County of San Diego

ELFIN FOREST AND HARMONY GROVE

SAN DIEGUITO COMMUNITY PLAN

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that this Plan, consisting of text and exhibits, is the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove portion of the San Dieguito Community Plan and is a part of the San Diego County General Plan, and that it was considered by the San Diego County Planning Commission during nine hearings that occurred from November 6, 2009 through the 20th day of August 2010, and adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on the 3rd day of August 2011.

Attest: MARK WARDLAW, Director
Planning & Development Services

Amendments

June 18, 2014 – GPA 12-007

Table of Contents

Introduction to the Community Plan 1
Purpose of the Community Plan 1
Public Involvement in Preparing the Community Plan 3
How to Use the Community Plan 5
Implementing, Monitoring, and Amending the Community Plan 5
Community Background 6
Elfin Forest 6
a. History 6
b. Relationship to Adjoining Communities 7
c. Environmental Setting 7
d. Existing Land and Community Character – 9
e. Existing Circulation and Mobility 10
f. Existing Community Facilities and Infrastructure 11
g. Public Safety 12
h. Trends and Future Projections 12
Harmony Grove 13
a. History 13
b. Relationship to Adjoining Communities 15
c. Environmental Setting 15
d. Existing Land Uses and Community Character 16
e. Existing Circulation and Mobility 19
f. Existing Community Facilities and Infrastructure 20
g. Public Safety 20
h. Trends and Future Projections 21
Community Vision 22
Elfin Forest 22
Harmony Grove 23
Goals, Policies, & Implementation 24
1. Land Use (LU) 27
1.1 Community Character 27
1.2 Community Growth Policy 31
1.3 Community Conservation and Protection 32
1.4 Areas of Change: Development Infill and Intensification 33
1.5 Community Facilities 33
1.6 Other Topics/Issues 34

2. Circulation and Mobility (CM) 35
2.1 Integrated Mobility and Access 35
2.2 Local Road Network 35
2.3 Fire Access/Egress Routes 36
2.4 Local Transit 37
2.5 Pedestrian 37
2.6 Bicycle and Trails 37
2.7 Aviation 38
2.8 Trip Reductions 38
2.9 Parking 39
2.10 Infrastructure and Utilities 39
3. Conservation and Open Space (COS) 41
3.1 Resource Conservation and Management 41
3.2 Parks and Recreation 43
3.3 Community Open Space Plan 43
4. Safety (S) 45
4.1 Hazards/Risk Avoidance and Mitigation 45
4.2 Emergency Preparedness and Response 46
4.3 Other Topics – Law Enforcement 46
5. Noise (N) 47
5.1 Noise Sources 47
5.2 Noise Standards and Mitigation 47
5.3 Other Topics/Issues 47
6. Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan Area (SPA) 48
6.1 Existing uses and site characteristics 48
6.2 Issues affecting development 49
6.3 Vision for site conservation and/or development 50
6.4 Concepts for land uses 50
6.5 Transitions and linkages with adjoining existing and planned development 51
6.6 Phasing of development 51
Appendix: Biological Diversity 53

List of Figures

1 Elfin Forest – Harmony Grove Planning Area (San Dieguito) 2
2 San Dieguito Context Map 17
3 San Dieguito Village Boundaries 25

Introduction to the Community Plan

Purpose of the Community Plan

Community and subregional plans, adopted as an integral parts of the County of San Diego's General Plan, are policy plans specifically created to address the issues, characteristics, and visions of communities within the County. These communities each have a distinct physical setting with a unique history, culture, character, life style, and identity. Community and subregional plans, thus provide a framework for addressing the critical issues and concerns that are unique to a community and are not reflected in the broader policies of the General Plan. As part of the General Plan this Community Plan is consistent with all other parts of the County's General Plan.

Used in conjunction with the General Plan, a community or subregional plan (Plan) is a key tool for the public, community planning/sponsor groups, county staff and decision makers to identify the existing conditions and development that positively contribute to its character and should be conserved, as well as the location, scale, and design of desired new land uses, and community facilities. The Plan's policies require that development be comparable to, or transition with, existing development to ensure that new development "fits" with the community and enhances the community's vision.

Scope of the Community Plan

This Plan covers the planning area of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove, which is approximately 6,793-acres in size. (See Figure 1 on page 2) The Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council amended its boundaries to reflect the changes in the community. The Town Council boundaries were originally described as the same as CSA107. As more of the open space in Elfin Forest becomes built and residents want a voice in the Town Council, this created areas of "no man's land" where residents found themselves neither within the boundaries of adjacent municipalities, yet not within the Fire Department boundary, as defined by CSA107, and therefore without representation. The Harmony Grove boundary was modified in 2004, by change of bylaws to annex parcels whose owners petitioned to join the Town Council. The Elfin Forest modifications now extend its western boundary to meet the City of Encinitas and its southern boundary to the Escondido Creek, the historical dividing line between Elfin Forest and Rancho Santa Fe.

Content and Organization of the Community Plan

The following is the content and organization of the Plan and a brief description of each of these sections of the Plan.

Vision Statement — A vision statement that expresses community values about its distinguishing character, quality of life, mix of uses, development form and scale, public realm and places, mobility, economy, environment, safety, and relationships to adjoining communities, open spaces and the region.

Community Profile/Community Character — A description of the Community's existing character, uses, environment, conditions, factors influencing future changes, and key planning issues.

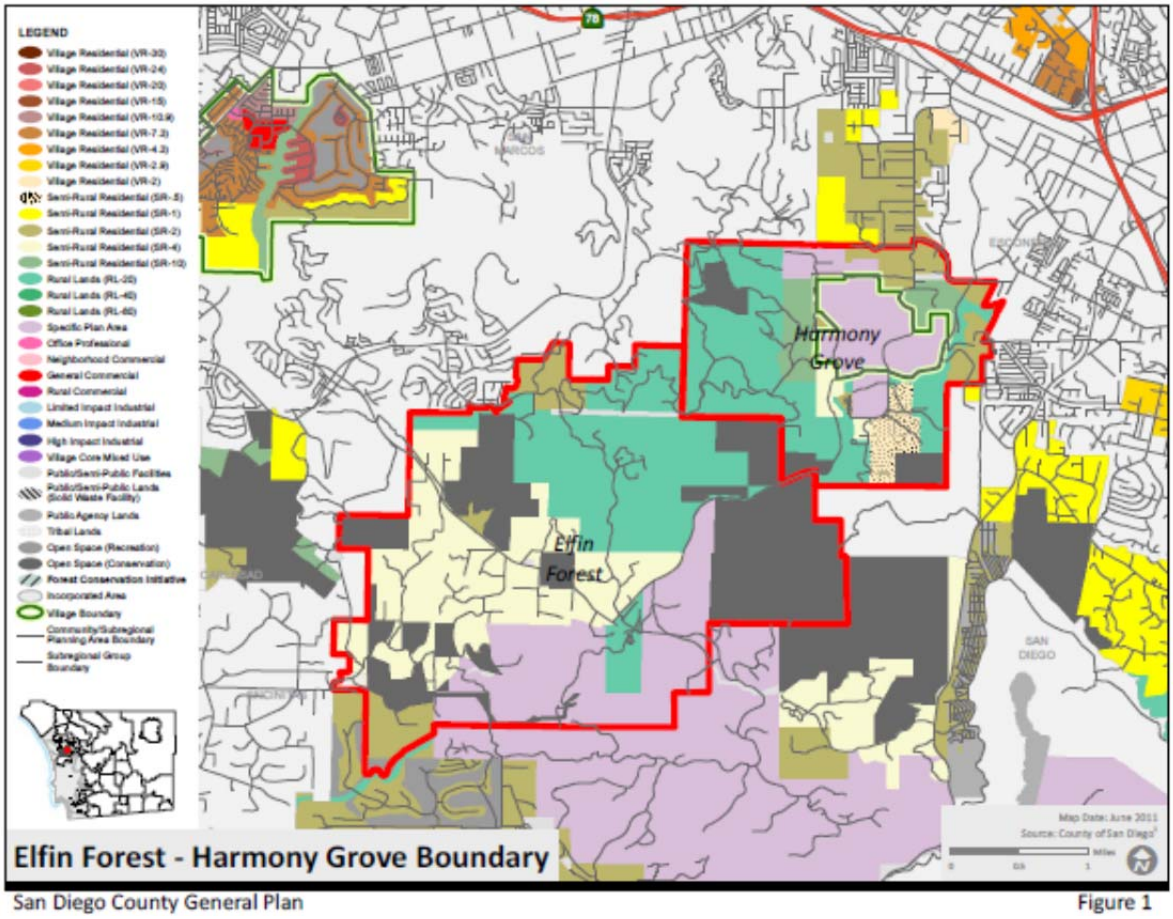


Figure 1: Elfin Forest – Harmony Grove Planning Area (San Dieguito)

<u>Elements</u> — Due to the breadth and detail of the countywide elements, communities may find it unnecessary to identify unique goals and policies for all of the following subjects. Therefore, not all communities may use all of the following elements:

- *Land Use*. Application of countywide land use designations and goals and policies to reflect the distinguishing characteristics and objectives for the Community. These may address such objectives as a specific mix of uses; priority development locations and projects; needed community facilities; development form and scale; architectural, landscape, and public realm design characteristics; land use compatibility and similar topics.
- *Mobility*. Delineates the roadways, transit corridors, bicycle paths, equestrian paths and pedestrian trails that supplement and complete the road networks defined by the countywide Mobility Element. Policies may also address unique Community issues such as neighborhood traffic intrusion, commercial district parking, local public transit and infrastructure improvements.
- *Conservation and Open Space*. Application of countywide Conservation and Open Space Element policies to address issues associated with designated plant and animal habitats, agriculture, water bodies, open

space, and other specific resources within the Plan area. This may encompass actions to protect resources that may uniquely apply to specific sites or resources.

- *Safety*. Application of countywide Safety Element policies to address specific safety issues in the Plan area. This may encompass actions to protect residents and development from defined risks.
- *Noise*. Application of countywide Noise Element policies to address specific source issues and impacts in the plan area. This may consider differentiation of land use compatibility standards to reflect community character and location—for example, villages located in rural setting and hillsides in contrast to those located adjoining urban and suburban development.

Public Involvement in Preparing the Community Plan

The Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove portion of the San Dieguito Community Plan was developed by citizen groups of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove, and then consolidated to give each group specific goals and policies, while maintaining separate goals and policies as needed for each community group.

Elfin Forest

The Elfin Forest Community Plan was developed using a wide array of public involvement strategies. The first draft of the Community Plan was prepared by members of the Board of the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council using previous community planning documents, the "Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Community Guide," published 2004, and a 2005 survey commissioned by the Town Council of all residents, entitled, "Elfin Forest Harmony Grove: A Snapshot of Our Community." Once this first draft was completed the following actions were taken to garner community input:

- All draft documents were posted on the Town Council's website – www.efhgtc.org.
- Articles about the community planning process appeared in the September and October issues of "The Chaparral," the Town Council's newsletter which is sent to every household via email.
- In addition, "Elf alerts" were also sent via email to all residents asking for them to review the documents online and to attend the community meetings and share their comments or send them to board members via email.
- A community meeting was held on September 3, 2008, to review and solicit public comments on the Elfin Forest Community Background and Vision Statement.
- A community meeting was held on October 1, 2008, to review and solicit public comments on the Elfin Forest Goals, Policies and Implementation Section.

- Also, key community stakeholders (i.e. past Town Council board members, Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Department members and the Escondido Creek Conservancy) received Community Plan documents for their review of key sections of the planning documents.
- At the conclusion of the public involvement process for the Elfin Forest Community Plan, 22 residents gave written input into the process and 12 residents gave verbal input.

Harmony Grove

The Harmony Grove Community Plan was developed using a wide array of public involvement strategies. This plan was originally drafted in 2001, by the Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group (HGEVCG). The draft plan was reviewed at their Board meetings and public meetings and posted on the Group's web site for over one year for community review and comment. The Plan, called the Harmony Grove Eden Valley Community Plan, was submitted to the County of San Diego, the San Dieguito Planning Group, and the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council after the HGEVCG disbanded in 2002. A revised and updated draft of the Community Plan was prepared by members of the Board of the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council using the previous community planning documents, the "Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Community Guide," published 2004, and a 2005 survey commissioned by the Town Council of all residents, entitled, "Elfin Forest Harmony Grove: A Snapshot of Our Community." Once this revision was completed the following actions were taken to garner community input:

- All draft documents were posted on the Town Council's website – www.efhgtc.org.
- Articles about the community planning process appeared in the September and October issues of "The Chaparral," the Town Council newsletter that is sent to every household via email.
- In addition, "Community alerts" were also sent via email to all residents asking them to review the documents online and to attend the community meetings and share their comments or send them to board members via email.
- A community meeting was held on September 3, 2008, to review and solicit public comments on the Harmony Grove Community Background and Vision Statement.
- A community meeting was held on October 1, 2008, to review and solicit public comments on the Harmony Grove Goals, Policies and Implementation Section.
- Also Community Plan documents were specifically sent to key community stakeholders (i.e. past Town Council board members, Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Department members, the Escondido Creek Conservancy, and the Harmony Grove Meadows Subcommittee) for their review of key sections of the planning documents.

- At the conclusion of the public involvement process for the Harmony Grove Community Plan, at least 28 residents had reviewed the revised plan and 20 gave written input into the process, including five from Eden Valley.

How to Use the Community Plan

To use this Plan, the General Plan elements should first be reviewed for applicable goals and policies and the General Plan Land Use Maps (General Plan Land Use Maps Appendix) should be referred to when applicable to determine the type, location, and density of land use allowed. This plan supplements these countywide policies and diagrams and further directs the land uses and development desired to achieve the community's vision.

Implementing, Monitoring, and Amending the Community Plan

It shall be the responsibility of the County to implement the Plan, to monitor progress towards its implementation, and to amend the Plan when necessary. Each Plan includes the community's key issues as well as the goals and policies to address the issues identified. For each policy or set of policies, there is one or more implementation action identified to carry it out. The implementation program also identifies the County department or agency responsible for its implementation, where appropriate. Many of the policies will be implemented by County ordinances and other discretionary actions such as zoning, design guidelines, and development standards in the County Zoning Code.

Implementation of the Plan should be monitored on a periodic basis by the County and the Community Planning/Sponsor Group for progress towards its implementation. For compliance with State law, the Plan shall be reviewed no less than once annually so that its implementation status may be included in the County's Annual General Plan Report to the State. The annual review provides the opportunity for the Plan to be updated and amended, as appropriate, to reflect changes in the community vision, conditions or attitudes.

Community Background

Elfin Forest

a. History

An article in the "San Diego Union" dated May 24, 1959, described a visit to Elfin Forest this way: "…After reaching the bottom of the hill, you will be in another world, a world where sounds of civilization are few and far between, a world where the loudest noise is the bird singing in a nearby tree, where the automobile seems out of place, and it wouldn't seem strange to see a farmer or rancher hooking up his springboard for a weekly trip into town."

Fifty years later, this is still a very apt description of the rural Elfin Forest community. It is a quiet and environmentally healthy area comprised of custom single-family homes and equestrian ranches on two to ten-plus acre lots, with a few agricultural businesses. Open spaces, which are preserved in perpetuity as such, make up more than half of our community. Elfin Forest has an extremely strong community spirit that focuses on the preservation of Elfin Forest as a rural community, preserving, and defending the area's sensitive environmental habitat and knowing and helping your neighbors. Our motto is: "keep it rural!"

The name Elfin Forest comes from the scientific community. Naturalists use the term to describe the chaparral, the type of vegetation which formerly covered much of Southern California and is still the predominant vegetation in Elfin Forest. The "elfin forest" or chaparral conserves the land it covers by holding soil in place during rainstorms and in our Elfin Forest grows the coastal sage scrub which supports many endangered plants and animals, including the California gnatcatcher. The coastal sage scrub is now endangered throughout the county and the state, and State and federal agencies are studying different ways to protect it. Elfin Forest contains one of the largest remaining areas of virgin coastal sage scrub in Southern California.

Until 1977 the Elfin Forest community was sparsely developed; at that time there were only a few homes on large country parcels, the Questhaven Retreat and the Elfin Forest Vacation Ranch/Trailer Park. (The trailer park was closed in 1999 to make way for the development of the Cielo Del Norte project. Subsequently, this property was removed from the Cielo project and sold to a private individual who has placed a conservation easement on the property to ensure that the land will be preserved as open space in perpetuity. Portions of the land are currently being restored as wetland mitigation for the Sprinter Rail Project.)

The Questhaven Retreat was founded in 1940. It has been in continuous use as a nondenominational Christian retreat and training school for students who seek the universal way of Christian discipleship. It welcomes those of all faiths to come to this peaceful haven for quiet and spiritual renewal to draw closer to God. The Retreat's 640 acres of secluded hills, oak-lined valleys and coastal chaparral ensure that a large tract of pristine native wilderness will be preserved for generations to come.

The Elfin Forest rural residential community has slowly been developing since 1977 when some of the large properties came up for sale. The development has been dependent on the real estate market in the greater San Diego area and a majority of the homes in the valley were built in the following time periods:

1977 – 1980

1985 – 1992

1996 – present

b. Relationship to Adjoining Communities

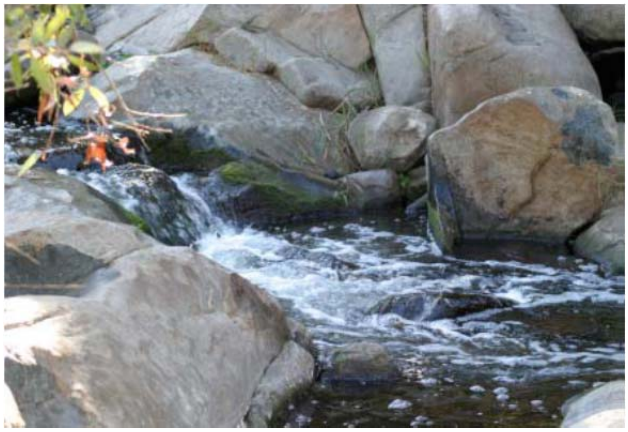
The Elfin Forest community represents a very large rural island in the heart of developed Coastal North San Diego County, which is located within the San Dieguito Community Planning Area (CPA). Elfin Forest is surrounded by Rancho Santa Fe to the south; Olivenhain, Encinitas, La Costa and Carlsbad to the west; San Marcos to the west and north and Harmony Grove to the east. Access into the community is limited by only one major road – Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Road – which runs west to east. Access from the west is through the San Marcos community of San Elijo Hills and from the east through the community of Harmony Grove and the City of Escondido.

c. Environmental Setting

Elfin Forest is situated in two intersecting valleys — one running north-south and the other running east-west. Both valleys are cradled by dramatic brush-covered hills and granite formations. The valleys are isolated by the topography of the surrounding hills and are rural in character. The valleys are home to a diverse mix of native plants and animals, including deer, coyotes, bobcats, red fox, golden eagles, hawks and other raptors, Bells vireos, gnatcatchers, ravens and numerous plant species. A multitude of species that thrive in this area are on State and/or federal endangered or threatened species lists. The County has identified this area as highly valuable environmental land. (Please refer to the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Community Guide, Fifth Edition, published 2004.) The Multiple Species Conservation Plan for North County identifies most of Elfin Forest as "High Value habitat", underscoring the unique value of this environmental resource to San Diego County as a whole.

Elfin Forest is characterized by its abundance of chaparral, a word derived from the Spanish word “chaparro” meaning live oak. Chaparral consists of certain species of vegetation found mostly covering hillsides and mountain slopes along the coast of Southern California. Elfin Forest contains one of the best examples of this native plant collection. The particular type of chaparral still found in Elfin Forest, coastal sage scrub, only occurs within proximity of the coast, and therefore has been decimated by development throughout Southern California. Elfin Forest contains one of the largest and last stands of coastal sage scrub (the habitat for the federally threatened California gnatcatcher) anywhere in San Diego County.

The Escondido Creek extends from the eastern edge of Harmony Grove and continues through Elfin Forest to the northern edge of Rancho Santa Fe. The Escondido Creek and the surrounding open space in Elfin Forest are home to many unique and endangered species. This watershed area is an invaluable resource deserving protection. The watershed accommodates a variety of natural habitats, including riparian wetlands, oak woodlands, native grasslands, chaparral, and coastal scrub. The upland areas support many rare plant species, such as wart-stemmed ceanothus, summer holly, mesa club moss, and California adolphia. Expanses of coastal sage scrub provide refuge for threatened California gnatcatchers, San Diego horned lizards, and orange-throated whiptail lizards.



Sticky dudleya and sea dahlia grace the rocky cliffs above the creek, while marsh elder and Orcutt’s brodiaea can be found along the sandy banks. Great blue herons, mountain lions, coyotes, mule deer, bobcats, fox, roadrunners, owls, hawks, turkey vultures, and golden eagles all play a part in this delicate ecosystem.

The topography of Elfin Forest is characterized by open valley floors associated with the Escondido Creek and surrounded by gently to steeply sloping hills and by sharp granite escarpments. A significant portion of the valleys, hills, and ridgelines are in their natural condition and providenatural open space and scenic vistas. Habitats include: sensitive riparian wetlands, oak woodlands, native grasslands, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub. The Escondido Creek wildlife corridor is home to a plethora of rare, sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species. Elfin Forest is home to over 1800 acres of dedicated open space, including 750 acres at the Elfin Forest Reserve, 640 acres at the Questhaven Retreat and over 200 acres for Sage Hill – in total a full third of Elfin Forest’s total acreage in already protected open space, providing a large swath of habitat to the various native species. It is a primary goal of our community to continue to preserve the remainder of the pristine and unique open space as mitigation land for developments elsewhere in the County.

Additional information on the biodiversity in Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove is provided in the Appendix: Biological Diversity.

d. Existing Land and Community Character –

Elfin Forest is primarily characterized by open space, a rural enclave with large lots with citrus and avocado orchards, as well as horse and alpaca ranches. It is an extremely peaceful and quiet place and generally remains in its natural state. The dark night sky is an important aesthetic resource; and there are many scenic views in the community, including those of the hills, the valleys, and the riparian habitat. The character of Elfin Forest is based on openness: open land, open spaces, and undeveloped countryside with a low density of homes. Most homes are well integrated into the natural landscape.

The Elfin Forest community encompasses approximately 4,727.1 acres that are developed with custom single-family homes on large estate lots. The homes must be located on lots no smaller than two acres and must utilize septic systems for sewage management. The existing community has a combination of homes and ranches nestled into the hills; keeping ridgelines and slopes intact to preserve the natural topography of the area and to help preserve wildlife corridors and native plant species. There are a few agricultural businesses in the form of a nursery, a flower grower, and a seed production farm, which provide a rural flavor. In addition, there are commercial lemon and avocado growers and many home orchards. The community has no industrial uses.

Private equestrian and hiking trails extend throughout the Elfin Forest community. Split rail fences, newly-planted trees, and a staging area near the fire station lend community character and beauty to these trails. Open space, dark nighttime skies, low traffic volume, and access to the abundant wildlife through protected nature trails are valued by Elfin Forest residents. There are no street lights, lighted signs, traffic signals, or sidewalks. In addition to the physical attributes of the community, there is a community spirit of “Neighbors Helping Neighbors.” Examples of this are the EFHG Volunteer Fire Department and Fire Auxiliary, the EFHG Town Council, the Escondido Creek Conservancy, the Elfin Forest Foundation, the Elfin Forest Landscape Foundation, the neighborhood block captains, the EFHG Playgroup, and the EFHG Trails Committee. Community events, such as the EFHG Town Council Fourth of July Picnic and Parade Fundraiser and the annual Elfin Forest Garden Festival, promote and preserve the unity and focus of Elfin Forest residents.

LAND USE PLANNING ISSUES:

1. There still exist many large undeveloped parcels of land in private hands within Elfin Forest, some of which are in excess of 450 acres. Development of these parcels by any standard less than two acres per dwelling unit poses

the threat of subdivisions coming into our rural community which would be inappropriate.

2. There is a major issue of risk of annexation of undeveloped parcels by adjacent cities, at the behest of landowners trying to evade meeting our community standards. Annexation of these parcels into adjacent cities would fragment and negatively impact the Elfin Forest community and the fragile environmental ecosystem. In addition, the fragmentation of the Elfin Forest community would lead to the creation of unserviceable county islands.
3. Where possible, the remaining undeveloped parcels should be conserved in their natural state. Elfin Forest strongly supports the preservation of our critical and endangered habitats, including wetlands vegetative habitats. These should be considered by the County as first candidates for mitigation properties given their very high habitat value, and the fact most are surrounded by currently dedicated open space.
4. The rural residential character with large lots and equestrian estates must be maintained. Limited agricultural uses must continue to be encouraged and only those commercial uses that are ancillary to the agricultural business on the same property should be allowed.
5. The community consists of estate development of at least two acre lots and seeks the preservation of this type of development.
6. The Escondido Creek is a valuable environmental resource that must be preserved and restored in order to protect the valley's sensitive habitats and provide open space opportunities for San Diego County residents.

e. Existing Circulation and Mobility

Circulation and mobility within the Elfin Forest community includes Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Road, a two-lane Light Collector, which runs from San Elijo Hills on the west through the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove communities to Escondido on the east. This road is the main access point in and out of Elfin Forest. A major issue for the community is the amount of traffic on this road. As development has increased in surrounding communities, so has the traffic. In addition, since this roadway is a well-known roadway used by bicycle enthusiasts, it is important to limit the traffic on this road to allow this activity to continue safely.

All other roads besides Elfin Forest Road are private and maintained by the residents. As commuter traffic increases, the installation of gates within some roadways in the community has been envisaged by the property owners. County support in those endeavors would be appreciated as these efforts are crucial to our goal of "keeping it rural". In addition, maintaining a network of two-lane roads is essential to retain the rural character of Elfin Forest.

The Elfin Forest community has over 23 miles of private equestrian and pedestrian trails. Many were simply created by horses and allowed to be used by the underlying property owner, but some are bordered with split rail fencing and constitute a key amenity in the community. The County helped fund the trail along Questhaven Road, which is dedicated to and maintained by the County. In addition, the community has two miles of landscaped and maintained trails located primarily along Elfin Forest Road, and is funded by the Elfin Forest Community Foundation and Citizens Against Rural Exploitation. Issues pertaining to these unique trails include future maintenance and linkage to the County trail system.

f. Existing Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Infrastructure

Since Elfin Forest is a rural community, there is no sewer system or natural gas. Instead of natural gas, the community relies on propane and/or electricity. In addition, all homes in the Elfin Forest use septic systems for their sewage management. Water is provided by the Olivenhain Municipal Water District, the Vallecitos Water District, and on the Questhaven Retreat by the Questhaven Municipal Water District.

Septic systems are strongly supported by the community as they have become a very important mechanism to keep the community rural, as large lots are necessary to sustain these systems.

Community Facilities

Since Elfin Forest is a small rural community, there are no schools or active parks in the community. The vast majority of children in our community can attend public schools in the Rancho Santa Fe School District. A few homes are in the Escondido City School District. School-age families place a lot of value on being able to attend the Rancho Santa Fe schools, and this creates a strong linkage between the two communities.

In terms of community facilities, there are four major resources located within the community:

1. Elfin Forest Fire Station – Located in the heart of the community, the Fire Station not only houses the volunteer fire department, but also serves as a meeting place for community meetings and events.

2. Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve – This 750-acre open space park and recreational area was developed by the Olivenhain Municipal Water District in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management as an element of the Olivenhain Water Storage Project. The Reserve offers approximately 17 miles of hiking, mountain biking, equestrian trails, primitive picnic areas, and scenic mountain viewing points. The Reserve includes oak riparian, oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral plant communities.
3. Private and public equestrian and hiking trails – Elfin Forest is home to more than 23 miles of private trails/linear parks and one public trail that runs from the Questhaven Retreat south for approximately one mile along Questhaven Road.
4. Fire Safe Garden – The Elfin Forest Fire Safe Garden, located adjacent to the Fire Station, was created after the 1996 Harmony Grove wildfire. It is a living demonstration of the techniques and plant materials we can all use to safeguard our homes and properties from wildfires. It has been featured in several magazines and landscaping books.

g. Public Safety

Natural Hazards

The two major disasters that could affect the Elfin Forest community are the risk of wildfires and flooding.

Wildfires – Because Elfin Forest is a rural community which contains much natural vegetation and chaparral; and because of our naturally dry environment being complicated by years of drought, the risk of wildfires is extremely high.

Flooding – The Escondido Creek can become dangerous with heavy winter rains. The result is large quantities of swiftly moving runoff through drainages, culverts, and creeks. Areas at risk are along Harmony Grove Road, the southern end of Questhaven Road, and the creek crossing into Rancho Santa Fe on Suerte Del Este.

Public Safety Providers

Fire protection is provided by the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Department. This Fire Department, with 27 volunteers and two paid staff to provide year-round fulltime service, operates under contract with the County of San Diego to provide fire suppression, fire prevention, and medical aid to the residents of County Service Area 107. The County of San Diego Sheriff's Department provides police protection to the community.

h. Trends and Future Projections

The population of Elfin Forest today is approximately 800 residents in about 300 homes, and is expected to increase only slightly as additional rural estate homes are built in the community. As the population increases in San Diego County and statewide, there will be continual pressure to put higher density residential into or adjacent to Elfin Forest.

However, given the challenges facing the community, this should not be allowed to occur. These challenges include:

1. A sensitive environmental ecosystem that is extremely fragile and should be protected.
2. Pressure on coastal cities and County agencies to mitigate like for like continual infrastructure development, coupled with the disappearance of coastal sage scrub habitat outside Elfin Forest.
3. Limited access into and out of the community.
4. An extreme vulnerability to wildfires (two in the last twelve years, including one where we experienced loss of life by a resident) because of the topography and open space characteristics. Allowing more homes in the urban/wildlife interface should only be done very carefully.
5. Limitations of septic system capacity and even feasibility in the rocky and clay soil native to Elfin Forest.

ISSUES WHICH NEED TO BE CONFRONTED:

1. Risk of annexation of land within Elfin Forest by adjacent cities.
2. Interest by non-resident property owners/developers of undeveloped parcels in Elfin Forest to change the current residential land use density to lots of less than two acres per dwelling unit.
3. Conserving the remaining undeveloped parcels in Elfin Forest in their natural state.
4. Preservation and restoration of the Escondido Creek in order to protect the watershed's sensitive habitats.
5. Preventing development along our ridgelines, including from surrounding communities.
6. Sewage management with septic systems to be maintained in Elfin Forest.
7. Water conservation and drought-tolerant landscaping in all public and private spaces.
8. Fire-safe landscaping.

Harmony Grove

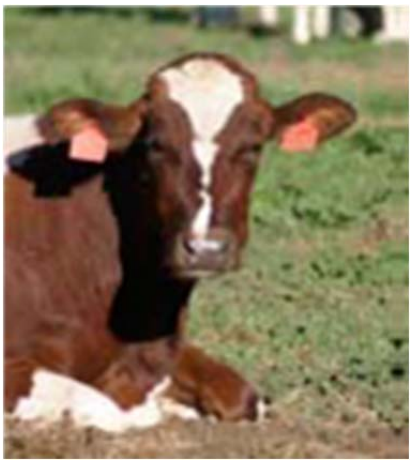
a. History

Harmony Grove is the oldest of the San Dieguito communities, named by the Spiritualist Association that incorporated there in 1896. This area may have housed the prehistoric village of Japatul. Luiseno and Diegueno occupation is evident. Prehistoric resources include petroglyphs, pictographs, some habitation sites, bedrock milling sites, a lithic scatter, and a private artifact collection. In addition, there are several buildings that appear on the 1889/1891 San Luis Rey 15' topographic map, and some of these are still

standing. For example, the remains of an adobe structure stand near Country Club Drive and Cordrey Lane.

The ridgeline along the western edge of Harmony Grove forms a locally important historic visual resource called the “Lady of the Valley.” As seen from Harmony Grove, the highest point is the shoulder of a woman lying on her side, her long hair trailing off to the north (to the right in the photograph), and her hips and legs seen to the south.

The Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association and its many associated buildings and residences stand at the heart of Harmony Grove. This association was formed in the late 1800s, and is a cultural historic resource. The area surrounding the Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association was first developed primarily as agricultural lands. In the past few decades, significant rural development has occurred that established its pastoral character.

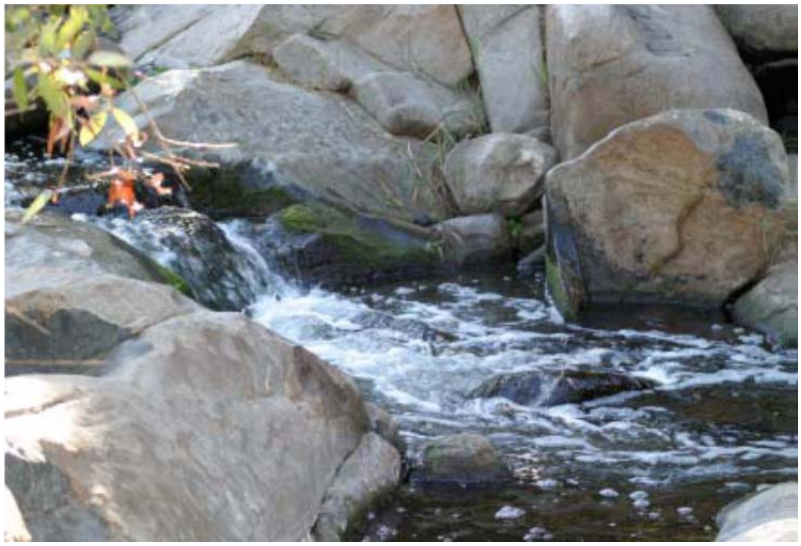


b. Relationship to Adjoining Communities

The community of Harmony Grove lies within the San Dieguito ommunity Plan Area and is 2,065 acres in size. Harmony Grove geographically sits to the south of State Route 78, to the west of the western edge of the City of Escondido, to the north of the Del Dios Highway, where Via Rancho Parkway intersects the Del Dios Highway, and to the east of Elfin Forest Recreational Preserve. It is bordered by Eden Valley and Escondido to the north, San Marcos to the west, Elfin Forest to the south, and Del Dios and Escondido to the east (See Figure 2 on page 17). The central 900-acre portion of Harmony Grove that was proposed for annexation and industrialization was removed by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) from the Escondido sphere of influence at the request of residents of the surrounding unincorporated areas.

c. Environmental Setting

The community of Harmony Grove is situated in two intersecting valleys — one running north-south, and the other running east-west. Both valleys are cradled in dramatic brush-covered hills and granite formations. The valleys, though physically close to urban areas, are isolated by the topography of the surrounding hills, and are rural in character. The valleys are home to a diverse population of native plants and animals, including deer, coyotes, bobcats, golden eagles and other raptors, least Bells' vireos, gnatcatchers, ravens, and numerous species of plants. There are a multitude of species thriving in this area that are on protected lists.



The Escondido Creek extends from the eastern edge of Harmony Grove and continues through Elfin Forest to the northern edge of Rancho Santa Fe. The area falls within the San Diego Air Basin and is located in an area of high air pollution potential. The topography is characterized by open valley floors associated with Escondido Creek surrounded by gently steeply sloping hills

and by sharp granitic escarpments. A significant portion of the valleys, hills, and ridgelines are in their natural condition, which providenatural open space and scenic vistas. Habitats include sensitive riparian wetlands, oak woodlands, native grasslands, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub. The Escondido Creek wildlife corridor runs through the center of Harmony Grove. The area is home to a plethora of rare, sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species.

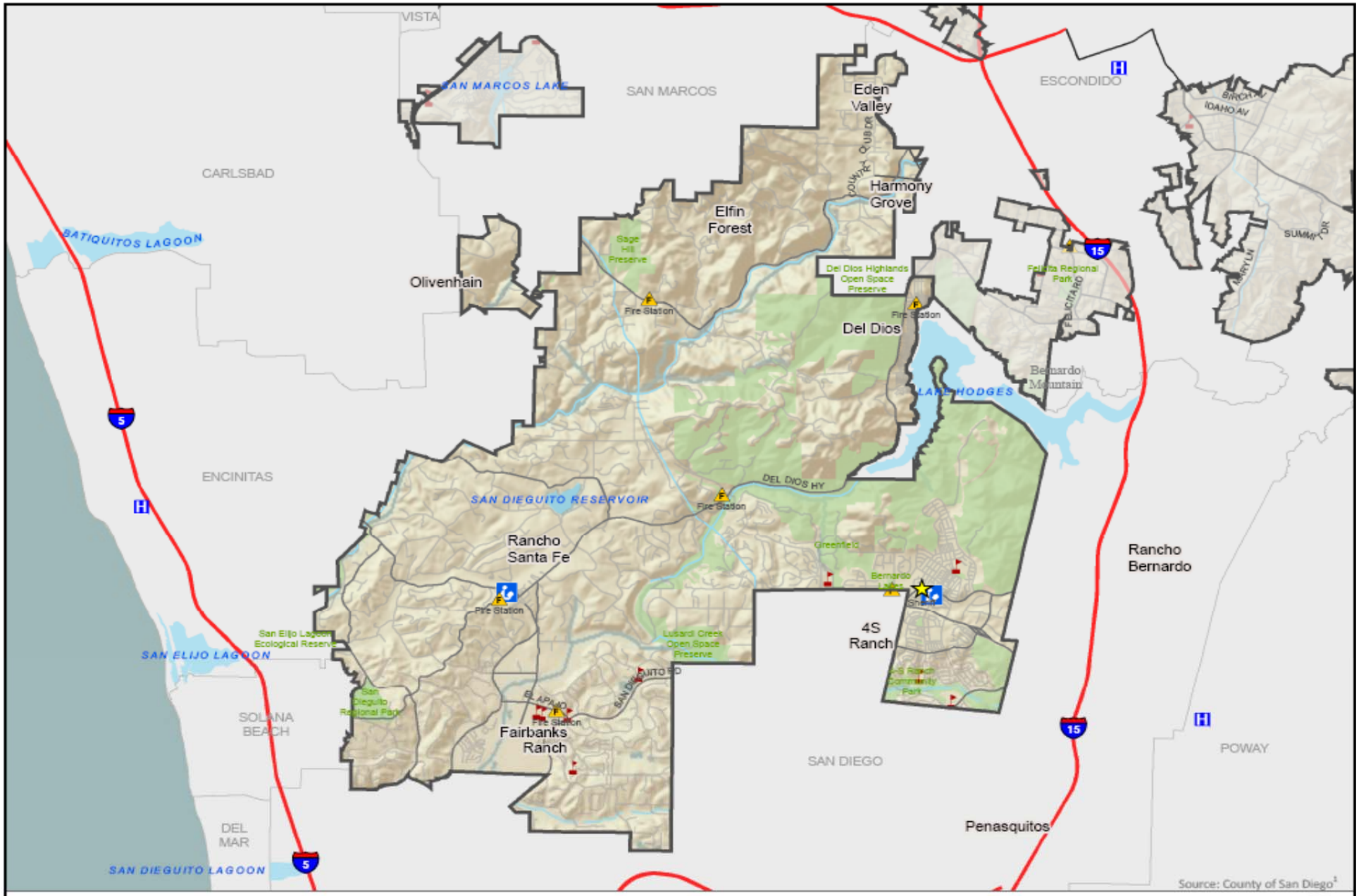
d. Existing Land Uses and Community Character

The Harmony Grove community encompasses areas that are primarily single-family rural residential communities on estate lots sprawling over hillsides, along with agricultural uses and residential livestock keeping (see Harmony Grove homes in photos below).

It has no established trails; no commercial development or non-agricultural industry, except for one concrete–pipe plant; no sidewalks; and no extractive land uses. Areas of dedicated open space include the holdings of The Escondido Creek Conservancy, totaling approximately eleven acres. Urban areas of Escondido and San Marcos immediately adjoin several portions of Harmony Grove.

Harmony Grove residents value open space, quiet, dark nighttime skies, and low traffic volume. There are no street lights, lighted signs, or traffic signals.

Some of the key elements of the Harmony Grove character and values include one- and two-story single-family homes on large lots; large-animal facilities on residential properties; no clustered development; no "cookie-cutter" developments; no walled developments, and no gated communities.



SAN DIEGUITO CONTEXT MAP

San Diego County General Plan

Figure 2

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LAND USE PLANNING ISSUES:

- The Harmony Grove community, working with County staff, designed a Village Development Pattern Model as represented in the General Plan Land Use Map. There still exist many large undeveloped parcels of land within Harmony Grove outside the footprint of the approved Village. Development of these parcels with an urban, clustered or suburban design would threaten the continued existence of the rural residential and equestrian character of Harmony Grove.
- Annexation of parcels within Harmony Grove by adjacent cities would fragment the historic 100-year-old Harmony Grove community, disrupt the fragile ecosystem, and create unserviceable county islands.
- The Escondido Creek is a valuable environmental resource and must be preserved and restored to protect the valley's sensitive habitats, and provide open space opportunities for San Diego County residents.
- Development standards that prohibit construction along ridgelines must be adopted to implement General Plan policies protecting ridgelines.
- Harmony Grove strongly supports conservation and protection of native species, and is working towards becoming a green community by recycling animal wastes, using reclaimed water for irrigation, and supporting local organic agriculture.
- Agricultural uses, especially small family-owned organic farms, are important to the functioning of Harmony Grove and are encouraged as part of an environmentally sensitive green community plan.

e. Existing Circulation and Mobility

There are three main roadways in Harmony Grove: Country Club Drive, which extends primarily north-south throughout the length of the community; Kauana Loa Drive, which begins at Country Club Drive and heads east, curving to the south to run together with Harmony Grove Road in Escondido; and Harmony Grove Road, which continues from Escondido in a south-easterly direction through the community. Non-local east-west commuter traffic creates excessive traffic congestion on Harmony Grove Road during rush hours.

Equestrian on Country Club Drive

A major high tech business park, the Escondido Research and Technology Center, is located immediately to the north east of Harmony Grove. Excess commuter traffic would create hazards along the rural county roads of this community.

Harmony Grove has private roads to provide access to many residential and agricultural uses. Some of these are not adequately named or identified for public safety purposes. Harmony Grove residents and equestrians currently walk directly on the major roads and this represents a serious safety hazard that will only become worse as the area is built out. Off-road trails are needed to provide safe passage for the residents and their children. A particular problem exists along the southeastern terminus of Country Club Drive, where pedestrians and equestrians would be traveling towards the Del Dios Highlands County Preserve or the Lake Hodges Recreational Area.

f. Existing Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The area infrastructure is rural, and utilizes mainly septic systems for waste disposal. Some areas have well water, others use water supplied by various water districts (Rincon Del Diablo, Olivenhain). There is no available natural gas.

Harmony Grove has no schools or active parks. However, there are several community facilities:

- The Fellowship Hall of the Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association – This private facility has served as a meeting room for area residents on many occasions in the past.
- The Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Fire Station – The Fire Station not only houses the volunteer fire department, but also serves as a meeting place for community meetings and events.
- Johnston-Ward Farmhouse – The farmhouse has been dedicated to the community for use as a meeting place. The Heritage Gallery on the first floor houses historic artifacts and old photographs of the community.
- Harmony Grove Village – The approved Harmony Grove Village project will have a small commercial town center that should serve the local community and provide public gathering places as well as opportunities for the sale of locally grown organic produce. This project also will have a wastewater reclamation facility that will provide sewage service to Village homes and create recycled water for irrigation.

g. Public Safety

Fire protection is provided by the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Volunteer Fire Department. This Fire Department operates under contract with the County of San Diego to provide fire suppression, fire prevention, and medical aid to the residents of County Service Area 107. A second station of this fire department is scheduled to be built in Harmony Grove as part of the Harmony Grove Village project. The County Sheriff's Department provides police protection to the community.

The two major hazards that could affect the Harmony Grove community are the risks of wildfires and flooding.

Wildfires – The risk of wildfires is extremely high in Harmony Grove, because it is a rural community that contains much natural vegetation and chaparral. This risk has been further exacerbated by years of drought in our naturally dry environment.

Flooding – The Escondido Creek can become dangerous with heavy winter rains. The result is large quantities of runoff moving through drainages, culverts, and creeks called swiftwater. Sections of Country Club Drive and of Harmony Grove Road are subject to flooding that can prevent travel to or from the southeastern portion of the Harmony Grove community.

h. Trends and Future Projections

The population of Harmony Grove is expected to increase dramatically as the Harmony Grove Village development pattern is built out. If the pattern shown on the General Plan Land Use Map is strictly followed, the final number of urban homes should approximately equal the number of rural homes in the neighboring communities and Harmony Grove should be able to keep its rural voice.

However, there is continual pressure to put higher density residential or even industrial development in Harmony Grove beyond what is allowed by the General Plan Land Use Map. Several agricultural operations are finding that limits to their operations are leading them to consider re-zoning and re-development in the near future. In addition, non-resident land speculators have purchased local undeveloped land in the hopes that General Plan Amendments allowing higher density will be adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Residents will continue to work to preserve this historic 100-year-old community by implementing the Village Development Pattern that was negotiated.

ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE CONFRONTED

- The Village development pattern as shown in the General Plan Land Use Map must be strictly adhered to as the formal development model for the area.
- Urban homes must not outnumber the rural homes to maintain the rural voice and preserve the rural heritage of this historic community.
- Annexation of Harmony Grove properties into adjacent cities allows landowners to escape the rural community development standards and must be discouraged.
- Safe pedestrian / equestrian trails should be established.
- “Green Community” practices should be encouraged.
- Water conservation and drought-tolerant landscaping in all public and private spaces should be supported.
- Fire-wise landscaping should be encouraged.

Community Vision

Elfin Forest

The community of Elfin Forest is a rural residential community characterized by large swaths of open space, residential large lots, and agricultural uses. Lot sizes vary from two to over ten acres, with a system of private equestrian and hiking trails throughout. The majority of Elfin Forest is undeveloped lands with unique biodiversity. We are a rural community that cherishes our peaceful and quiet environment without sidewalks, street lights, and stoplights, and our dark night skies. This is a community of individuals, who have their own private space to implement their own vision of the ideal life, which is not the usual “subdivision” model. As a community, we respect and strive to preserve our existing undeveloped lands as natural habitat and open space areas; not only for ourselves, but for all of the residents of San Diego County. We are a community that believes in and lives by community spirit, and we promote a “know your neighbors” environment.

Our residential areas blend into the natural environment and are developed on minimum two-acre parcels. The homes are custom-built and utilize septic systems for sewage management. Our agricultural uses including seed farms, citrus and avocado groves, nurseries, flower growers, and fruit growers are a key part of our community and uphold the rural community character. Access to our community is limited by a two-lane road, which is necessitated to preserve our rural and environmentally-sensitive area. All other roads within the community are private and maintained by the residents.

Our community services include a vibrant volunteer Fire Department, a system of trails, the Fire Safe Garden, and the Elfin Forest Reserve.

Our environmental resources are primarily the Escondido Creek, which constitutes a portion of our southern boundary, and large open space parcels that are home to many unique and endangered species. The community of Elfin Forest believes in the preservation and protection of our unique habitat and the creation of wildlife corridors in any future development. We value our sensitive habitat and wildlife corridors, and believe that they must remain pristine and dedicated with a conservation easement to preclude different uses in the future. We favor purchase of remaining open space to protect the unique ecosystem remaining, one of the last large swaths of undeveloped land west of Interstate15.

We are very aware of the inherent risk of wildfires. Because most residences are built at the interface with wild lands, and many are surrounded by open space native vegetation, we are at special risk in case of wildfires. We, therefore, value and support the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Fire Department as it is a major force in our community, protecting, and uniting us.

Harmony Grove

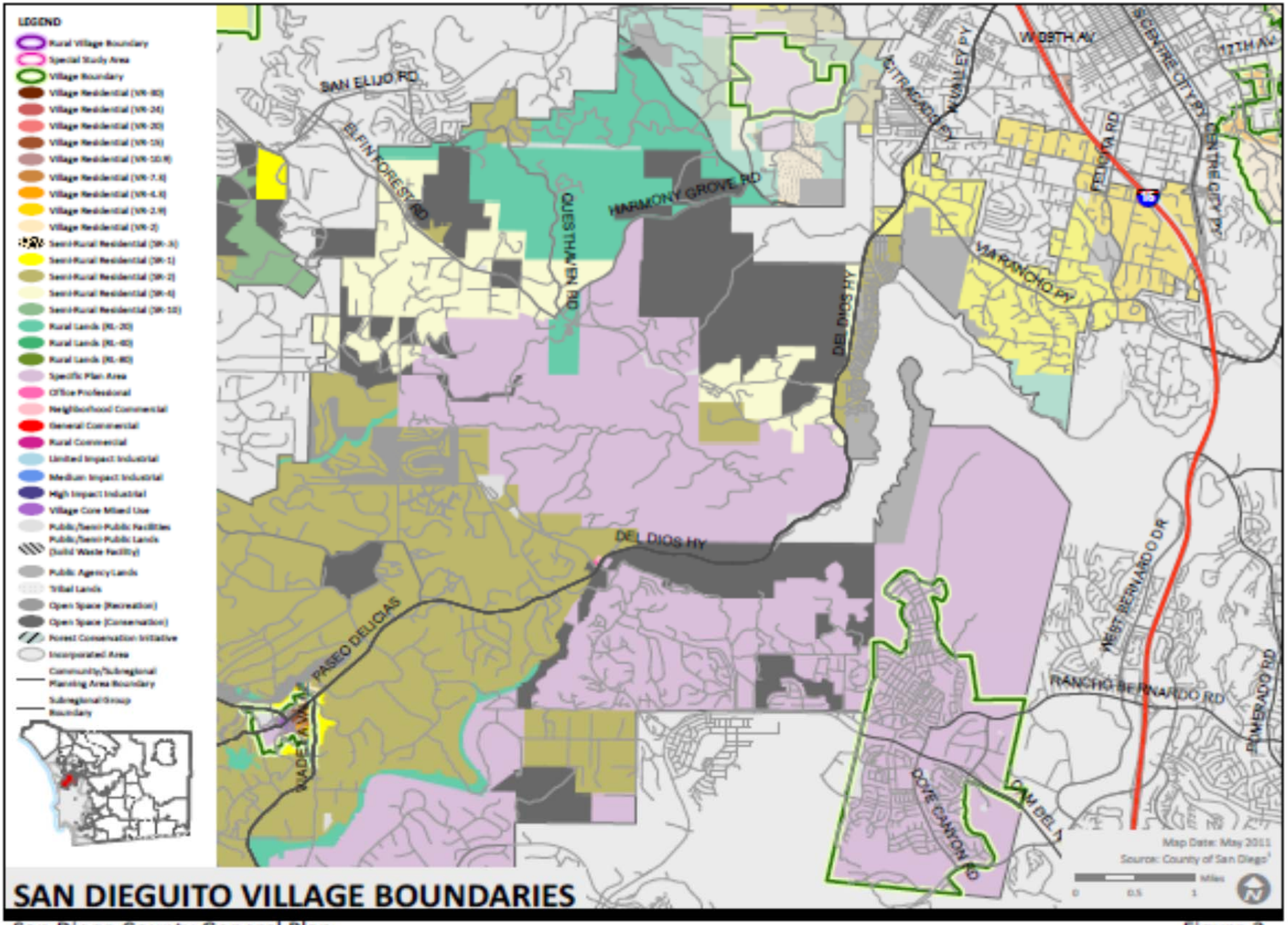
The following describes the ideal future state of the Harmony Grove community:

The area is rural in nature, extremely quiet, peaceful, and generally remains in its natural state, except for the agricultural uses. The dark night sky is an important aesthetic resource. The most scenic views in Harmony Grove are of the hills, valleys, riparian habitat, and grazing farm animals; and these visual qualities must be preserved. The area remains non-industrial with low-densities, whichpreserve the community's historic rural agricultural character.

The residents embrace a green community, where they continue their rural small-town lifestyle, enjoy keeping leisure and market animals, and live in harmony with the land and the wildlife. The Village is a place where local farmers sell organically grown vegetables; and where residents' children often find first homes, or where their parents can choose to live in retirement.

The historic rural habitat is preserved where the Village is surrounded by large-lot rural homes and small, family owned farms and vineyards that preserve the critical relationships necessary for this environmentally sensitive and balanced green community. The all-important rural voice is not overwhelmed by the urban voice.

Goals, Policies, & Implementation



SAN DIEGUITO VILLAGE BOUNDARIES

San Diego County General Plan

Figure 3

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1. Land Use (LU)

Community Boundaries

The Harmony Grove Village Boundary, shown on Figure 3 on page 25, is a growth boundary that identifies land to which development should be directed. Areas outside this limit line are not intended to expand and should retain the original Harmony Grove rural residential and agricultural character.

The community of Elfin Forrest does not have an established Village or Rural Village boundary.

Land Use Diagram

The San Dieguito Community Planning Area Land Use Map is provided in the General Plan Land Use Maps Appendix as Figure LU-A-19.

1.1 Community Character

Elfin Forest

Issue LU-1.1 Elfin Forest is a rural community in San Diego County that could be threatened by urban sprawl from adjacent municipalities, land owners of undeveloped large parcels who desire to develop their properties at higher densities for monetary gain, and developers, if zoning and density changes are permitted.

Goal LU-1.1 Maintain our rural residential community

Policy LU-1.1.1 Restrict land uses to single-family rural residences, equestrian or large animal estates, and agricultural uses.

Policy LU-1.1.2 Require minimum lot sizes of two acres outside the Village Boundary as the standard, unless significant preservation of resources is achieved; and specific findings are met for the preservation of community character with the utilization of lot area averaging, planned residential developments, or specific plans.

Policy LU-1.1.3 Any and all development in Elfin Forest must be served only by septic systems for sewage management to ensure the preservation of the community's rural character.

Policy LU-1.1.4 Prohibit commercial and industrial uses with the exception that existing agricultural uses may conduct commercial activity, if it is ancillary to and supportive of the primary agricultural use on the property.

Policy LU-1.1.5 For developments of two lots or more, require community review of proposed plans prior to County permit approval.

Policy LU-1.1.6 Prohibit sidewalks to maintain Elfin Forest's character as a rural community and protect the community's dark nighttime skies.

Issue LU-1.2 Elfin Forest is a community that values its dark nighttime sky and wants to maintain it.

Goal LU-1.2 A rural community that has a dark nighttime sky.

Policy-LU 1.2.1 Encourage all existing and new residential dwellings to preserve the dark nighttime sky by instituting an external lighting "lights-out" program after 10pm.

Policy-LU 1.2.2 Prohibit street lights and stop lights, except where necessary for public safety.

Policy-LU 1.2.3 Require residential lighting to preserve dark nighttime skies, street lighting on private property to be directed downward to reduce scattered light; and restrict lighted signage to the minimum required for operation and safety.

Issue LU-1.3 Even though Elfin Forest is a rural community with large lots, some of which are used to keep large animals, the majority of residents do not have horses or other large animals. Therefore, it is important that large animal regulations are respected.

Goal LU-1.3 Responsible animal-keeping.

Policy LU-1.3.1 Allow for the responsible husbandry of equestrian and other large animals.

Policy LU-1.3.2 Strictly enforce County regulations pertaining to large animal keeping.

Policy LU-1.3.3 Strictly enforce boarding regulations.

Policy LU-1.3.4 Encourage composting of manure to control odor and flies.

Policy LU-1.3.5 Encourage proper maintenance of fences and animal enclosures.

Policy LU-1.3.6 Encourage the use of cross-fencing to promote healthy grass pastures and reduce dust, mud and erosion.

Policy LU-1.3.7 Encourage the use of recycled water for pasture irrigation.

Policy LU-1.3.8 Promote use of our community trail system for the enjoyment of horses and their riders, as well as pedestrians.

Issue LU-1.4 Elfin Forest is a well organized and caring community where residents work together to solve a wide range of issues. Because of this, a stronger community identity is needed.

Goal LU-1.4 A continued strong sense of identity for the community of Elfin Forest.

Policy LU-1.4.1 Seek a separate zip code to enhance a strong community identity for the community of Elfin Forest.

Implementation Plan LU-1.4.1 Coordinate with the US Postal Service to create the new zip code.

Policy LU-1.4.2 Require development to submit plans for review by the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council.

Harmony Grove

Issue LU-1.5 Harmony Grove is a rural community threatened by urban sprawl. *Policies on annexation by adjacent jurisdictions are identified in Section 1.2, Community Growth Policy.*

Goal LU-1.5 Preservation of the rural small town feeling of Harmony Grove.

Policy LU-1.5.1 Require minimum lot sizes of two acres outside the Village Boundary as the standard, unless significant preservation of resources is achieved; and specific findings are met for the preservation of community character with the utilization of lot area averaging, planned residential developments, or specific plans.

Policy LU-1.5.2 Require developers to obtain community review and input of their plans prior to permit approval.

Policy LU-1.5.3 Provide for lot sizes that will permit residents to keep leisure and market animals on their property.

Policy LU-1.5.4 Restrict land use primarily to single-family residences outside of the Village.

Goal LU-1.6 Open access community design that fosters a feeling of "one neighborhood" despite multiple developments.

Policy LU-1.6.1 Require large developments to retain connectivity with visual or physical pedestrian/equestrian access to community features.

Policy LU-1.6.2 Promote design of development with a rural, country theme.

Goal LU-1.7 Continued preservation of mature native trees.

Policy LU-1.7.1 Require development designed that avoids the removal of mature trees and encourages shady parking areas with trees.

Goal LU-1.8 Dedicated open space.

Policy LU-1.8.1 Require mitigation land for development within the community to be purchased within the community to create open space and trails.

Issue LU-1.9 The historic equestrian character of Harmony Grove is threatened by increasing development pressures.

Goal LU-1.9 An attractive equestrian community that encourages environmentally sensitive, responsible horse keeping.

Policy LU-1.9.1 Require disclosure of Harmony Grove's rural nature to potential home buyers in order for new residents to accept the

consequences and benefits of living in a rural environment (ie, proximity of large animals and small farms and ranches).

Policy LU-1.9.2 Encourage the keeping of equestrian and market animals.

Policy LU-1.9.3 Encourage proper maintenance of fences and animal enclosures.

Policy LU-1.9.4 Require commercial equestrian facilities to strictly conform to County regulations to ensure maintenance of attractive facilities that enhance the community and promote the health of the animals.

Policy LU-1.9.5 Support the opportunity for home horse keepers to board a very small number of horses to help defray costs of keeping their own animals.

Policy LU-1.9.6 Encourage the use of cross-fencing to promote healthy grass pastures and reduce dust, mud, and erosion. Make recycled water available for pasture irrigation.

Policy LU-1.9.7 Strictly enforce manure and odor control.

Policy LU-1.9.8 Promote the use of a non-motorized trail system for the enjoyment of both horses and their riders, as well as hikers and bicyclists.

Goal LU-1.10 The Preservation of a rural visual environment, including leisure and market animals grazing in fenced front yards.

Policy LU-1.10.1 Reduce front setback requirements to allow grazing, but not housing, of leisure and market animals in residential fenced front yards.

Issue LU-1.11 Agricultural uses, especially small family-owned organic farms, are important to the functioning of Harmony Grove, and are encouraged as part of an environmentally sensitive green community plan.

Goal LU-1.11 Becoming a green community by recycling animal wastes, using reclaimed water for irrigation, and supporting local organic agriculture.

Policy LU-1.11.1 Encourage local distribution of composted animal wastes.

Issue LU-1.12 The rich visual resources of the valley, including a locally significant visual resource, i.e., “Lady of the Valley” mountain formation, are threatened by urban sprawl. *Policies concerning ridgelines are identified in the General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element under Goal COS-12.*

Goal LU-1.12.1 A rural residential lifestyle built in a fashion that is compatible with and sensitive to its natural setting; unspoiled views of intact hills, valleys, and creeks.

1.2 Community Growth Policy

Issue LU-2.1 Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are rural communities surrounded by cities (Escondido to the northeast and San Marcos to the southwest), and, as such, are threatened by urban sprawl. To preserve the rural lifestyle and to retain value in their rural properties, the communities would like to establish buffers where urban areas are immediately adjacent to rural home sites. For example, Escondido is planning to annex a portion of Harmony Grove to expand a business park. Harmony Grove residents requested that as a condition of annexation, the area adjacent to rural residential homes would include more rural design elements, such as park areas with nature trails, trees within parking lots, and restricted traffic access to local Harmony Grove roads. In areas where more urban residential development may occur (perhaps in San Marcos), densely populated small-lot developments should not be planned adjacent to multi-acre rural home sites. Support for these policies should be garnered from adjacent municipalities.

Goal LU-2.1 Preservation of the rural unincorporated community of Elfin Forest and its cohesiveness with its neighbor, the rural unincorporated community of Harmony Grove.

Policy LU-2.1.1 Coordinate with LAFCO to respect the boundaries of the unincorporated community of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove, and strongly discourage any portion to be annexed to adjacent cities.

Policy LU-2.1.3 Seek funds to purchase lands with sensitive natural resources to also serve as open space buffers between adjacent cities and the unincorporated community of Elfin Forest – Harmony Grove, and preserve them with a conservation easement to preserve the rural character and habitat.

Policy LU-2.1.4 Maintain open-space buffer between urban areas and rural community to preserve character of unincorporated community.

Issue LU-2.2 Several agricultural operations are finding that limits to their operations are leading them to consider re-zoning and re-development in the near future. In addition, non-resident land speculators have purchased local undeveloped land in the hopes that higher density will be adopted by the Board of Supervisors through General Plan Amendments. Development of these parcels outside the proposed Harmony Grove Village Boundary (refer to Figure 3) with an urban, clustered, or suburban design threatens the continued existence of the rural residential and equestrian character of Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove.

Goal LU-2.2 Preservation of the lifestyle of the rural resident while accommodating growth.

Policy LU-2.2.1 Ensure that the number of urban residences does not greatly exceed that of the rural residences in the greater unincorporated communities of Harmony Grove and Eden Valley.

Policy LU-2.2.2 Allow, within the village boundary, as part of a thoughtful comprehensive community plan, the keeping of livestock on a limited basis on residential lots greater than 1/3 acre, which have become necessary in heretofore rural areas to comply with increased population projections.

Implementation Program LU-2.2.2 Zoning Ordinance

1.3 Community Conservation and Protection

Issue LU-3.1 Much of the coastal area sensitive environmental habitat in San Diego County has been destroyed by development. Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are one of the last coastal areas in San Diego County with sensitive and endangered habitats that are still intact.

Goal LU-3.1 The continued preservation of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove's sensitive and endangered habitats.

Policy LU-3.1.1 Encourage the restoration and maintain the watershed, creeks, and riparian areas.

Policy LU-3.1.2 Seek a means to prevent motorized vehicles; i.e. dirt bikes, off road vehicles, etc. in these areas and effectively enforce the restriction.

Policy LU-3.1.3 Encourage developers and public agencies in the County to acquire Elfin Forest's sensitive environmental habitat as mitigation.

Policy LU-3.1.4 Ensure that connectivity of open space is made a priority in targeting areas to be used as mitigation properties or otherwise conserved open space, so as to preserve and increase linkages between wildlife corridors and avoid fragmentation of habitat.

Issue LU-3.2 All cultural resources are valued by the community; they remind the residents of the continuity of the past with the present, and provide an invaluable educational and societal resource.

Goal LU-3.2 The preservation of the significant historic cultural resources in the community. (Elfin Forest)

Policy LU-3.2.1 Encourage the portions of the historic Butterfield stage coach trail located in Elfin Forest to be maintained and identified as such through proper signage.

Goal LU-3.3 A community where significant prehistoric and historic cultural resources will be preserved. (Harmony Grove)

Policy LU-3.3.1 Require development to incorporate the prehistoric and historic rural theme of this community**.**

1.4 Areas of Change: Development Infill and Intensification

Elfin Forest

Issue LU-4.1 The remaining lots available in Elfin Forest for development are subject to cluster and other incompatible development.

Goal LU-4.1 All future development in Elfin Forest that is compatible with the existing community.

Harmony Grove

Refer to General Plan goals and policies.

1.5 Community Facilities

Elfin Forest

Issue LU-5.1 Elfin Forest has six facilities which are important to the community:

- The EFHG Fire Station
- The Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve
- The Gardens at the Fire Station
- The Firewise Garden
- The Native Plant Garden
- Extensive Community Trails.

Goal LU-5.1 The continued maintenance and preservation of community facilities.

Policy LU-5.1.1 Develop, in conjunction with the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council and other community groups, a maintenance strategy for the miles of private trails in our community

Policy LU-5.1.2 Encourage new trails to complete the system and provide safe passage.

Policy LU-5.1.3 Support the expansion of the Fire Station to include permanent sleeping quarters for our firefighters

Policy LU-5.1.4 Continue to support the expansion of the Elfin Forest Recreation Reserve, where possible.

Harmony Grove

Goal LU-5.2: Preservation of the following community facilities:

- The Fellowship Hall of the Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association – This private facility has served as a meeting room for area residents on many occasions in the past.
- The Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire Station – the Fire Station not only houses the volunteer fire department, but also serves as a meeting place for community meetings and events.

- The Johnston-Ward Farmhouse – This historic home has been dedicated to the community for use as a meeting place. The Heritage Gallery on the first floor houses historic artifacts and old photographs of the community.

Goal LU-5.3: Establish a small commercial town center to serve the local community and provide public gathering places as well as opportunities for the sale of locally grown organic produce.

1.6 Other Topics/Issues

a. Commercial (Harmony Grove)

Goal LU-6.1 Small-town feeling for limited commercial developments; land use and business to be compatible with community character and general goals.

Policy LU-6.1.1 Restrict use of land for commercial development to limited community serving facilities, without large aggregations of commercial businesses, and encouraging locally owned businesses serving the community.

Policy LU-6.1.2 Restrict signage and lighting in commercial developments to the minimum required for operation and safety.

b. Industrial (Harmony Grove)

Issue LU-6.2 The sensitive nature of our rural lifestyle is incompatible with most intensive industrial uses. Historic Harmony Grove has sustained many years of quarrying and several abandoned quarries remain in unsafe and un-restored conditions. Such blights on our community should be prevented.

Goal LU-6.2 A community that is not adversely impacted by industrial or mining sites.

Policy LU-6.2.1 Require industrial or mining activities to mitigate impacts from increased traffic, noise, and potential health hazards.

2. Circulation and Mobility (CM)

2.1 Integrated Mobility and Access

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

2.2 Local Road Network

Elfin Forest

Issue CM-2.1 Elfin Forest is a rural community traversed by a two-lane public roadway; Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Road must be maintained at that level. There is also a system of private roads that are maintained by the adjacent homeowners which provide access to individual properties from Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Road. The community also has an extensive community trail system, which allows for travel on foot, on bicycle, and on horseback. It is important to the Community to retain a network of two lane roads.

Goal CM-2.1 Roads within the Elfin Forest community that are designed to retain the community's rural character.

Policy CM-2.1.1 Encourage restriction of truck traffic on Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Road to local deliveries.

Policy CM-2.1.2 Preserve rural character of Elfin Forest by maintaining low traffic speeds on Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Road.

Policy CM-2.1.3 Limit gross weight allowed on Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Road, whenever feasible.

Policy CM-2.1.4 Vigorously enforce weight limits and speed limits on Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Road.

Policy CM-2.1.5 Locate new developments aligning Elfin Forest Road and/or Harmony Grove Road around their core to avoid ensnaring Elfin Forest residents in their local traffic.

Issue CM-2.2 Many of the private roads in the community have excessive and unwanted trespassing onto them. In particular, many nonresidents use these roads to gain access to environmentally-sensitive lands to ride their off-road vehicles or dump trash. In addition, trespassers often build bonfires and party in these rural undeveloped sensitive lands.

Goal CM-2.2 Private roads that are only used by intended property owners.

Policy CM-2.2.1 Support the efforts of local organizations to gate some of the private roads to reduce wildfire risk and facilitate emergency evacuation. Gates to be installed per the California Fire Code and County Fire Code Section 902.2.4.1.

Policy CM-2.2.2 Discourage unauthorized access to preserve areas.

Implementation Program CM-2.2.2 Install signage, and gates, where feasible, to restrict access to County-owned preserve areas.

Harmony Grove

Issue CM-2.3 Harmony Grove has private roads to provide access to many residential and agricultural uses. Some of these are not adequately named or identified for public safety purposes.

Goal CM-2.3 Quiet residential streets safe for pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian use and adequately identified for emergency response service providers. Low traffic volume and low traffic speeds and commercial weight limits traffic calming areas; scenic highways.

Policy CM-2.3.1 Restrict local public roads to two-lane, undivided, curving streets with established speed and weight limits commensurate with residential equestrian neighborhoods.

Policy CM-2.3.2 Encourage a study for traffic calming strategies, where necessary, and the restriction of truck traffic to local deliveries.

2.3 Fire Access/Egress Routes

Issue CM-3.1 Many private roads within Elfin Forest are not adequately named or identified for adequate public safety responses.

Goal CM-3.1 All private roads are named or identified so that all emergency vehicles know where they are located.

Policy CM-3.1.1 Create, in conjunction with the Elfin Forest – Harmony Grove Town Council, a naming system consistent with existing community street names, and a list of potential names for each unnamed street.

Implementation Program CM-3.1.1 The EFHGTC will establish a timeframe by which all unnamed streets in Elfin Forest will be correctly named and signed for emergency responders to locate.

Implementation Program CM-3.1.2 The EFHGTC will develop a process associated with the timeline through which the Town Council Board will have the authority to choose a name should the street residents are unable to come up with a consensus in the time allocated.

Issue CM-3.2 Many existing private roads in Elfin Forest are not wide enough to accommodate trailers and evacuate traffic in case of an emergency, and cannot be widened.

Goal CM-3.2 Fire access roads that provide for emergency evacuation without interference from trailers and incoming traffic.

Policy CM-3.2.1 Require appropriately designed access be provided with the approval of large animal boarding.

Policy CM-3.2.2 Consider emergency evacuation and local road conditions when granting new building permits along those constricted egress routes.

Implementation Program CM-3.2.2 A committee comprised of members of the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council and the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Department to study this problem and recommend possible solutions, such as vegetation management, turn outs at certain points along the roads, and possible amendments to the County Private Road Standards.

2.4 Local Transit

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

2.5 Pedestrian

Elfin Forest

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

Harmony Grove

Issue CM-5.1 Because there are no sidewalks, Harmony Grove residents, equestrians and bicyclists must currently travel directly on the major roads, and this represents a serious safety hazard that will only become worse as the area is built out. Off-road trails are needed to provide safe passage for the residents and their children.

Goal CM-5.1 Safe passage for pedestrians throughout the Harmony Grove community.

Policy CM-5.1.1 Require construction of pedestrian trails linking each and every house as a condition of development for subdivisions with 5 or more homes.

2.6 Bicycle and Trails

Elfin Forest

Issue CM-6.1 Currently the private trails in the Elfin Forest are maintained by property owners or by the Elfin Forest Landscape Foundation. Ongoing funding sources for this organization need to be identified.

Goal CM-6.1 Long-term adequate maintenance of Elfin Forest trails**.**

Policy CM-6.1.1 Explore long term funding opportunities where trail users and public agencies can contribute to provide long term maintenance.

Implementation Program CM-6.1.1-1 Funding will be solicited through grants and requests from the County and other agencies to establish a permanent funding source.

Implementation Program CM-6.1.1-2 The Town Council Board will organize regular “Community Clean-up events” to defray the costs of ongoing maintenance.

Implementation Program CM-6.1.1-3 One of the local organizations will be tasked with managing the Trail Maintenance Endowment in

such a way that only the interest from the endowment is used for ongoing management activities.

Implementation Program CM-6.1.1-4 Encourage dedication of trails to the County (see below).

Implementation Program CM-6.1.1-5 Consider additional funding or assessments strategies.

Harmony Grove

Issue CM-6.2 A particular problem exists along the southeastern terminus of Country Club Drive, where bicyclists, hikers, and equestrians would be traveling towards the Del Dios Highlands County Preserve or the Lake Hodges Recreational Area. There is an Arizona bridge with no bicycle lane or safety rails that can be hazardous to cross, particularly in wet weather at the intersection of County Club Drive and Harmony Grove Drive.

Goal CM-6.2 A multi-use trail system linking the Harmony Grove community to major recreational areas such as Lake Hodges, Elfin Forest Preserve, and Jack's Pond.

Policy CM-6.2.1 Seek funds to better provide crossing for pedestrians on trails.

Refer to General Plan Goals and Policies for more policies on Trails and Pedestrian Connectivity

2.7 Aviation

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

2.8 Trip Reductions

Elfin Forest

Refer to General Plan goals and policies.

Harmony Grove

Issue CM-8.1 A major high tech business park, the Escondido Research and Technology Center, is located immediately to the northeast of Harmony Grove. Excess commuter traffic can create hazards along the rural county roads of this community.

Goal CM-8.1 Safe roadways for vehicle, pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle passage.

Policy CM-8.1.1 Encourage road designs that support low speeds appropriate for a rural neighborhood, and the use of curves and stop signs as appropriate for traffic control.

Policy CM-8.1.2 Encourage the use of electric commuter shuttle system between the business park and the Harmony Grove Village center.

2.9 Parking

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

2.10 Infrastructure and Utilities

a. Water:

Issue CM-10.1 San Diego County has limited water resources.

Goal CM-10.1 Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove will wisely use its valuable water resources, as well as educational resources.

Policy CM-10.1.1 Encourage native, drought-tolerant, and fire-wise landscaping for existing development through the continued maintenance and development of the Fire Wise Garden.

b. Sewer/septic

Issue CM-10.2 Septic systems are the sole and preferred sewage management for Elfin Forest, because they ensure that Elfin Forest - Harmony Grove will remain a rural community.

Goal CM-10.2 A sewage disposal system that retains the rural character of Elfin Forest - Harmony Grove

Policy CM-10.2.1 Require all proposed new development to use septic systems with one septic system per dwelling unit.

c. Storm drainage

Issue CM-10.3 The Escondido Creek passes through Elfin Forest on many residential lots and the public should be aware of the problems of stormrunoff.

Goal CM-10.3 A population that is aware of potential hazards from runoff

Policy CM-10.3.1 Encourage programs and other means for the community to be fully-informed as to the risks of storm drainage and runoff to the creek, the San Elijo Lagoon and Pacific Ocean.

d. Energy

Refer Conservation and Open Space Goals and policies

e. Landfill

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

f. Telecommunications

Issue CM-10.4 While improved telecommunication technology is necessary and desirable there are sometimes negative impacts on communities.

Goal CM-10.4 Telecommunications equipment properly located that minimally impacts the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove communities.

Policy CM-10.4.1 Require mitigation of noise to adjacent residential properties.

Policy CM-10.4.2 Require, to the maximum extent feasible, telecommunication infrastructure at Elfin Forest's Community Facilities sites – the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station and the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve.

Policy CM-10.4.3 Utilize masking systems to cause new towers to resemble natural vegetation.

3. Conservation and Open Space (COS)

3.1 Resource Conservation and Management

a. Agricultural soils and production

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

Issue COS-1.1 Significant agricultural resources including egg ranches, horse ranches, avocado, citrus, and deciduous fruit growing operations exist and uphold the rural community character.

Goal COS-1.1 Agricultural resources that enhance the environment and contribute to the rural community vision.

Policy COS-1.1.1 Encourage the establishment of "green" small family owned farms and vineyards.

Policy COS-1.1.2 Encourage the use of recycled water for organic farms.

Policy COS-1.1.3 Provide for farmer's markets to allow for the sale of local produce in the future Village.

Goal COS-1.2 Native soil and topography moderately interspersed with low impact residential and agricultural uses.

Policy COS-1.2.1 Require development to minimize impact on soil resources. Topography is to be maintained, wherever possible.

b. Plant and animal habitats and wildlife corridors

Issue COS-1.2 Elfin Forest contains large amounts of sensitive lands including wildlife corridors, the Escondido Creek floodplain, riparian vegetation, wetlands, woodland resources, and steep slopes.

Goal COS-1.2 The preservation of Elfin Forest's sensitive plant and animal habitats and wildlife corridors.

Policy COS-1.2.1 Require mitigation land for development projects within the community to be purchased within Elfin Forest to preserve our sensitive plant and animal habitats, to the extent possible.

Policy COS-1.2.2 Make it a priority for Elfin Forest areas to be purchased for mitigation property, including mitigation for development impact elsewhere in San Diego County.

Policy COS-1.2.3 Increase total preserved open space acreage through actively pursuing grants, donations, private endowments, non-profit acquisition, and public trusts.

Policy COS-1.2.4 Restrict agricultural uses to exclude growing of the most invasive types of vegetation that can spread to the native habitat.

Goal COS 1.3 The preservation of natural creeks and riparian areas.

Policy COS-1.3.1 Promote the preservation of Escondido Creek in its natural state and ensure that any new development, such as homes, animal enclosures, driving ranges, etc, are adequately separated and buffered from the creek to prevent erosion, runoff, or pollution of the creek.

Policy COS-1.3.2 Integrate development plans with the native habitat in such a way as to permanently preserve vast amounts of open space and continuous wildlife corridors.

Policy COS-1.3.3 Protect the water quality of the Escondido Creek by educating residents and enforcing regulations about dumping near or into the Creek, as well as by enacting a gate system preventing trespassers in the areas most affected by dumping creekside (Suerte del Este and Canyon de Oro).

Policy COS-1.3.4 Support educational programs and opportunities for owners of large animal keeping facilities on proper manure storage/disposal to prevent creek contamination.

Goal COS-1.4 Work with the Water Districts to visually mitigate for all water construction projects.

Policy COS-1.4.1 Prohibit water storage tanks on ridgelines and in public view.

c. Scenic resources and highways

Issue COS-1.5 Elfin Forest Road / Harmony Grove Road is on the County Scenic Highway System. Harmony Grove Road has many curves with rocks cut on one side and Escondido Creek with mature vegetation and native wildflowers and rugged mountains lining the other side. It is included in the Conservation and Open Space Element, Table COS-1 County Scenic Corridors

d. Surface, groundwater and watersheds

Issue COS-1.6 The Escondido Creek along with smaller and seasonal creeks in Elfin Forest are at risk for surface pollution from residential chemicals, animal keeping activities, and broken septic systems.

Goal COS-1.6 The Escondido Creek, smaller and seasonal creeks that are free of pollution.

Policy COS-1.6.1 Establish education programs to protect surface and groundwater in the community from runoff of pollutants.

Implementation Program COS-1.6.1 Educating residents on proper use of chemicals, encouraging organic gardening, and Best Management Practices for Large animal keeping; including French drains for washing areas, containment of manure, and composting manure.

e. Mineral resources

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

f. Air quality

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

g. Water and energy

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

Issue COS-1.7 Exploring alternative energy sources and assuring that all new developments have sufficient energy sources is a high priority in Elfin Forest.

Goal CM-1.7 A rural residential community which will work to conserve energy so that there is enough power to meet the needs of its residents and agricultural businesses.

Policy CM-10.7.1 Encourage new and existing residents to explore alternative sources of energy.

3.2 Parks and Recreation

The community of Elfin Forest has indicated through two community surveys that ballparks, playgrounds, and other active use parks are not desired because they would not be in keeping with the community's rural character.

Issue COS-2.1 Parks should be passive use facilities to avoid adverse impacts on this historic rural community. (Harmony Grove)

Goal COS-2.1 A small neighborhood park, preferably on a floodplain near a creek, that is accessible by trail system. (Harmony Grove)

Policy COS-2.1.1 Make it a priority to acquire open space for small parks along trail routes, which have mature native landscaping, picnic tables, and minimal playground equipment. Restrict active recreational facilities, and minimize lights and paved areas. (Harmony Grove)

3.3 Community Open Space Plan

Elfin Forest

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

Harmony Grove

Issue COS-3.1 Development of the Harmony Grove area could significantly impact the establishment of a sensitive lands open-space system, because the site contains the Escondido Creek floodplain and riparian vegetation, wetlands, woodland resources, and steep slopes.

Goal COS-3.1 Open space preserves of coast live oak riparian forests, oak woodland chaparral, native grasslands, and coastal sage scrub.

Policy COS-3.1.1 Preservation of open space banks of native habitat is a key element of this plan. Developers are required to mitigate for damages by purchasing open space in the area in conjunction with local preservation groups.

Goal COS-3.2 A community where all living things including humans, invertebrates, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, and native vegetation live together in harmony.

Policy COS-3.2.1 Require developments to preserve, to the extent feasible, large banks of open space, including ridgelines, in their natural habitat.

Policy COS-3.2.2 The riparian continuous corridor is preserved and protected. Any possible runoff into the stream is to be abated.

Policy COS-3.2.3 Require developers to mitigate loss of habitat and impact to a critical population of sensitive species by purchasing mitigation land to be enjoyed as open space for all in conjunction with local public land trusts.

Policy COS-3.2.4 Require sensitive habitat be preserved through designation as open space and through dedication of open space easements prior to development.

4. Safety (S)

4.1 Hazards/Risk Avoidance and Mitigation

a. Seismic and geologic risks

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

b. Flooding

Issue S-1.1 During many rainstorms, the Escondido Creek floods and causes Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Road and Suerte Del Este to be closed.

Goal S-1.1 Safe ingress/egress to the community during heavy rains

Policy S-1.1.1 Require new construction to have County approved bridges appropriate for use and weight as access/egress.

c. Wildland fire

Issue S-1.2 Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are located in a high wildland fire threat area, and the EFHG Fire Department is the core of the community.

Goal S-1.2 To have the EFHG Fire Dept. provide timely response to fire and medical emergencies, while maintaining an advanced level of training.

Policy S-1.2.1 Encourage the EFHG Fire Dept to provide 24/7 staffing either at the fire station or on-call from home.

Policy S-1.2.2 Support the EFHG Fire Dept through fund-raising activities, and help to insure adequate funding by the County.

Policy S-1.2.3 Assure that the special taxes that are paid by Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove residents for their Volunteer Fire Department are not diverted to other parts of the County, and if the Volunteer Fire Department is ever disbanded, assure that the Special Tax is also eliminated.

Goal S-1.3 Educate the community about how to be fire safe. (Elfin Forest)

Policy S-1.3.1 Ensure that the community knows and practices all aspects of being fire-safe, including fire-safe landscaping and maintaining residential areas in a fire-safe manner.

Policy S-1.3.2 Encourage twice yearly fire safe inspections by Cal Fire.

Goal S-1.4 Prevent risk of wildfires from trespassers building bonfires and driving off-road vehicles in the native chaparral. (Elfin Forest)

Policy S-1.4.1 Support community organizations installing gates to block access to high fire risk areas where trespassers build bonfires at night and effectively enforce no trespassing ordinances.

Goal S-1.5 Timely response to fire and medical emergencies. (Harmony Grove)

Policy S-1.5.1 Make it a priority to improve response times for Harmony Grove with the development of a fire station.

Policy S-1.5.2 Investigate methods to support the volunteer fire department by special taxes and fund raising activities; and develop additional fire/police stations in community.

Goal S-1.6 Paramedic service that is available to all residents of Harmony Grove. (Harmony Grove)

Policy S 1.6.1 Support the annexation of Harmony Grove into CSA 17 to provide paramedic service.

4.2 Emergency Preparedness and Response

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

4.3 Other Topics – Law Enforcement

Issue S-3.1 Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are relatively crime-free communities.

Goal S-3.1 A safe environment through community design and citizen participation.

Policy S-3.1.1 Encourage formation of neighborhood watch groups.

Policy S-3.1.2 Establish close, regular contact between citizen's groups and the San Diego County Sheriff and the California Highway Patrol.

5. Noise (N)

5.1 Noise Sources

Issue N-1.1 Noise from Elfin Forest Road is excessive to many residents whose homes are located on or near the roadway.

Goal N-1.1 Limited traffic volumes and noise impacts on Elfin Forest Road.

Policy N-1.1.1 Encourage exploration of alternative design engineering techniques to reduce traffic volumes and noise impact along Elfin Forest Road.

Policy N-1.1.2 Encourage enforcement of weight limit for trucks on Elfin Forest Road.

Issue N-1.2 Local agricultural businesses may produce limited mechanical or other noises.

Goal N-1.2 Elfin Forest should be quiet and free of excessive or objectionable noise.

Policy N-1.2.1 Establish noise standards especially for a rural residential area which acknowledges existing agricultural uses.

5.2 Noise Standards and Mitigation

Refer to General Plan goals and policies

5.3 Other Topics/Issues

None

6. Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan Area (SPA)[1]

The Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan Area is comprised of approximately 468 acres located both north and south of the intersection of Harmony Grove Road and Country Club Drive in the community east of the City of Escondido known as Harmony Grove. It is, primarily a residential village that provides a range of for-sale housing to accommodate broad market needs. It contains a maximum of 742 detached residential units, resulting in an average gross density of 1.6 dwelling units per acre. Residential lots range in size from under 5,000 square feet to over two acres.

Harmony Grove Village includes a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use core that combines commercial, residential, live/work, recreational, and public uses. Community amenities include parks, open space, a multi-use trail system, and equestrian facilities. Development within Harmony Grove Village will be governed by the adopted Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan.

6.1 Existing uses and site characteristics

The site is a 468-acre irregularly shaped area with a relatively flat valley floor and more rugged terrain to the east and west. Elevation change is from 570 feet above mean sea level (MSL) to 800 feet above MSL. More than half the site is at less than a 15 percent slope; however, 9 percent of the site is at more than a 50% slope. The site lies outside of the current MSCP but within the boundary of the draft North County MSCP (see Appedix). Portions of the area have high sensitivity and/or wetland classification. The Escondido Creek traverses the site from east to west in the southern portion. Original uses were dairies, egg ranches, avocado/citrus groves, quarries, a fertilizer processing operation, and scattered residences.

Issue SPA-1.1 This SPA establishes uses and guidelines for a master planned community, hereafter called Harmony Grove Village (HG Village), within the 100 year old historic agricultural/residential area called Harmony Grove. HG Village is designed to create community and preserve the rural lifestyle of the existing residents. It is part of an overall vision that requires a specific pattern of development of decreasing density and increasing rural character with increasing distance from the Village center.

Goal SPA-1.1 The planning for HG Village should be integrated with and directly assist in implementing the Community Development Model (see Guiding Principle 2 of the General Plan).

Policy SPA-1.1.1 Planning for HG Village should complement the goals and polices set forth in the Harmony Grove chapter and the entirety of the San Dieguito Community Plan.

[1] Large portions of the content of this section are paraphrased or copied from the Draft specific plan/General Plan Amendment GPA 04-40/SP 04-03 October 2006. For further information or details not highlighted in this text, please refer to the approved SPA documents.

6.2 Issues affecting development

Issue SPA-2.1 The site has been heavily disturbed by the existing agricultural operations. Natural drainage courses within the site have been modified and surface flow has been redirected. Ponds containing dairy operation waste run-off water are heavily contaminated**.**

Goal SPA-2.1 Restored riparian and woodland areas.

Policy SPA-2.1.1 Require the new development to:

- Restore the degraded creeks, naturalize the creek banks, and restore the natural drainage patterns, where possible;
- Avoid contamination of Escondido Creek;
- Protect the oak woodlands on site;
- Provide biological buffers, where appropriate; and
- Remove and replace heavily contaminated soils.

Issue SPA-2.2 The surrounding historic community is rural equestrian and agricultural, and the HG Village will have more urban densities. The rural lifestyle must not be lost to urban sprawl.

Goal SPA-2.2 Preservation of the unique features of a rural lifestyle, while integrating the urban lifestyle of the HG Village.

Policy SPA-2.2.1 Require new HG Village residents to show support for local and state right-to-farm regulations.

Policy SPA-2.2.2 Allow limited keeping of livestock on lots 1/3 acre and greater within the Specific Plan Area.

Policy SPA-2.2.3 Allow for a system of recreational multi-use trails that will connect the more urban center with the larger rural homes at the periphery of the SPA and beyond into the existing residential community.

Policy SPA-2.2.4 Use design features compatible with a rural equestrian theme.

Policy SPA-2.2.5 Strictly adhere to the restrictions imposed by the Village Boundary (shown in section 1.0 of this plan).

Policy SPA-2.2.6 The sewage treatment method selected must be sized for this project without the possibility for expansion.

Policy SPA-2.2.7 The development within this SPA must incorporate the name “Harmony Grove” and must not be subdivided into communities with other names, so as to foster a feeling of “one town.”

Issue SPA-2.3 The dark skies must be preserved.

Goal SPA-2.3 Preservation of the dark nighttime skies.

Policy SPA-2.3.1 Any development must conform to preserving dark nighttime skies.

Implementation Program SPA-2.3.1 Residential lighting should preserve dark nighttime skies; street lighting should be directed downward to reduce scattered light; and restrict signage to minimum required for operation and safety.

6.3 Vision for site conservation and/or development

Issue SPA-3.1 The site contains several tributaries of the Escondido Creek and mature oak woodlands that that should be enjoyed by the community.

Goal SPA-3.1 Restoration and preservation of riparian and woodland areas, and provide protected public access to these.

Policy SPA-3.1.1 Allow for public trails along riparian and wetland areas.

Issue SPA-3.2 The site contains an historic building, the Johnston-Ward Farmhouse.

Goal SPA-3.2 Preservation of the Johnston-Ward Farmhouse for use as a public museum and Heritage Gallery.

Policy SPA-3.2.1 To the extent possible, incorporate a dedication of this historic building into mitigation plans.

6.4 Concepts for land uses

This section identifies concepts for land uses to be accommodated; their physical form and character; access and mobility; infrastructure and services; resource conservation; and other relevant elements

Issue SPA-4.1 The Village center must include a commercial area that is attractive and safe and provide amenities that serve the local population without specifically attracting tourists.

Goal SPA-4.1 A true community center for a rural area complete with: a range of housing, a local-serving commercial area and walkable core, restored farmhouse museum, and public equestrian facilities.

Policy SPA-4.1.1 Give preference to local-serving businesses, such as country store, butcher, baker, and farmer's market.

Policy SPA-4.1.2 Provide for shopkeeper units to encourage that the commercial area has a human presence at all hours.

Policy SPA-4.1.3 Provide a public equestrian arena that would be managed in cooperation with the County.

Policy SPA-4.1.4 Provide a protected corral/staging area near the trails and the country store so that equestrians can dismount and tie their horses.

6.5 Transitions and linkages with adjoining existing and planned development

Issue SPA-5.1 The Village must create a sense of community for the existing as well as new residents.

Goal SPA-5.1 Provision of open access to public Village features.

Policy SPA-5.1.1 Create public trails/walkways to the Commercial area, main parklands, trails along the waterways, and public equestrian facilities.

Policy SPA-5.1.2 Provide controlled crossing lights with buttons at equestrian as well as pedestrian heights where multi-use trails cross busy streets.

Issue SPA-5.2 Sometimes homeowners associations or neighborhood groups decide to eliminate portions of private trails.

Goal SPA-5.2 Provision of permanent public multiuse trails that connect various local communities and places of interest.

Policy SPA-5.2.1 Provide a connection to the dedicated County trails, and ensure that all Village public trails are dedicated to the County to preserve these for the entire community.

6.6 Phasing of development

Issue SPA- 6.1 The construction traffic and heavy trucks can be very disruptive to a rural community with no sidewalks where pedestrians and equestrians must walk in the streets.

Goal SPA-6.1 Local roadways will remain safe for pedestrian and equestrian use throughout the development build out.

Policy SPA-6.1.1 The new commuter roadway, now called Lariat Drive, should be built early in the development phase so that construction traffic can be routed away from the local rural roads.

Policy SPA-6.1.2 Adequate advance notice will be given before extra wide or large materials will be transported on local roads.

Issue SPA-6.2 The rugged terrain can absorb or redirect the sound of the warning sirens used during construction blasting. The sudden blast noise and concussion can frighten horses causing riders to fall and make riding horseback especially hazardous for area residents.

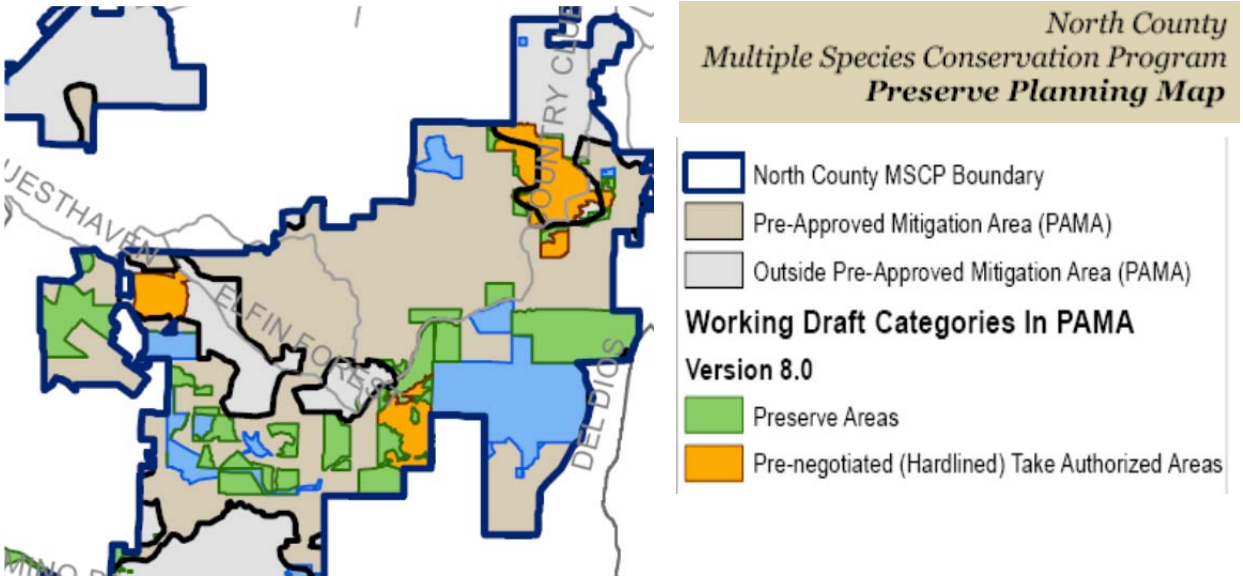
Goal SPA-6.2 All residents will receive notice prior to blasting and equestrians will receive sufficient notice immediately prior to blasting to allow riders to dismount and secure their horses.

Policy SPA-6.2.1 The warning sirens should be tested to ensure that area residents can properly hear these sirens or other means of

notification, ie, cell phone calls, should be set up to ensure that everyone receives adequate notice before each blasting event occurs.

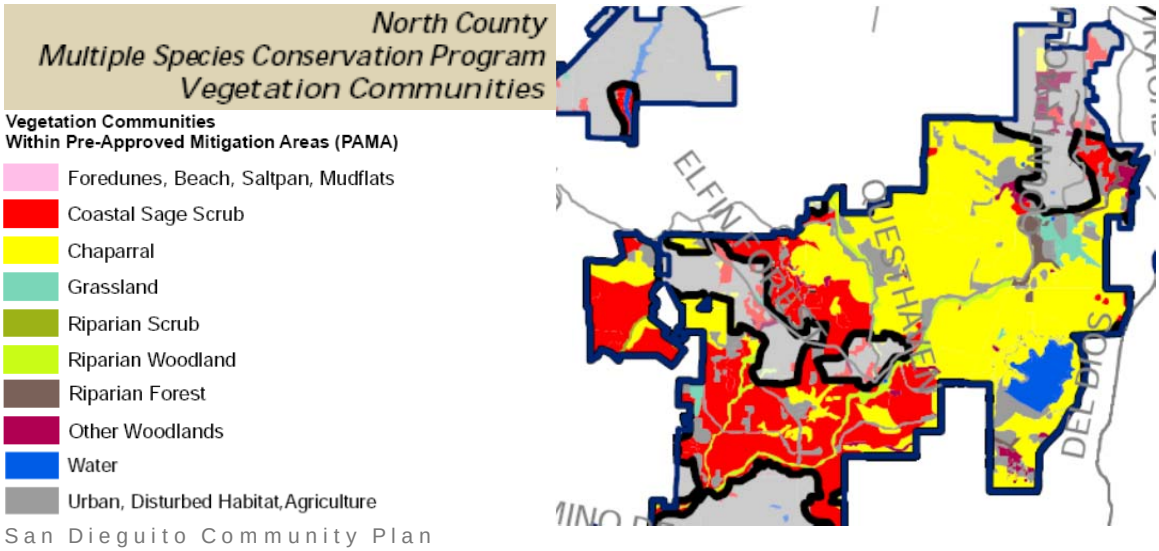
Appendix: Biological Diversity

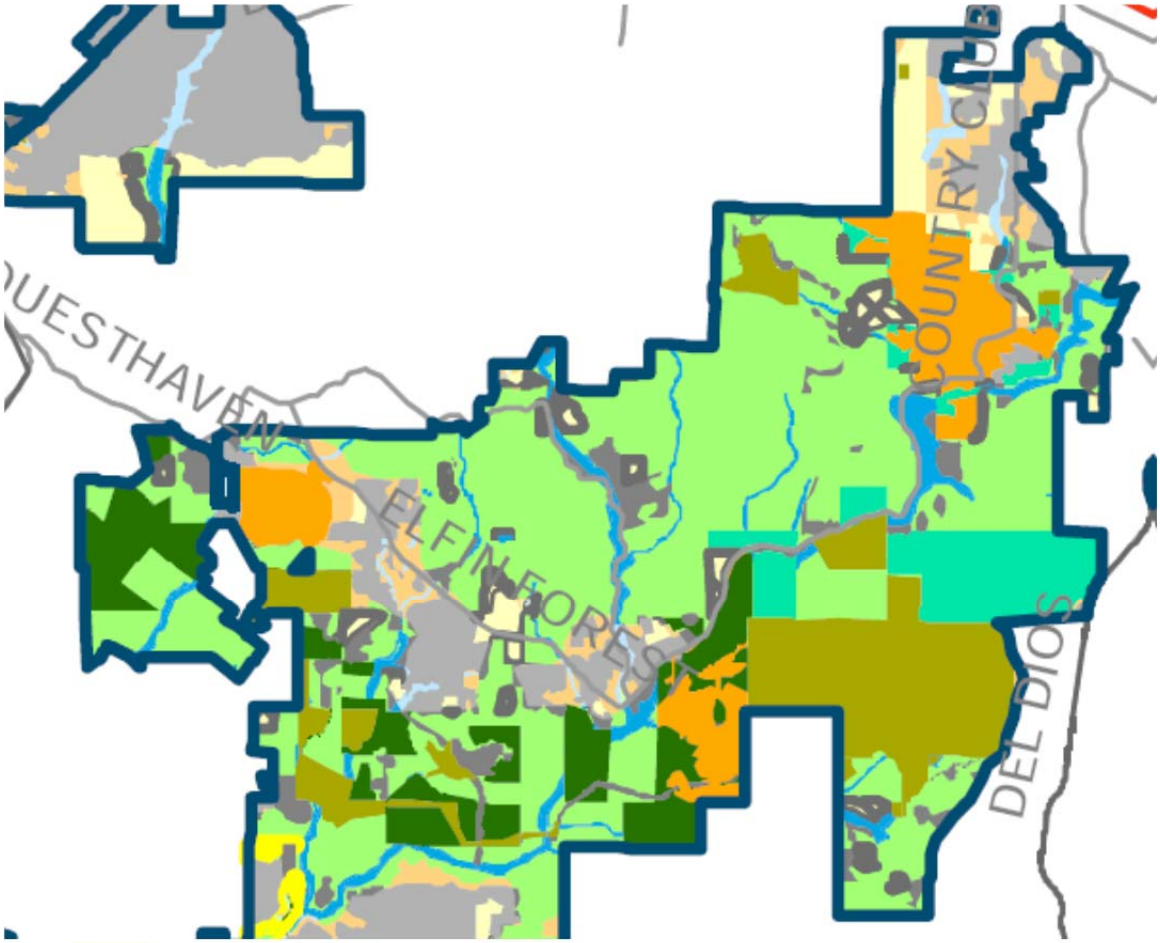
The maps in this section detail the rich variety of rare habitats which call Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove home and therefore the need to preserve and conserve as much open space as possible.



This above map from the Draft North County MSCP shows that most of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are located in the Pre-Approved Mitigation Area (PAMA). Furthermore, it shows that there are already large swaths of land preserved, either through the Olivenhain Municipal Water District (in blue above, including the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve), or preserved open space (in green above). It is our intent to work with the County and other agencies to conserve the remainder of the PAMA in its natural state; thereby safeguarding the largest wildlife corridor east of Interstate15 to protect the unique ecosystem in our valley.

The following maps provide further testimony to the richness and biodiversity of the Elfin Forest area. The first provides an overview of the vegetation communities, which is primarily Coastal Sage Scrub, a habitat severely threatened by development.





Water Districts

Urban/Developed outside PAMA

Urban/Developed within PAMA

Hardline Gains

Riparian/Wetland Habitat and Transition Zone within PAMA

Pre-negotiated (Hardlined) Take Authorized Areas

Natural Upland Habitat within PAMA

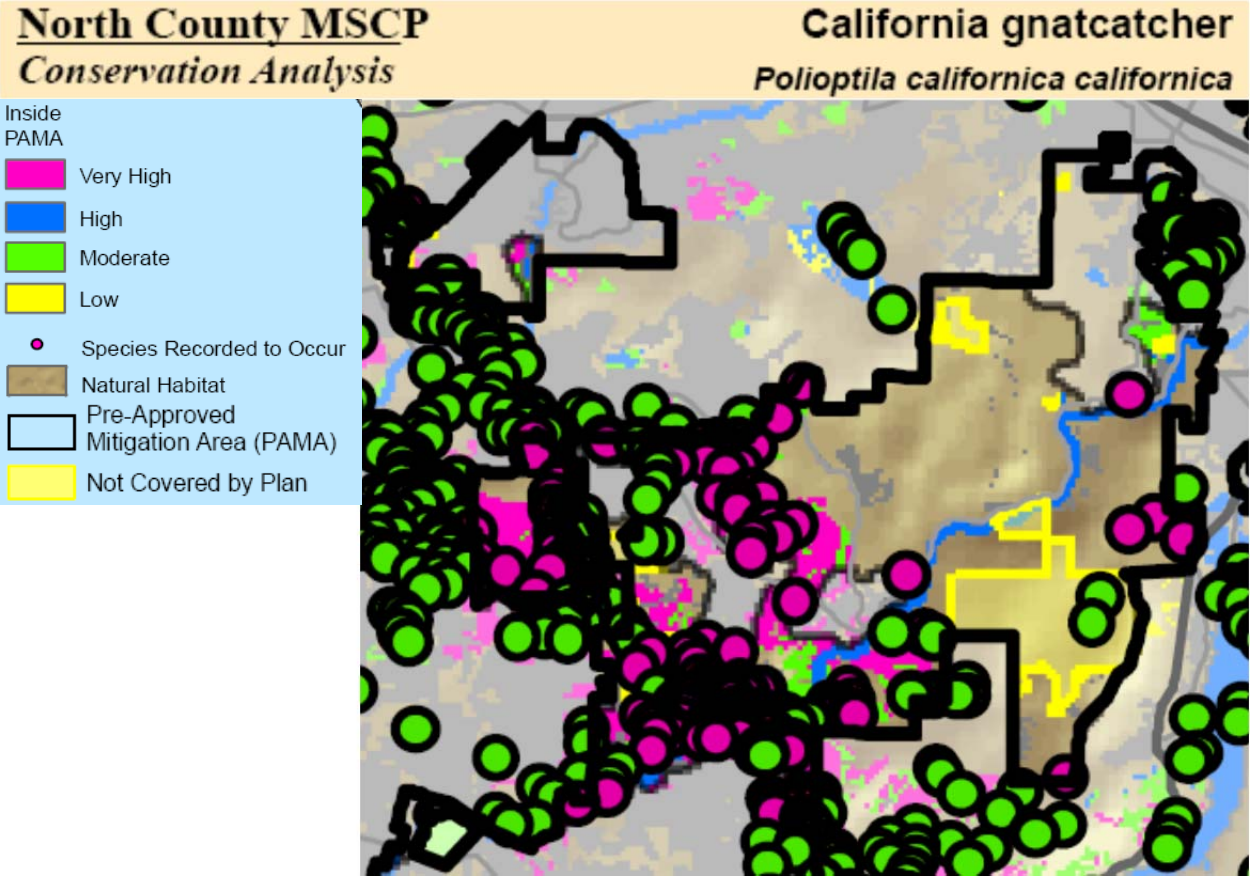
Baseline Preserve

North County MSCP Boundary

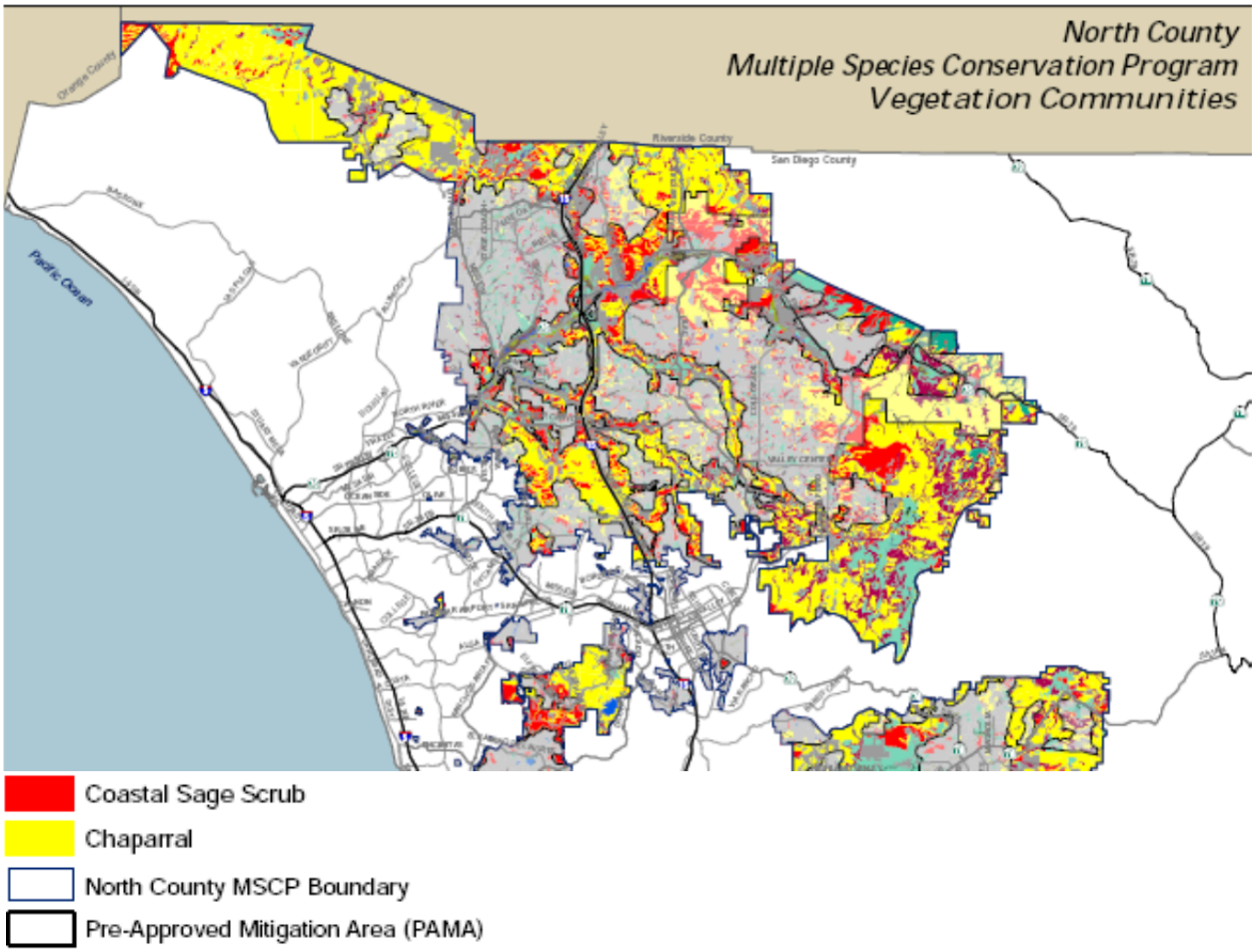
Working Draft Categories PAMA

Version 8.0

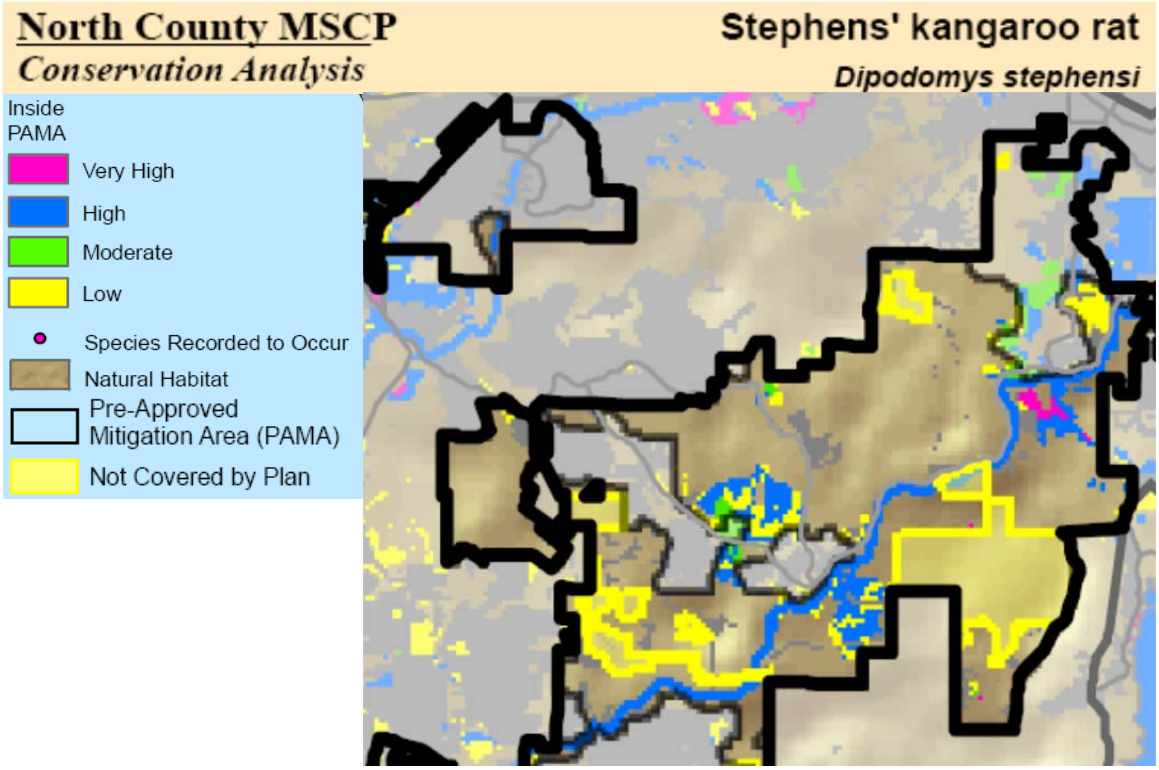
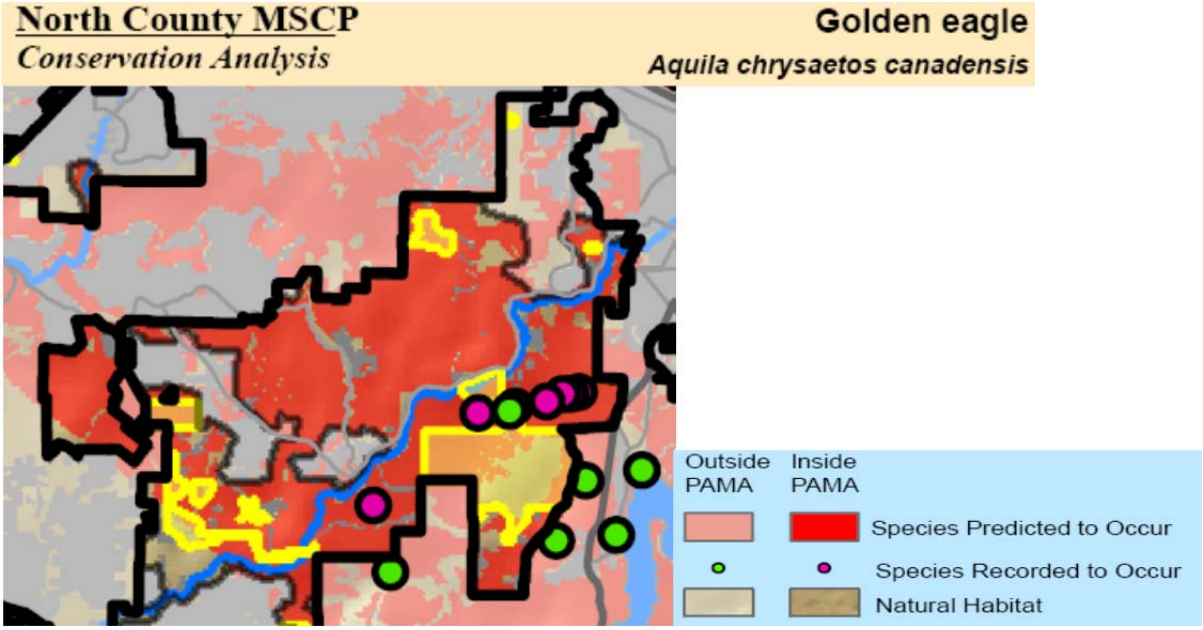
The map below makes it clear why Elfin Forest has been called “Gnatcatcher central”, with the largest concentration of gnatcatcher sightings (USFWS Threatened specie) in the MSCP planning area west of Interstate15. The #1 objective of the MSCP for this species is “Conserve 75 percent of the high quality coastal sage scrub and major population within the Elfin Forest Core Area” (page 315 of the North County MSCP Draft Conservation Analysis).



Further, under specific strategies, the same document recommends "Focus acquisitions, to the extent possible, in the Elfin Forest Core Area." This makes sense given that Elfin Forest is home to the largest stand of undisturbed coastal sage scrub in the PAMA west of Interstate15, as shown below.



Vegetation Communities
Within Pre-Approved Mitigation Areas (PAMA)



As can be seen above, Harmony Grove is home to one of the highest concentration of Stephens' kangaroo rat, a USFWS Endangered species. This area includes parcels proposed for high density clustered development, which is not part of the Village Development Pattern adopted by the residents for the valley. Another species of particular interest in Harmony Grove is the Golden Eagle, a USFWS-protected species. The map below shows its prevalence on our valley. These two animal species underscore the high importance of conserving open space in Harmony Grove.