Subarea plan.
  - c. OHV trails in the South County and Lake Hodges Segments of the County Subarea Plan will be located outside of proposed and dedicated preserve areas.
  - d. OHV trails within Metro-Lakeside-Jamul, but outside of proposed or dedicated preserve areas, will be considered a project and will be subject to the provisions of the MSCP, County Subarea plan, and Biological Mitigation Ordinance.
  - e. OHV activity on Bureau of Land Management lands will be managed in accordance with the BLM Resource Management Plan.

Use of off-highway vehicles that is necessary in order to engage in other allowed uses as specified in the County Subarea Plan or an approved Habitat Management Plan shall not be prohibited.

9. Limit recreational uses to passive uses such as bird-watching, photography and trail use. Locate developed picnic areas near MSCP Preserve edges or specific areas within the MSCP Preserve, in order to minimize littering, feeding of wildlife, and attracting or increasing populations of exotic or nuisance wildlife (opossums, raccoons, skunks). Where permitted restrain pets on leashes.
10. Remove homeless and itinerant worker camps in habitat areas as soon as found pursuant to existing enforcement procedures.
11. Hunting or discharge of firearms is an incompatible use in the MSCP Preserve, and therefore prohibited, except for law enforcement, MSCP Preserve management, emergency purposes or as allowed under an approved habitat management plan.
12. Poaching or collecting plant or animal species from the MSCP Preserve is prohibited. The County may authorize collecting upon approval for scientific research, revegetation or restoration purposes, or species recovery programs.
13. Comply with all applicable County ordinances and policies (i.e. leash laws).
14. Collection of archaeological or historical artifacts or fossils, or defacement or destruction of historic features, is prohibited except upon approval by the County.

### 3. Litter/Trash and Materials Storage

#### *Priority 1:*

1. Remove litter and trash on a regular basis. Post signage to prevent and report littering in trail and road access areas. Provide and maintain trashcans and bins at trail access points.
2. Impose penalties for littering and dumping. Fines should be sufficient to prevent recurrence and also cover reimbursement of costs to remove and dispose of debris, restore the area if needed, and to pay for enforcement staff time.
3. Prohibit permanent storage of materials (e.g. hazardous and toxic chemicals, equipment, etc.) within the MSCP Preserve and ensure appropriate storage per applicable regulations in any areas that may impact the MSCP Preserve, due to potential leakage.
4. Keep wildlife corridor undercrossings free of debris, trash, homeless encampments, and all other obstructions to wildlife movement.
5. Evaluate areas where dumping recurs for the need for barriers. Provide additional monitoring as needed (possibly by local and recreational groups on a “Neighborhood Watch” type program), and/or enforcement.

### 4. Adjacency Management Issues

Residential uses will be the most common use located adjacent to the MSCP Preserve, although roads, manufactured open space, recreational facilities, and industrial and commercial uses will occur in some areas.

The following uses can be compatible on land adjacent to the preserve.

Manufactured open space (e.g. parks, playing fields, vegetated slopes, green belts, etc.) roads, recreational facilities, water reservoirs, other public facilities and utilities, agricultural and grazing operations are deemed to be compatible when located immediately adjacent to the preserve. No additional buffers or transitional areas are required.

In addition, hiking, bird watching, horseback riding, camping, power boating, water skiing, fishing, pet exercising, hang gliding, hot air ballooning, scientific research, mountain biking, equestrian facilities, athletic fields, sailing, sun bathing, swimming, golf courses, hunting, brush management may be considered as compatible uses.

The establishment of the MSCP Preserve system does not include regulatory authority on properties adjacent to the preserve. However, the County will encourage adjacent property owners to follow guidelines when planning and implementing uses and activities when located immediately adjacent to the preserve. These guidelines are meant to ensure compatibility with the preserve as follows:

- A. Where feasible, plant materials used to landscape manufactured open space, road cuts/fills and recreational facilities should consist of native species similar/compatible with the adjacent habitat in the preserve. If possible, those species should be based on plants with genetic materials of the area. In addition, the planting of aggressive, non-native plant species identified in the County Urban/Wildlife Interface document will be discouraged through public outreach programs and bulletins.
- B. Areas and structures subject to heavy human use (e.g. ball fields, parking lots,

hardscapes/playing courts, equestrian centers, staging areas, etc.) shall, to the extent feasible, be located away from the edge of the preserve.

- C. Lighting within 100 feet of the preserve edge shall be confined to areas necessary to ensure public safety, and shall be limited to low pressure sodium fixtures, shielded and directed away from the preserve where possible.
- D. Fencing along the preserve boundary is desirable but not mandatory and may provide a barrier to fire, invasive species, and uncontrolled human access. Should a landowner or preserve manager decide to install fencing, the type, style and height must conform to existing regulations or those included in the applicable Specific Plan.
- E. There shall be no requirements for buffers outside the preserve system. All open space requirements for the preserve system shall be incorporated into the preserve system.
- F. Conduct an assessment of the need for cowbird trapping in each area of the MSCP Preserve where cattle, horses, or other animals are kept, as recommended by the habitat management technical committee in coordination with the wildlife agencies.
- G. On a case by case basis some limited trapping of non-native predators may be necessary at strategic locations, and where determined feasible to protect ground and shrub-nesting birds, lizards, and other sensitive species from excessive predation. This management directive may be considered a Priority 1 if necessary to meet the conditions for species coverage. If implemented, the program would only be on a temporary basis and where a significant problem has been identified and therefore needed to maintain balance of wildlife in the MSCP Preserve. The program would be operated in a humane manner, providing adequate shade and water, and checking all traps twice daily. Provide signage at access points and noticing of adjacent residents to inform people that trapping occurs, and how to retrieve and contain their pets.

***Priority 1:***

- 1. Enforce, prevent and remove illegal intrusions into the MSCP Preserve(e.g. orchards, decks, etc.) on an annual basis, in addition to complaint basis.
- 2. Disseminate educational information to residents adjacent to MSCP Preserve to heighten environmental awareness, and inform residents of access, appropriate plantings, construction or disturbance within MSCP Preserve boundaries, pet intrusion, fire management, and other adjacency issues.
- 3. Install barriers (fencing, rocks/boulders, vegetation) and/or signage where necessary to direct public access to appropriate locations.
- 4. Invasive Exotics Control and Removal

***Priority 1:***

- 1. Do not introduce invasive non-native species into the MSCP Preserve. Provide information on invasive plants and animals harmful to the MSCP Preserve, and prevention methods, to visitors and adjacent residents. Encourage residents to voluntarily remove invasive exotics from their landscaping.
- 2. Remove giant reed (*Arundo*), pampas grass, castor bean, artichoke thistle, and other exotic invasive species from creek and river systems, canyons and slopes, and elsewhere within the MSCP Preserve as funding or other assistance becomes available. If possible, it is recommended that removal begin upstream and/or upwind and move downstream/downwind

to control re-invasion. Priorities for removal should be based on invasive species' biology (time of flowering, reproductive capacity, etc.), the immediate need of a specific area, and where removal could increase the habitat available for use by covered species such as the least Bell's vireo. Avoid removal activities during the reproductive seasons of sensitive species and avoid/ minimize impacts to sensitive species or native habitats. Monitor the areas and provide additional removal and apply herbicides if necessary. If herbicides are necessary, all safety and environmental regulations must be observed. The use of heavy equipment, and any other potentially harmful or impact-causing methodologies, to remove the plants may require some level of environmental or biological review, permitting requirements and/or supervision to ensure against impacts to sensitive species.

3. On a case-by-case basis, trapping of cowbirds and eradication of bullfrogs may be necessary at strategic locations, and where determined feasible to protect sensitive species from excessive predation. This management directive may be considered a Priority 1 if necessary to meet the conditions for species coverage.

***Priority 2:***

1. When funding permits, initiate a focused invasive species survey with regular follow-up monitoring to assess invasion or re-invasion by exotics, and to schedule removal. Utilize trained volunteers to monitor and remove exotic species as part of a neighborhood, community, school, or other organization's activities program (such as California Plant Society has done in the Sweetwater Regional Park). If done on a volunteer basis, prepare and provide information on methods and timing of removal to staff and the public if requested. For giant reed removal, the Riverside County multi-jurisdictional management effort and experience should be investigated and relevant techniques used. Similarly, tamarisk removal should use The Nature Conservancy's experience in the Southern California desert regions, while artichoke thistle removal should reference The Nature Conservancy's experience in Irvine. Other relevant knowledge and experience is available from the California Exotic Pest Plant Council.
2. If eucalyptus, exotic palms, or pepper trees die or are removed from the MSCP Preserve area, replace with appropriate native species. Ensure that these tree species do not spread into new areas, nor increase substantially in numbers over the years. Eventual replacement by native species is preferred.

## **5. Flood Control**

***Priority 1:***

Perform standard maintenance, such as clearing and dredging of existing flood channels, pursuant to 401 and 404, Clean Water Act permit and 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement conditions as required. Standard maintenance conditions should include that maintenance will occur during the non-breeding or nesting season of sensitive bird or wildlife species utilizing the riparian habitat. For the least Bell's vireo, the non-breeding season generally includes mid-September through mid-March.

**Priority 2:**

Review existing flood control channels within the MSCP Preserve periodically (every 5-10 years) to determine the need for their retention and maintenance, and to assess alternatives, such as restoration of natural rivers and floodplains.

**6. Fire Prevention, Control and Management**

The San Diego County Fire Chief's Urban/Wildland Interface Task Force has prepared Countywide brush management guidelines in concert with the Wildlife Agencies. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Wildlife Agencies, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and Fire Chiefs and Fire Districts was executed in February 1997 following completion of the Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The MOU will provide the basis for ensuring fire control activities, fire prevention and fire for habitat management are integrated into preserve management plans. As determined by the local fire official, all project conditions will include a statement that all fuel modifications zones will occur within the project's development line, and not extend into preserve lands.

Fire management activities are permitted within the preserve when conducted according to a fire management plan approved by the wildlife agencies, County and appropriate fire district as part of area-specific management directives. Preparation of a stand-alone fire management plan is optional, at the desire of the MSCP preserve manager, jurisdiction, landowner or fire district.

Fire suppression districts, personnel and equipment shall use whatever tactics necessary to control and extinguish wildfires necessary to protect public safety as determined by the local fire official. Such activities are permitted within and adjacent to the preserve. No mitigation shall be required for any "take" of covered species that occurs during any fire fighting operation.

**Background**

Fire management in the County of San Diego primarily focuses on fuel or brush management in conjunction with the local Fire Districts. The typical mesa-canyon topography and fire-adapted native vegetation of the coastal region has led to the common condition of development occurring on mesa tops surrounded by canyon slopes of highly-flammable chaparral and other natural open space. The formation of an open space system to protect biological resources and preserve long-term viability introduces additional issues regarding fire management that need to be addressed in conjunction with public safety factors.

Major issues related to fire management in the MSCP Preserve include the following:

1. Fire hazard reduction methods, including brush management, for public safety purposes may impact sensitive species.
2. Fire hazard reduction may involve methods that increase other management concerns (e.g. exotic species invasion, erosion).
3. Fire management needs for particular fire-adapted species such as Del Mar manzanita and Shaw's agave need to be identified.
4. Within the MSCP, it is highly unlikely that problems would ever occur from the creation of senescent vegetation through excessive fire suppression. Vegetation and habitats are

much more likely to be adversely affected by fires occurring too often. Therefore, fire suppression should be the primary tool for fire management. However, specific fire management plans may be created to create vegetation mosaics that reduce the ability of catastrophic fire when necessary. In those plans, sensitive species and sensitive habitats must be given highest priority so that fire management does not impact them.

### **Fuel Modification Zones**

Residential, industrial, institutional and commercial uses will be generally separated from the preserve by a fuel modification zone, which varies in width depending on each project's circumstances. For properties controlled by public land trusts, they are responsible for maintaining a fuel modification zone where required. The intent of the fuel modification zone is to protect uses adjacent to the preserve from wildfires. It may further protect the resources within the preserve by absorbing some of the "edge effects" that might otherwise occur within the preserve. With implementation of the fuel modification zone, no other restrictions for fuel management on residential, industrial, institutional, commercial or other uses are required.

The following guidelines are intended to establish how the fuel modification zone will be managed.

- A. Plant materials existing within the fuel modification zone may be thinned, mowed, pruned and/or removed as necessary.
- B. Supplemental planting may be elected by the owner. Plant materials used shall be acceptable to the appropriate fire agency and non-invasive. This guideline also applies to any road cuts and/or graded disturbed areas within the fuel modification zone.
- C. Ownership of the fuel modification zone may vary. In most cases, it may be by the adjacent lot owner or homeowners' association. Where appropriate, the zone may be incorporated into project open space and landscaping plans.
- D. Responsibility for brush management will vary according to the specific requirements of the approved project. In most cases, it shall reside with the landowner or homeowners association, and may be enforced by the appropriate fire department or homeowners' association. For residential areas, the Codes, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs) shall clearly define the responsibilities of the owner with respect to fuel modification including when and how such activities shall be carried out.
- E. Fencing, lighting and signage are permitted in the fuel modification zone, at the discretion of the landowner.
  - a. Lighting shall be confined to areas necessary to ensure public safety, and shall be limited to low pressure sodium fixtures, shielded and directed away from the preserve.
  - b. Fencing is desirable but not mandatory and provides a barrier to invasive species, and uncontrolled human access. Should a landowner decide to install fencing anywhere within the brush management zone, the type, style and height must conform to existing regulations.

## **7. Grazing Policy**

Many areas of preserve land within the Subarea have been grazed for much of the past century. By participating in grazing policy issues, landowners adjacent to preserve areas may become partners in the land management within the MSCP Plan. Upon the completion of initial biological studies, prescribed grazing programs may be implemented that are deemed appropriate and a benefit to the resource.

Managed grazing may enhance the species diversity of native grassland communities, by reducing competitive dominance of exotic pest species. Grazing can also be a cost-effective means to control invasive pest plant species. Invasion by exotic weedy species is of great concern, especially in areas that undergo a sudden release from grazing pressure.

If the preserve area is occupied by Stephen's kangaroo rat, a grazing program may be necessary to maintain habitat quality for this endangered species. This species requires relatively open grassland and grazing can prevent exotic greases from becoming too dense.

Furthermore, grazing can reduce fuel loads, and can be an important component of a fire management program.

Grazing regimes need to be researched before any program is implemented, but prescribed grazing programs may lead to enhanced species composition for native grasslands.

## **8. Emergency, Safety and Police Services**

The interface between current and future urban development and the preserve areas requires increased coordination between the preserve managers and agencies responsible for public safety and enforcement of immigration laws. The MSCP preserve system, including the County's portion of the system must accommodate access for emergency response, fire control and management, and enforcement of immigration laws. In the event that entry into the preserve by law enforcement agencies is needed in the routine performance of their duties, use of existing roads and trails should be encouraged. In emergencies where there is a direct threat to public safety, the law enforcement agency should contact the Habitat Manager whenever feasible. The construction of any new roads required by law enforcement agencies shall be subject to all applicable state and federal laws, and be subject to review under NEPA and CEQA.

Law enforcement and fire control agencies, the National Guard, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Border Patrol and organizations and agencies that respond to natural disasters shall be permitted to perform their activities within any preserve system subject to all applicable requirements of state and federal law.

### ***Enforcement of Immigration Laws***

Each of the preserve management plans will include provisions for enforcement of immigration laws. The goals for dealing with immigration issues within preserves is to maintain or increase the ability of immigration enforcement officials to carry out their duties. All law enforcement agencies shall be allowed access to the preserve as necessary to enforce the law.

### ***Emergency Response***

Each of the preserve management plans includes provisions for response to emergencies, including floods, law enforcement and public health and safety. The goal for dealing with emergency response issues within preserves is to maintain or increase the ability of emergency response personnel to deal with emergencies. All medical, rescue and other emergency agencies are allowed access to the preserve to carry out operations necessary to the health, safety and welfare of the public.

### ***Emergency Repairs to Infrastructure***

In preserve areas managed by the County or the County's authorized representative, the County shall allow the agency to enter the preserve and complete necessary repairs consistent with normal practices and with state and federal take authorization in conformance with existing federal and state laws.

## **9. Monitoring Plan**

The approved biological monitoring protocol requirements are cited in the "MSCP Biological Monitoring Program" document prepared by Ogden Environmental, dated 1996. It may be necessary to periodically revise the biological monitoring protocol as new scientific information becomes available. Any revisions in the protocol will be subject to approval by the resource agencies and agreed to by the participating local jurisdictions. The monitoring plan identifies basic monitoring requirements cited in Table 3-5 for the various native habitats, covered species, and corridors, and shall also include monitoring and reporting requirements, a remediation section and highlights research opportunities.

Biological monitoring will be the joint responsibility of the County and the wildlife agencies for all lands within the County's boundaries. Proper management of the MSCP Preserve will require ongoing and detailed analysis of the data collected through monitoring activities. To ensure uniformity in the gathering and treatment of this data, the wildlife agencies will assume primary responsibility for coordinating the monitoring programs, analyzing data, and providing information and technical assistance to the jurisdictions. No additional fees will be charged to landowners for biological monitoring.

## **10. Research Opportunities for the Academic and Professional Scientific and Biologic Activities**

- A. All scientific, research, monitoring and habitat restoration and enhancement activities are permitted within the preserve, subject to approval by the preserve manager/landowner and obtaining any necessary permits. All such activities shall be consistent with the area-specific management directives.
- B. All or any of the above activities shall be carried out under a regional program implemented by the resource agencies, County of San Diego or preserve manager.
- C. Prior to beginning any of the above research activities, prior approval of the property owner/preserve manager must be obtained.

The MSCP Preserve presents a rich array of research opportunities for the academic and

professional communities, primarily in disciplines related to biology, ecology, and natural resources management, but also ranging to environmental design, sociology, and park use and administration. The County of San Diego encourages research within the MSCP Preserve in order to gain valuable information unavailable through other means. There are a multitude of unanswered questions posed by the development of a multiple species and habitat system where little literature or previous research exists on the majority of species inhabiting the region. In addition, research on vegetation associations and habitats, natural regeneration, restoration, fragmentation, edge effects, genetics, viability, predation, wildlife movement, wildlife use of culverts and other undercrossings, and much more, would be useful to provide information on the health and dynamics of an urbanized open space system as well as how to improve conditions. The MSCP Biological Monitoring Plan makes recommendations for further research to supplement the required monitoring program.

Some specific requirements for researchers are needed in order to obtain mutual benefits for the County, the MSCP program, wildlife agencies and researchers. These include:

1. Coordination with County staff to discuss projects, potential locations, guidelines for access, and oversight responsibility.
2. Application to do research should occur through a letter sent to County staff, with a copy to the MSCP habitat management technical committee. The application should describe the participants, the precise location where the work is to be done, the tasks and methodologies that would take place on preserve lands, the dates and approximate length of time for the research, and any known or expected disturbances. The letter will need to present proof of insurance or indemnify all participants in the research effort to work at their own risk.
3. Applicants must agree to provide the data or the results of the research to County staff, and to the wildlife agencies within a reasonable timeframe after the completion of the project. If working on a grant or similar funding arrangement, a letter from the grantor acknowledging and accepting this arrangement must be submitted.
4. If working in state or federally listed species habitat or wetlands, any necessary permits from the appropriate agencies must be obtained prior to commencement of research, with a copy provided to the County or MSCP management entity.
5. The researchers will be held responsible for any damage or disturbance to native plants, animals, hydrology, or any other aspect of the natural ecosystem, and will need to provide restoration or other reparation if necessary.

## **11. Cultural Resources**

All preserve lands will be inventoried for cultural resources. Cultural resources include historic structures, features, and landscaping, as well as historic and prehistoric archaeological sites, features, and artifacts. Protection and preservation of cultural resources will comply with County of San Diego ordinances (Title 4; Public Property, Division 1; Parks and Beaches, Article 2, Section 41.113), and applicable state and federal laws.

- A. Inventories shall include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey, as well as pertinent archival and historical research.
- B. Specific management plans will be prepared to preserve and interpret cultural resources.
- C. All management activities within the preserve, including but not limited to trail construction,

placement of fencing and gates, and restoration of habitat will take into consideration potential impacts to cultural resources.

- D. No removal or modification of cultural resources shall occur without written approval by the Director of Parks and Recreation.
- E. Removal or disturbance of cultural resources shall not occur prior to completion of an approved mitigation program, such as data recovery or recordation. Preservation in place is the preferred mitigation measure.
- F. Condition and status of cultural resources shall be noted as part of routine monitoring activities and remedial measures shall be taken if damage is noted.
- G. Site location information will be confidential, and will be available only for qualified cultural resource staff and land managers. Site locations will not be shown on maps or divulged to the public.
- H. Interpretive programs for Native American heritage, local and regional history, and prehistory will be developed for the preserve. These may include lectures, walks, kiosks, signs, brochures, and displays, but will not include excavations, collecting of artifacts, or disclosure of confidential site locations unless an interpretive plan is developed and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. The plan will include supervision by a qualified archaeologist approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation.
- I. Any cultural materials collected from the preserves will be curated at a qualified curation facility.
- J. Native American tribal councils will be contacted and consulted for input.

# **MSCP FRAMEWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

## **ATTACHMENT A** **SUMMARY OF EXISTING MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Multiple Species Conservation Program County of San Diego Subarea Plan consists of three Segments: Lake Hodges; Metro-Lakeside-Jamul; and, South County. Each of these Segments, and the Subarea Plans for other jurisdictions, including the City of San Diego, have policies and directives regarding monitoring and management of preserved lands. Area Specific Management Directives shall be incorporated into actions relating to these lands. The following section is a summary of the management issues within the Segments. However, details of policies must be investigated further in the original documents and the contents contained hereinafter should be utilized as guidelines to management.

### **Lake Hodges Segment**

The Lake Hodges Segment (LHS) is located in west-central San Diego County, west of Interstate 15, north of the City of San Diego, and east of Rancho Santa Fe.

The LHS covers approximately 8,874 acres. The majority of the land is currently vacant, with approximately 512 acres in agricultural uses and a few scattered homes. Four major projects are located in this Subarea: Rancho Cielo, 4S Ranch, Santa Fe Valley and the Madura Subdivision. Agreements between the landowners, County staff, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) were concluded on all four private projects, either to establish “hard lines,” for the LHS preserve or as part of the 4(d) Habitat Loss Permit process.

These projects are a mix of new communities with urban level uses, and low-density residential developments with a variety of private and public support facilities. Additional land owned by the City of San Diego, which exists as a peninsula within Lake Hodges and north of the Lake, is included in the LHS, but is not counted as part of the County’s total number of preserved acres, nor is it subject to the County’s Subarea Plan or Framework Management Plan. A parcel of mitigation land purchased by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) north of Lake Hodges and an area created as a mitigation bank by The Environmental Trust for Bernardo Mountain are also included in the LHS.

The area is traversed by the Del Dios Highway, and crisscrossed by dirt roads. Various utility lines, including electrical and water, currently cross portions of the LHS. The San Dieguito River runs through the central portion of the LHS, generally paralleling the Del Dios Highway. Lake Hodges extends partially into the northeast boundary of the LHS. Lusardi Creek lies along the southern boundary of the LHS.

The dominant vegetation types shown on the MSCP vegetation maps for the LHS are grassland, coastal sage scrub (CSS) and maritime chaparral. Subsequent field mapping has shown that non-native grassland makes up the majority of the grasslands in the LHS.

### **Covered Species List**

The LHS will also provide conservation benefits for uncovered species. Although the MSCP only provides take authorization and protection for 85 covered species, the LHS will provide adequate protection for an additional 29 species. Therefore, a total of 114 species will be protected in this Segment. Not all species designated on the MSCP list occur within this Segment.

### **Remaining Land within the Lake Hodges Segment**

Land under the ownership of the City of San Diego surrounds Lake Hodges. Approximately 19 acres, has also been acquired by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) north of the reservoir and just east of the City lands. The majority of the vegetation at this site is Coastal sage scrub. Furthermore, additional land that partially surrounds and includes Bernardo Mountain are under the control of The Environmental Trust. This land, consisting of approximately 279 acres, is intended to be utilized as a mitigation bank. Approximately 59 acres of it is located in the unincorporated area. It contains Coastal sage scrub, some Southern mixed chaparral and smaller amounts of Oak woodland and Riparian oak woodland.

The resultant preserve will consist of 4,743 acres. The preserve includes more than 2,600 acres of Coastal sage scrub, 1,422 acres of Southern mixed chaparral, 14.5 acres of Southern maritime chaparral, 60 acres of native grassland, 105 acres of Oak and Riparian woodlands and scrub, and 79 acres of marsh and wet meadow. The preserve also protects a major portion of the Hodges Reservoir-San Pasqual Valley Core Area identified in the Draft MSCP, as well as providing the vital regional linkage to the northwest to the Carlsbad/La Costa region. This is the primary connection between these two regions for the California gnatcatcher.

### **Fuel Modification Zones**

Within the LHS the general guidelines apply, but with the zone boundary modified by project circumstances as follows: in Santa Fe Valley and 4S Ranch, the fuel modification zone is not part of the preserve; and, in Rancho Cielo, the fuel modification zone may occur outside of the individual homeowner lots, however, it is not counted as part of the preserve. The fuel modification zone for Rancho Cielo is a maximum zone, and may be reduced.

### ***Land Uses Allowed Within the Preserve***

#### **Existing Uses**

The preserve areas created through open space easements will generally prohibit any uses other than those specified in this Habitat Management Plan. In the 4S Ranch property, specific uses that will continue in the preserve include: horseback riding, mountain biking, fishing, low impact recreational uses, water wells, pumps and associated facilities, dams, roads and trails, grazing, and public utilities consistent with the approved Habitat Management Plan. However, until all of the areas of open space have been dedicated through processing of maps, there may be a continuation of existing uses within areas shown as preserve.

#### **Public Access and Recreation**

Public access and passive recreation are permitted uses within specified areas of the preserve on the Santa Fe Valley and 4S Ranch portions of the preserve. The location of access points, new trails and facilities, and a public control plan will be included in the framework habitat management plans in Santa Fe Valley and the Area Specific Management Directives for 4S Ranch and the area-specific management directives and will be subject to approval by the County and resource agencies. All Habitat Management Plans will substantially conform to the general guidelines of this Framework Management Plan.

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan area shows a trail extending through the San Dieguito River and to the east as well as a trail diagonally across the central portion of the plan area connecting to the east loop road and Four Gee Road. The access points will be adjacent to the Del Dios Highway north of the bridge crossing of the San Dieguito River and adjacent to the proposed Transit Center. The 4S Ranch project will include a public trail through the Lusardi Creek portion of the site, on the southern end of the project.

#### Infrastructure

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan illustrates the existing infrastructure and proposed infrastructure that will be necessary for the development of Santa Fe Valley. For the most part, the proposed infrastructure occurs outside of the Open Space areas. Proposed infrastructure would extend sewer lines through the golf course on the west edge of the Specific Plan Area. Since portions of the golf course are to remain in open space, the proposed infrastructure would impact some of them. However, the existing infrastructure for the Santa Fe Valley already supports 12 inch water lines through the central portion of the Specific Plan Area and a regional aqueduct traversing through the western portion of the site, both in areas where the land is proposed to be preserved as open space.

The Rancho Cielo Mitigation Plan dated April 14, 1995 shows the areas of sewer and water easements through the areas of natural open space. There are several small water and sewer easements through the open space areas and they were accounted for in the Habitat Loss Permit processed for the project.

4S Ranch proposes to have off-site water transmission lines to the project as well as off-site reclaimed water lines connecting to the treatment facility on 4S Ranch. While it is planned that only one of the off-site pipeline corridors will traverse the open space preserve, it may be necessary for others to do so as well as the project is refined.

#### **Emergency, Safety and Police Services**

While brush management will be conducted outside the preserve, it may be desirable to carry out programs and activities designed to reduce the possibility of catastrophic wildfires that could destroy much of the Lake Hodges Segment preserve. Such activities may include controlled burns and fuel load reduction carried out in accordance with an approved site-specific plan or prescribed wildfire management program for the preserve.

All Law enforcement, medical, rescue, and emergency agencies shall be allowed unrestricted access to the preserve. In the event that entry into the preserve by law enforcement agencies is needed in the routine performance of their duties, use of existing roads and trails should be encouraged. In

emergencies where there is a direct threat to public safety, the law enforcement agency should contact the Habitat Manager whenever feasible. The construction of any new roads required by law enforcement agencies shall be subject to all applicable state and federal laws, and be subject to review under NEPA and CEQA.

Biological mitigation for wetlands shall be in accordance with the state and federal policy of “no net loss” of wetland functions and values. All wetlands impacts and mitigation shall consider the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Clean Water Act, Section 404(b)(1) guidelines (40 C.F.R. Part 230), and California Fish and Game Code, 1600 provisions.

No grading will be performed within the LHS Preserve without prior determination of conformance with the LHS by the Director of the Department of Planning and Land Use of the County of San Diego.

### **Project Plans**

A Habitat Management Plan for the portion of the LHS preserve located in Rancho Cielo was included as part of the Mitigation Plan for the Habitat Loss Permit. The Madura project is of smaller size, therefore, it has no specific management plan other than to maintain the area as open space. The 4S Ranch and Santa Fe Valley Specific Plans contain conditions that the proponents shall prepare and submit separate habitat management plans to the CDFG, USFWS, and County, prior to the recordation of the first final map within each project. The Habitat Management Plan for 4S Ranch and Santa Fe Valley will act as their area-specific management directives. The County of San Diego is responsible for the management of lands in 4S Ranch beyond that of basic stewardship. Additional Habitat Management Plans shall only be required for specific developments and those portions of the preserve that remain in private ownership. The plans will include a section on adaptive management procedures and provide for the preparation of an annual report, which will be subject to County review. Land which is transferred to public ownership shall be managed by the accepting entity that may prepare a new habitat management plan or incorporate management into existing appropriate plans. However, habitat management plans will only be required to be prepared by the private property owner for private land when the specific plan requires it.

The Habitat Management Plan will include provisions for control of access, signage to prevent trespassing, trash and litter pickup, and other required activities. Any specific species surveys, censuses, biological monitoring and all other scientific research activities will be carried out consistent with the general guidelines of this Framework Management Plan. Specific species surveys, censuses, and biological monitoring are the County’s responsibility in 4S Ranch, but not in Santa Fe Valley. Any State and/or Federal agency proposing to perform such research in the privately owned portions of the preserve shall obtain permission and indemnify the landowner prior to the beginning of any such activities.

## **Specific Management Policies and Directives for the portion of the Lake Hodges Segment not covered by approved management plans**

### **Background**

#### ***Goals and Objectives***

The Lake Hodges Segment consists primarily of rolling hills, mesas, with slopes and deep canyons draining into the San Dieguito River Valley and Lusardi Creek. In spite of and due to the constraints on this land, the optimum future condition envisioned for the Lake Hodges Segment is an open and relatively undisturbed river canyon, slopes and adjacent mesa tops containing a full ensemble of native species which provide functional wildlife habitat and movement capability. Integrated into the canyon network will be recreational trails.

#### ***Covered Species***

#### **SENSITIVE SPECIES OBSERVED WITHIN THE LAKE HODGES SEGMENT**

##### **PLANTS**

*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*  
*Adolphia californica*  
*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *crassifolia*  
*Artemisia palmeri*  
*Baccharis vanessae*  
*Brodiaea orcuttii*  
*Ceanothus verrucosus*  
*Chamaebatia australis*  
*Comarostaphylis diversifolia* ssp. *Diversifolia*  
*Dudleya variegata*  
*Dudleya viscida*  
*Ferocactus viridescens*  
*Iva hayesiana*  
*Juncus acutus* var. *leopoldii*  
*Quercus dumosa*  
*Selaginella cinerascens*

##### **BIRD SPECIES**

American kestrel  
 Barn owl  
 Bell's sage sparrow  
 Black crowned night heron  
 Blue gray gnatcatcher  
 Blue grosbeak  
 California gnatcatcher  
 California horned lark  
 Cooper's hawk  
 Downy woodpecker  
 Golden eagle  
 Grasshopper sparrow

##### **BIRD SPECIES (cont.)**

Great blue heron  
 Great egret  
 Green heron  
 Loggerhead shrike  
 Merlin  
 Northern harrier  
 Prairie falcon  
 Rufous crowned sparrow  
 San Diego cactus wren  
 Turkey vulture  
 White tailed kite  
 Yellow warbler

##### **REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS**

Coronado Island skink  
 Granite spiny lizard  
 Northern red diamond rattlesnake  
 Orange throated whiptail  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 Western pond turtle  
 Western spadefoot toad  
 Western whiptail

##### **MAMMALS**

San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit  
 San Diego desert woodrat

##### **INVERTEBRATES**

San Diego fairy shrimp

#### ***Major Issues for Lake Hodges Segment***

The major issues that require consideration for management in the Lake Hodges Segment are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities (edge effects) adjacent to and in covered species habitat and linkages.
2. Off-road vehicle activity.
3. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
4. Enhancement and restoration needs
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Utility, facility and road repair, construction and maintenance activities.
7. Cultural Resources

**Priority 1:**

1. Delineate the preserve boundaries along areas of the mesa tops, canyons, and slopes surrounding the development areas with markers and signs to inform the general public, residents, and other people of the boundaries of the preserve to prevent disturbance of the area. This area should be made off-limits to any activity (except where required for brush management or allowed trails), dumping, storage of materials, and other disturbances. Fencing or other protection mechanisms will only be necessary if continued disturbance by the residents (including home gardens, landscaping and play areas) of these areas is evident.
2. Allow regeneration of native habitat to continue in their present state, thus providing needed raptor foraging area. If regeneration to coastal sage or other native habitats appears to be unbalancing the need for grassland areas in the future, assess these areas for management that would maintain a grassland (preferably native) community.
3. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources that will provide for monitoring and protection. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Cultural resources have been identified within the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan. These resources, primarily prehistoric archaeological sites, have either been preserved in open space easements or subjected to data recovery programs. Other cultural resources may be located outside the Specific Plan area.

**Priority 2:**

1. Evaluate the preserve area for potential research opportunities in studying natural regeneration of native grasslands, Coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat. If regeneration is not possible, pursue restoration of disturbed habitats in this area.
2. Provide educational materials and training on the MSCP and on native wildlife to local residents and public agency personnel working in the LHS area to encourage sensitive behavior towards wildlife and its habitat, and to discourage unnecessary trespassing including off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas

3. Ensure that night lighting along development/preserve interface intrudes as little as possible on lands in the interior of the preserve.
4. Assess and prioritize the San Dieguito River Valley and Lusardi Creek areas for restoration of disturbed areas. Include existing roads and those determined not to be needed for inclusion into the trail system in the restoration assessment. Burned areas should not need restoration, but off-road use and other disturbed areas should either be restored or other steps taken to encourage regeneration. This could offer potential research opportunities
5. On a case-by-case basis, trapping of cowbirds and eradication of bullfrogs may be necessary at strategic locations, and where determined feasible to protect sensitive species from excessive predation. This management directive may be considered a Priority 1 if necessary to meet the conditions for species coverage.

### **Specific Management Policies and Directives for the San Pasqual (unincorporated) Preserve Area**

#### **Background**

#### ***Goals and Objectives***

The optimum future condition for San Pasqual Preserve area would be a mosaic of native habitats, limited passive recreational activities that act to preserve and rejuvenate healthy natural ecosystems and processes, water quality, and the full range of native species. Grazing will be limited exclusively to areas where it can be shown to be beneficial to the Stephen's kangaroo rat (if observed), or covered species that rely on open areas to facilitate recovery of the species. Any grazing activities must be approved and closely monitored by the preserve manager.

#### ***Covered Species***

Covered species found in the San Pasqual Preserve area include:

##### **Plants**

San Diego barrel cactus  
Wart-stemmed ceanothus

##### **Animals**

Coastal cactus wren  
California gnatcatcher  
Cooper's hawk  
Ferruginous hawk  
Golden eagle  
Least Bell's vireo  
Orange-throated whiptail  
Mountain lion  
Mule deer  
Rufous-crowned sparrow  
San Diego horned lizard  
Western bluebird  
White-faced ibis

### *Major Issues*

The major issues that require consideration for management in the San Pasqual Preserve Area are the following in order of priority:

1. Offsite grazing and encroachment of cattle, and activities adjacent (edge effects) to and in covered species habitat and linkages.
2. Water quality, including erosion, sedimentation, and agricultural runoff.
3. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
4. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
5. Enhancement and restoration needs.
6. Cultural Resources

#### *Boden Canyon Mitigation Bank:*

This 40-acre property (Parcel G) was acquired by the County as a mitigation bank to be used for County Public Works projects. It is located between the town of Ramona and San Pasqual Valley, about 10 miles east of the San Diego Wild Animal Park. It is part of a 2,068-acre property that has been purchased by the County and the City of San Diego, and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) for the San Dieguito River Park. The County mitigation bank has an approved management plan.

Boden Canyon is composed of eight habitat types, including Coastal sage scrub, oak riparian vegetation, coast live oak woodland, Engelmann oak woodland, perennial native grassland, mixed chaparral, chamise chaparral, and non-native grassland. This area is important because it, together with approximately 800 acres owned by the City of San Diego in Boden Canyon, provides a diverse, reasonably undisturbed block of contiguous habitat that connects to U.S. Forest Service lands east of the MSCP area.

#### *Priority 1:*

1. Protection of Oak riparian, coastal sage scrub and other upland habitats from disturbance throughout this portion of the valley (e.g. Boden Canyon preserve) will require periodic monitoring to ensure no disturbance is occurring. If disturbance occurs, consider implement protective measures.
2. Allow regeneration of native habitat to continue in their present state, thus providing needed raptor foraging area. If regeneration to coastal sage or other native habitats appears to be unbalancing the need for grassland areas in the future, or if Stephen's kangaroo rat is observed, it may be determined that these areas of management should maintain a grassland (preferably native) community.
3. Any equestrian activities should occur only on existing trails or roads or be placed approximately 300-500 feet away from riparian habitats. Cowbird trapping should be conducted in the vicinity of riparian systems.
4. Preserve the existing wildlife corridor width of approximately 800 feet along Santa Ysabel Creek and Santa Maria Creek as a connection between the floodplain and areas with upland habitat to ensure maintenance of the corridor's width through agreements with the City of San Diego and CDFG as appropriate.
5. Establish a riparian corridor and provide fencing along the length of Santa Maria Creek adjacent to grazing leases to exclude livestock from entering and disturbing habitat areas.

6. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection.

*Priority 2:*

1. Evaluate the preserve area for potential research opportunities in studying natural regeneration of native grasslands, Coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat. If regeneration is not possible, pursue restoration of disturbed habitats in this area. Generally in most areas of the preserve, including creeks and tributaries, riparian vegetation will naturally regenerate and active restoration will not be needed except for locations where determined necessary by preserve managers. Where enhancement is considered, use only local native species.
2. Restore the area of Santa Maria Creek that lies within the preserve to strengthen the wildlife connection. When/if the uses in this area change, recognize and incorporate both the constraints of the floodplain and the wildlife corridor into any future lease(s) as appropriate.
3. Where the river corridor and jurisdictional boundary narrows near the eastern end of the valley, provide periodic monitoring to ensure maintenance of a continuous regional wildlife corridor with connections made to offsite open space lands wherever possible. If the land uses in this area south of the river constrain the corridor width, then agreements or negotiations may be necessary to assure adequate width, or other options may need to be considered.
4. In the far eastern portions of the valley, through the tree groves, the riparian connection is extremely narrow. Where the river cuts through the groves, limit efforts to control the natural ecological processes. Maintain the groves without fencing and allow unrestricted wildlife movement through the groves. Preserve the existing riparian corridor along Santa Ysabel Creek for use as a wildlife connection to Pamo Valley and evaluate a widening if there is a change in agricultural use that further constrains the corridor.

### **South County Segment**

The South County Segment (SCS) includes about 82,767 acres within the County jurisdiction in the southwest section of the County. The planning area generally includes lands south of Jamacha Boulevard and South Bay Parkway, including the lower drainage basins of the Sweetwater, Otay, and the Tijuana Rivers. On the southwest, the plan includes the westernmost parcel of Otay Ranch south of Telegraph Canyon Road and extends south to the International Border south and east of Otay Lakes. To the northeast, the plan includes State, County, and other parcels on McGinty Mountain. On the east, the plan covers substantial areas south of Campo Road (State Route 94), excluding the rural communities of Jamul and Dulzura. In the extreme southeast, the plan includes Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and California Department of Forestry lands in the San Ysidro Mountains (Otay Mountain), and the lower western slopes of Tecate Mountain; it also includes BLM parcels southeast of Dulzura and north of State Route 94.

The plan includes two outlying areas on McGinty Mountain to the north and BLM lands north of Highway 94 and east of Dulzura (Engineer Springs, White Mountain).

The SCS presently covers four private development plans: Otay Ranch, Hidden Valley Estates, Pointe San Diego, and parts of Loma del Sol. All of these projects have been designed with natural open space areas with approved management plans, and make up the bulk of the private preserved areas in the SCS.

The SCS also includes lands owned by non-governmental entities, such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC) lands on McGinty Mountain, and private mitigation banks including those managed by The Environmental Trust (TET) on McGinty Mountain, O'Neal Canyon and Marron Valley.

The SCS also includes public lands with natural open space areas pledged for conservation purposes by the Federal BLM and Fish and Wildlife Service, State of California Department of Forestry and Department of Fish and Game, the City of San Diego, and the County of San Diego, including Rancho San Diego purchased by the County, CalTrans, and San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and is now part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Other public agencies, including the Sweetwater Authority, the Otay Municipal Water District have prepared plans. At this time, the remaining water agencies are preparing their conservation plans, and have yet to be approved. These habitat plans will substantially add to the presently proposed preserve area extent and biological function.

The preserve area presently includes about 48,240 acres. The native vegetation of the South County Segment is dominated by Coastal sage scrub (19,542 acres) Chaparral (18,106 acres) vegetation. Chaparral/coastal sage scrub mix comprises about 637 acres of preserve land. Additionally, the largest stands of Southern cypress woodland (5,320 acres) in the United States exist on the slopes of Otay and Tecate Peaks in the South County Segment. Grasslands comprise about 1,172 acres; greater than 200 acres of the following habitats fall within the preserve area: Coast live oak riparian forest, Riparian forest, Oak woodlands, and disturbed habitats. The remaining habitats in the preserve are less than 200 acres each.

### **Existing Land Uses within the South County Segment**

Land uses within the proposed covered projects of the SCS are generally vacant and/or used for agriculture (generally groves and grazing). The SCS covers parts of the following County planning areas: Crest-Dehesa-Harbisson Canyon-Granite Hills Community Plan, Jamul-Dulzura Community Plan, Sweetwater Community Plan, and Otay Subregional Planning Area.

Existing residential uses in the area include generally urban densities adjacent to the Cities of Chula Vista and San Diego to the west; in the communities of Spring Valley and Casa de Oro (urban to rural densities) to the north; the rural communities of Jamul and Dulzura lie along Highway 94 to the east. The developing commercial/industrial land uses on Otay Mesa lie to the west along the International Boundary.

Much of the SCS is in private ownership. The largest area of land managed for resource conservation is located on Otay Mountain and is managed by the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The City of San Diego owns land around the Upper and Lower Otay

Reservoirs and Marron Valley. The majority of this land is managed as a regional park by the County Department of Parks and Recreation.

### **Otay Ranch**

Resource Management Plan: Part of the approval of General Plan Amendment for Otay Ranch included approval of the Phase I Resource Management Plan (RMP). This is a comprehensive planning document that addresses the preservation, enhancement, and management of sensitive natural and cultural resources on the 22,899-acre Otay Ranch property.

The goal of the RMP is establishment and management of an open space system that will become a permanent Management Preserve dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the multiple resources present on Otay Ranch. The RMP is intended to be implemented as part of the overall integrated planning approach for Otay Ranch. A series of goals, objectives, policies and standards in the RMP address the resource protection issues.

Biogeography/Conservation Issues: The approved Resource Management Plan for Otay Ranch is 11,375 acres. Together with the 1,166 acres of Limited Development Areas, a total of 12,541 acres are anticipated to be preserved in open space on Otay Ranch.

Specific Project Requirements. Allowable uses for areas adjacent to the preserve are discussed in Policies 7.1-7.3 of the Otay Ranch RMP. The edge of the preserve is defined as a strip of land 100 feet wide that surrounds the perimeter of the Management Preserve.

### **Overall Management Policies & Directives for the South County Segment for Otay Mesa, Otay Valley, and Otay Mountain not covered by the Otay Ranch RMP**

The following general management directives apply to the Otay Mesa area as a whole; long-range policy documents pertinent to the area have been reviewed and incorporated by reference. For example, the Otay Ranch has an approved Resource Management Plan. This specific area of South County Segment is subject to the conditions of said plan.

The Otay Ranch Resource Management Plan covering this area designates the entire Otay River Valley as open space. Goals within the plan include conserving the Otay River Valley and floodplain as open space and protecting sensitive habitat areas from disruption.

The County of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan, South County Segment, contains lists and maps of vernal pools and sensitive species, as well as descriptions of native vegetation, wildlife, and the ecological significance of the Otay Mesa area.

### **County of San Diego East Mesa Detention Facility**

The East Mesa Detention Facility site is located south of Lower Otay Lake, north of O'Neal Canyon, and north east of the Donovan State Prison facility site, the lower southwest slopes of the San Ysidro Mountains. The site encompasses approximately 524 acres. Approximately 120 acres have been set aside for open space. Additional lands will be retained as open space as mitigation for the future phases of development as depicted on the South County Segment plan maps.

Mitigation for impacts for the County of San Diego East Mesa Detention Facility required 120 acres

north and adjacent to the site identified for open space purposes.

### ***Goals and Objectives***

The Otay Mesa area consists primarily of a large mesa, with slopes and deep canyons draining into the Otay River Valley or towards Mexico. One linkage connects habitat areas south to north across Otay Mesa Road. In spite of and due to the constraints on this land, the optimum future condition envisioned for the Otay Mesa area is a network of open and relatively undisturbed canyons containing a full ensemble of native species which provide functional wildlife habitat and movement capability. Integrated into the canyon network will be recreational trails and Border Patrol access roads.

### ***Covered Species***

Covered species in this area include:

#### Plants

California orcutt grass  
Coast barrel cactus  
Otay Mesa mint  
Otay tarplant  
Orcutt's bird's beak  
Orcutt's brodiaea  
Prostrate navarretia  
San Diego goldenstar  
San Diego thorn- mint  
Small-leaved rose  
Snake cholla  
Variegated dudleya  
San Diego button-celery

#### Animals

California gnatcatcher  
Cactus wren  
Cooper's hawk  
Golden eagle  
Northern harrier  
Orange-throated whiptail  
Peregrine falcon  
Riverside fairy shrimp  
San Diego fairy shrimp  
San Diego horned lizard  
Burrowing owl

### ***Major Issues***

The major issues that require consideration for management in the Otay Mesa area are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses (including the Sheriff's firing range, and edge effects) and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat and linkages.
2. Off-road vehicle activity.
3. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
4. Enhancement and restoration needs.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Illegal immigration and Border Patrol activities.
7. Utility, facility and road repair, construction (i.e. SR 125) and maintenance activities.
8. Cultural Resources

**Priority 1:**

1. No unauthorized motorized vehicles except Border Patrol, preserve managers, maintenance personnel or emergency vehicles will be allowed on any trails or off-trail in the preserve. The Border Patrol should restrict vehicle use to the existing access roads as much as feasible, to avoid disturbance of habitat. Continuous coordination with the Border Patrol will be necessary to ensure continued awareness of the preserve and cooperation in maintenance. The presence of the Border Patrol in this area should help to make the preserve safer for visitors. If possible, improve coordination with the Border Patrol to aid in the identification and prevention of vandalism, off-road vehicle use, dumping, and other disturbances to habitat.
2. Identify narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. Remove all trash, hazardous materials, and vehicles from the preserve prior to transfer from private into public ownership and/or management. If hazardous materials remain, these areas should be signed to indicate their locations and made off-limits to people.
4. Inventory vernal pool areas within the Otay Mesa area for sensitive and target species where not previously or recently done, and assess for enhancement/restoration needs or opportunities, general status, and potential threats.
5. Protect succulents from trampling and poaching of plants. Provide barriers as appropriate to this area that accommodate wildlife movement through established wildlife corridors.
6. Protect and manage areas with concentrations of *Plantago erecta* and owls clover that may provide a food source for the Quino checkerspot.
7. Regular enforcement patrols may be necessary in the canyons (including Poggi, Johnson, O'Neal) and the Otay River valley and its' tributaries to prevent vandalism, poaching, and off-road vehicle activity.
8. Delineate the preserve boundaries along areas of the mesa and slopes surrounding Donovan State Prison and the County Bailey Detention Facility with markers and signs to inform correctional facility employees, contractors, and other people of the boundaries of the preserve to prevent disturbance of the area. This area should be made off-limits to illegal tilling of the mesas (except where required for brush management), dumping, storage of materials, and other disturbances. Fencing or other protection mechanisms will only be necessary if continued disturbance (including horse and cattle grazing) of these areas is evident.
9. Retain mesa areas which are currently non-native grasslands in order to allow regeneration or continue in their present state, thus providing needed raptor foraging area. If regeneration to coastal sage or other native habitats appears to be unbalancing the need for grassland areas in the future, assess these areas for management that would maintain a grassland (preferably native) community.
10. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources, which will provide for monitoring and protection.

11. Vernal pool assessments are required and therefore should be Priority 1. Assess vernal pool areas proposed for development (e.g. approved development projects or proposed regional transportation facilities such as State Routes 905 and 125) for transplantation of sensitive plants and soils containing seedbanks of sensitive flora and fauna. Include in mitigation programs arrangements for proper timing of soil and plant removal, proper storage if necessary, and appropriate timing of enhancement/restoration efforts, including transplantation.

**Priority 2:**

1. Assess the need for continued use of the existing access roads along the mesa tops, providing access to the bottom of Otay River Valley, its' tributaries and bordering canyons. Utilize to the extent possible utility maintenance and Border Patrol access roads as trail systems. Restore any roads determined not to be necessary to serve these functions, and any duplicate roads to the appropriate local native habitat(s).
2. Restoration of habitats may require topsoil importation, which could be provided from the surrounding development areas at the time of grading, as these soils would also contain the appropriate local seedbank.
3. Evaluate the mesa west of the Donovan State Prison and Bailey Detention Facility for potential research opportunities in studying natural regeneration of native grasslands, Coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat. If regeneration is not possible, pursue restoration of disturbed habitats in this area.
4. Install barriers and signage along Salt Creek Canyon where agriculture or development abuts the preserve.
5. Provide educational materials and training on the MSCP and on native wildlife to Border Patrol agents and other public agency personnel working in the Otay Mesa border area to encourage sensitive behavior towards wildlife and its habitat, and to discourage unnecessary off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas.
6. Insure that if night lighting along the border is proposed in the future, that the lighting intrudes as little as possible on lands in the interior of the preserve.
7. Assess and prioritize the Poggi, Johnson and O'Neal Canyon areas for restoration of disturbed areas. Include existing roads and those determined not to be needed for Border Patrol activities in the restoration assessment. Burned areas should not need restoration, but off-road use and other disturbed areas should either be restored or other steps taken to encourage regeneration. This could offer potential research opportunities.

**Specific Management Policies and Directives for the Otay River Valley not covered by the Otay Ranch RMP*****Background*****Otay Valley Regional Park Plan (County Jurisdiction Lands)**

The Otay Valley Regional Focused Park Concept Planning Area, including the Otay River Valley and all drainages into the valley west of the Otay Reservoirs, is located in the southern portion of San Diego County, and four miles north of the United States/Mexico International Border. The Otay Valley Regional Park (OVRP) is being planned through a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) between the County of San Diego, the City of San Diego and the City of Chula Vista. The

park will fulfill the need to provide a mix of active and passive recreational activities while protecting environmentally sensitive areas, protecting cultural and scenic resources, and encouraging compatible agricultural uses in the park.

The proposed regional trail system is intended to link to the Bayshore Bikepath to the west and serve as a continuing link to regional trails further east. Trails within the Otay River Valley will utilize existing fire and utility roads wherever possible in order to minimize impacts.

In addition, the Otay Ranch Resource Management Plan (RMP), Phase I calls for a nature interpretive center to be located within the open space preserve on the Otay Ranch.

The part of the proposed park in County jurisdiction lies primarily east of Otay Valley Road and extends to the east side of the MSCP boundary, except for lands in the City of Chula Vista on the west side of Lower Otay Reservoir. The County jurisdiction includes the City of San Diego owned lands around the reservoir, which is part of the City's Cornerstone Lands Conservation Bank. The lands in County jurisdiction are primarily in open space, riparian and disturbed riparian uses, but include a rock quarry and gun club.

#### **Otay Valley Regional Park Plan (County Jurisdiction Lands)**

At present, a conceptual plan considered by the JEPAC Policy Committee for the park preliminarily identifies a number of recreational facilities. At present, the exact location of these recreational facilities within the park is not known. In addition to the potential recreational facilities, other facilities, listed below may be located within the river park boundary.

- a. City of San Diego Clean Water Program reclamation facility (located in the western end of the County jurisdiction lands, within the river valley (see Lettieri-McIntyre, 1994).
- b. Proposed roads crossing the river: a) Paseo Ranchero; b) La Media Road; c) State Route 125; and d) Alta Road.
- c. Other local roads and trails within the park for local access.
- d. Existing rock quarry (about 135 acres) on Rock Mountain, just east of Otay Valley Road; the quarry operation is expected to continue for about the next 50 years, after which the site may be used for active recreation.
- e. The Gun Club/Bird Ranch: This area and the area immediately east (about 225 acres) has been a gun club and ranch and would not be used for habitat management purposes under the conceptual park plan.
- f. The site for the 400 acres of active recreation in Otay Ranch has been identified for the beach areas on both sides of the Otay River.
- g. Lower Otay County Park (about 70 acres): an existing but closed camp ground; to be refurbished.
- h. The existing County Air Park, located east of Otay Reservoir, south of Otay Lakes Road: used as a landing field and observation area for gliders and parachutists (about 60 acres).
- i. The Conceptual Park plan also includes the George F. Bailey Detention facility and the 120-acre mitigation/open space area located to the north of the facility.

#### ***Goals and Objectives***

The optimum future condition for the Otay River Valley will be a fairly unrestricted floodplain containing natural riparian and wetland habitats interspersed with both active and passive recreational areas, and edged by both natural slopes and adjacent developed areas. Although the valley is narrow and defined, all future uses within the area would strive to maintain and enhance healthy natural processes and provide continuous native habitats for wildlife movement and sensitive species conservation, while providing recreational opportunities and an improved quality of life and environment for local residents Covered Species

Covered species in the Otay River Valley include:

Plants

California orcutt grass  
Coast barrel cactus  
Otay Mesa mint  
Otay tarplant  
Orcutt's bird's beak  
Orcutt's brodiaea  
Prostrate navarretia  
San Diego goldenstar  
San Diego thorn- mint  
Small-leaved rose  
Snake cholla  
Variegated dudleya  
San Diego button-celery

Animals

Burrowing owl  
California gnatcatcher  
Cactus wren  
Cooper's hawk  
Golden eagle  
Northern harrier  
Orange-throated whiptail  
Peregrine falcon  
Riverside fairy shrimp  
San Diego fairy shrimp  
San Diego horned lizard

In addition, various raptors, including the northern harrier, use the valley for foraging and nesting.

**Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the Otay River Valley, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities (edge effects) adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural Resources.

**Priority 1:**

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with the City of Chula Vista or in conjunction with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell's vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.
2. Identify narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. In the long-term, allow the riparian and wetland habitats in the valley to regenerate, except where active restoration is specified as a result of monitoring or for mitigation purposes. In the future, assess the riparian areas for management changes and needs, which could offer future research opportunities.
4. No unauthorized motorized vehicles except Border Patrol, preserve managers, maintenance personnel or emergency vehicles will be allowed on any trails or off-trail in the preserve. The Border Patrol should restrict vehicle use to the existing access roads as much as feasible, to avoid disturbance of habitat. Continuous coordination with the Border Patrol will be necessary to ensure continued awareness of the preserve and cooperation in maintenance. The presence of the Border Patrol in this area should help to make the preserve safer for visitors. If possible, improve coordination with the Border Patrol to aid in the identification and prevention of vandalism, off-road vehicle use, dumping, and other disturbances to habitat.
5. Remove all trash, hazardous materials, and vehicles from the preserve prior to transfer from private into public ownership and/or management. If hazardous materials remain, these areas should be signed to indicate their locations and made off-limits to people.
6. Inventory vernal pool areas within the Otay Mesa area for sensitive and target species where not previously or recently done, and assess for enhancement/restoration needs or opportunities, general status, and potential threats.
7. Protect succulents from trampling and poaching of plants. Provide barriers as appropriate to this area that accommodate wildlife movement through established wildlife corridors.
8. Protect and manage areas with concentrations of *Plantago erecta* and owls clover that may provide a food source for the Quino checkerspot.
9. Regular enforcement patrols may be necessary in the canyons (including Poggi, Johnson, O'Neal) and the Otay River valley and its' tributaries to prevent vandalism, poaching, and off-road vehicle activity.
10. Delineate the preserve boundaries along areas of the mesa and slopes surrounding Donovan State Prison and the County Bailey Detention Facility with markers and signs to inform correctional facility employees, contractors, and other people of the boundaries of the preserve to prevent disturbance of the area. This area should be made off-limits to illegal tilling of the mesas (except where required for brush management), dumping, storage of materials, and other disturbances. Fencing or other protection mechanisms will only be necessary if continued disturbance (including horse and cattle grazing) of these areas is evident.
11. Retain mesa areas which are currently non-native grasslands in order to allow regeneration or continue in their present state, thus providing needed raptor foraging

- area. If regeneration to coastal sage or other native habitats appears to be unbalancing the need for grassland areas in the future, assess these areas for management that would maintain a grassland (preferably native) community.
12. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection. Some of the cultural resources within this preserve will be within Otay Valley Regional Park. One archaeological site within the preserve has been determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and will be appropriate for interpretive programming.

**Priority 2:**

1. Assess vernal pool areas proposed for development (e.g. approved development projects or proposed regional transportation facilities such as State Routes 905 and 125) for transplantation of sensitive plants and soils containing seedbanks of sensitive flora and fauna. Include in mitigation programs arrangements for proper timing of soil and plant removal, proper storage if necessary, and appropriate timing of enhancement/restoration efforts, including transplantation.
2. Assess the need for continued use of the existing access roads along the mesa tops, providing access to the bottom of Otay River Valley, its' tributaries and bordering canyons. Utilize to the extent possible utility maintenance and Border Patrol access roads as trail systems. Restore any roads determined not to be necessary to serve these functions, and any duplicate roads to the appropriate local native habitat(s).
3. Restoration of habitats may require topsoil importation which could be provided from the surrounding development areas at the time of grading, as these soils would also contain the appropriate local seedbank.
4. Evaluate the mesa west of the Donovan State Prison and Bailey Detention Facility for potential research opportunities in studying natural regeneration of native grasslands, Coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat. If regeneration is not possible, pursue restoration of disturbed habitats in this area.
5. Install barriers and signage along Salt Creek Canyon where agriculture or development abuts the preserve.
6. Provide educational materials and training on the MSCP and on native wildlife to Border Patrol agents and other public agency personnel working in the Otay Mesa border area to encourage sensitive behavior towards wildlife and its habitat, and to discourage unnecessary off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas.
7. Insure that night lighting intrudes as little as possible on lands in the interior of the preserve.
8. Assess and prioritize the Poggi, Johnson and O'Neal Canyon areas for restoration of disturbed areas. Include existing roads and those determined not to be needed for Border Patrol activities in the restoration assessment. Burned areas should not need restoration, but off-road use and other disturbed areas should either be restored or other steps taken to encourage regeneration. This could offer potential research opportunities.

***County of San Diego BLM/Lower Otay Reservoir Site***

This 200-acre property (APN 647-130-12) is presently owned by BLM but the County of San Diego

manages the site for conservation purposes and is obtaining a patent on the property. The property will be managed by the County Department of Parks and Recreation for passive recreation and natural resource conservation.”

Covered species include:

Plants

California orcutt grass  
Coast barrel cactus  
Otay Mesa mint  
Otay tarplant  
Orcutt’s bird’s beak  
Orcutt’s brodiaea  
Prostrate navarretia  
San Diego goldenstar  
San Diego thorn- mint  
Small-leaved rose  
Snake cholla  
Variegated dudleya  
San Diego button-celery

Animals

Burrowing owl  
California gnatcatcher  
Cactus wren  
Cooper’s hawk  
Golden eagle  
Northern harrier  
Orange-throated whiptail  
Peregrine falcon  
Riverside fairy shrimp  
San Diego fairy shrimp  
San Diego horned lizard

### Major Issues

The major issues that require consideration for management in the Otay Reservoir, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities (edge effects) adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
5. Enhancement and restoration needs.
6. Water quality.
7. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
8. Cultural Resources.

### Priority 1:

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with BLM or in conjunction with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell’s vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.
2. Identify narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. In the long-term, allow the riparian and wetland habitats in the valley to regenerate. In the future, assess the riparian areas for management changes and needs which could offer future research opportunities.

4. No unauthorized motorized vehicles except Border Patrol, preserve managers, maintenance personnel or emergency vehicles will be allowed on any trails or off-trail. The Border Patrol should restrict vehicle use to the existing access roads as much as feasible, to avoid disturbance of habitat. Continuous coordination with the Border Patrol will be necessary to ensure continued awareness of the preserve and cooperation in maintenance. The presence of the Border Patrol in this area should help to make the preserve safer for visitors. If possible, improve coordination with the Border Patrol to aid in the identification and prevention of vandalism, off-road vehicle use, dumping, and other disturbances to habitat.
5. Remove all trash, hazardous materials, and vehicles from the preserve prior to transfer from private into public ownership and/or management. If hazardous materials remain, these areas should be signed to indicate their locations and made off-limits to people.
6. Inventory vernal pool areas within the Otay Mesa area for sensitive and target species where not previously or recently done, and assess for enhancement/restoration needs or opportunities, general status, and potential threats.
7. Protect succulents from trampling and poaching of plants. Provide barriers as appropriate to this area that accommodate wildlife movement through established wildlife corridors.
8. Protect areas with concentrations of *Plantago erecta* and owls clover that may provide a food source for the Quino checkerspot.
9. Retain mesa areas which are currently non-native grasslands in order to allow regeneration or continue in their present state, thus providing needed raptor foraging area. If regeneration to coastal sage or other native habitats appears to be unbalancing the need for grassland areas in the future, assess these areas for management that would maintain a grassland (preferably native) community.
10. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection. Some of the cultural resources within this preserve will be within Otay Valley Regional Park. This preserve includes historic cultural resources associated with early settlement in Otay Valley, and with construction of the dam at Lower Otay Reservoir.

**Priority 2:**

1. Assess the need for continued use of the existing access roads along the mesa tops, providing access to the bottom of Otay River Valley, its' tributaries and bordering canyons. Utilize to the extent possible utility maintenance and Border Patrol access roads as trail systems. Restore any roads determined not to be necessary to serve these functions, and any duplicate roads to the appropriate local native habitat(s).
2. Provide educational materials and training on the MSCP and on native wildlife to Border Patrol agents and other public agency personnel working in the Otay Mesa border area to encourage sensitive behavior towards wildlife and its habitat, and to discourage unnecessary off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas.
3. Insure that night lighting intrudes as little as possible on lands in the interior of the preserve.

**County of San Diego McGinty Mountain Park**

This 20.34-acre parcel is adjacent to The Nature Conservancy holdings south of McGinty Mountain. It contains Coastal sage scrub and Chaparral vegetation communities and was acquired for natural resources protection (100%).

Covered species include:

Plants

San Diego thorn-mint  
 San Diego ambrosia  
 Encinitas baccharis  
 Orcutt's brodiaea  
 dense reed grass  
 slender-pod jewelflower  
 Lakeside ceanothus  
 wart-stemmed ceanothus  
 Palmer's ericameria  
 San Diego barrel cactus  
 felt-leaved monardella  
 willow monardella  
 San Diego goldenstar  
 Dehesa bear-grass  
 San Miguel savory  
 Gander's butterweed  
 narrow-leaved nightshade  
 Parry's tetracoccus

Animals

arroyo southwestern toad  
 southwestern pond turtle  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 orange-throated whiptail  
 bald eagle  
 northern harrier  
 Cooper's hawk  
 ferruginous hawk  
 golden eagle  
 coastal cactus wren  
 California gnatcatcher  
 western bluebird  
 least Bell's vireo  
 California rufous-crowned sparrow  
 mountain lion  
 southern mule deer

**Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the McGinty Mountain area, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural Resources

**Priority 1:**

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with BLM, CDFG or in conjunction with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell's vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.

2. Identify narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. Evaluate the preserve area for potential research opportunities in studying natural regeneration of native grasslands, Coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat. If regeneration is not possible, pursue restoration of disturbed habitats in this area.
4. Provide educational materials and training on the MSCP and on native wildlife to local residents and public agency personnel working in the area to encourage sensitive behavior towards wildlife and its habitat, and to discourage unnecessary trespassing including off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas.
5. Insure that night lighting along development/preserve interface intrudes as little as possible on lands in the interior of the preserve.
6. Assess and prioritize McGinty Mountain for restoration of disturbed areas. Include existing roads and those determined not to be needed for inclusion into the trail system in the restoration assessment. Burned areas should not need restoration, but off-road use and other disturbed areas should either be restored or other steps taken to encourage regeneration. This could offer potential research opportunities.
7. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources, which will provide for monitoring and protection. The preserve includes the historic Peg Leg Mine, which could be appropriate for interpretive programming.

### ***County of San Diego Sweetwater Regional Park***

Sweetwater Regional Park is located in the Sweetwater River Valley between the Sweetwater Reservoir on the east and I-805 on the east in the Bonita/Sunnyside area (San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department, 1989). The eastern third occupies the high, hilly ground between the reservoir and the valley below. The western two-thirds lies within the 100-year floodplain of the Sweetwater River. The County jurisdiction part of the park includes about 515 acres.

Vegetative cover on the site includes the following: about 90 acres of Coastal sage scrub, 40 acres of Maritime succulent scrub, 115 acres of Southern willow scrub, 170 acres of non-native grasslands, and about 100 acres of urban uses, including mining and intensive agriculture.

Existing park uses include several houses, an equestrian center, limited retail commercial, a golf driving range, a pine tree nursery, abandoned dairy buildings, trails and a campground.

Covered species include:

Plants

San Diego thorn-mint  
 San Diego ambrosia  
 Encinitas baccharis  
 Orcutt's brodiaea  
 dense reed grass  
 slender-pod jewelflower  
 Lakeside ceanothus  
 wart-stemmed ceanothus  
 Palmer's ericameria  
 San Diego barrel cactus  
 felt-leaved monardella  
 willow monardella  
 San Diego goldenstar  
 Dehesa bear-grass  
 San Miguel savory  
 Gander's butterweed  
 narrow-leaved nightshade  
 Parry's tetracoccus

Animals

arroyo southwestern toad  
 southwestern pond turtle  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 orange-throated whiptail  
 bald eagle  
 northern harrier  
 Cooper's hawk  
 ferruginous hawk  
 golden eagle  
 coastal cactus wren  
 California gnatcatcher  
 western bluebird  
 least Bell's vireo  
 California rufous-crowned sparrow  
 mountain lion  
 southern mule deer

**Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the area, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural Resources.

**Priority 1:**

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell's vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.
2. Identify narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. Evaluate the preserve area for potential research opportunities in studying natural regeneration of native grasslands, Coastal sage scrub, and vernal pool habitat. If regeneration is not possible, pursue restoration of disturbed habitats in this area.

4. Provide educational materials and training on the MSCP and on native wildlife to local residents and public agency personnel working in the area to encourage sensitive behavior towards wildlife and its habitat, and to discourage unnecessary trespassing including off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas.
5. Insure that night lighting along development/preserve interface intrudes as little as possible on lands in the interior of the preserve.
6. Assess and prioritize areas of the Sweetwater Regional Park for restoration of disturbed areas. Include existing roads and those determined not to be needed for inclusion into the trail system in the restoration assessment. Burned areas should not need restoration, but off-road use and other disturbed areas should either be restored or other steps taken to encourage regeneration. This could offer potential research opportunities.
7. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources, which will provide for monitoring and protection.

#### ***Resolution Trust Corporation/Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank***

The County and other agencies have acquired approximately 1,853 acres of land in the Valley de Oro Community Planning Area, previously owned by the Resolution Trust Corporation. This property, the undeveloped part of the Rancho San Diego Specific Plan, is located south of the intersection of State Route 94/Campo Road and Jamacha Road.

The site supports 1,428 acres of CSS habitat and approximately 181 acres of riparian woodland and includes other vegetation communities: Southern mixed chaparral, Coast live oak woodland, Engelmann oak woodland, scrub, freshwater marsh, and native grassland. The site may serve, initially, as a mitigation area for a number of public projects. These lands are now part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National.

#### ***Environmental Land Solutions/The Environmental Trust Properties***

The Environmental Trust (TET) has two mitigation banks within the South County NCCP planning area: Marron Valley Mitigation Preserve and O'Neal Canyon and southerly foothills corridor.

1. Marron Valley Mitigation Preserve consists of 561 acres located just to the east of Otay Mountain and is surrounded the BLM Wildlife Study Area and the City of San Diego Marron cornerstone lands.

Regional vegetation coverage at the Marron Valley site includes primarily (Interior) Sage scrub and Chaparral.

2. O'Neal Canyon and Southerly Foothills Corridor is currently about 600 acres abutting the BLM "Otay Wilderness Study Preserve" (north and south), and south of Lower Otay Lake and the County jail, and approximately north of the International Border, on the western flanks of the San Ysidro Mountains. Resources include: 217.8 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub; 11 acres of maritime succulent scrub; 8.8 acres of Southern willow riparian scrub; 1.2 acres of California native grassland; 0.5 acres of Engelmann oak woodland; 378.5 acres of Tecate cypress woodland; 53.5 acres of Southern mixed chaparral; 36.6 acres of Chamise chaparral; 10.4 acres of Cismontane alkali wetlands; 1.4 acres freshwater marsh; and 2.7 acres of rock outcrops/cliffs.

**Other Preserve Areas Within the South County Segment Planning Area**

Each of the following preserves either have approved plans or will prepare a management plan that will substantially conform to the general guidelines of this plan.

***The Nature Conservancy Lands on McGinty Mountain***

These parcels are owned in fee title by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and total 573 acres. The northerly parcels intertwine with California Department of Fish and Game and The Environmental Trust mitigation bank parcels on the top and south side of McGinty Mountain. The County of San Diego McGinty Mountain County Park and several privately owned parcels lie in between the bulk of the northerly TNC parcels and an isolated southern parcel, although an easement for a trail covers some of the intervening parcels.

The Nature Conservancy is seeking to cooperatively manage their ownerships along with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). At the present all the TNC fee-owned parcels are considered 100 percent preserved, with no exclusions except hiking trails, and passive recreational uses.

***California Department of Fish and Game McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve***

The California Department of Fish and Game owns both fee title and easements on property on McGinty Mountain. The lands covered by a Conservation Easement to the CDFG consist of 5 tax parcels and total 150.37 acres (owned by The Environmental Trust) and the lands owned in fee title consist of 86.67 acres on a single tax parcel. These lands are managed by the CDFG as the McGinty Mountain Ecological Reserve. These lands will be managed by the CDFG consistent with the biological goals of the MSCP and will be considered 100 percent preserved.

These lands have high resource value, and because of the proximity to other lands owned and managed for natural resource values by TNC, TET, and the County of San Diego, should serve as an anchor point for additional acquisition of core and linkage habitats. The Nature Conservancy Lands on McGinty Mountain

***California Department of Forestry West Tecate Peak Ownership***

The Department of Forestry owns and manages approximately 2,200 acres abutting the western boundary of BLM property on the west side of Tecate Peak. This property does not have a formal management plan but is presently used for prescribed burning, training for California Department of Forestry uses, and resource management. The site has both Chaparral and Southern Tecate cypress forest.

***Bureau of Land Management Lands in Otay Mountain Area***

The BLM adopted the South Coast Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision on May 26, 1994. This plan addressed management of approximately 296,000 acres of BLM-administered public land in the southwestern Counties of California. The San Diego County Management Area includes 65,000 acres of BLM public land, and an additional 74,000 acres of BLM split estate lands in the western portion of the County. In Split Estate lands, the Federal government still controls mineral resources, but not the surface uses of the land (these lands are not shown on the SCS maps).

Most of the BLM public lands, including the largest parcels, are in the mountainous terrain lying between Interstate Highway 8 and the United States/Mexican Border. The 1994 plan identified a

number of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Research Natural Areas (RNAs) and Outstanding Natural Areas (ONAs) for the protection of sensitive resources and Native American religious values (see BLM, 1994). The plan identifies a number of Resource Condition Objectives and specific Land Use Allocations (and planned acquisitions).

In June 1994, the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, San Diego Association of Governments (including the County of San Diego and the City of San Diego) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for cooperation in habitat conservation planning and management. This includes policies dealing with diversity, coordination of land management, resolution of conflicts between land management prescriptions and conservation objectives, and cooperation in acquiring other habitat areas and corridors.

BLM has summarized details of the plan for the land within the SCS as follows:

Resource Objectives. The South Coast RMP/ROD identified the following resource condition objectives for the San Diego County Management Area:

- A. Emphasize protection and enhancement of sensitive species habitat and open space values.
- B. Improve management effectiveness within the management area through disposal of isolated parcels and consolidation of BLM public land ownership.
- C. Enhance habitats for all wildlife species, including deer and quail.
- D. Provide opportunities for low-impact recreation through provision of facilities and services.
- E. Protect Native American values associated with Caecum (Tecate Peak).

#### ***Bureau of Land Management Lands in Otay Mountain Area***

The preserve exclusions are contained in the South Coast Management Plan (BLM, 1994).

#### ***City of San Diego Land Around Otay Lakes***

City owned lands are included in this Segment of the SCS to maintain continuity. These lands around Otay Lakes and the biological resources they support are discussed in the City of San Diego's Subarea Plan. Some of these lands are subject to a mitigation banking agreement between the City and the Wildlife Agencies called the Cornerstone Lands Agreement. These lands will form a cornerstone for a natural open space corridor in the South Bay area. Otay Lakes Road may be realigned and Proctor Valley road improved on these cornerstone lands.

#### ***City of San Diego Marron Valley Property***

Marron Valley occupies approximately 2,300 acres in the southeastern portion of the MSCP study area.

“The large drainages through this area (e.g., the Tijuana river, Bee Canyon, and Cottonwood Creek) support significant stands of riparian habitat and function as major wildlife corridors. These riparian areas offer excellent opportunities for restoration and enhancement. Much of the area is currently leased for cattle grazing. Portions of the lands are overgrazed (Ogden field data), but likely could be restored with removal of grazing or decreased intensity and rotation of grazing. Management of this area for biological resources will pose special problems because of its remoteness and proximity to

the Mexican border. Conservation of Marron Valley will provide wildlife habitat, offer opportunities for the creation and enhancement of various habitat types (i.e., riparian, coastal sage scrub), and extend the sphere of protected lands surrounding the San Ysidro Mountains.”

### **Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment**

The Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment of the County Subarea Plan includes lands that are under the jurisdiction of San Diego County and within the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) planning area. This Segment has two parts, one in the north bounded by the City of San Diego, Poway, and the boundary of the MSCP area. The second part is bounded on the west by several incorporated areas, on the east and north by the MSCP boundary, and on the south by the South County Segment (SCS). For purposes of this plan, the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment is analyzed in two sections, separated by I-8.

The Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment has a total area of 172,952 acres, of which 115,241 are in natural vegetation with habitat value. The area north of I-8 occupies 74,510 acres, of which 51,543 provide habitat. South of I-8, the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment includes 98,442 acres with 63,698 acres of habitat. Urban uses, other development, and agriculture occupy the remaining 57,711 acres.

Population centers within this Segment include the unincorporated communities of Jamul, Jamacha, Rancho San Diego, Lakeside, Moreno, Eucalyptus Hills, Lakeview, Johnstown, Flinn Springs, Spring Valley, Mt. Helix, Crest, and Winter Gardens. Lands in the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment provide future opportunities for both development and conservation. Conservation of approximately 33,200 additional acres in an appropriate configuration are needed to achieve the biological goals for the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment. Of the total goal for additional conservation, approximately 17,000 acres are to be located north of I-8 and approximately 15,500 south of I-8.

No grading will be done within the SCS without a determination of conformance with the SCS by the Director of the Department of Planning and Land Use of the County of San Diego.

### Overall policies and guidelines for the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment

#### **Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural Resources.

#### *Priority 1:*

1. Acknowledge the no-net-loss-of-wetlands standard that individual projects must meet to satisfy state and federal wetland goals, policies, and standards and implement applicable

- County ordinances with regards to wetland mitigation.
2. Identify and map narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
  3. Maximize the habitat structural diversity of conserved habitat areas, including conservation of unique habitats and habitat features (e.g., soil types, rock outcrops, drainages, host plants).
  4. Provide for the conservation of spatially representative (e.g., north of I-8 vs. south of I-8) examples of extensive patches of coastal sage scrub and other habitat types that were ranked as having high and very high biological value by the MSCP habitat evaluation model.
  5. Create significant blocks of habitat to reduce edge effects and maximize the ratio of surface area to the perimeter of conserved habitats. Potential impacts from new development on biological resources within the preserve that should be considered in the design of any project include access, nonnative predators, nonnative species, illumination, drain water (point source), urban runoff (non-point source), and noise.
  6. Preserve the biological integrity of linkages between Biological Resource Core Areas.
  7. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection.

### **Critical Biological Resource Areas of the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment**

Five linkages are located in the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment. They are:

1. Otay Ranch to Sequan, a linkage consisting of many small parcels of land. Although most of this linkage occurs in natural land, assembling an adequate linkage will require negotiations with many landowners;
2. Sweetwater Reservoir to McGinty Mountain, a highly fragmented area. The southern part of this linkage is narrow and highly constrained by development.
3. I-8 at Lakeside, another area with considerable development and multiple small parcels of land. The conserved area south of I-8 has been expanded to about 2,600 acres by the creation of the Crestridge Mitigation Bank;
4. Dehesa to El Capitan Reservoir, a linkage to US Forest Service lands outside the MSCP area. This linkage is an important corridor for species that occupy habitats other than Coastal sage scrub; and
5. Boden Canyon, a linkage in the extreme northeast of the MSCP area. It provides a connection to Rancho Guejito outside the MSCP area.

#### *Priority 1:*

1. Minimize habitat fragmentation; provide habitat for plants and animals in transit; maintain genetic and demographic interchange between populations; facilitate daily, annual, and seasonal movements; permit dispersal to breeding and foraging areas; and facilitate 'rescue' of small peripheral populations from extinction.

2. Identify and map narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. Evaluate the habitat needs and dispersal characteristics of the target species and how they relate to the landscape and development patterns in the area. The following are the design criteria for projects to protect the biological values of linkages and corridors:
  - Maintain habitat linkages consisting of vegetative and topographic cover.
  - Maintain existing movement corridors within linkages.
  - Accommodate regional corridors that provide travel for a wide range of wildlife species, especially those linkages that support resident populations of wildlife.
  - The width of a linkage will be based on the biological information for the target species, the quality of the habitat within and adjacent to the corridor, topography, and adjacent land uses. Where there is limited topographic relief, the corridor must be well vegetated and adequately buffered from adjacent development.
  - If a corridor is relatively long, it must be wide enough for animals to hide in during the day. Generally, wide corridors are better than narrow ones. If narrow corridors are unavoidable, they should be relatively short. If the minimum width of a corridor is 400 feet, it should be no longer than 500 feet. A width of greater than 1,000 feet is recommended for large mammals and birds. Corridors for bobcats, deer, and other large animals should reach rim-to-rim along drainages, especially if the topography is steep.
  - Visual continuity (i.e., long lines-of-sight) will be provided within movement corridors. Developments along the rim of a canyon used as a corridor should be set back from the canyon rim and screened to minimize their visual impact.
  - Select corridors with low levels of human disturbance, especially at night. This includes maintaining low noise levels and limiting artificial lighting.
  - Barriers, such as roads, will be minimized. Roads that cross corridors should have 10-foot high fencing that channels wildlife to underpasses located away from interchanges. The length-to-width ratio for wildlife underpasses is less than 2, although this restriction can be relaxed for underpasses with a height of greater than 30 feet.
  - Where possible at wildlife crossings, road bridges for the vehicular traffic rather than tunnels for wildlife use will be employed. Box culverts will only be used when they can achieve the wildlife crossing/movement goals for a specific location. Crossings will be designed as follows: sound insulation materials will be provided; the substrate will be left in a natural condition, and vegetated with native vegetation if possible; a line-of-sight to the other end will be provided; and, if necessary, low-level illumination will be installed in the tunnel.
  - If continuous corridors do not exist, archipelago (or stepping-stone) corridors may be used for short distances. For example, the gnatcatcher may use disjunct patches of sage scrub for dispersal if the distance involved is under 1-2 miles. Impacts to rare, narrow endemic animal species, listed in Table 4-6 within the MSCP Subarea, shall be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Species-specific requirements set forth in Table 3-5 of the MSCP Plan including any applicable limitations on clearing of occupied habitat shall be complied with.

## **Specific Management Policies and Directives for the Metro Lakeside-Jamul Segment**

### **Background**

#### ***Goals and Objectives***

The Metro Lakeside-Jamul Segment consists of varying types of topography. In spite of and due to the constraints on this land, the optimum future condition envisioned for the Lakeside-Jamul Segment is a network of open and relatively undisturbed canyons, ridges, river valleys and their associated slopes, containing a full ensemble of native species which provide functional wildlife habitat and movement capability. Integrated into the preserve network will be recreational trails.

#### ***Covered Species***

Covered species in this area include:

##### Plants

San Diego thorn-mint  
 San Diego ambrosia  
 Encinitas baccharis  
 Orcutt's brodiaea  
 dense reed grass  
 slender-pod jewelflower  
 Lakeside ceanothus  
 wart-stemmed ceanothus  
 Palmer's ericameria  
 San Diego barrel cactus  
 felt-leaved monardella  
 willowy monardella  
 San Diego goldenstar  
 Dehesa bear-grass  
 San Miguel savory  
 Gander's butterweed  
 narrow-leaved nightshade  
 Parry's tetracoccus

##### Animals

arroyo southwestern toad  
 southwestern pond turtle  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 orange-throated whiptail  
 bald eagle  
 northern harrier  
 Cooper's hawk  
 ferruginous hawk  
 golden eagle  
 coastal cactus wren  
 California gnatcatcher  
 western bluebird  
 least Bell's vireo  
 California rufous-crowned sparrow  
 mountain lion  
 southern mule deer

### **Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in area are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat and linkages.
2. Off-road vehicle activity.
3. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
4. Enhancement and restoration needs.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Utility, facility and road repair, construction (i.e., SR 125) and maintenance activities.
7. Cultural Resources.

*Priority 1:*

1. Protection of Oak riparian, coastal sage scrub and other upland habitats from disturbance will require periodic monitoring to ensure no disturbance is occurring. If disturbance occurs, implement protective measures.
2. Identify and map narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.
3. Any proposed equestrian operations should generally occur where those uses already occur or be placed approximately 300-500 feet away from coastal sage scrub or riparian habitats.
4. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection.

*Priority 2:*

1. Generally in most areas of the preserve, including creeks and tributaries, riparian vegetation will naturally regenerate and active restoration will not be needed except for locations where determined necessary by future preserve managers. Where enhancement is considered, use only local native species.
2. Restore the areas within the preserve to strengthen the wildlife connection.
3. Ensure maintenance of a continuous regional wildlife corridor with connections made to offsite open space lands wherever possible.

**San Diego County Property**

This land varies in its value for wildlife because of the recreational uses in some areas; however, all of these areas provide habitat for sensitive species within this Segment. Dos Picos, Lake Jennings, and Louis Stelzer Regional Parks, three highly developed areas, are not included in this list because of their limited use as habitat.

***El Capitan Preserve:***

This 2,839-acre reserve consists of mixed chaparral, oak woodland, and Coastal sage scrub. It provides habitat for many species, including the California gnatcatcher and peregrine falcon. This preserve connects to U.S. Forest Service land east of the MSCP area.

Covered species in the El Capitan Preserve include:

Plants

San Diego thorn-mint  
 San Diego ambrosia  
 Encinitas baccharis  
 Orcutt's brodiaea  
 dense reed grass  
 slender-pod jewelflower  
 Lakeside ceanothus  
 wart-stemmed ceanothus  
 Palmer's ericameria  
 San Diego barrel cactus  
 felt-leaved monardella  
 willowy monardella  
 San Diego goldenstar  
 Dehesa bear-grass  
 San Miguel savory  
 Gander's butterweed  
 narrow-leaved nightshade  
 Parry's tetracoccus

Animals

arroyo southwestern toad  
 southwestern pond turtle  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 orange-throated whiptail  
 bald eagle  
 northern harrier  
 Cooper's hawk  
 ferruginous hawk  
 golden eagle  
 coastal cactus wren  
 California gnatcatcher  
 western bluebird  
 least Bell's vireo  
 California rufous-crowned sparrow  
 mountain lion  
 southern mule deer

In addition, various raptors, including the northern harrier, use the valley for foraging and nesting.

**Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the area, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural Resources

**Priority 1:**

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell's vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.
2. Identify and map narrow endemics and critical populations in the preserve so that these areas can be avoided and monitored. Surveys should occur in the spring of the year or the appropriate season as determined by the protocols of the species being surveyed. These areas will prohibit any building or recreational activities.

3. Protection of Oak riparian, coastal sage scrub and other upland habitats from disturbance will require periodic monitoring to ensure no disturbance is occurring. If disturbance occurs, consider protective measures.
4. Any proposed equestrian operations should generally occur where those uses already occur or be placed approximately 300-500 feet away from coastal sage scrub or riparian habitats where feasible. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area.
5. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection. Baseline cultural resource research for El Capitan preserve was accomplished as part of the County's acquisition project for the property.

*Priority 2:*

1. Generally in most areas of the preserve, including creeks and tributaries, riparian vegetation will naturally regenerate and active restoration will not be needed except for locations where determined necessary by future preserve managers. Where enhancement is considered, use only local native species.
2. Restore the areas within the preserve to strengthen the wildlife connection.
3. Ensure maintenance of a continuous regional wildlife corridor with connections made to offsite open space lands wherever possible

***Oakoasis Preserve:***

This area consists of 397 acres of mixed chaparral and oak woodland, located midway between Sycamore Canyon and El Capitan Preserve.

Covered species in the area include:

Plants

San Diego thorn-mint  
 San Diego ambrosia  
 Encinitas baccharis  
 Orcutt's brodiaea  
 dense reed grass  
 slender-pod jewelflower  
 Lakeside ceanothus  
 wart-stemmed ceanothus  
 Palmer's ericameria  
 San Diego barrel cactus  
 felt-leaved monardella  
 willowy monardella  
 San Diego goldenstar  
 Dehesa bear-grass  
 San Miguel savory  
 Gander's butterweed  
 narrow-leaved nightshade  
 Parry's tetracoccus

Animals

arroyo southwestern toad  
 southwestern pond turtle  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 orange-throated whiptail  
 bald eagle  
 northern harrier  
 Cooper's hawk  
 ferruginous hawk  
 golden eagle  
 coastal cactus wren  
 California gnatcatcher  
 western bluebird  
 least Bell's vireo  
 California rufous-crowned sparrow  
 mountain lion  
 southern mule deer

**Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the area, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural Resources

**Priority 1:**

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell's vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.
2. Protection of Oak riparian, coastal sage scrub and other upland habitats from disturbance will require periodic monitoring to ensure no disturbance is occurring. If disturbance occurs, consider protective measures.
3. Any proposed equestrian operations should generally occur where those uses already occur or be placed approximately 300-500 feet away from coastal sage scrub or riparian habitats where feasible.
4. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources, which will provide for monitoring and protection. Oakoasis Preserve includes a historic log house, which will be restored by the County.

**Priority 2:**

1. Generally in most areas of the preserve, including creeks and tributaries, riparian vegetation will naturally regenerate and active restoration will not be needed except for locations where determined necessary by future preserve managers. Where enhancement is considered, use only local native species.
2. Restore the areas within the preserve to strengthen the wildlife connection. When/if the uses in this area change, recognize and incorporate both the constraints of the floodplain and the wildlife corridor into any future lease.
3. Ensure maintenance of a continuous regional wildlife corridor with connections made to offsite open space lands wherever possible. If the land uses in this area south of the river constrain the corridor width, then agreements or negotiations may be necessary to assure adequate width, or other options may need to be considered.

***Sycamore Canyon Open Space:***

This 1,819-acre area is located northwest of Lakeside in central San Diego County, west of Highway

67. It lies immediately east of CDFG's Sycamore Valley Ecological Reserve. The area provides a large contiguous block of open space with chaparral as the dominant vegetation type. Sycamore Canyon Open Space is occupied by both the California gnatcatcher and San Diego thorn-mint.

#### Plants

San Diego thorn-mint  
 San Diego ambrosia  
 Encinitas baccharis  
 Orcutt's brodiaea  
 dense reed grass  
 slender-pod jewelflower  
 Lakeside ceanothus  
 wart-stemmed ceanothus  
 Palmer's ericameria  
 San Diego barrel cactus  
 felt-leaved monardella  
 willow monardella  
 San Diego goldenstar  
 Dehesa bear-grass  
 San Miguel savory  
 Gander's butterweed  
 narrow-leaved nightshade  
 Parry's tetraococcus

#### Animals

arroyo southwestern toad  
 southwestern pond turtle  
 San Diego horned lizard  
 orange-throated whiptail  
 bald eagle  
 northern harrier  
 Cooper's hawk  
 ferruginous hawk  
 golden eagle  
 coastal cactus wren  
 California gnatcatcher  
 western bluebird  
 least Bell's vireo  
 California rufous-crowned sparrow  
 mountain lion  
 southern mule deer

#### **Major Issues**

The major issues that require consideration for management in the area, based on the existing conditions are the following, in order of priority:

1. Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat.
2. Dumping, litter, and vandalism.
3. Itinerant living quarters.
4. Mining, excavation, and related processing activities.
5. Exotic (non-native), invasive plants and animals.
6. Enhancement and restoration needs.
7. Water quality.
8. Utility, facility and road repair, construction, and maintenance activities.
9. Cultural resources

#### **Priority 1:**

1. Coordinate an invasive non-native plant removal program with a regional MSCP management program in order for effective, long-term management of this problem. In areas with least Bell's vireos, the removal program should be limited to the period between mid-September and mid-March of each year.
2. Protection of Oak riparian, coastal sage scrub and other upland habitats from disturbance will require periodic monitoring to ensure no disturbance is occurring. If disturbance occurs, consider protective measures.
3. Any proposed equestrian operations should generally occur where those uses already occur

or be placed approximately 300-500 feet away from coastal sage scrub or riparian habitats where feasible.

4. Inventory cultural resources within the preserve area. The inventory will include a record search at the South Coastal Information Center, SDSU, and an on-foot field survey. Develop a management plan for the cultural resources which will provide for monitoring and protection. Sycamore Canyon and Goodan Ranch include a complex of historic buildings, which have been restored by the County. This park is also the site of the town of Stowe, which exists only as an archaeological site. Numerous prehistoric archaeological sites are also located within this preserve.

#### *Priority 2:*

1. Generally in most areas of the preserve, including creeks and tributaries, riparian vegetation will naturally regenerate and active restoration will not be needed except for locations where determined necessary by future PRESERVE (preserve) managers. Where enhancement is considered, use only local native species.
2. Restore the areas within the preserve to strengthen the wildlife connection
3. Ensure maintenance of a continuous regional wildlife corridor with connections made to offsite open space lands wherever possible. .

#### **Other Open Space and Conservation/Mitigation Banks**

These areas have either already been acquired as mitigation for impacts of specific projects or have been established as mitigation banks that can be used to mitigate for the impacts of future development. Each mitigation bank will prepare a management plan that substantially conforms to the general guidelines of this plan and will be subject to approval by the County and resource agencies.

#### ***Crestridge Conservation Bank and Crestridge Habitat Management Area:***

The Crestridge Conservation Bank is a 2,355-acre property located near the community of Lakeside. It supports significant stands of Coastal sage scrub, southern mixed chaparral, and oak woodland habitat. The bank, owned by Gatlin Development Company, represents a regionally important habitat linkage between the Crest/El Cajon areas south of I-8 and habitat lands in Lakeside, and around El Capitan Reservoir located north of I-8. The bank property parallels I-8 from west to east and provides a significant habitat linkage to Harbison Canyon east of the bank. Harbison Canyon is a key corridor, and the only location in the vicinity of the bank where wildlife can cross under I-8. The Harbison Canyon/Chocolate Canyon drainage is a natural open space connection to the City of San Diego Watershed lands surrounding El Capitan Reservoir to the north. Also in the north, this conservation bank connects to dedicated open space from the East County Square and Fisher Property (Bermuda Hills) developments. Lands dedicated by San Diego County Water Authority and CalTrans about the property to the south.

The Crestridge Habitat Management Area, owned by the San Diego County Water Authority, consists of 261 acres of Coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral that provide habitat for the following sensitive species: California gnatcatcher, golden eagle, orange-throated whiptail, San Diego horned lizard, and western spadefoot toad. The land, located immediately south of the Crestridge Conservation Bank, is managed by The Environmental Trust as a mitigation bank.

***San Vicente Conservation Bank:***

The San Vicente Conservation Bank consists of 320 acres located east of Route 67, south of the City of Poway's Iron Mountain preservation area. It is owned by the Boys and Girls Club of East County Foundation and was developed in cooperation with the Wildlife Agencies.

The property supports 197.4 acres of moderate to high quality Coastal sage scrub habitat, as well as 121.6 acres of southern mixed chaparral. In addition to these dominant plant communities, small areas of alkali marsh and native grassland habitats are present. The habitats on the site are relatively undisturbed and support a broad diversity of plant and wildlife species, including the California gnatcatcher. The site provides an important habitat linkage between the preserved areas in the City of Poway to the north and west and the City of San Diego lands surrounding San Vicente Reservoir to the south.

The conservation bank will be managed by The Environmental Trust, a local non-profit land management organization. Fee title to the entire bank will eventually be transferred to The Environmental Trust, with the Boys and Girls Club of East County.

Land under the ownership of the Helix Companies within the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment is the subject of an agreement with the Wildlife Agencies. These lands consist of a 168-acre property located west of Del Dios, 500 acres of property in 2 pieces located south of San Vicente Reservoir, a 428-acre property east of Santee and west of Eucalyptus Hills, and a 247-acre property located south of El Capitan Reservoir in the vicinity of Peutz Valley.

**State-owned Property**

There are four areas owned by the State of California that are in protected status within this Segment. One parcel was acquired by CalTrans as mitigation for impacts of its projects. The other three are ecological reserves managed by CDFG. Each of these areas either have an established management plan or will prepare a plan which substantially conforms to the general guidelines of this plan and will be subject to County and resource agency approval.

***CalTrans/Sandy Trust Property:***

CalTrans acquired 122 acres located near the community of Crest. The land, mostly Coastal sage scrub with some chaparral, is managed by The Environmental Trust.

***Sequan Peak Ecological Reserve:***

This reserve is a 593-acre block of land located immediately south of Sloane Ranch. It is primarily chaparral habitat that supports numerous sensitive plant species and serves as a corridor for large mammals including deer and mountain lions.

***Sweetwater River Ecological Reserve (Sloane Ranch):***

This reserve, located west of Loveland Reservoir, includes both sides of the Sweetwater River below the dam. It is 495 acres in extent and dominated by oak/willow riparian woodland, Coastal sage scrub, and chaparral, with lesser amounts of several other habitats. The biodiversity is high. The area provides potential habitat for Least Bell's vireo and California gnatcatcher. It is adjacent to Sweetwater Authority Lands at Loveland Reservoir, and to U.S. Forest Service and BLM lands east

of the MSCP area.

***Sycamore Valley Ecological Reserve:***

This 325-acre preserve, also known as Goodan Ranch, is located in south/central San Diego County between the cities of Poway and Santee, just west of Highway 67. CDFG owns 25% of the property, with the remaining 75% jointly owned by the cities of Poway and Santee.

This property provides high quality, diverse native vegetation for multiple species of wildlife. It supports some sensitive species, including California gnatcatcher, San Diego thorn-mint, and willow monardella. Habitats include southern coast live oak riparian woodland, coast live oak woodland, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, freshwater seep, Diegan coastal sage scrub, southern mixed chaparral, scrub oak chaparral, chamise chaparral, native grassland, and non-native grassland/disturbed.

The location of the property provides a critical link in undeveloped open space in this area. It is between open space at Miramar Naval Air Station (Camp Elliott) and the County's Sycamore Opens Space Preserve. All public ownerships in the Sycamore area combined result in a protected area of approximately 25,000 acres, a portion of which are in this Segment.