Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Report
(Specific Plan 95-001; Rezone 95-008; Log 95-8-21)

Prepared for

County of San Diego
Department of Planning and Land Use
5201 Ruffin Road
San Diego, CA 92123

Prepared by

Ogden Environmental and Energy Services Co., Inc.
5510 Morehouse Drive
San Diego, California 92121
(619) 458-9044

August 1995

Project No. 210741000

DRAFT

County of San Diego

ROBERT R. COPPER
DIRECTOR (Acting)
(619) 694-2962

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE

5201 RUFFIN ROAD, SUITE B, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123-1666

INFORMATION (619) 694-2960

January 26, 1996

Shawna Anderson
Ogden Environmental
5510 Morehouse Drive
San Diego, CA 92121

Subject: Revisions to the Draft EIR, Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan

Dear Shawna:

As a part of your contract, based on public review letters and public hearing comments, below is a list of revisions that are required to the public review copy of the DEIR for Santa Fe Valley. The revisions are not in numerical order, but the pages where revisions are required are provide in each instance:

1. Page 4.2-45, 3rd paragraph - strike out the phrase ~~is expected to constitute mitigation for these impacts based on a subregional approach~~, and replace it with will constitute mitigation for these impacts based on the subarea plan being prepared for the Lake Hodges area. This is because of the requirement for the preparation of an NCCP subarea plan, the required preparation of a Habitat Management Plan, the dedication of more than 1,400 acres in undisturbed open space, the use of the D2 designator in area where no development is currently proposed, and the addition of 375 acres of buffer area between the development and the natural open space.

2. Table 4.13-2 needs to be updated with the information provided by the Solana Beach School District in their letter of comment on the DEIR, dated September 13, 1995.

3. Page 4.13-7, after the first full paragraph, add a new second paragraph: In addition, fire flow demands require the design and construction of major on-site and off-site pipelines and appurtenant facilities to provide the 2,500 gallons per minute stipulated by the serving fire district. A fire station will be constructed on-site, as will water storage facilities and associated pipelines to serve the needed infrastructure.

4. Page 4.13-25, after the last paragraph, add a new paragraph: In the future, Pipeline No. 5 is planned to distribute potable, filtered, or

unfiltered imported water. Olivenhain Municipal Water District is planning for the transmission and distribution of reclaimed water, but has no association with the San Diego County Water Authority Pipeline No. 5.

5. Page 4.13-27, first full paragraph, 3rd line, add: In order to meet this requirement, OMWD is planning a raw water storage project supplied from the SDCWA aqueduct with an associated water treatment plant to supply treated (potable) water to the District's customers. Delete the reference to the wastewater reservoir and water treatment plant.

6. Page 4.13-32, first full paragraph, revise: ~~During the dry season, the reclaimed water from the OMWD sewage treatment plant will be beneficially used for irrigating landscaped areas.~~ Add the following: A wastewater storage facility is proposed to be constructed in the Bernardo Lakes portion of the SPA which will be used for irrigating landscaped areas.

7. Page 4.1-12, revise the reference to a 12 acre commercial site to 53 acres of commercial and mixed use areas.

8. Page 4.5-3, correct the reference to Bernardo Center Drive from a four-lane major arterial to a six-lane major classification.

9. Page 4.5-4, correct to state that Rancho Bernardo Road is planned as a six-lane major classification between West Bernardo Drive and I-15.

10. Table 4.5-5a should be labelled as Planned Geometrics; Table 4.5-7 should be labelled Existing Geometrics; Table 4.5-8 should be labelled as Existing Geometrics.

11. Figure 4.13-4 should be corrected to show the proposed OMWD pump station to be located adjacent to the existing water treatment facility near the McCrink/Elynn property line intersection at Artesian Road.

12. Page 8-4, Table 8-1, and page 8-6 need to be corrected to show 53 acres of commercial/mixed uses, 1,024 acres of development, and 1,867 acres of open space on the 4S Ranch property.

13. The last paragraph on page 3-9 (continued on 3-10), revise as follows: ~~and~~ 3) areas on the southwestern portion of the SPA containing biological resources considered to be of maximum sensitivity, and most slopes over 25 percent; and, 4) other sensitive habitat areas throughout the SPA, including, but not limited to coastal sage scrub, riparian, and other sensitive habitats, that were identified as high or maximum sensitivity for biological resources in the Environmental Data Base report (Ogden 1993).

14. Table 4.5-36 needs to be corrected with the version that was included in the Specific Plan text.

15. Page 4.2-29, revise the 2nd full sentence as follows: Because the entire population of sticky dudlea is proposed for preservation, no significant ~~direct~~ impacts to this species would occur.

16. Page 4.2-30, last full sentence, revise: ~~While~~ Levels of impact to this species are above the County's guidelines for development projects (20

percent); however, the overall protection of a large number of plants in a contiguous open space system (OS-I) reduces the impact ~~to less than significant~~ to significant and mitigable.

17. Page 4.2-27, add the following sentence at the end of the first paragraph: This small reduction (0.5 acre) of coast live oak woodland is a significant and mitigable impact.

18. Page 4.2-53, under the heading Coast Live Oak Woodland, revise as follows: The single small (approximately 0.4 acre) stand of coast live oak woodland in Open Space II (McCrink Ranch tentative map) ~~shall be avoided through project redesign if feasible~~. would result in a significant and mitigable impact. Mitigation measures to reduce the significant impacts shall include avoiding the stand through project redesign.

19. Page 4.2-73, paragraph entitled Uplands, revise: All direct and indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats (coastal sage scrub ~~and coast live oak woodland~~) are significant.

20. Page 4.2-24, first paragraph, last sentence, revise: This impact is mitigated ~~through participation in~~ by qualifying for and obtaining a comprehensive 10(a) permit through the NCCP and subarea planning process.

21. Page ES-6, revise: ~~Participation in the NCCP and subarea planning process would mitigate impacts to the California gnatcatcher.~~ Replace with The County will participate in the NCCP and Subarea Planning Process and will prepare the Lake Hodges Subarea Plan. This will include coordination with the State and Federal resource agencies. This NCCP reference also occurs in scattered locations throughout the Summary of Impacts Section, and may also occur throughout the report.

22. Page 3-7, replace the second highlighted paragraph with the following: Allow for comprehensive environmental planning consistent with the goals and objectives of the State's Natural Communities conservation Program (NCCP), therefore qualifying the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area as a subarea for permits and authorization by the USFWS and CDFG under the NCCP, which requires no further permits.

23. Page 4.1-15, third full paragraph, revise as follows: Open Space I is planned to be preserved as permanent open space, to be undisturbed, with only the following uses allowed: the vehicular river crossing, recreational trails, a trail staging area, and essential public facilities. Subsequent environmental review for these facilities shall be required per CEQA; Open Space II is planned to act as a buffer between the core biological areas within Open Space I and development areas. In Open Space II, active and passive recreational uses are allowed. Open Space II will be permanent open space, but no open space easements are required for this area due to the active recreational uses proposed here.

24. Add a statement on page 4.2-5 that the San Diego thornmint and the Encinitas baccharis are also proposed for Federal listing.

25. Change the statement on page 4.2-45 as follows: ~~Losses of coastal sage scrub habitat onsite have been accepted by the resource agencies.~~ Losses of

DRAFT

coastal sage scrub habitat onsite have been accepted by the resource agencies contingent upon the development of an adequate subarea plan which includes the Santa Fe Valley SPA.

26. Revise the statement on page 4.2-50 as follows: with implementation of the mitigation measures in Section 4.2.4, all impacts to biological resources will be significant, and will be mitigated by the following measures:.

Please provide two copies of the revised versions of the DEIR at your convenience. If you have any questions about the revisions, please contact Gary Fink at 694-3016.

Dennis J. Verrilli

DENNIS J. VERRILLI, Chief
Advance Planning

DJV:GRF:wc

cc: Susie Porter, Advance Planning
Gary Fink, Resource Planning

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF FIGURES (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF FIGURES (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES (Continued)

LIST OF APPENDICES

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF PLATES

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan sets forth a comprehensive concept for the development of a residential community in the San Dieguito Community Plan area of northerncentral San Diego County. The Specific Plan provides policies and guidelines for development within a 3,163-acre multi-ownership Specific Plan Area (SPA). On December 16, 1987, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors amended the San Dieguito Community Plan to designate this area as General Plan Land Use Designation (21) Specific Plan Area. The Board of Supervisors directed the County staff to prepare the Specific Plan with property owners funding the planning effort. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65451 and the County's Regional Land Use Element, the (21) SPA General Plan Land Use Designation is applied to lands where a Specific Plan must be adopted by the Board of Supervisors prior to any further division of land.

The Specific Plan is intended to promote coordinated development of individual parcels consistent with policies designed to address open space, conservation, recreation, residential and commercial development, circulation and access, community facilities and infrastructure, development phasing and financing, as well as site planning and community design. To this end, the Specific Plan contains six elements that together establish the goals, policies, and implementation strategies of the Specific Plan and represent the vision for ultimate buildout of the Santa Fe Valley SPA as a residential community. The six elements are Conservation and Open Space, Land Use, Circulation, Public Facilities, Community Design, and Facilities Financing.

The Land Use Element establishes the proposed land uses in the SPA. Approximately 1,404 acres of land would be preserved as undisturbed permanent open space. Another approximate 374 acres of land would be developed mainly as golf course, and to act as a buffer between the more sensitive natural open space areas and the more intensive urban development proposed for the remainder of the site. The Specific Plan proposes development of up to 1,200 residential dwelling units with variable densities from 1 dwelling unit per 6 acres and larger to 4 dwelling units per acre. A 18-hole links-style championship golf course with driving range and clubhouse, a resort-hotel, a 9-hole executive golf course, a congregate care facility, a neighborhood commercial center,

community facilities, and supporting infrastructure are also proposed as part of the Specific Plan.

ES.2 Environmental Analysis

Table ES-1 provides a summary of project impacts and recommended mitigation measures for the proposed Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan. As indicated in Table ES-1, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any unmitigable impacts. If all the mitigation measures recommended in this Draft EIR are implemented, the significant environmental impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, visual quality/aesthetics, traffic/circulation, noise, air quality, hydrology/water quality, geology/seismicity/soils, and paleontological resources can be eliminated.

Based on the analysis in this EIR, the following issue areas were determined not to have significant effects on the environment and therefore required no mitigation: land use, population/demographics, and socioeconomics. Additionally, implementation of the proposed project would result in certain beneficial socioeconomic effects to employment, regional average personal income, and regional economic activity.

ES.3 Alternatives

Three alternatives to the proposed project are analyzed in this EIR: 1) Alternative A – Clustered Alternative with Ancillary Uses, 2) Alternative B – Clustered Alternative with Reduced Ancillary Uses, and 3) the No Project Alternative.

Under Alternative A, development would not be allowed in any areas of the SPA having maximum and high environmental sensitivity. The remaining areas of the SPA would be developed at various residential densities with ancillary uses. Ancillary uses would include an 18-hole golf course, a resort, a neighborhood commercial area, a congregate care facility, an alternate bridge connecting the SPA to Del Dios Highway, and community facilities similar to those included in the proposed project. Natural open space would total approximately 1,973 acres of land.

Under Alternative B, development would not be allowed in any areas of the SPA having maximum and high environmental sensitivity. The remaining areas of the SPA would be developed at various residential densities. However, Alternative B does not include the

golf course, resort, bridge, or the congregate care facility. Ancillary uses would be limited to a smaller commercial area and community facilities. Natural open space would total approximately 1,973 acres of land.

Under the No Project Alternative, no Specific Plan would be adopted and land would be developed under existing entitlements of one dwelling unit per legal lot. Existing agricultural fields, scattered homes, and other land uses would remain.

Alternative A, Alternative B, and the No Project Alternative are discussed in further detail in Section 9.0 of this EIR.

Table ES-1

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
LAND USE	No significant land use impacts were identified.	No mitigation is required.	–
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	The project would impact a total of 16 acres of wetland habitat 0.9 acres of unvegetated waters of the U.S.	Wetland impacts shall be avoided through project redesign if feasible, application of the "D2" designator, and the wetland permitting process. Site-specific wetland delineation studies shall be prepared, and unavoidable impacts shall be mitigated through creation and enhancement of wetland habitat. Wetland vegetated buffers shall be established.	Not significant.
	The project would directly impact vernal pools in the northwestern portion of the SPA, and potentially in the southwestern portion of the SPA.	Vernal pools shall be preserved or mitigated by acquisition and preservation in open space on or offsite.	Not significant.
	Indirect wetland impacts would occur including decreased water quality, fugitive dust emissions, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, and degradation of habitat due to increased human access.	A drainage control plan shall be prepared and appropriate erosion control measures shall be implemented; construction activities adjacent to wetlands shall occur during the dry season where feasible; fueling zones shall be established at least 50 feet from wetlands and drainages; standard dust control procedures shall be used; access trails shall be limited to existing roads and trails.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)	The project would impact a total of 344 acres of sensitive upland habitats including 323 acres of coastal sage scrub.	The County and Santa Fe Valley property owners are participating in the NCCP and subarea planning process. The open space design for Santa Fe Valley was formulated through negotiations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game and is anticipated to satisfy the requirements for a habitat conservation plan and a Section 10 (a) permit for the Santa Fe Valley SPA. This process would mitigate impacts to sensitive upland species. It is also recommended that disturbed areas be restored with upland habitat. Direct impacts to upland habitat shall be avoided to the extent possible.	Not significant.
	Indirect impacts to Group 1 plant species would occur including the production of fugitive dust emissions, soil erosion on slopes, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, and increases in the moisture regime. If the presence of Encinitas baccharis or San Diego thorn-mint is verified during preconstruction surveys, direct significant impacts could occur.	Pre-construction field surveys shall be conducted prior to development. Unavoidable losses to sensitive plant species shall be mitigated by acquiring and preserving offsite populations.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)	Significant direct and indirect impacts may occur to San Diego fairy shrimp in the southwestern vernal pools.	Future development shall be located away from the southwestern vernal pool complex through the "D2" designator process. Pre-construction surveys shall be conducted for presence of fairy shrimp; impacts to vernal pools shall be mitigated through preservation of offsite pools.	Not significant.
	Golden eagle would be impacted by the incremental loss of foraging habitat and potential indirect impacts to a nesting site. This is considered a cumulatively significant impact.	Participation in the NCCP and subarea planning process will mitigate for cumulative significant impacts to golden eagle.	Not significant.
	California gnatcatchers would also be directly impacted, and indirectly impacted from the reduction of habitat linkages.	Lands containing coastal sage scrub or represent critical linkages in areas associated with the "D2" designator shall be considered for public acquisition. The "D2" designator shall be used to avoid fragmentation of habitat. Participation in the NCCP and subarea planning process would mitigate impacts to the California gnatcatcher. The open space design for the Santa Fe Valley SPA, in conjunction with surrounding open space plans (i.e., 4S Ranch and Rancho Cielo) is expected to satisfy the requirement for a Section 10(a) permit for the "take" of gnatcatchers.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)	Adverse impacts to wildlife movement corridors would occur because of the loss of habitat within the corridor, constricted segments, interference from humans, and predators, lack of cover, and incompatible adjacent land uses.	Adverse impacts should be reduced by restoration of habitat previously disturbed within areas identified as natural open space. Utilize the "D2" designator to provide a wider, more contiguous wildlife corridor. Allow only passive recreation within buffer to the San Dieguito River Valley. Lighting of the bridge over the San Dieguito River should be minimized.	Not significant.
CULTURAL RESOURCES	Thirty (30) archaeology sites would be directly impacted. Some sites have not been tested for importance under CEQA, and once tested, may not be significant.	All tested or unevaluated sites must be tested to determine site importance. Mitigation techniques such as site avoidance, capping preceded by limited data recovery, or a combination shall be used.	Not significant.
VISUAL QUALITY/ AESTHETICS	Site-specific visual impacts to natural open space areas would be significant. Landform alteration would occur on steep slopes, in areas within the viewshed of an identified scenic highway (i.e., Del Dios Highway), and in areas visible to a large number of people. The project would result in cut/fill slopes in excess of 15 feet in height, vegetation removal, and substantial grading in areas of high landform and visual quality. Implementation of the proposed "D1" and "D3" designators would reduce visual impacts.	Site-specific contour grading, revegetation of slopes, terraced foundations, vegetation screening of large cut/fill slopes shall be used. Compliance with "D1" designator for hillsides and ridgelines and "D3" designator for community design guidelines is required.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
TRAFFIC/ CIRCULATION	The project would contribute to an already congested regional circulation system. Specifically, the project would impact the following segments, and intersections:		Not significant.
	- Del Dios Highway from the project entrance to El Camino del Norte at the Phase I West development phase;	Widening of Del Dios Highway and Paseo Delicias to accommodate more traffic and improve LOS is inconsistent with the San Dieguito Community Plan because of disruption to the community's rural character.	
	- Paseo Delicias between El Camino del Norte and Via de la Valle at project buildout;		
	- Camino del Norte between West Bernardo Drive and I-15 at project buildout;	The project shall contribute its fair share to fund intersection improvements at Camino del Norte and Bernardo Center Drive.	
	- Camino del Norte southbound ramp to I-15 at the Phase II development phase; and	The project shall contribute its fair share to fund interchange improvements at the Camino del Norte ramps at I-15.	
	- Camino del Norte northbound ramp to I-15 at project buildout.		
	- Rancho Bernardo Road between West Bernardo Drive and I-15 at project buildout.	The project shall contribute its fair share to fund traffic improvements on Rancho Bernardo Road between West Bernardo Drive and I-15.	

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
NOISE	Commercial uses located on the neighborhood commercial site may impact proposed residences and the group care facility. Noise from the proposed sewage treatment plant may impact nearby residential areas to the west and south of the site.	Site-specific noise analyses will be necessary for each commercial land use as they are proposed to ensure compliance with the County noise ordinance. If the businesses are designed and operated in compliance with the County noise ordinance, these noise impacts would be fully mitigated. A site-specific noise analysis is required for the sewage treatment plant in compliance with the County noise ordinance.	Not significant.
AIR QUALITY	Exhaust emissions from construction activities would be significant, but temporary. Vehicle emissions would not contribute a significant amount to the region; although CO emission standards would be slightly exceeded.	Emissions from construction activities are localized and short-term, and can therefore be mitigated using appropriate control measures for NO_X, CO, and PM_{10} emissions. This shall be accomplished through minimization of simultaneous operation of multiple construction equipment, using phased grading and low pollutant-emitting construction equipment, and by using water sprinklers or other appropriate soil stabilization techniques. The project proponents shall promote use of alternative transportation methods such as shuttle services, rideshare opportunities, and use of a trail system.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
HYDROLOGY/ WATER QUALITY	Flooding impacts associated with development of the SPA would be significant because of the potential changes in floodway channel geometry and associated floodway channel capacity resulting from a proposed paved trail within the San Dieguito River Valley floodway.	The paved trail shall be relocated outside of the floodway channel of the San Dieguito River Valley.	Not significant.
	The project would result in increased surface run-off.	Drainage systems for each proposed development shall be designed in accordance with the recommendations of site-specific drainage studies, and County DPW Flood Control Section. Drainage channels shall be unlined where feasible to allow for infiltration. Energy dissipaters shall be constructed wherever necessary. Permeable surfaces shall be used where feasible. Ground cover shall be used in conjunction with low-pressure sprinkler systems on graded slopes. Drainage facilities shall be maintained regularly.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
HYDROLOGY/ WATER QUALITY (CONTINUED)	The project would result in erosion and sedimentation impacts.	Exposed soil shall be covered with plastic sheeting during inclement weather. Hay bales, berms, and other devices shall be used to help control sedimentation during grading. Introduced slopes shall be seeded immediately following grading. Construction and grading shall be avoided during periods of inclement weather. Temporary sedimentation/desilting basins shall be constructed where needed.	Not significant.
	The project would result in impacts to surface and ground water quality.	Source control practices to reduce the amount and likelihood of contaminants shall be implemented. A spill prevention and control plan shall be developed. TDS levels shall be monitored and controlled. Final graveling plans shall include measures to reduce erosion and sedimentation.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
GEOLOGY/ SEISMICITY/ SOILS	Impacts on project components proposed for construction in areas underlain by potentially liquefiable alluvium would be significant.	Comprehensive, development-specific geotechnical evaluations are required for each proposed subdivision. Recommendations provided in these evaluations shall be reviewed and approved by the County prior to incorporation into the final grading and construction plans. Liquefaction-prone areas shall be identified as part of the site-specific geotechnical evaluations. For thinner deposits, loose and unconsolidated soils shall be removed and replaced with properly compacted fill soils. For thicker deposits, *in situ* densification techniques shall be implemented.	Not significant.
	Impacts caused by landslides would be significant.	Site-specific studies shall be performed to further identify possible landslide masses. Slide masses may then be removed or stabilized. Cut/fill slopes shall be constructed according to the Uniform Building Code.	Not significant.
	The project could result in impacts due to soil erosion, expansion, or contraction.	The project shall be required to use engineering techniques to reduce these hazards as outlined in Section 4.9 of the EIR.	Not significant.

Table ES-1 (Continued)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN

Issue Area	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Impact
PALEON-TOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Development proposed in certain areas of the SPA could result in impacts to paleontological resources that may exist in the Mission Valley and Delmar Formations.	Direct project impacts to paleontological resources, if recovered during construction activities, shall be mitigated by onsite monitoring and recovery. A qualified paleontological monitor shall be onsite during subject grading operations.	Not significant.
POPULATION/ DEMO-GRAPHICS	No significant population/ demographic impacts were identified.	No mitigation is required.	-
SOCIOECO-NOMICS	No significant socioeconomic impacts were identified.	No mitigation is required.	-
PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES	The proposed 1.5-acre fire station is not adequate in size according to the Rancho Santa Fe Fire District. No other significant impacts to public services and utilities would occur.	Discretionary development approvals shall not be granted until the size, timing, and funding of a fire station on the SPA is accepted by the District.	Not significant

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

SECTION 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The purpose of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform the public and decision makers about the nature and scope of the proposed project, the type and extent of expected environmental impacts associated with the proposed project, mitigation measures proposed to reduce such impacts, project alternatives, and discretionary actions and permits required for project approval. This EIR has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Section 2100 et. seq.) and the state CEQA Guidelines as amended June 1986 (California Administrative Code Section 15000 et. seq.), and as subsequently updated. This document contains all EIR sections mandated by CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. Environmental assessment in this document includes all general issue areas identified during public scoping as having potentially significant impacts.

1.2 BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

This Draft EIR has been prepared pursuant to the CEQA environmental review process. The County of San Diego is the Lead Agency for the project and will be responsible for discretionary actions taken to implement the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan. This Draft EIR will be available for review by the public and agencies for a period of 45 days. Comments on the Draft EIR are invited and may be submitted to the County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use, 5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B, San Diego, CA 92123-1666. The Planning Department will consider all written comments on the Draft EIR before making recommendations to the County's Planning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors regarding the extent and nature of the environmental impacts of the proposed project.

In order to provide the County of San Diego and the public with a thorough analysis of options, this EIR analyzes the proposed project which is described in detail in Section 3.0, Project Description. In summary, the proposed project is a specific plan for the development of 1,200 residential dwelling units and ancillary uses on 3,163 acres of multi-owned land. Three project alternatives are also evaluated in this EIR which include the No Project Alternative, as required by CEQA, and two clustered development plan alternatives.

In addition, four individual development projects are currently proposed in the planning area. Landowners have submitted Tentative Maps and/or Major Use Permits for these properties which include the Balcor Tentative Map; the McCrink Ranch Tentative Map; the Bernardo Lakes Tentative Map; and the Seaton Tentative Map. Specific details about the number of units proposed, the Tentative Map and/or Major Use Permit numbers, and other relevant information are provided in Section 3, Project Description.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15082, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) describing the County's intent to prepare an EIR for the proposed Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area (SPA) project was distributed on October 4, 1994. The NOP process is intended to foster informed discourse among public agencies in order to determine the scope of the EIR analysis. This EIR focuses on the following 13 potentially significant environmental issues: land use, biological resources, cultural resources, visual quality/aesthetics, traffic/circulation, noise, air quality, hydrology/water quality, geology/seismicity/soils, paleontological resources, population/demographics, socioeconomics, and public services and utilities.

The Draft EIR for the Santa Fe Valley SPA provides the basis for the County of San Diego to make an informed decision regarding the proposed project. These decisions include:

- Which alternative would provide the most efficient and practicable implementation of the proposed project such that the project proponents would be able to effectuate the project objectives.

- Which alternative, including the "No Project Alternative", would result in the minimum environmental impacts, after incorporating the effects of the proposed mitigation.

- What specific mitigation measures will be recommended to avoid or minimize the identified significant environmental impacts resulting from the selected alternative.

The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use will gather public input and will consider recommendations when preparing the Final EIR on the project to the Planning Commission and County Board of Supervisors. The County Board of Supervisors must certify the Final EIR as complete and in compliance with CEQA before

approving or disapproving the project. Public input is encouraged at all public hearings. In the final review of the project plan, environmental considerations as well as economic factors and social factors will be weighed to determine the most appropriate form of development.

1.3 Mitigation Monitoring Framework

General guidelines for a monitoring and reporting program for the proposed Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan are included as part of this Draft EIR in response to AB 3180; California Public Resources Code Section 21081.6. To implement and monitor the mitigation measures contained in this EIR, a mitigation monitoring program (MMP) is required as a condition of approval of the Specific Plan. The MMP is designed to ensure compliance with adopted mitigation measures and to verify that the required mitigation measures are effective at reducing identified significant impacts. The MMP will be applied to those mitigation measures adopted by County decision makers as conditions of project approval. The MMP is available for review at the County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use, located at 5201 Ruffin Road in San Diego, California.

1.4 Document Organization

This Draft EIR is organized as follows: Executive Summary, which briefly describes the project and provides a summary of potentially significant impacts; Section 1, Introduction, contains a brief project description and background to the project, and a discussion regarding the mitigation monitoring framework; Section 2, Environmental Setting, summarizes the existing environmental characteristics of the project area; Section 3, Project Description, provides a detailed description of the project location, characteristics, background, and objectives, and outlines the steps for Specific Plan implementation, including the required discretionary actions; and Section 4 contains the environmental analysis of project-specific effects. Unavoidable significant environmental effects are discussed in Section 5; significant irreversible environmental changes are discussed in Section 6; growth inducement and cumulative impacts are discussed in Sections 7 and 8, respectively; Section 9 provides an evaluation of feasible alternatives to the proposed project; Section 10 is a discussion on effects not found to be significant; Section 11 provides a list of individuals and agencies contacted; Section 12 provides a list of references; and certification of accuracy and qualifications are presented in Section 13.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

SECTION 2
ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.1 REGIONAL AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.1.1 Surrounding Setting

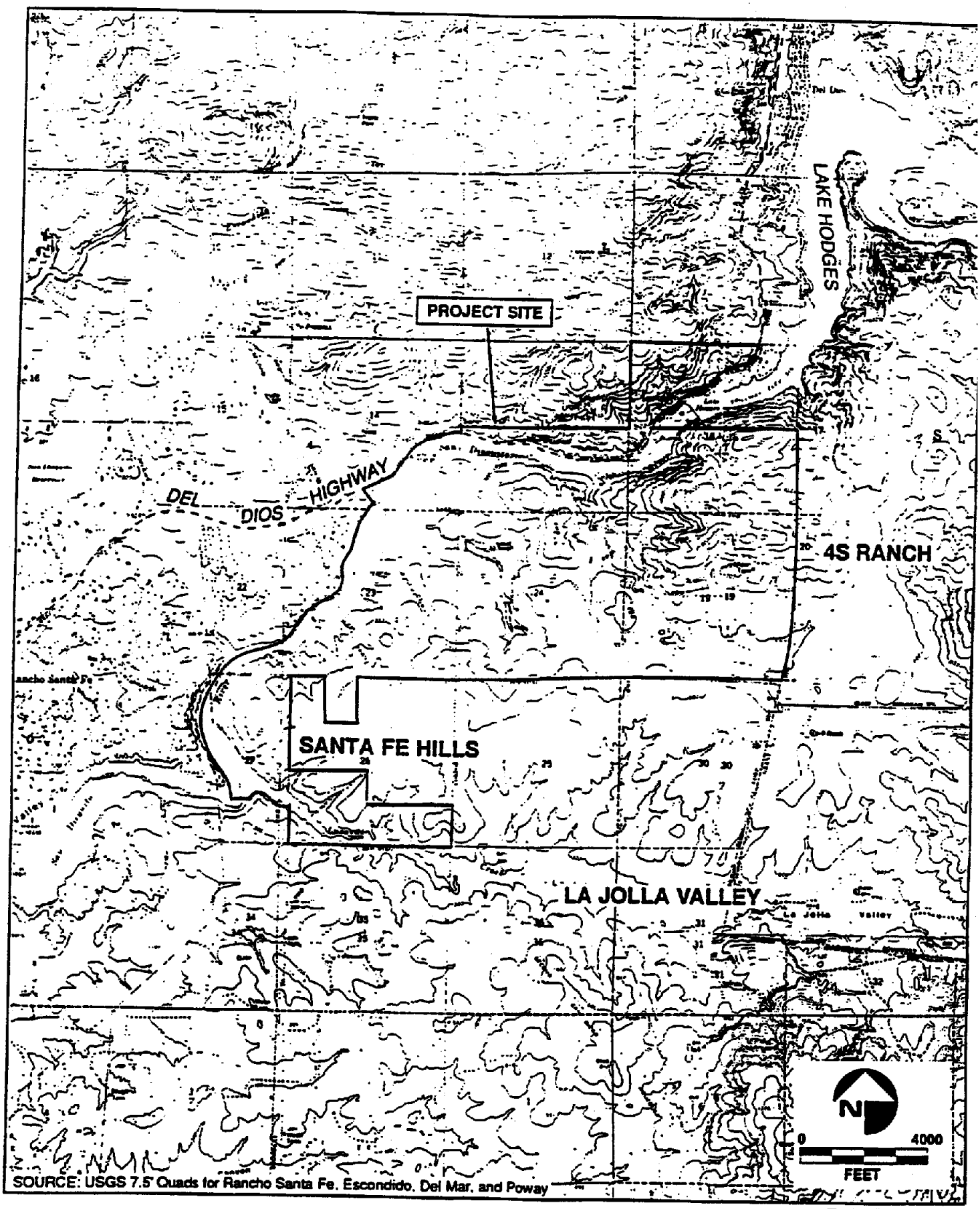
The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area (SPA) is 3,163 acres in size located in western San Diego County, California approximately 2 1/2 miles west of Interstate 15 and immediately south of the western extension of Lake Hodges as shown in Figure 2-1, and Figures 3-1 and 3-2 in Section 3.0, Project Description.

Santa Fe Valley is located between the communities of Rancho Santa Fe and Fairbanks Ranch to the west and Rancho Peñasquitos and Rancho Bernardo to the east. Access to Santa Fe Valley is from the northeast and west via Interstate 15 and Del Dios Highway. Del Dios Highway parallels the San Dieguito River for about 2 miles downstream from the dam at Lake Hodges and generally forms the majority of the northern and western boundary of the site. The southern boundary of Santa Fe Valley is formed by the County's and City of San Diego's jurisdictional boundary.

The existing and proposed developments surrounding Santa Fe Valley are generally characterized by estate and large-lot, high-amenity residential communities. Land immediately to the south and east of Santa Fe Valley is generally undeveloped, but planned for future development. The mostly undeveloped 4S Ranch Specific Pan Area forms Santa Fe Valley's eastern boundary. The partially developed 4S Business Park is further to the east. Rural residential development is located in the Santa Fe Hills community on the southern boundary of Santa Fe Valley. Rancho Cielo SPA is located across the San Dieguito River Valley north of Santa Fe Valley. The planned but currently undeveloped Black Mountain Ranch which is within the City of San Diego's designated North City Future Urbanizing Area is located to the south of Santa Fe Valley.

2.1.2 Onsite Characteristics

With the exception of a few scattered residences and some agricultural development, the site is generally undeveloped. The agricultural operations are limited primarily to the more



SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Quads for Rancho Santa Fe, Escondido, Del Mar, and Poway

OGDEN

Environmental Setting

FIGURE 2-1

level areas in the central portion of the site. An SDG&E electrical transmission corridor, and the San Diego County Water Authority's Second Aqueduct pipeline easement run through the project in a northwest to southeast direction.

Vegetation communities onsite include coastal sage scrub, chaparral, coyote bush scrub, native and non-native grasslands, riparian forests, riparian scrub, freshwater marsh, coast live oak woodland and Eucalyptus woodland, and wetlands. Other habitat communities include rock outcrops, vernal pools, and disturbed areas. The San Dieguito River Valley and Lusardi Creek are considered significant wildlife corridors through this area.

Site topography is characterized by gently rolling hillsides in the central and southern portions of the site and steep, rugged canyons and ridges in the northeastern portion of the site where topographic relief is greatest. Slopes in the northeastern portion of the site generally range from 25 percent to greater than 50 percent. Elevations range from approximately 80 feet above mean sea level (MSL) at the confluence of Lusardi and San Dieguito Creeks to approximately 1,380 feet above MSL in the hills above the Lake Hodges dam in the northeastern portion of the site.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

SECTION 3
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Article 9 of the State CEQA Guidelines mandates that all environmental impact reports (EIRs) must contain a project description. In accord with CEQA Guidelines section 15124, the project description for the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area EIR includes all appropriate graphics and a detailed discussion of the following:

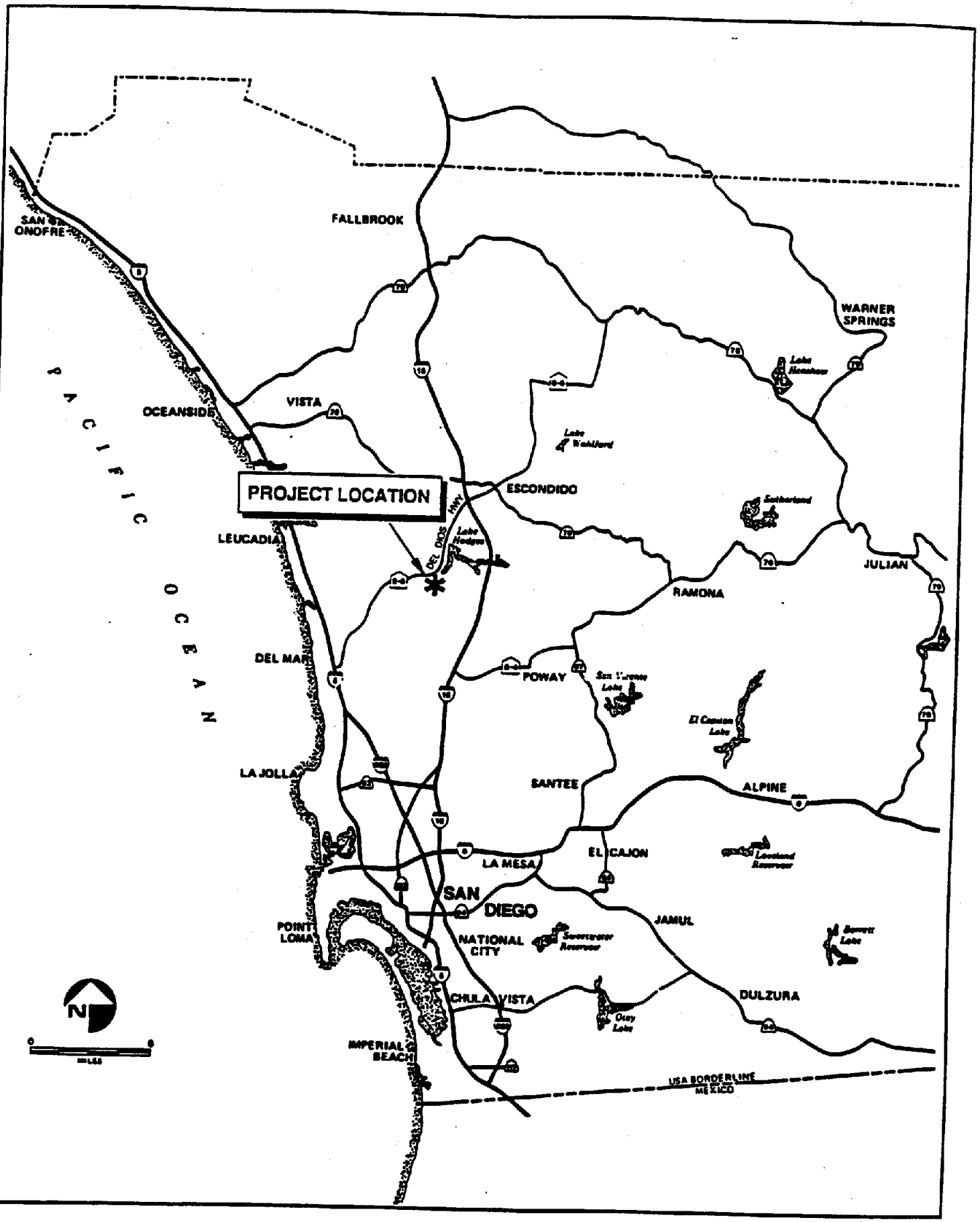
Project Location and Boundaries
Project Background
Project Objectives
Project Characteristics
- Land Use Plan
- Environmental Characteristics
- Specific Plan Implementation
- Tentative Map Proposals
- Supporting Public Services/Utilities

Intended Uses of This Environmental Impact Report
- Decision Making Agencies
- Discretionary Measures
- Permitting Requirements

3.1 LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area (SPA) is part of the San Dieguito Community Planning Area in northern San Diego County. The SPA is approximately 2 1/2 miles west of Interstate 15, approximately 5 miles east of Interstate 5, and generally south of and adjacent to Del Dios Highway and north of Artesian Road (see Figure 3-1) in the unincorporated portion of San Diego County.

The Santa Fe Valley SPA encompasses approximately 3,163 acres of land (see Figure 3-2) along the northern border of the City of San Diego. The areas to the north, east, and south of the SPA are currently undeveloped with the exception of scattered rural development and grazing land. The SPA is located in an area of transition from undeveloped, mainly agricultural uses, to future development under several County and City of San Diego planning documents approved for the area.

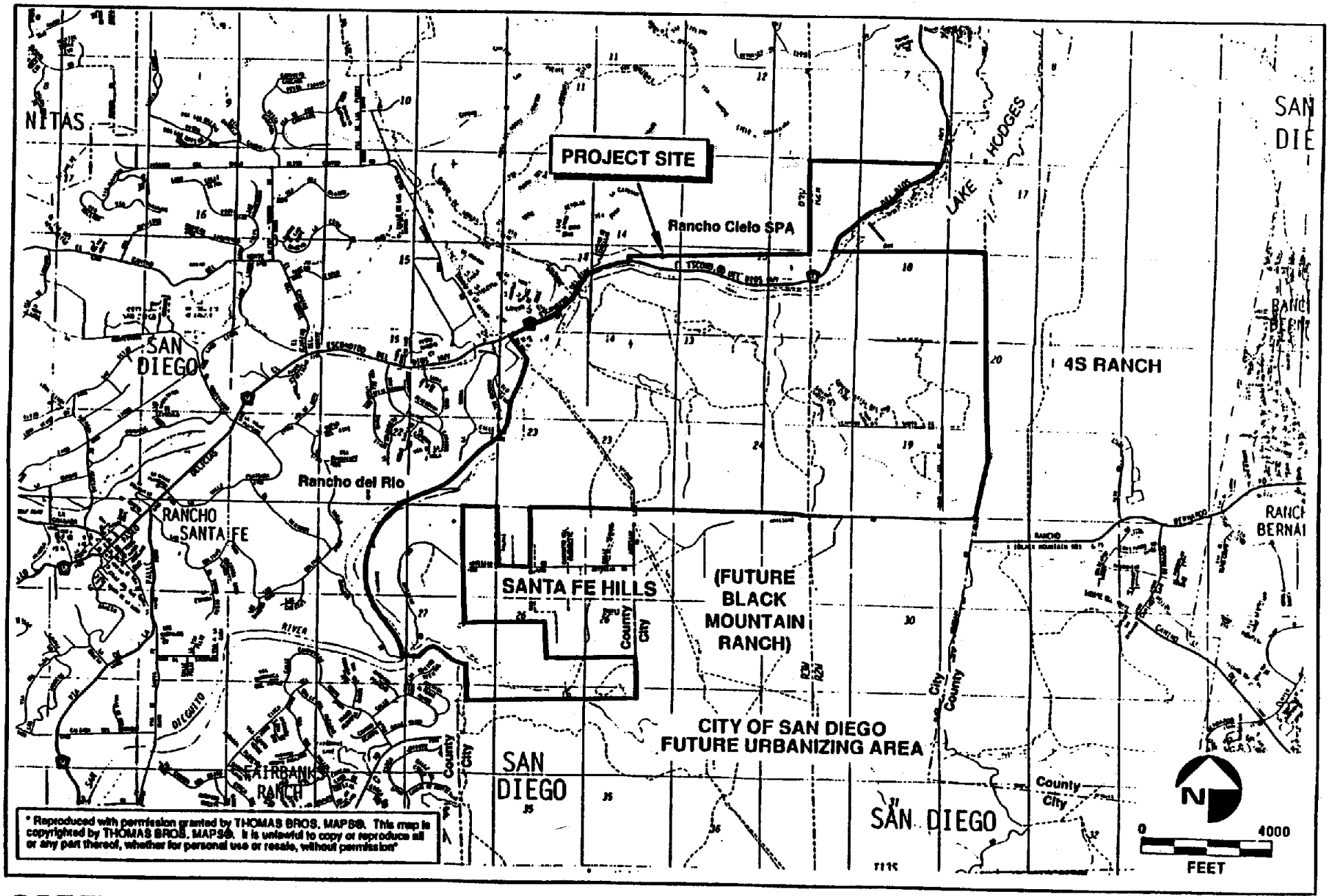


OGDEN

Regional Location of Project Site

FIGURE

3-1



OGDEN

Vicinity Map

FIGURE

3-2

The northern boundary of the SPA is formed by the western end of Lake Hodges and the San Dieguito River. The southern boundary is partially formed by the City/County jurisdictional boundary. The approved Rancho Cielo SPA (future development) is to the north of Santa Fe Valley and the existing Fairbanks Ranch community is to the southwest. The communities of Rancho del Rio and Rancho Santa Fe are located west of Santa Fe Valley, with the 4S Ranch Specific Plan Area and 4S Business Park to the east. The City of San Diego's Rancho Bernardo community is located further east of Santa Fe Valley. Santa Fe Valley surrounds the partially developed Santa Fe Hills community on three sides. Santa Fe Hills is located adjacent to Lusardi Creek and north of the planned Black Mountain Ranch project. The Black Mountain Ranch project is within the City of San Diego's North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA), south of Santa Fe Valley.

Access to Santa Fe Valley is from the northeast and east via Interstate 15 to Rancho Bernardo/Artesian Road and Del Dios Highway. Del Dios Highway parallels the San Dieguito River for approximately two miles downstream from the Lake Hodges Dam. Rancho Bernardo/Artesian Road exists to the south and east of the project site.

3.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Land use planning and development in the unincorporated areas of the county are regulated by the San Diego County General Plan. The General Plan for the county is a long-term comprehensive plan for the physical development of the unincorporated land. The plan consists of maps and text setting forth land use planning objectives, policies, and goals for San Diego County. The General Plan consists of a series of required and optional elements. The elements of the General Plan provide the basic structure by which community and subregional plans are organized. The County General Plan geographically divides unincorporated county lands into communities and subregional areas for which more localized plans are adopted. Specific plan areas are adopted under the auspices of community and subregional plans pursuant to California Government Code Section 65450. The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area is one of several SPAs within San Diego County's San Dieguito Community Plan area. Generally, specific plans provide a more flexible method of implementing the community plan objectives than zoning regulations. This is especially important when a particular area contains sensitive resources or requires strategies for the provision and financing of infrastructure improvements such

as the Santa Fe Valley SPA proposal. The purpose of the Specific Plan Area designation therefore, is to encourage comprehensive land planning of large contiguous areas.

In 1987, the County amended the San Dieguito Community Plan to designate the Santa Fe Valley area as (21) Specific Plan Area. This action was primarily in recognition of several important considerations. These considerations included: the presence of sensitive environmental and visual resources; the proposed San Dieguito River Regional Open Space Park; multiple ownership patterns; lack of public services and facilities; adjacent community concerns for comprehensive planning, compatible land use, and coordinated development; and encroaching urbanization from the east and south.

Pursuant to the County's Land Use Element, the (21) SPA General Plan land use designation is applied to lands where a Specific Plan must be adopted by the Board of Supervisors prior to any further division of land. The purpose of the (21) SPA General Plan land use designation is to initiate a planning framework for a comprehensive Specific Plan text and map for the Santa Fe Valley SPA consistent with the objectives and policies established by the San Dieguito Community Plan and the County of San Diego's General Plan. The Specific Plan is intended to promote coordinated development of individual parcels consistent with policies designed to address open space and conservation, land use, circulation, community facilities, infrastructure, facility phasing and financing, as well as site planning and design guidelines.

Prior to establishing the General Plan land use category (21) Specific Planning Area designation to Santa Fe Valley, the San Dieguito Community Plan designated the area for (17) Estate Residential land use on the more level portion of the Santa Fe Valley, (18) Multiple Rural Residential land use for the steeper sloped areas, and (24) Impact Sensitive land uses for the floodplains and areas within the San Dieguito River Valley. These designations were replaced with the SPA designation as described above.

The preparation of a Specific Plan for the Santa Fe Valley SPA was authorized by the Board of Supervisors on December 18, 1991. This authorization was subsequent to adoption of a specific planning process which was developed based on extensive coordination with property owners, the San Dieguito Planning Group, adjacent communities, and interested organizations and individuals. Development of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan included extensive public participation and community involvement.

The Santa Fe Valley SPA planning process consists of four phases which are discussed below.

- Phase 1: Existing Conditions - This phase consisted of an environmental and planning inventory analysis, in which relevant data was collected, mapped, and evaluated. The resulting environmental data base for the entire SPA was compiled consisting of detailed mapping of biological, paleontological and cultural resources, geology/geotechnical characteristics, viewshed analysis, and other environmental constraints. Based on this information, a composite environmental constraints analysis was performed and an Existing Environmental Conditions Report was prepared which identified the areas that were either potentially suitable or unsuitable for development in Santa Fe Valley (Ogden 1993). The determination of which lands are suitable for development was primarily focused on environmental considerations. Other reports were prepared as part of this initial phase, including the Santa Fe Valley Market Study. Extensive information was also collected for public facility, infrastructure, and community support systems; transportation; and economic factors.

- Phase 2: Specific Plan Alternatives - The second phase of the Specific Plan preparation process explored alternative land use, circulation, and infrastructure alternatives with input from property owners, the San Dieguito Planning Group, adjacent communities, resource agencies, and various governmental agencies and special districts. A number of alternative plans were developed and environmental impacts of each alternative were evaluated. This process culminated in the preparation of a preferred Specific Plan.

- Phase 3: Preferred Specific Plan - In the third phase, the preferred Specific Plan was refined to produce a draft Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan text and map for public review. The California Department of Fish and Game and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service were consulted through a series of meetings to evaluate consistency of the draft Specific Plan with applicable regional open space and conservation programs. Phase 3 also involved the preparation of this draft EIR for public review in order to assess the potential environmental impacts from the proposed project, and to identify mitigation measures.

- Phase 4: Specific Plan Adoption - Phase four will consist of the preparation of the final Specific Plan by further refining the Specific Plan text, and preparation of the final EIR including responding to comments. This phase will be completed when the Board of Supervisors adopts the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan and certifies the EIR.

3.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

An EIR must describe a range of alternatives to the proposed project, or to its location, that could feasibly attain the project's basic objectives. Therefore, a statement of project objectives delineated in the Specific Plan must be included in the project description.

The goal of the Specific Plan is to supply the necessary planning, engineering, and financing framework to support the ultimate buildout of all planned land uses for the Specific Plan Area. The following project objectives of the proposed Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan are summarized as follows:

- Provide for land uses that establish a sense of community in Santa Fe Valley consistent with the character of adjoining existing and planned communities.

- Allow for comprehensive environmental planning consistent with the goals and objectives of the State's Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP), therefore qualifying the Specific Plan project for permitting authority under the 4(d) rule or as a subarea under the NCCP which requires no further permit.

- Provide economic feasibility for each property owner by maintaining an economic use of individual ownerships.

- Implement the San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan, by providing regional trails, a staging area, and site planning guidelines.

- Provide for public facilities and services at the time of need concurrent with development in a manner that ensures adequate provision of essential facilities and services.

- Provide for a range of residential land uses to allow for a gradual residential development consistent with the present and future demand for housing in the region.

- Provide recreational and educational opportunities accessibile by public roads and trails in close proximity to residential areas.

- Establish conservation and open space areas to maintain and enhance existing sensitive environmental and cultural resources.

- Provide for convenient commercial land uses in the proximity of residential land uses to reduce overall vehicular travel demand.

In order to accomplish the project objectives, issuance of the following discretionary permits would be required:

- Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors adoption of the Specific Plan and Certification of this EIR

- County approval of Resource Protection Plans and Site Plans

- Approval of applicable Tentative Maps, Major Use and Minor Use Permits, Site Plans and Administrative Permits

- Approval of Grading Permits

- Applicable resource agency permits (e.g., Section 404, Section 7 consultation, 401 Water Quality Certification, 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement, Section 2080 Permit).

For a more detailed discussion of discretionary permits, refer to Sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.3 of this EIR.

3.4 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

3.4.1 Land Use Plan

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan outlines general policies and implementing measures to allow future development within the SPA consistent with the San Dieguito Community Plan. The Specific Plan proposes to accommodate a maximum of 1,200 residential dwelling units at varying densities throughout the SPA. The residential development is proposed to encompass land primarily consisting of slopes having less than 15 percent grade. The plan also proposes other amenities intended to serve the community such as schools, recreational facilities, and commercial areas. The distribution of land use is based upon the location of environmental, visual and cultural resources, accessibility, and major physical features. Figure 3-3 depicts the proposed land use plan for the Santa Fe Valley SPA. Tentative map subdivision proposals for development of the SPA under the Specific Plan are described in Section 3.4.4.

The Specific Plan establishes the framework for the future development of the Santa Fe Valley SPA through six implementation elements: Conservation and Open Space, Land Use, Circulation, Public Facilities, Facilities Financing, and Community Design. The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan also establishes regulatory provisions, development phasing strategies, and implementation procedures. These components will comprise the Specific Plan criteria under which future residential development proposals will be evaluated. The following is a summary of the above referenced planning framework.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element identifies the sensitive environmental, cultural, and visual resources that exist in the SPA and was established with the intent of protecting and maintaining all sensitive lands designated as open space within the Santa Fe Valley SPA. The Conservation and Open Space plan identifies two open space categories. In the Specific Plan, land designated as Open Space I would be preserved as permanent open space. Land designated as Open Space II would allow active and passive recreational uses. Figure 3-3 illustrates the open space categories of the Specific Plan.

The environmentally sensitive lands proposed onsite to be conserved as permanent open space under Open Space I (OS-I) include: 1) areas along the San Dieguito River Valley that

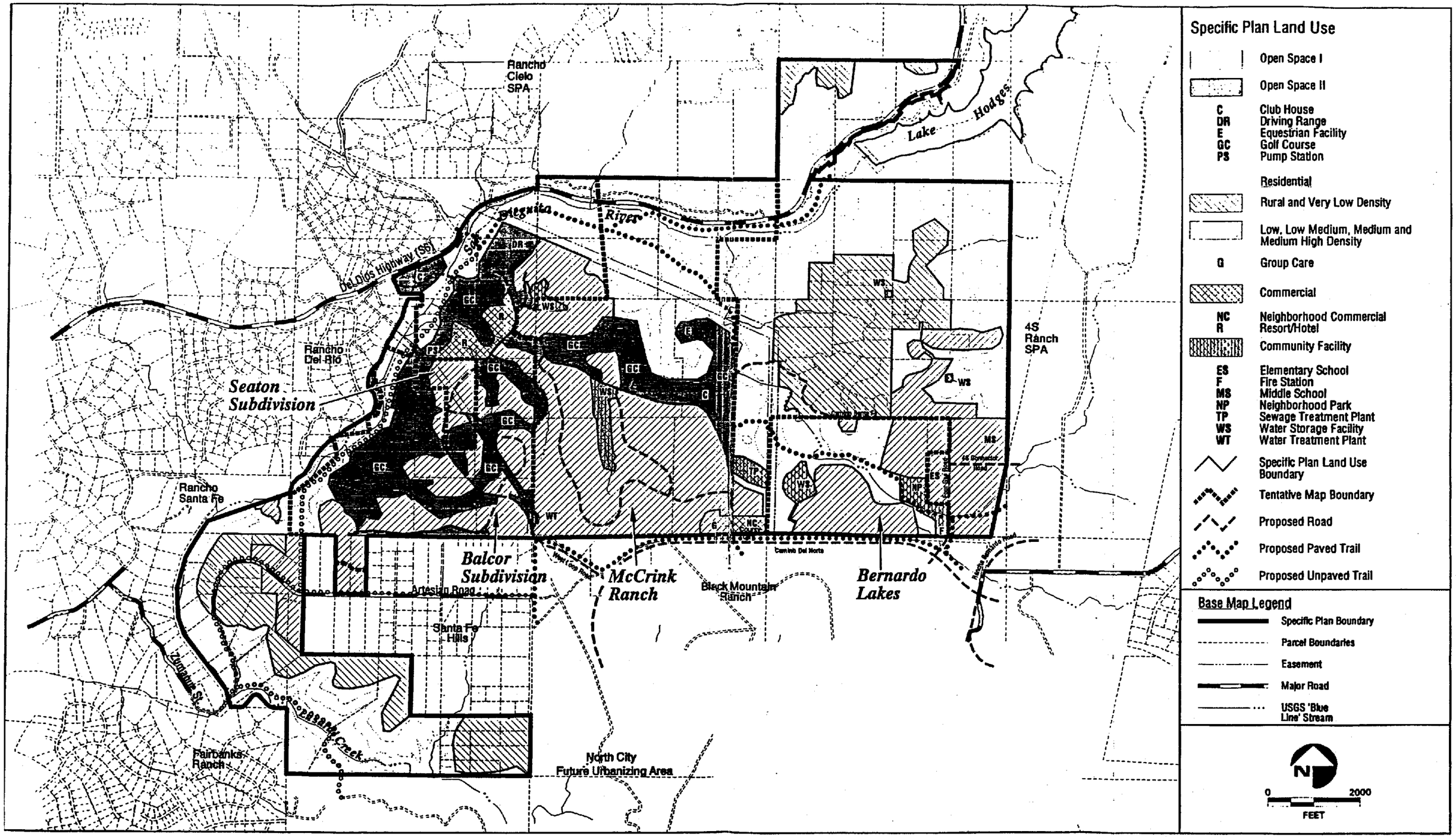
include the 100-year floodplain, high quality coastal sage scrub and riparian wetland habitats, important archaeological sites, and most slopes over 25 percent; 2) areas along Lusardi Creek that are within the 100-year floodplain, significant areas of coastal sage scrub and riparian wetlands; and 3) areas in the southwestern portion of the SPA containing biological resources considered to be of maximum sensitivity, and most slopes over 25 percent. These areas are intended to be dedicated as part of a regional open space corridor and habitat preserve system and will not be disturbed by any uses except for trails, essential utility lines, and circulation, as shown on Figure 3-3.

The Open Space II (OS-II) areas are immediately adjacent to the OS-I areas. OS-II areas are designated for passive and active recreational uses. The passive areas of OS-II are planned to act as a buffer between the biological areas associated with OS-I and developed areas. The active recreational areas of OS-II are mostly golf courses.

Sensitive lands in the SPA are an integral component of several open space and wildlife corridors and potential biological core areas in the region. The Specific Plan proposes a "D2" special area designator that applies to certain sensitive biological areas (see Figure 3-4). The objective of the "D2" designator is to "assure that all feasible measures are taken to maximize the amount and viability of sensitive habitat resources in environmentally sensitive areas approved for residential development in Santa Fe Valley." The "D2" designator would apply to Rural and Very Low density residential areas as shown on Figure 3-4. The "D2" designator establishes standards for site design in order to maximize preservation of sensitive biological resources. The standards of the "D2" designators are contained in a separate proposed rezone ordinance to be adopted concurrently with the Specific Plan.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element of the Specific Plan establishes the following proposed land use categories for the Santa Fe Valley SPA: Open Space (Categories I and II), Residential (under six types of land use densities), Commercial, and Community Facilities. Table 3-1 lists the proposed land uses and associated gross acreage and Figure 3-3 illustrates the Land Use Plan for the SPA.

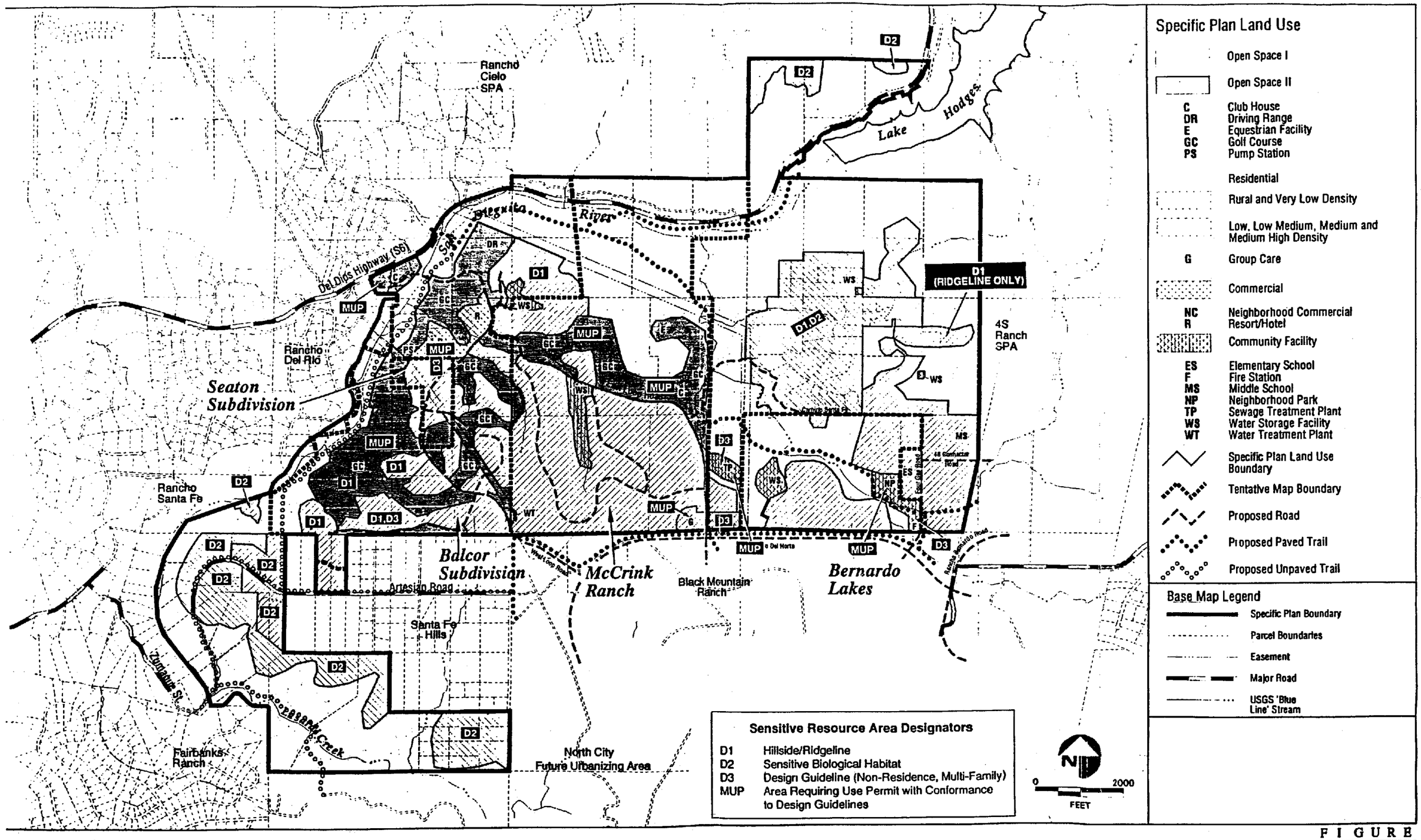


OGDEN

Proposed Specific Plan Land Use

FIGURE 3-3

01/20/95



GDEN

Sensitive Resource Area/Community Design Designators

FIGURE 3-4

01/20/95

Table 3-1

SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN
PROPOSED LAND USES

Land Use Category	Acreage Subtotal	Total Gross Acres	Dwelling Units (DUs)
Open Space			
Open Space I		1,404.0	
Open Space II		374.5	
Golf Courses (2)[1]	355.0		
Equestrian Facility	7.0		
Clubhouse	12.5		
Residential		1,287.0	1,200 DUs (Total at full buildout)
Rural (1 DU/6 acres and larger)	132.8		21
Very Low (1 DU/4-5.9 acres)	293.0		58
Low (1 DU/2-3.9 acres)	69.0		23
Low Medium (1 DU/1-1.9 acres)[2]	394.0		297
Medium (1.1 - 2 DU/acres)	265.6		384
Medium High (2.1-4 DU/acres)	132.4		417
Commercial		40.0	
Neighborhood Commercial	7.0		
Resort/Hotel	25.6		
Group Care	7.3		
Community Facilities		58.3	
Neighborhood Park	14.0		
Fire Station	1.5		
Sewage Treatment Plant	8.0		
Water Storage Facilities	34.2		
Water Treatment Facility	0.6		
Total Acres		3,163	

[1]Includes an 18-hole and a 9-hole golf course. May allow up to 14 dwelling units rather than the 9-hole golf course under the Specific Plan, transferred from residential areas.
[2]Includes 12-acre elementary school and 30-acre middle school.

Note: Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding.
DU = Dwelling Unit

Source: Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Land Use Map, June 1995

As discussed under the Open Space and Conservation Element, the Open Space I designation applies to lands suitable for conservation and permanent protection of environmental resources, consistent with the goals and objectives of the regional open space planning efforts currently underway, and also consistent with the County's General Plan Open Space Element. The Open Space II designation applies to lands immediately adjacent to permanent open space areas. Open Space II is proposed for passive and active recreational uses.

The clustering of residential units is encouraged by the Specific Plan to minimize the actual development area. Under the Land Use Element, residential land use densities vary from Rural (1 dwelling unit per 6 acres and larger) to higher residential densities (up to 4 dwelling units per acre). The total number of dwelling units proposed for the Santa Fe Valley SPA is based on the maximum allowable density, per the San Dieguito Community Plan, of the previous land use designations (17), (18), and (24) through application of the County's Slope Density Formula as described in Policy S-1 of the Department of Planning and Land Use Codes Division. The Low Medium density residential land use designation listed in Table 3-1 also includes two proposed school sites.

As an alternative to developing the proposed 9-hole golf course as part of the McCrink Ranch Tentative Map, estate-type residential development (up to 14 units) could be built instead under the Specific Plan. Should residential development occur in lieu of the 9-hole golf course, development densities over the remaining portion of the McCrink Ranch Tentative Map would be reduced in order to avoid exceeding the maximum number of dwelling units allowed.

In order to serve future commercial needs of Santa Fe Valley residents, a 7-acre neighborhood retail site is proposed at a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.25.

A number of other land uses may be allowed in the SPA, subject to approval of a Major Use Permit. These uses include: golf course(s) and clubhouse(s), tennis facilities, a resort hotel with a maximum of 250 rooms, a congregate care facility with a maximum of 200 beds, and institutional uses including an elementary school, a middle school, a fire station, and a local park. The community facilities proposed as part of the Land Use Plan are described further on in this section under the Public Facilities Element.

The development of the SPA is expected to occur in three phases over a 15-year period. Phase I would include development of approximately 100 dwelling units (including the existing homes within the SPA) and an 18-hole golf course with a clubhouse facility. Phase II would include development of up to approximately 700 additional dwelling units (for a total of 800 dwelling units through Phase II), a resort hotel, a 9-hole golf course, a clubhouse, and a group care facility. Phase III would represent full build out of the SPA.

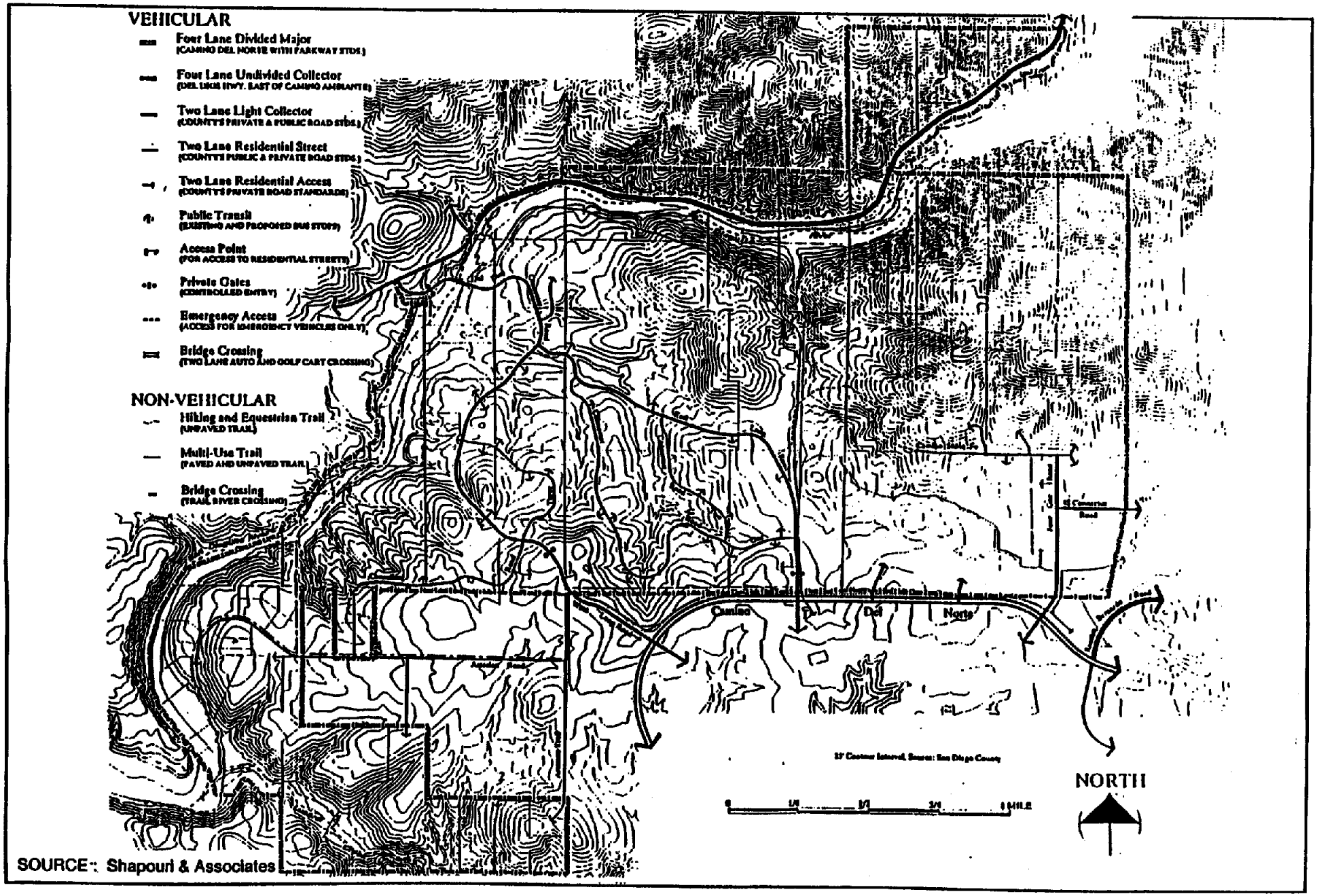
Circulation Element

The Circulation Element identifies the circulation system proposed to serve Santa Fe Valley at specified developmental thresholds, and establishes transportation facilities performance standards. Figure 3-5 illustrates the proposed streets to accommodate the projected buildout traffic volumes. The proposed street system was determined based upon a traffic analysis conducted in conjunction with the development of the Circulation Element.

The proposed Circulation Plan incorporates a system of arterials that will provide internal circulation throughout the SPA as well as controlled access to Del Dios Highway and Interstate 15. The Specific Plan provides a number of policies and implementation measures intended to integrate the SPA with the regional transportation system. The Specific Plan allows one ingress/egress point to the existing Del Dios Highway and eliminates through traffic by providing a network of private roads in Santa Fe Valley which are proposed to be gated.

Higher density residential development areas and the Neighborhood Commercial site are located on the southern edge of Santa Fe Valley to encourage regional access to and from Camino del Norte. To accommodate development in the eastern portion of the Santa Fe Valley, two lanes of Camino del Norte must be improved prior to final approval of any land division applications as a condition of tentative map approval. Future construction of SR 56 through City of San Diego land to the south is also planned to provide additional east/west access to and from the SPA when Black Mountain Ranch develops.

The Specific Plan provides for an onsite road system, consisting of both public and private roads. The existing Artesian Road that currently connects to Camino del Norte would provide access to existing residential development in the southwestern portion of the Santa Fe Valley. Access to the majority of the proposed future development located in the western portion of Santa Fe Valley is provided from West Loop Road and East Loop Road,



SOURCE: Shapouri & Associates

OGDEN

Proposed Circulation Plan within the Santa Fe Valley SPA

FIGURE
3-5

which are planned to connect to Camino del Norte at two signalized intersections. West Loop Road is proposed to cross the San Dieguito River via a bridge to connect with Del Dios Highway. Access to West Loop Road would be restricted by gates north of the intersection with Camino del Norte and south of the intersection with Del Dios Highway. Access to the eastern portion of Santa Fe Valley is provided from East Loop Road and Four Gee Road. These roads would connect to Camino del Norte at signalized intersections. The Circulation Element also addresses alternative modes of transportation such as public transit, bicycle routes, horseback riding trails, and pedestrian circulation.

Public Facilities Element

The Specific Plan provides for a system of public facilities and community support systems to serve planned development in the SPA. Policies in the Specific Plan address applicable facilities and services including law enforcement, fire protection, parks, schools, water, wastewater, and storm drainage. The Public Facilities Element for Santa Fe Valley is based on the County's Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. The purpose of the element is to provide for adequate public safety, services, and facilities to accommodate the Specific Plan land uses in Santa Fe Valley.

The Specific Plan proposes to accommodate necessary elementary school and middle school facilities in locations designated on the Specific Plan Land Use Map (see Figure 3-3). The potential school sites are also designated as residential land uses in the event that the sites are not needed for school facilities. The Specific Plan proposes to accommodate a local park in conjunction with potential school sites.

Water services will be provided by the Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD). Potential water system facility improvements to serve Santa Fe Valley include a new reservoir in the northeastern portion of the SPA to provide adequate fire and emergency storage. The one-million gallon Golem Reservoir in the eastern portion of the SPA would be replaced by a larger facility to support buildout of Santa Fe Valley. Reclaimed water services for the golf courses will be provided by the Rancho Santa Fe Community Services District (CSD).

Currently there is no sewer service in Santa Fe Valley. The few existing residences on the site therefore utilize individual septic systems. The Specific Plan proposes to ultimately provide wastewater treatment and disposal by construction of an onsite regional waste

water treatment plant, or through annexation to the existing Rancho Santa Fe CSD. If annexation occurs, a new pump station would be required to facilitate conveyance of effluent from portions of the SPA to the Rancho Santa Fe CSD treatment plant.

The Specific Plan also proposes to plan and manage stormwater runoff in a manner consistent with County Department of Public Works requirements. Urbanization typically increases the amount of impermeable surfaces which typically results in increased storm water runoff volume and velocity. Accordingly, drainage facilities would be constructed within the SPA as necessary to accommodate anticipated increases in storm water runoff.

Community Design Element

The Community Design Element presents the overall design concept for the Santa Fe Valley SPA. Under the Community Design Element, policies and implementation measures address the Special Area Zoning Designators proposed on the SPA to protect scenic visual resources, ensure visual compatibility, and promote high quality design. Additionally, a Streetscape Plan and design standards, and site planning and building design are identified under this element. The proposed Specific Plan includes a set of Community Design Guidelines implemented through the "D3" zoning designator, discretionary permits and review (see Figure 3-4). The goal of these guidelines is to establish a consistent design expression among site planning, engineering, architectural, and landscaping components. These guidelines contain both general guidelines for all subject development within the SPA as well as specific design guidelines for certain areas. Proposed development in the SPA subject to the design "D3" designator includes: subdivisions (i.e., proposed tentative maps to subdivide land), multi-family residential structures, all non-residential structures, and development within specified viewsheds. These guidelines supplement County standards and regulations, including, but not limited to the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Uniform Building Code, and Uniform Fire Code.

The Community Design Guidelines for all subject development within the SPA address: 1) subdivision design (open space linkages, clustering, viewshed determinations, lot arrangement on ridgelines and hilltops, road design, entry treatments, and grading), 2) grading (general grading, grading on slopes, phased grading, creative grading techniques, and retaining walls), 3) site planning (entry treatments, walls, fences, parking lots, site lighting), 4) non-residential site planning, 5) residential architecture, 6) non-residential architecture, 7) signage, 8) landscaping, and 9) hillside development.

Design guidelines are also proposed for development within the specific viewsheds of Del Dios Highway and the San Dieguito River as determined by the visual sensitivity analyses discussed earlier in this section. These guidelines include: 1) subdivision design, 2) grading, 3) building characteristics, 4) roads and hardscape, 5) landscaping, 6) lighting, 7) fencing, and 8) drainage and erosion control.

A "D1" zoning designator is proposed as part of the Specific Plan which addresses design controls within subject areas visible from the future San Dieguito River Park and Del Dios Highway. The "D1" designator addresses Hillside/Ridgeline development, the purpose of which is to mitigate visual impacts of development in particularly sensitive hillside and ridgeline areas from the adjoining Del Dios Highway, San Dieguito River Park, and residential communities.

The "D2" designator establishes standards for site design in order to maximize preservation of sensitive biological resources. The standards of the "D1" and "D2" designators are contained in a separate rezone ordinance adopted concurrently with the Specific Plan.

The "D3" designator has been applied to land proposed for multi-family residential and certain non-residential development in the SPA. Standards and objectives of the "D3" designator are contained in the Design Guidelines.

Facilities Financing Element

The Facilities Financing Element establishes the options under which the SPA will be financed. Within the SPA, property owners will be expected to finance the construction of all required public facilities on a "fair share" basis to serve the anticipated development in advance of need prior to any further division of land. To assist in up-front financing, the County and special districts may allow the formation of Improvement Districts to finance certain area-wide improvements. Financing of all private roads and onsite facility improvements will be the responsibility of individual property owners within the SPA boundaries.

3.4.2 Environmental Characteristics

Santa Fe Valley is generally characterized by rugged terrain and varied topography associated with the San Dieguito River Valley and its corresponding variety of vegetation communities and habitats. Numerous valleys and ridges in the hilly terrain of Santa Fe Valley have been created by the San Dieguito River . The central and southern portions of Santa Fe Valley are characterized by gently rolling hills and intervening areas of more level terrain. Elevations range from a low of approximately 80 feet above mean sea level (MSL) at the confluence of Lusardi and San Dieguito Creeks to a high of approximately 1,380 feet above MSL in the hills above the Hodges Dam in the northeastern portion of the site.

The majority of Santa Fe Valley is undeveloped and contains sensitive environmental resources such as coastal sage scrub, chaparral, wetland habitats, and both native and non-native grasslands.

Santa Fe Valley functions as an important link in maintaining a continuous wildlife corridor system between undeveloped habitat areas in the region. The San Dieguito River Valley and Lusardi Creek are considered significant wildlife corridors through this area for species such as mule deer, mountain lion, and bob cat. Santa Fe Valley also provides habitat for a significant population of California gnatcatchers and many of other sensitive flora and fauna.

Important cultural resources and archaeological sites exist within the SPA, the most well known of which is the archaeological site known as the Harris Site. The Harris Site and other known archaeology sites exist along the San Dieguito River Valley and throughout portions of the SPA.

3.4.3 Specific Plan Implementation

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan contains regulatory provisions and design guidelines for implementing the policies contained in each of the elements described in Section 3.4. In order to implement the policies of the Specific Plan, customized regulations are proposed to augment the provisions of the County's Zoning Ordinance. Customized zoning districts, use regulations, and development regulations are also proposed.

Regulatory Provisions

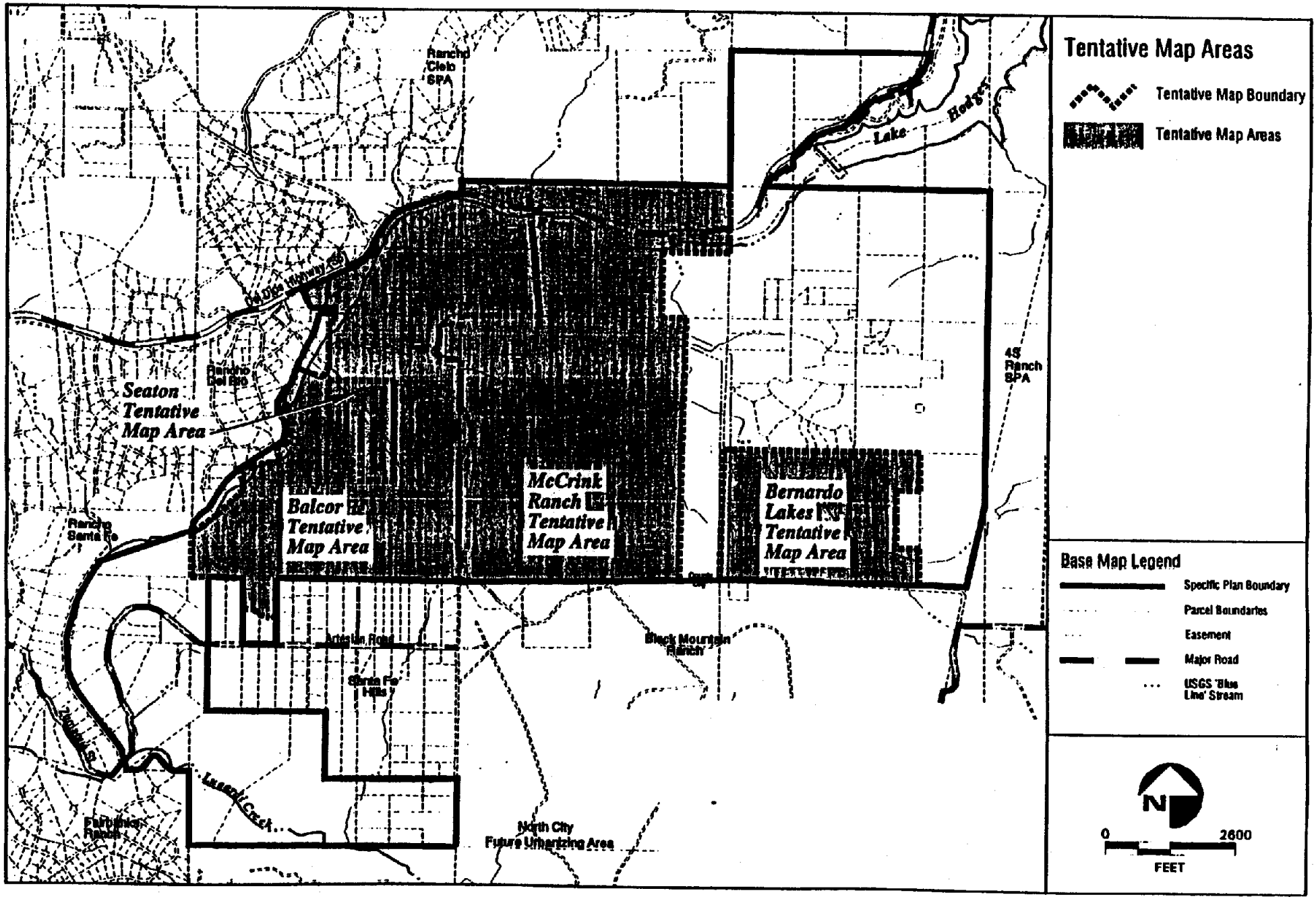
The regulatory provisions include a development phasing process: facilities financing plan: and implementation strategies. These provisions are summarized below.

Development Phasing Process. Development phasing in the Santa Fe Valley SPA is proposed to be in three development phases over 15 years. Ultimate development of the Santa Fe Valley will be phased with the ability to provide adequate public facilities and services, particularly circulation capacity. Residential development is expected be phased in response to market demand.

Implementation Strategies. In order to implement the Circulation and Public Facility Elements of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan, a Local Assessment District may be necessary to issue bonds and charge the proportionate tax or assessment liability to each property and construct improvements within the SPA. Implementation will also require coordination with numerous other groups, including, federal and state resource agencies, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District, and the City of San Diego.

3.4.4 Tentative Map Proposals

Four tentative maps for residential subdivisions are proposed under the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan (Figure 3-6) and are evaluated in this EIR. The tentative map areas represent approximately 1,656 acres or about 50 percent of the acreage of SPA. The proposed Tentative Maps are discussed in more detail below and include: 1) Balcor, 2) McCrink Ranch, 3) Seaton, and 4) Bernardo Lakes. Relevant tentative map characteristics are summarized in Table 3-2.



OGDEN

Tentative Map Areas Within SPA

FIGURE 3-6

Table 3-2

TENTATIVE MAP SUMMARY

	Balcor	Seaton	McCrink Ranch	Bernardo Lakes
Tentative Map Number	TM 5073	TPM 20196	TM 5069	TM 5070
Major Use Permit Number	P95-009 - Golf Course P95-010 - Resort	NA		NA
Administrative Permit				AD 95-015
# of Residential Dwelling Units	246 units	4 lots	390 units	139 units
Total Developed Acreage	226 acres	27 acres	369 acres	129 acres
Total Open Space I	167 acres	–	273 acres	97 acres
Total Open Space II	253 acres	13 acres	102 acres	–
Total Acreage of Tentative Map	646 acres	40 acres	744 acres	226 acres

Balcor Subdivision Tentative Map

The Balcor Tentative Map area totals approximately 646 acres of land in the western portion of the Santa Fe Valley SPA (Figure 3-7). Del Dios Highway and the San Dieguito River channel generally form the northern boundary, and the San Dieguito River channel generally forms the western boundary of the tentative map area. The McCrink Ranch Tentative Map area exists to the east, and Santa Fe Hills generally forms the southern boundary of the proposed Balcor Tentative Map area. Access to the Tentative Map area would be from West Loop Road via Camino Del Norte and Artesian Road to the south, and from via Del Dios Highway to the northwest.

The proposed Balcor subdivision includes a total of 246 dwelling units and an 18-hole golf course with associated uses. Grading for the Balcor subdivision includes approximately 3,000,000 cubic yards of cut volume and fill volume. Four existing residences are within the map area. Three lots would allow for the future development 176 condominium units

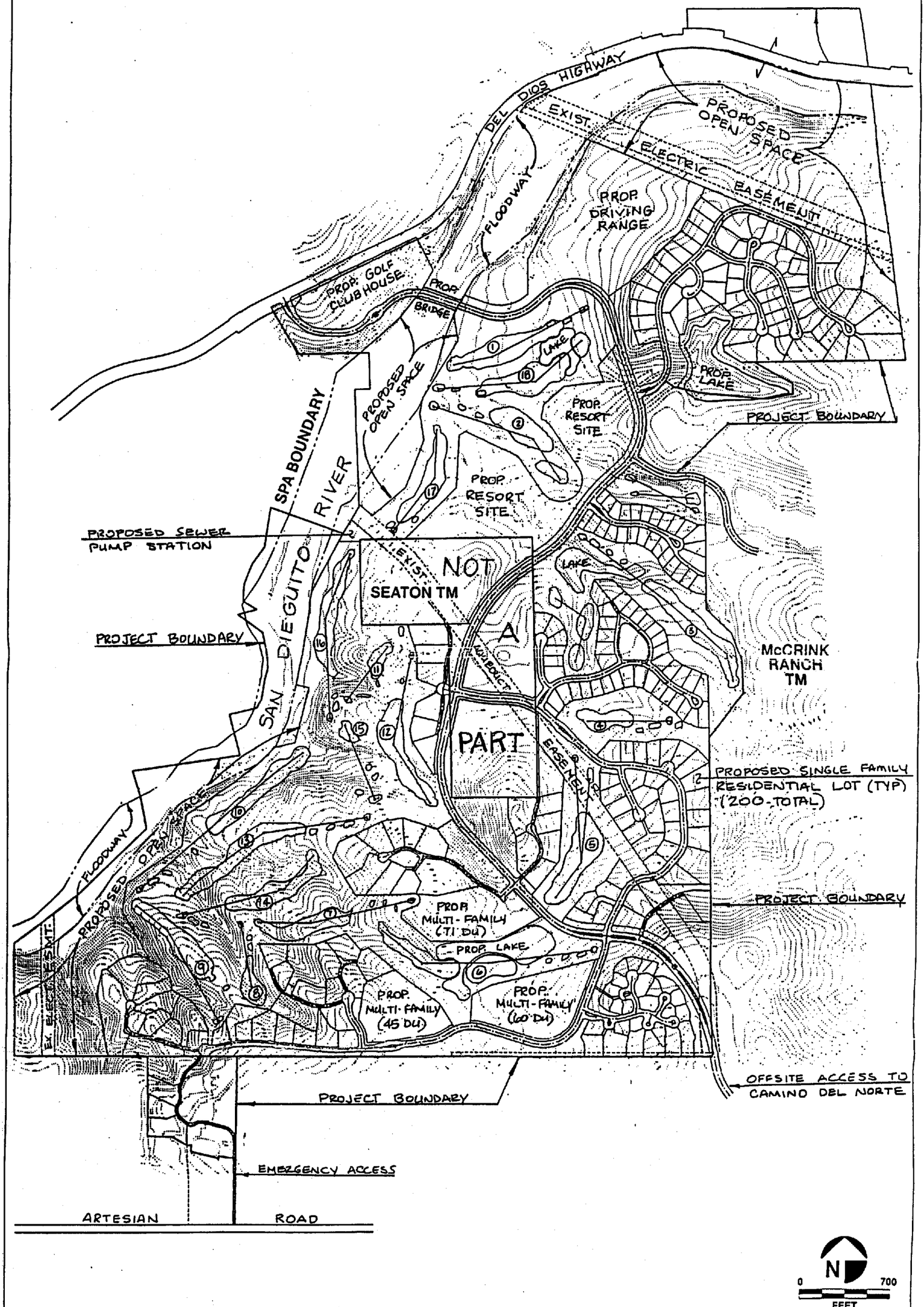
document the environmental implications of their actions. CEQA contains substantive provisions with which agencies must comply. The provision requiring public agencies to deny approval of a project having significant adverse effects when feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures can substantially reduce such effects is generally regarded as the most important substantive provision of CEQA. Further, CEQA requires that public agencies prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) whenever a proposed project may cause significant adverse effects on the environment.

To determine the "scope" of an EIR the Lead Agency must consult with responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and any federal agency whose approval or funding the proposed project will need. These agencies are listed in Section 3.5.1 of this document. Additionally, CEQA encourages each public agency to include provisions in its environmental review procedures for wide public involvement, both formal and informal, consistent with its existing activities and procedures, in order to receive and evaluate public reactions to environmental issues relative to the agency's activities.

The intended purpose of this EIR is to facilitate development of specific information about how the proposed project may adversely affect the environment, to involve the public in environmental decision making, to facilitate interagency consultation, to allow applicable public resource agencies to make informed decisions regarding the requisite permitting needed for project approval, and to generate proposals for project modification to be effected through the adoption of alternatives or mitigation measures. Means of project modification generally include: 1) revising a project, 2) imposing conditions on project approval, 3) choosing an environmentally superior project alternative, or 4) disapproving the project (CEQA Guidelines, section 15002, subd. (h)).

3.5.1 Decision Making Agencies

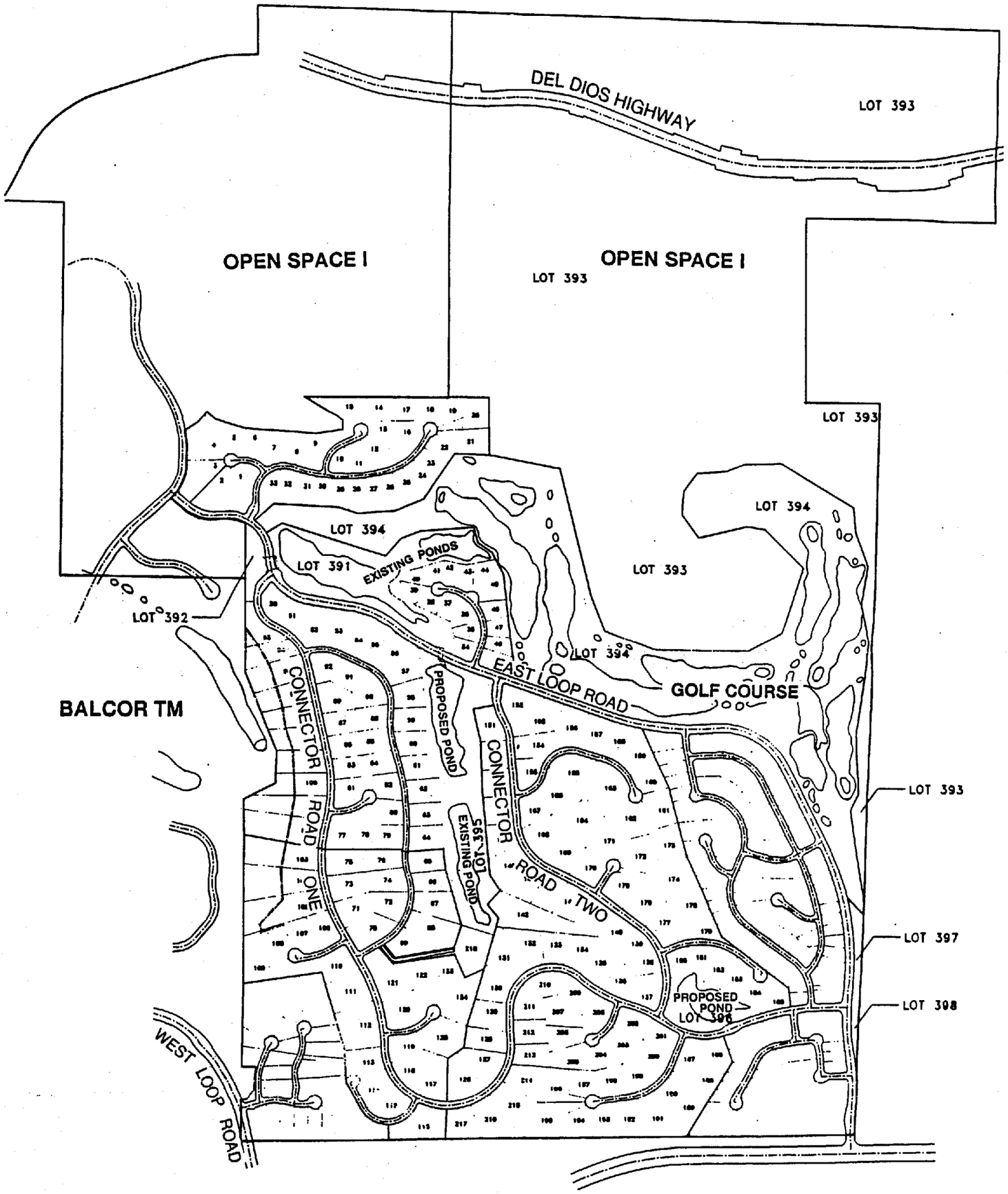
The CEQA Guidelines define the roles of three primary types of agencies with regard to interagency division of labor for environmental review. The three primary types of agencies include: 1) lead agencies, 2) responsible agencies, and 3) trustee agencies. Additionally, advisory bodies are often involved in the environmental review process as well. A summary of the relationship of these agencies with each other, and to the CEQA review process follows.



OGDEN

Balcor Subdivision Tentative Map

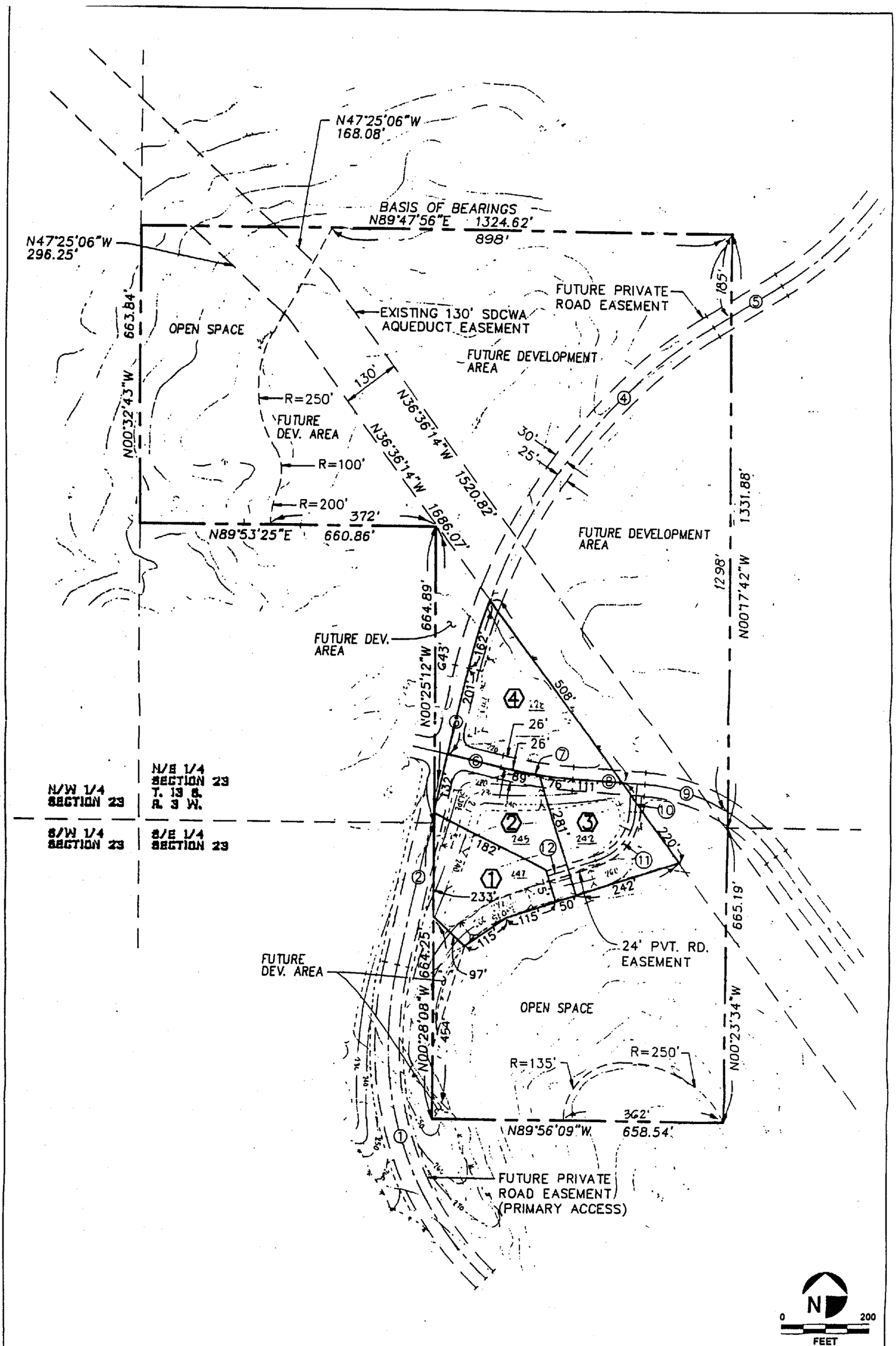
FIGURE 3-7



OGDEN

McCrink Ranch Subdivision Tentative Map

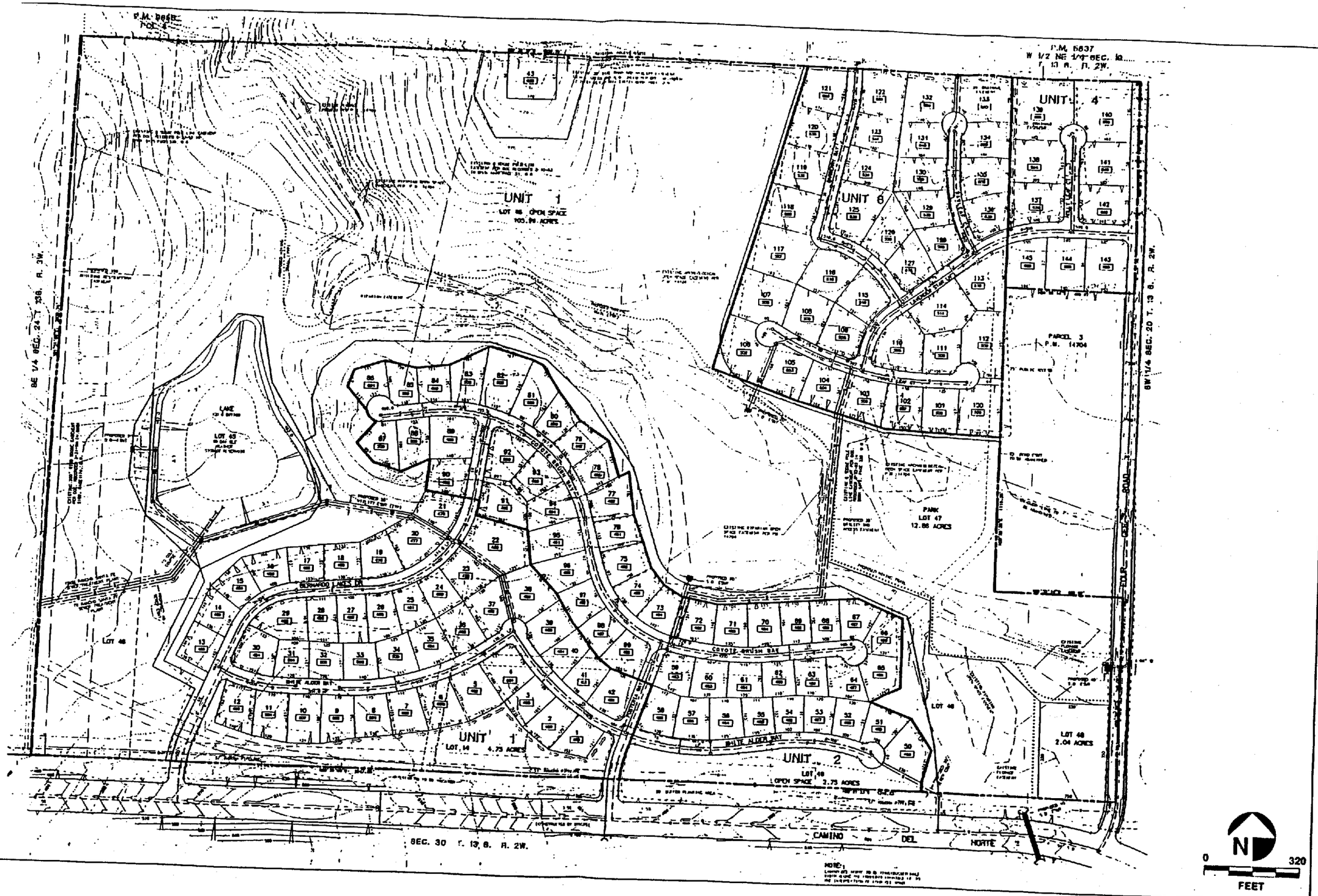
FIGURE 3-8



OGDEN

Seaton Subdivision Tentative Map

FIGURE
3-9



IGDEN

Bernardo Lakes Subdivision Tentative Map

FIGURE
3-10

Lead Agencies

The Lead Agency for the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan EIR is the County of San Diego. The Lead Agency is the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment (CEQA Guidelines section 15367).

Responsible Agencies

A Responsible Agency is a public agency, other than the Lead Agency which has responsibility for carrying out or approving a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR. A Responsible Agency includes all public agencies (i.e., any state agency, board, or commission and any local or regional agency, as defined by CEQA Guidelines, Section 15381).

Trustee Agencies

Lead Agencies must consult with Trustee Agencies, although the Trustee Agencies may or may not have actual permitting authority or approval power over aspects of the project in question (CEQA Guidelines, section 15086). A Trustee Agency is a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California (CEQA Guidelines, section 15386).

Advisory Bodies

Where an advisory body such as a planning commission is required to make a recommendation on a project to the decision-making body, the advisory body shall also review and consider the applicable environmental disclosure document in draft or final form (CEQA Guidelines section 15025).

The following is a list of decision making agencies for the proposed project:

Lead Agency

County of San Diego

Responsible Agencies:

Local Area Formation Committee (LAFCO)
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
San Diego County Air Pollution Control District

Trustee Agencies

California Department of Fish and Game
State Department of Parks and Recreation
State Lands Commission

Advisory Bodies

San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority
San Dieguito Planning Group
Poway Unified School District
Solana Beach School District
Escondido Union High School District
San Dieguito High School District
Rancho Santa Fe Five Protection District
Rancho Santa Fe Community Services District

3.5.2 Discretionary Actions Required

CEQA review applies to "discretionary projects", but it does not apply to "ministerial projects". A discretionary project is one that requires the exercise of judgment or deliberation when the public agency or body decides to approve or disapprove a particular activity. Such discretion may exist where the approving agency can impose reasonable conditions based on professional judgment, or where the standards guiding decision makers are relatively general.

The following discretionary actions will be required to implement the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan:

- Planning Commission review and recommendations of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan and certification of the EIR to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors.

- Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors review of four tentative maps submitted concurrently with the Specific Plan.

- Board of Supervisors adoption of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan and certification of the Final EIR.

- Any development proposed in areas identified and designated with the "D" for Design Review Special Area Regulations would be required to prepare site plans consistent with development standards developed for Santa Fe Valley as described in the Conservation and Open Space Element and the Community Design Element of the Specific Plan.

- A number of land uses may be allowed in the Specific Plan Area, subject to approval of a Major Use Permit. These uses include: golf course(s) and clubhouse(s), tennis facilities, a resort hotel with a maximum of 250 rooms, a congregate (group) care facility with a maximum of 200 beds, an equestrian facility, a staging area, and institutional uses including an elementary school, a middle school, and a local park.

- Approval of Tentative Map proposals, major use permits, and site plans submitted subsequent to approval of the Specific Plan and certification of the EIR.

- Issuance of various resource agency permits listed in Section 3.5.3 could be discretionary measures.

- A fire station may be allowed subject to the approval of a Site Plan.

3.5.3 Permitting Requirements

The following is a list and brief explanation summarizing the required permits for project implementation:

Resource	Permit	Permitting Authority	Purpose
FEDERAL			
Wetlands and Federal Waters of the U.S.	Section 404: Nationwide Permit # 26 for impacts to jurisdictional habitat less than 1 acre in size	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	A total of 36 nationwide permits (NWP) are available under the USACE's permitting program. The permits cover general activities which have been pre-approved by the USACE so long as certain conditions are met. The NWP #26 permits wetland impacts of less than 1 acre automatically, and may permit such impacts of between 1 and 10 acres after the processing of a Pre-discharge Notification. In California, NWPs are issued contingent upon prior receipt of the state's water quality certification or waiver of such need by the state and after receipt of confirmation that nationally registered historic properties will not be affected.
Wetlands and Federal Waters of the U.S.	Section 404: Nationwide Permit # 26 for wetland impacts between 1 and 10 acres in size	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Proposed impacts to wetlands and jurisdictional drainages of between 1 and 10 acres (that meet all conditions stated in the NWP program), must process a Pre-Discharge Notification with the USACE. Additionally, projects that may affect a federally-listed species, and where such affect is a direct result of the proposed wetland impacts, must also process an informal Section 7 permit with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service before the Pre-Discharge Notification.
Wetlands and Federal Waters of the U.S.	Section 404: Individual	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Proposed wetland and jurisdictional impacts greater than 10 acres or that otherwise do not meet the conditions of the Nationwide Permit Program (e.g., "take" of a federally-listed species).

Resource	Permit	Permitting Authority	Purpose
STATE			
Historic Resources	National Historic Preservation Act	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Associated with all 404 permits from the USACE is the mandatory review of whether state historic properties will be affected by the proposed wetland impacts. Assurance that historic properties will not be affected must be obtained before the USACE can issue either an individual or nationwide 404 permit.
Water Quality	State 401 Water Quality Certification, Clean Water Act 33 CFR §330.4(c)	Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	Associated with all 404 permits from the USACE is the mandatory processing of a state water quality certification or waiver with the RWQCB. Either certification or waiver must be obtained before the USACE can issue the either an individual or nationwide 404 permit. Review by the RWQCB will insure that the proposed impacts will not adversely affect local water quality.
Wetlands and State Jurisdictional Drainages	California State Code 1601: Streambed Alteration Agreement	California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)	For the regulation of any proposed activity that will divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake designated by CDFG.
State-listed Species	Section 2080 Permit, California Endangered Species Act	California Department of Fish and Game	If a 2080 permit is required, proposed impacts to state-listed species will be reviewed and approved by the CDFG and will require the review and approval of mitigation and management for the affected species.

Resource	Permit	Permitting Authority	Purpose
STATE (Continued)			
Waters of the U.S.	Point Source and Non-point Source National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits, Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 as amended by the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977 and the Water Quality Act of 1987	State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under the auspices of the federal Environ. Protection Agency (EPA)	Point Source NPDES Permitting: The CWA requires NPDES permits for discharges from point sources such as municipal wastewater treatment plants, industries, animal feedlots, and mining operations. NPDES permits specify effluent limitations for each individual industrial and municipal discharges, a compliance schedule, monitoring and reporting requirements, and any other terms and conditions necessary to protect water quality. Non-point Source NPDES Permitting: The 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act added Section 402(p) requiring the US EPA to promulgate regulations for NPDES permit applications from storm water discharges. The requirements pertain to storm water discharges from municipal storm water systems and storm water drainages associated with construction and industrial activity. (NPDES permitting requirements are not the same as CWA Section 401 certifications, or Section 404 permits.)
LOCAL			
Land Use	Major Use Permits, Minor Use Permits, Tentative Maps, Tentative Parcel Maps, Administrative Permits, Site Plans, and Grading Permits, Compliance with Design Guidelines	County of San Diego	Certain land uses consistent with the Santa Fe Valley Land Use Plan may be conditionally allowed subject to discretionary approval.

SECTION 4
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.1 LAND USE

4.1.1 Existing Conditions

The following analysis addresses the existing regulatory setting, physical development, and planned land use patterns within and adjacent to the project area; potential land use impacts in the area; and any necessary mitigation measures to reduce such impacts. The analysis is based on review of the proposed Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan and associated tentative maps, field observations of existing land uses, land use regulations, and a review of applicable planning documents/maps (e.g., County of San Diego General Plan, San Dieguito Community Plan, San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan).

The Santa Fe Valley SPA is part of the San Dieguito Community Planning area in northern San Diego County. The SPA is approximately 2 1/2 miles west of Interstate 15, approximately 5 miles east of Interstate 5, generally south of and adjacent to Del Dios Highway, and north of Artesian Road (see Figure 3-1).

The Santa Fe Valley SPA encompasses approximately 3,163 acres of land. The site is at the northern edge of development in San Diego County, along the border of the City of San Diego. The northern boundary of the SPA is formed by the western end of Lake Hodges and the San Dieguito River. The southern boundary is partially formed by the City/County jurisdictional boundary. Lake Hodges and the community of Rancho Bernardo exist to the east. The communities of Fairbanks Ranch and Rancho Santa Fe exist to the west.

Access to Santa Fe Valley is from the north via Del Dios Highway and from the south via Artesian Road. Del Dios Highway parallels the San Dieguito River for approximately 2 miles downstream from the dam at Lake Hodges and Artesian Road forms part of the SPA's southern boundary.

The concept of "land use" can be separated into two major categories: 1) natural, and 2) human-modified. Natural land use includes rangeland and other open or undeveloped areas. The nature of land in regard to its location, soil composition, topographic features,

vegetation, minerals, watershed, etc., determine its value as a natural resource. Human-modified land use development is guided by various plans, regulations, and ordinances and encompasses various types of developed land.

An EIR must discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and existing general, community, and regional plans. If a particular project is inconsistent with any such plans, its impacts would normally be considered significant (Guidelines, Appendix G, subd. (a)). The discussion of significant environmental effects should include the human use of the land including commercial and residential development. The EIR must also analyze any significant environmental effects the project might cause by bringing development and people into the area (CEQA Guidelines, section 15126, subd. (a)). The following sections include these analytical issues.

Land use is typically implemented pursuant to plans, policies, regulations, ordinances and other guidelines that determine the type and extent of allowable land uses and also protect specially designated or environmentally sensitive areas. Typically, land use planning processes ultimately result in a comprehensive plan (i.e., a general plan) or group of interrelated plans followed by ordinances regulating the use of land. The General Plan functions as a standard for evaluating all significant future development proposals of both government and private enterprise.

Land use planning and development in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County is regulated by the San Diego County General Plan. The General Plan for the County is intended to be a long-term comprehensive plan for the physical development of the unincorporated land. The County General Plan geographically divides unincorporated county lands into communities and subregional areas for which more localized community or subregional plans are adopted.

Santa Fe Valley is within the San Dieguito Community Plan area and is one of several Specific Plan Areas (SPAs) specified in the San Dieguito Community Plan. The SPA was developed pursuant to the goals, objectives and policies set forth in the community plan. The purpose of the SPA designation is to encourage relatively detailed yet comprehensive land planning of contiguous areas. Generally, specific plans provide a more flexible method of implementing the community plan objectives than zoning regulations. This is especially important when a particular area contains sensitive resources or requires strategies for the provision and financing of infrastructure improvements such as Santa Fe

Valley. The San Diego County General Plan, the Regional Land Use Element, and the San Dieguito Community Plan, as well as the San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan, provide an overall policy framework for the development and conservation of the Santa Fe Valley SPA. Relevant information and policies concerning these plans are discussed in each element of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan.

The following sections describe background issues and policies from the San Dieguito Community Plan and the San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan.

San Dieguito Community Plan

The San Dieguito Community Plan provides explicit policy regarding the specific planning of Santa Fe Valley since the Santa Fe Valley SPA is an important component of the San Dieguito Community Planning Area. Because of the multiple property ownership and the sensitive environmental resources, the Community Plan requires that the SPA planning process be funded by the property owners, managed by County staff and planned through a specific plan process.

Land use-related goals, objectives, and policies stated in the San Dieguito Community Plan relevant to the Santa Fe Valley SPA include:

- Land Use: Protect "scenic qualities of the area" by allocating a limited number of dwelling units to be developed in Santa Fe Valley.

- Conservation: Establish two Resource Conservation Areas in Lusardi Canyon and San Dieguito River to protect the natural resources in these areas.

- Floodplains and Water Courses: Prevent any alteration of the natural riparian habitat within the San Dieguito River.

- Trails: Determine locations of riding and hiking trails throughout the San Dieguito Community Planning area and place them on a set of Tax Assessor's Parcel Maps.

- Open Space: Preserve open space using open space easements, utility easements, and trail easements.

- Scenic Highways: Lands within the scenic viewshed of Circulation Element roads are to be subject to the "S" Scenic Area Designator for protection of scenic resources.

The Community Plan further states that: "The focus of this plan is the implementation of the San Dieguito River Regional Park." According to the Community Plan, "the basic elements of this park and open space system are as follows:

- Maintain the scenic qualities of the San Dieguito River Valley.
- Protect sensitive environmental resources throughout the Specific Plan Area.
- Accommodate a system of riding and hiking trails.
- Link with open space systems established within the San Dieguito Community Plan Area and with adjacent jurisdictions.

San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan

The San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan (Concept Plan) provides important policy relevant to Santa Fe Valley and was used as a guide for establishing open space areas in the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan. However, the Concept Plan has not been formally adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors.

The River Park is planned to protect environmental resources and provide recreational trails and visual amenities for the Santa Fe Valley and the San Diego region. The San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA) was established in 1987 by San Diego County and five cities to implement the San Dieguito River Valley Park. The JPA is empowered by its member agencies to acquire, hold, and dispose of property for park purposes, to undertake overall planning for, and to plan, design, operate and manage the San Diego River Valley Park.

The implementing legislation for the JPA established two main goals:

- Preserve and restore lands within the Focused Planning Area (FPA) (i.e.. an area within the watershed of the river which has the greatest visual and environmental impact on the river valley) as a regional open space greenbelt and park system, protecting natural resources, and providing compatible recreational opportunities.

- Provide a continuous and coordinated system of preserved lands, with a connecting corridor of walking, equestrian and bicycle trails, encompassing the River Valley from the ocean to the River's source.

The JPA must rely on its member agencies to implement the elements of the San Dieguito River Valley Park Concept Plan. A major concept for the River Park is to create a trail system that reaches all segments of the community.

The FPA boundary delineates areas that are either to be part of the River Park as permanent open space or are to be planned carefully for compatible development, consistent with the park's Concept Plan. Within the main river valley, the FPA boundary is intended to coincide with the bluff edges or ridgelines behind which potential development would be relatively unobtrusive to the open space character of the valley floor.

The San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan establishes a number of unique "landscapes" or subareas within the River's course to be individually planned. The Concept Plan envisions this landscape to be a passive use area, emphasizing trails for the appreciation of nature and visual amenities. According to the Concept Plan, the Santa Fe Valley SPA is located within the Del Dios Gorge and Santa Fe Valley landscapes.

While the JPA has not formally established specific land use designations for specific areas within its planning area, goals and policies have been proposed which indicate high priority for land within the Focused Planning Area of the San Dieguito River Valley. The JPA seeks a regional open space greenbelt and park system that protects the natural waterway of the San Dieguito River and the natural and cultural resources and sensitive lands, while providing compatible recreational opportunities that do not damage sensitive lands.

The San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan contains design and development standards recommended for private and other public proposals within the focused planning area for the park. The JPA encourages its member agencies (which includes the County of San Diego) to adopt the Concept Plan or incorporate the goals and recommendations of the Plan into their respective general plans, local coastal plans, and/or other appropriate planning documents. The standards set forth in the Concept Plan address preservation of significant physical and visual resources within the focused planning area for the Park. It is left up to the discretion of the member agencies to determine which, if any, of the standards recommended in the Concept Plan are appropriate for inclusion in the standards ultimately adopted by the agencies in order to implement the goals of the Concept Plan. The standards include recommendations addressing grading, structural design, subdivision plans, fencing, landscaping, drainage and erosion control, and resource management. The County of San Diego has not yet officially adopted these standards.

Existing Land Uses

Existing Land Use in Santa Fe Valley

Santa Fe Valley is currently owned by a multitude of land owners with a variety of land ownership sizes. Currently, a substantial amount of land within the SPA (approximately 50%) is owned by three major property owners; the remaining acreage is divided between many other land owners each with smaller respective properties. While most of the land in Santa Fe Valley is under private ownership, the vast majority of parcels are currently vacant/undeveloped or used for agricultural purposes. Most of the landscape therefore, exists in a relatively natural and undisturbed state. Currently, there are approximately 20 single family residential dwelling units scattered widely throughout Santa Fe Valley.

Some of the more level terrain near the central portion of the SPA is used for agricultural/horticultural purposes. Plant nurseries, truck crops, and orchards primarily comprise agricultural activities in Santa Fe Valley. Some previously farmed areas in the western portion of Santa Fe Valley are now fallow and are reverting back to more natural vegetative condition. Table 4.1-1 lists the existing land uses and corresponding acreages for each use within the SPA boundaries.

Table 4.1-1

EXISTING LAND USES IN THE SPA

Existing Land Use	Acres
Spaced Rural Residential	5.17
Single Family Residential	2.46
Orchards and Vineyards	117.02
Field Crops	803.34
Vacant and Undeveloped	2,144.28
Residential Under Construction	16.02
Intensive Agriculture	74.80
Total	3,163.09

Source: SANDAG

Existing Land Use Surrounding Santa Fe Valley

Existing developments surrounding Santa Fe Valley to the west and southwest are generally characterized by the high-amenity, estate residential communities of Rancho Santa Fe, Rancho Del Rio, and Fairbanks Ranch. These communities contain one- and two-acre estate housing with high-amenity attributes including golf courses, trails, and parks. Other existing nearby residential developments are located in the City of San Diego's communities of Rancho Peñasquitos and Rancho Bernardo to the east and the City of Escondido further to the northeast. These areas are typically developed at higher densities than the unincorporated land.

Santa Fe Valley surrounds the partially developed Santa Fe Hills community on three sides. Santa Fe Hills is located adjacent to Lusardi Creek and north of the City of San Diego's planned North City Future Urbanizing Area. The approved but only partially developed Rancho Cielo exists to the north of Santa Fe Valley across Del Dios Highway. The community of Del Dios along Lake Hodges exists to the northeast of Santa Fe Valley. Lake Hodges, which is operated by the City of San Diego, forms the northeastern

boundary of the SPA. These areas are shown in Figure 4.1-1. The 4S Business Park exists further to the east of Santa Fe Valley adjacent to Rancho Peñasquitos.

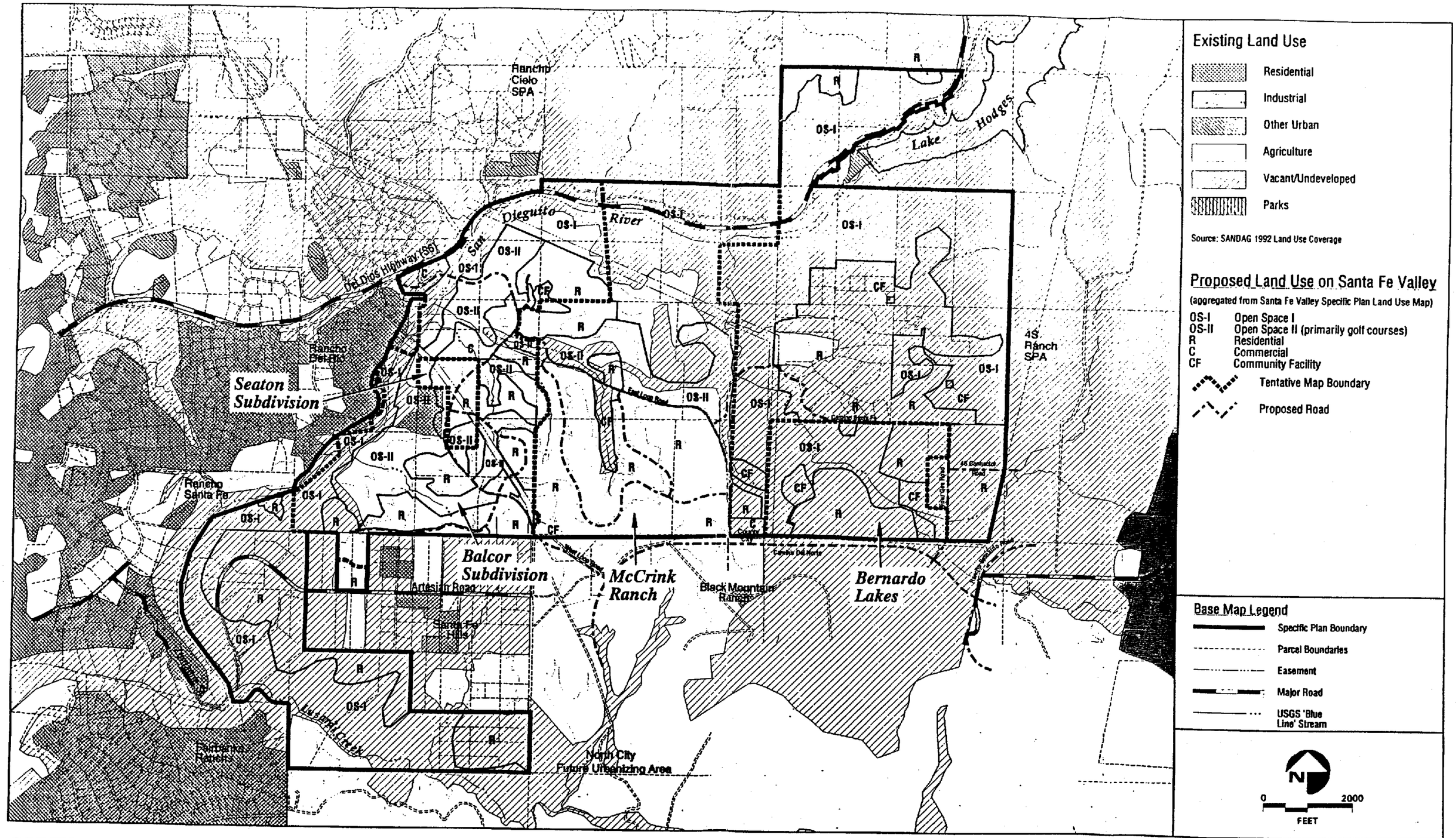
Planned Land Use

Planned Land Use in Santa Fe Valley

In 1987, the County amended the San Dieguito Community Plan to designate the Santa Fe Valley area as (21) Specific Plan Area. This action was primarily in recognition of the presence of sensitive environmental and visual resources; the proposed San Dieguito River Regional Open Space Park; multiple ownership patterns; lack of public services and facilities; adjacent community concerns for comprehensive planning, compatible land use, and coordinated development; and encroaching urbanization from the east and south.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65451, the (21) SPA land use designation is applied to lands where a specific plan must be adopted by the Board of Supervisors prior to any further division of land. The purpose of the (21) SPA land use designation in Santa Fe Valley was to initiate a planning framework for a comprehensive Specific Plan text and map for the Santa Fe Valley SPA consistent with the objectives and policies established by the San Dieguito Community Plan and the County of San Diego's General Plan. The Specific Plan is intended to promote development of individual parcels consistent with policies designed to address open space and conservation, land use, circulation, community facilities, infrastructure, facility phasing and financing, as well as site planning and design guidelines.

Prior to establishing the (21) Specific Planning Area designation to Santa Fe Valley, the San Dieguito Community Plan designated the area for (17) Estate Residential land use on the more topographically level portions of the Santa Fe Valley, (18) Multiple Rural Residential land use for the steeper sloped areas, and (24) Impact Sensitive land uses for the floodplains and areas within the San Dieguito River Valley. These designations were replaced with the (21) SPA designation which necessitated preparation of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan.



OGDEN

Existing and Proposed Land Use

FIGURE 4.1-1

07/19/95

Planned Land Use for Surrounding Area

There are several major residential projects either recently approved, planned, or proposed for development in the project vicinity. These include Black Mountain Ranch and the other associated subareas that make up the North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA) directly adjacent to the south, the proposed 4S Ranch Specific Plan to the east, and the Rancho Cielo SPA directly adjacent to the north. The Rancho Cielo SPA is approved but very limited development has occurred. The general locations of these projects are shown in Figure 4.1-1.

North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA). The City of San Diego NCFUA is comprised of over 12,000 acres located south and west of the project site. The NCFUA is designated as a Future Urbanizing Area (FUA), as defined under the City's Growth Management Plan. The FUA is land designated for future development once a plan for the development is adopted and the area is redesignated to Planned Urbanized Area (PUA). Approximately 6,300 acres were designated for development and approximately 5,900 acres were designated for retention as predominantly open space. Approximately 14,800 residential units with an estimated population of 38,400 people would be generated under the land use densities identified in the NCFUA Framework Plan.

However, buildout for the NCFUA is currently limited to a maximum of 3,750 dwelling units. Under the City's Growth Management Plan, a vote of the general public is required to allow the greater level of development contained in the NCFUA Framework Plan. Until such time, development is only permitted according to the existing zoning in the City General Plan. Unless a future vote of the people approves a phase shift in the FUA, development within the NCFUA will, thus, occur at a relatively slower pace and at a lower density than that projected in the Framework Plan.

The NCFUA is divided into five separate subareas (I, II, III, IV, and V), each requiring development plans at a specific plan level of detail to be prepared based on the land use designation and development densities provided in the Framework Plan.

The 4,172-acre NCFUA Subarea I is divided into two subareas located directly south of the Santa Fe Valley SPA. These areas are called: Black Mountain Ranch North (Subarea IB) and Black Mountain Ranch South (Subarea IA). The Black Mountain project proposes 1,119 dwelling units at the maximum allowable density of 1 dwelling unit per 4 acres per

existing entitlements under the City's General Plan. The other components of the project include two golf courses, community parks, and open space within the San Dieguito River Valley Park FPA.

4S Ranch General Plan Amendment and Specific Plan. Located immediately adjacent to the east of the project site, 4S Ranch consists of a 3,525-acre Specific Plan Area. Of this area, a 634-acre parcel is currently designated as Current Urban Development Area (CUDA) and is developed as an industrial business park. The remaining 2,891 acres are designated as Future Urbanizing Development Area (FUDA) and identified under the Community Plan as (21) Specific Planning Area with no density allocated. Proposed land uses for 4S Ranch include a mixture of 5,365 dwelling units, approximately 1,814 acres of park and open space uses, and a 12-acre central commercial area. The proposed overall density of the 2,891-acre portion of the Specific Plan is 1.85 dwelling units per acre.

Rancho Cielo Specific Plan. The Rancho Cielo SPA was approved in 1981 and is located directly north of Santa Fe Valley on the north side of the Del Dios Highway. The project consists of 770 dwelling units on 2,815 acres. Other approved uses for the Rancho Cielo project include an equestrian center, a neighborhood commercial center, a 6-acre village center, fire station, a water reclamation facility, and 1,689-acres of open space.

Community Character

Community character is not defined by CEQA but is specifically addressed in Article 9.2 of the County of San Diego CEQA Guidelines (1991). The County CEQA Guidelines define community character as:

> *"An overall qualitative perception of a community, a sense of uniqueness, also commonly known as a "sense of place" is a common reference point in defining the community character of an area. It is based on a sense of space and boundaries, physical characteristics (i.e., geographical setting, presence of unique natural and man made features, ambient noise and air quality) and qualitative psychological responses shared in common (i.e., "rural," "friendly")."*

Each community/subregional planning area within San Diego County has community character attributes common to the area as outlined in the respective community/subregional plans.

The community character goal as outlined in the San Dieguito Community Plan (1993) is to:

> *"Perpetuate the present state of spaciousness and rural living in the San Dieguito Plan Area, utilize the open spaces provided by low-intensity land uses to separate distinct neighborhoods, and establish and maintain San Dieguito as an economically and socially balanced community while ensuring that development is gradual, orderly, and in harmony with the existing environment."*

Much of the land in the vicinity of the Santa Fe Valley SPA is undeveloped and exists in a natural state. This condition lends itself well to the goals of the San Dieguito Community Plan such that there is maintenance of low-density rural or suburban neighborhoods within a natural setting. This rural atmosphere is typified by the low density residential developments in such surrounding neighborhoods as Del Dios, Santa Fe Hills, San Pasqual, and Mt. Israel. Some limited agriculture uses across these areas further adds to the rural ambiance. Recreational and visual amenities of Lake Hodges are evident throughout the area. The natural setting of the San Dieguito River channel/Lake Hodges provides the predominant visual characteristic through Santa Fe Valley.

Much of the land near and within the Santa Fe Valley SPA boundaries is currently devoted to agricultural production. Approximately 995 acres of land is currently being used to support orchards, field crops, and/or horticultural activities.

4.1.2 Specific Plan Area Impacts

Santa Fe Valley Land Use Policy Consistency

Criteria For Significance Determination

The project would have a significant land use impact if it is not consistent with the San Diego County General Plan's San Dieguito Community Plan and San Diego County's Regional Land Use Element of the General Plan.

The Draft Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan (October 1994) was reviewed for consistency with the San Diego County General Plan's San Dieguito Community Plan and San Diego County's Regional Land Use Element of the General Plan. This evaluation indicated that the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan would be consistent with the aforementioned planning documents.

For a detailed discussion of the policy consistency analysis, refer to the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Policy Consistency Analysis on file and available for public review at the County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use located at 5201 Ruffin Road in San Diego.

Santa Fe Valley Environmental Plan/Goal Consistency

Criteria For Significance Determination

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, indicates that a project will normally have a significant effect on the environment if it will conflict with adopted environmental plans and goals of the community where it is located. Therefore, the project would result in a significant impact if it is inconsistent with adopted environmental plans and goals of the local community.

Consistency with Environmental Plan/Goals

The San Dieguito Community Plan sets forth various goals related to protection of natural resources and sensitive habitats within its planning area. These goals focus on scenic

qualities, open space, recreational amenities, sensitive habitats, and natural resources as discussed in Section 4.1.1.

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan addresses local environmental goals through identification of and planning for conservation of sensitive resources. These goals are addressed in the various elements of the Specific Plan including the Open Space and Conservation, Land Use, and Community Design Elements.

Sensitive resources have been identified and are planned to be conserved and/or mitigated as part of the Open Space and Conservation Element of the Specific Plan. These include sensitive environmental, cultural, and visual resources. The major areas proposed for conservation include: 1) areas along the San Dieguito River Valley that include the 100-year floodplain, high quality coastal sage scrub, riparian wetland habitats, significant archaeological sites, and slopes over 25 percent; 2) areas along Lusardi Creek that are within the 100-year floodplain, significant areas of coastal sage scrub, riparian wetlands; and 3) areas in the southwestern portion of the SPA containing biological resources of substantial sensitivity and slopes over 25 percent. In order to conserve these areas, the Specific Plan designates the above areas as permanent open space.

It is the objective of the Specific Plan to encourage the protection, dedication, acquisition and/or exaction of sensitive lands. Open space areas are preserved using two categories: Open Space I and Open Space II. Open Space I is planned to be preserved as permanent open space; Open Space II is planned to act as a buffer between the core biological areas within Open Space I and development areas. In Open Space II, active and passive recreational uses are allowed.

The Specific Plan also requires that prior to recordation of any subdivision map or obtaining final approval of any other discretionary permits for land with a "D" Sensitive Area Designator, the affected projects must dedicate sensitive lands designated as Open Space I to a conservator agency approved by the County of San Diego. These lands are planned to be preserved and managed as permanent open space, contributing to the establishment of regional open space corridors.

The Santa Fe Valley Open Space and Conservation Element is intended to protect and maintain all sensitive lands designated as open space within the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area. This component of the Specific Plan is developed through close coordination

with appropriate local, state, and federal resource agencies, and Santa Fe Valley property owners. The Open Space and Conservation Element reflects the agreements and compromises of land owners, State and Federal resource agencies, various County staff, and the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority staff.

The Recreation Element of the General Plan and San Dieguito Community Plan indicate that planned land uses in the Santa Fe Valley SPA will generate the need for a local park. The Specific Plan proposes to accommodate a 14-acre neighborhood park on a site designated on the Specific Plan Land Use Policy Map, in conjunction with potential school sites. If implemented, San Diego County Service Area 83 will maintain the park, possibly jointly with the Poway Unified School District. Trails will also be provided throughout the SPA for recreational purposes.

Certain significant impacts to cultural, biological, and visual resources have been identified in the applicable sections of this EIR. These impacts would be mitigated through the proposed mitigation measures. Refer to the applicable sections of this EIR for a detailed discussion of these issues.

Therefore, through project planning and design features; requirements of the Specific Plan's Open Space and Conservation, Land Use, and Community Design Elements; and mitigation measures the project is in compliance with the adopted environmental plans and goals in the local community.

Physical Land Use Conflicts and Land Use Compatibility

Criteria for Significance Determination

A significant land use impact would occur if the proposed project would result in or require substantial physical alteration of the present or planned land use of an area, or substantially degrade the quality of the environment as a result of land use incompatibility.

Displacement of a Large Number of People

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Appendix G (m), a significant land use impact would result if the proposed project displaced a large number of people. The Santa Fe Valley SPA is generally undeveloped. Approximately 20 residences exist onsite. Assuming

2.87 persons per household (SANDAG 1990), the current population of the SPA is estimated to be approximately 57 persons.

The existing residences are primarily single family detached homes on estate and rural-type lots. Development of the Santa Fe Valley SPA would not displace most of the existing homes within the SPA boundaries. These residences would be maintained in their existing condition. However, as individual property owners begin to develop their land towards more intensive uses, the existing homes and agricultural uses would be replaced by more intensive residential, recreational, and commercial land uses. Using aerial photo interpretation, approximately five homes could be displaced by development proposed within the SPA. This would equate to displacement at ultimate build-out of up to approximately 14 persons. Therefore, while displacement would occur, it would be minor and incremental, and is not considered a significant impact. Each of the land owners associated with the Santa Fe Valley SPA would develop only property owned by them; it is not likely that any persons would be displaced who did not opt to develop their own property. Since more intense development would be implemented in lieu of the existing limited onsite development, no significant impacts to residents would be expected.

Disrupt or Divide the Physical Arrangement of an Established Community

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Appendix G (u), a significant land use impact would result if the proposed project disrupted or divided the physical arrangement of an established community. While limited development exists within the boundaries of the Santa Fe Valley SPA, the area is largely undeveloped and is not an organized, established "community." The small Santa Fe Hills area is the nearest "community" to the SPA. Low density rural type development is proposed as part of the Specific Plan in the area of Santa Fe Valley that surrounds Santa Fe Hills and is not expected to divide or disrupt the existing development in Santa Fe Hills. Therefore, the project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

Conflict with Established Recreational, Educational, Religious, or Scientific Uses of the Area

According to CEQA Guidelines Appendix G (w), a significant impact would result of the proposed modifications conflicted with established recreational, educational, religious, or scientific uses of an area. There are no established educational, religious (i.e., non-

prehistoric/historic), or scientific uses on site. Past prehistoric/historic religious uses on the site are addressed in Section 4.3, Cultural Resources. The existing trails onsite would be enhanced by a formalized trail system as part of project implementation. No other organized recreational uses of the site exist. Therefore, the project would not conflict with established recreational, educational, religious, or scientific uses of an area.

Convert Prime Agricultural Land to Non-Agricultural Use or Impair the Agricultural Productivity of Prime Agricultural Land

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G(y) stipulates that a project will normally have a significant effect on the environment if it will convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or impair the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural land. Designation of what constitutes "prime" agricultural land for this impact analysis includes Prime Farmlands as defined by the California Department of Conservation, lands categorized as Farmland of Local Importance as defined by the County of San Diego, and/or Agricultural Preserves identified by the County of San Diego under the Williamson Act. Therefore, effects to these agricultural resources would be considered a significant land use impact.

The Farmland Conversion Report 1986 to 1988 prepared by the State of California Department of Conservation Office of Land Conversion (California Department of Conservation 1990), defines Prime Farmland Land as:

> Lands with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. The land must be cropped and be supported by a developed irrigation water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality during the growing season.

Through the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act), the California Legislature has established the priority of preserving the state's most productive agricultural lands. The Williamson Act places the responsibility for identifying significant agricultural open space lands with local general purpose governments and established standards by which to identify such lands. The Williamson Act encourages local governments to identify prime agricultural lands within their jurisdiction by designating agricultural preserves (Public Resources Code Section 30241 and 30113).

Farmland of Local Importance designated by the County of San Diego includes land that meets all the characteristics of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance as defined by the California Department of Conservation. with the exception of irrigated farmland (agricultural lands need not be irrigated in San Diego County to qualify as Farmland of Local Importance). The Farmland Conversion Report 1986 to 1988 prepared by the State of California Department of Conservation Office of Land Conversion (California Department of Conservation 1990), defines Farmland of Statewide Importance as:

> Lands similar to Prime but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or with less ability to hold and store moisture, and have the same reliable source of adequate quality irrigation water available during the growing season as required for Prime Farmland.

Acreages of prime farmlands on Santa Fe Valley were calculated using two data layers: 1) the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program and 2) SANDAG Agricultural Preserves from the County of San Diego (Figure 4.1-2).

There are currently approximately 995 acres of agricultural/horticultural land within the Santa Fe Valley SPA boundaries. Analysis of this area revealed that there are no Prime Farmlands, nor are there Williamson Act farmlands (i.e., Agricultural Preserves) within the Santa Fe Valley SPA boundary. However, approximately 575 acres of land are classified as Farmlands of Local Importance. Development on or impairment of agricultural productivity would occur on all of the Farmlands of Local Importance with the SPA.

The County of San Diego currently has approximately 107,237 acres of land designated as Farmlands of Local Importance. Therefore, the loss of 575 acres of Farmlands of Local Importance within the SPA would constitute an approximate 0.54 percent overall regional reduction of such acreage. Given the limited and minor affects upon regional Farmlands of Local Importance resulting from development within the SPA, this is not considered to be a significant impact.

Community Character

Several developed or developing communities either abut or are near the Santa Fe Valley SPA. These communities include Fairbanks Ranch, Rancho Santa Fe, Del Dios, Rancho

Del Rio, and Santa Fe Hills. Generally, these communities are characterized by large-lot, high-amenity residential development.

Several proposed and/or planned communities either abut or would be near the proposed Santa Fe Valley SPA. These communities include the County of San Diego's 4S Ranch and Rancho Cielo SPAs, and the City of San Diego's Planned North City Future Urbanizing Area Black Mountain Ranch SPA. Generally, these communities are characterized by large-lot, high-amenity residential development. These areas also include relatively high density clustered residential development and supporting commercial areas.

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan establishes a land use planning framework for the development of residential and commercial development. Development is planned to be compatible with existing environmental resources, natural features, and adjoining communities. The SPA also addresses protection, management, and long-term conservation of sensitive biological, cultural, and visual resources within the SPA. The Plan proposes to accommodate a maximum of 1,200 residential dwelling units with varying densities to facilitate preservation of open spaces.

Development proposed by the Specific Plan would be consistent with the present state of spaciousness and rural living in the San Dieguito Community Planning area. The SPA provides for low-intensity land uses and conservation of sensitive open spaces. Development would be gradual/incremental, orderly, and would not result in any unmitigated environmental impacts to the existing environment. As such, the type of development proposed by the project would be consistent with the community character goals established in the San Dieguito Community Plan for residential development, as well as the surrounding and planned residential development.

Compatibility with Onsite and Surrounding Land Uses

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan outlines general policies and implementing measures to allow future development within the SPA consistent with the Specific Plan. The Plan proposes to accommodate a maximum of 1,200 residential dwelling units with varying densities. The plan also proposes other amenities intended to serve the community such as schools, recreational facilities, and commercial areas. The distribution of land use is based upon the location of environmental, visual and cultural resources, accessibility, and major physical features. Figure 3-3 depicts the proposed land use plan for the Santa Fe Valley

SPA. For a detailed discussion of the proposed land uses associated with the SPA, refer to Section 3.0, Project Description, of this EIR.

San Dieguito River Park. The San Dieguito River Park area is characterized by diverse, high quality visual character, including varied topographic features, prominent ridgelines and landforms, and water features. Certain aspects of the proposed project would detract from the park-like resources along the river valley, impacting the visual quality along this scenic corridor. The SPA is within the San Dieguito River Park FPA. However, there is clear policy direction to preserve the scenic and environmental resources of the San Dieguito River Valley within the Santa Fe Valley SPA as part of the Specific Plan. Several chapters in the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan contain policies that address issues concerning the River Park, including Open Space and Conservation, Land Use, Circulation, and Community Design Elements. The Specific Plan proposes implementation of mutual goals and objectives as described by the County's General Plan and San Dieguito River Valley Park Concept Plan. The Specific Plan proposes preservation of the San Dieguito River Valley under open space land use designations. To minimize the visual impact of residential development on visually sensitive ridgeline and hillside properties, the Specific Plan proposes a special area designator called the "D" designator overlay which sets planning and design standards for development in visually sensitive areas. Issues associated with visual quality of the San Dieguito River Valley viewshed are identified in Section 4.4, Visual Quality/Aesthetics.

San Diego County Water Authority Existing Second Aqueduct Easement. The San Diego County Water Authority's (CWA) existing Second Aqueduct easement crosses the western portion of the Santa Fe Valley SPA in a northwest-southeast alignment. This large aqueduct delivers water to the CWA's member agencies who then distribute the potable water to the public. The CWA maintains a permanent easement over the pipeline of up to approximately 130 feet in width. Permanent structures requiring a reinforced concrete building pad are not allowed within the easement; although, streets, parking, utility infrastructure, trails, and shallow-rooted vegetation are typically allowed. The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan does not propose any development directly over the easement, therefore no significant impacts would occur.

SDG&E Transmission Line Easement. An SDG&E transmission line easement crosses the northwestern portion of the Santa Fe Valley SPA in a northwest-southeast alignment. SDG&E maintains a permanent easement under the transmission line of up to

approximately 200 feet in width. Permanent structures are not allowed within the easement; although, streets, parking, utility infrastructure, trails, and shallow-rooted vegetation would typically be allowed. The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan does not propose any development directly within the easement, therefore no significant impacts would occur.

4.1.3 Level of Significance

Land Use Policy Impacts

The project would not have a significant policy consistency-related land use impact because it is consistent with the San Diego County General Plan's San Dieguito Community Plan and San Diego County's Regional Land Use Element of the General Plan.

Environmental Plan/Goal Impacts

The project is consistent with adopted local environmental plans and goals. Therefore, no significant environmentally-related land use impacts were identified. Refer to specific discussions as they relate to other environmental issues in this EIR.

Physical Land Use Impacts

No significant physical land use conflicts or physical land use incompatibilities were identified, therefore, no significant physical land use impacts would occur.

4.1.4 Mitigation Measures

Land Use Policy Impacts

No mitigation is required.

Environmental Plan/Goal Impacts

No additional mitigation is required beyond the issue-specific measures proposed in other applicable sections of this EIR.

Physical Land Use Impacts

No additional mitigation is required beyond the issue-specific measures proposed in other applicable sections of this EIR.

4.1.5 Tentative Map Area Impacts

The land use issues analyzed at the Specific Plan level of detail in Section 4.1.2 were found not to be significant. Therefore, no land use-related tentative map impacts are addressed.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.2 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section summarizes the Biological Resources Technical Report prepared for the Santa Fe Valley project included as Appendix C (separately bound) to this EIR. This section describes existing biological resources in the Santa Fe Valley SPA, including the general distribution and species composition of the vegetation communities, as well as wildlife habitats and their utilization. Particular attention was given to determining the presence or absence of significant biological resources in the SPA and the degree to which the proposed project will affect those resources. Significant biological resources are defined as plant or animal species that are considered endangered, threatened, and/or rare by federal and state resource agencies, depleted or declining species, and species or vegetation communities of limited distribution. A discussion of permits and/or agreements that may be required from regulatory agencies is provided, along with measures for mitigating project related impacts.

4.2.1 Existing Conditions

Vegetation Communities

A total of eleven native vegetation associations, along with five associations dominated by nonnative species, were identified within the SPA (Table 4.2-1). Native vegetation communities include coastal sage scrub, chaparral (includes chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*)-dominated and southern mixed chaparral), southern maritime chaparral, perennial (native) grassland, coastal and valley freshwater marsh, southern willow scrub, mulefat scrub, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, southern coast live oak riparian forest, San Diego claypan vernal pool, and coast live oak woodland. Nonnative associations are nonnative grassland, tamarisk scrub, disturbed wetland, eucalyptus woodland, and ruderal habitat. In addition, swale/wetland ecotones, natural floodchannel/streambeds, seasonal streambeds, open water, rock outcrops, and agricultural and developed lands were also mapped. Table 4.2-1 lists the vegetation communities represented on the SPA. For presentation purposes, vegetation communities and other associations were aggregated into nine "habitat" types, the locations of which are presented

Table 4.2-1

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPA

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in SPA
GROUP 1: SENSITIVE HABITATS	
WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	
Wetlands	
Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh	35.1
Southern Willow Scrub	25.8
Mulefat Scrub	6.2
Tamarisk Scrub	0.5
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	21.7
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.3
Vernal Pool	0.2
Disturbed Wetland	3.6
Swale/Wetland Ecotone	6.7
Total Wetlands	**100.1**
Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	
Natural Floodchannel/Streambed	13.7
Seasonal Streambed[1]	(4.1)
Open Water	20.9
Total Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	**34.6**
TOTAL WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	**134.7**
SENSITIVE UPLANDS	
Coastal Sage Scrub	1315.0
Undisturbed	965.0
Disturbed	350.0
Coastal Sage Scrub/Chaparral	41.5
Southern Maritime Chaparral	13.5
Perennial Grassland	24.6
Coast Live Oak Woodland	1.9
Rock Outcrops	2.0

Table 4.2-1 (Continued)

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPA

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in SPA
TOTAL SENSITIVE UPLANDS	**1.394.4**
TOTAL GROUP 1 HABITATS	**1.533.2**
GROUP 2: NONSENSITIVE HABITATS	
Chaparral	470.8
Nonnative Grassland	251.3
Eucalyptus Woodland	44.8
Ruderal Habitat	263.6
TOTAL GROUP 2 HABITATS	**1.030.5**
GROUP 3: MAINTAINED LANDS	
Agricultural Land	510.2
Developed	89.4
TOTAL GROUP 3 HABITATS	**599.6**
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	**3,163.3**

1 Seasonal streambed acreage is shown because it is jurisdictional habitat. This acreage is already accounted for in the coincident habitat (e.g., chaparral) and is not counted in the total habitat acreages.

on Plate 1. Each of these habitats, and the vegetation communities and other associations aggregated within them, are discussed in the Biological Resources Technical Report.

Wildlife Habitat and Sensitive Animal Species

A variety of wildlife habitats occur within the SPA. Table 1, Appendix B, lists the wildlife species that were detected or have the potential to occur within the SPA, and the habitats associated with these species. The value of the wildlife habitat ranges from high in some of the undisturbed upland and riparian vegetation communities, to low in areas that have been converted to active agricultural lands. Food availability, cover and protection, water, topography, vegetation, and soil composition are important in determining the value of a habitat to wildlife. On a regional scale, high species diversity, unique vegetation communities, and connection to surrounding natural open spaces give an area a higher wildlife resource value.

Sensitive Wildlife

Sensitive wildlife species are those given special sensitivity status designations by the federal or state governments (i.e., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), or the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)) (USFWS 1994a; CDFG 1992), the County (1991), and recognized local sources (Everett 1979; SDHS 1980a, 1980b). For organizational purposes and establishing criteria for determining impacts for this project, sensitive wildlife species have been divided into three groups based on their sensitivity status. These groups are:

- Group 1 - Federally and state-listed species, species proposed or petitioned for listing, federal C1 candidates, and species protected by the Bald Eagle Protection Act

- Group 2 - Federal C2 and C3 candidate species and CSC species that are not proposed for listing;

- Group 3 - Locally sensitive species as identified by Everett (1979) and SDHS (1980a, 1980b).

Thirty (30) sensitive animal species were detected within the SPA during field surveys. These species include 1 crustacean, 1 amphibian, 7 reptiles, 19 birds, and 2 mammals. Two additional species were not detected during recent surveys, but have been historically documented from the SPA. Another 29 species have varying potential to occur onsite based on the presence of suitable habitat and their occurrence in the region. Sensitive animal species detected during recent or historic surveys and those with the potential to occur within the Santa Fe Valley SPA are listed in Table 1 of Appendix B. Locations of sensitive wildlife detected within the SPA are also presented in Plate 2. Sensitive species with only a low potential to occur in the SPA are discussed in the Biological Resources Technical Report.

Sensitive Plants

Fourteen sensitive plant species were observed within the SPA and another two species were reported from historic sightings (i.e., pre-1992 surveys). While none of these species is currently listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS (1990), the CDFG (1990) lists both San Diego thorn-mint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*) and Encinitas baccharis (*Baccharis vanessae*) as endangered. Two other species are proposed for listing as endangered by the federal government. In addition, nine of these species are federal candidate species (USFWS 1990). All sixteen of these species are also listed as sensitive by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) (Skinner and Pavlik 1994). For organizational purposes and establishing criteria for determining significance of impacts, sensitive plant species have been divided into three groups based on their sensitivity status. These groups are:

- Group 1 - Federally and state-listed species, species proposed for listing, and federal C1 candidate species
- Group 2 - Federal C2 candidate species, CNPS List 1B and List 2 species
- Group 3 - CNPS List 4 species

A description of each species, along with their sensitivity status, distribution and occurrence within the SPA is summarized in Table 2 of Appendix B, and species' locations are presented on Plate 2.

Wildlife Movement Corridors and Habitat Linkages

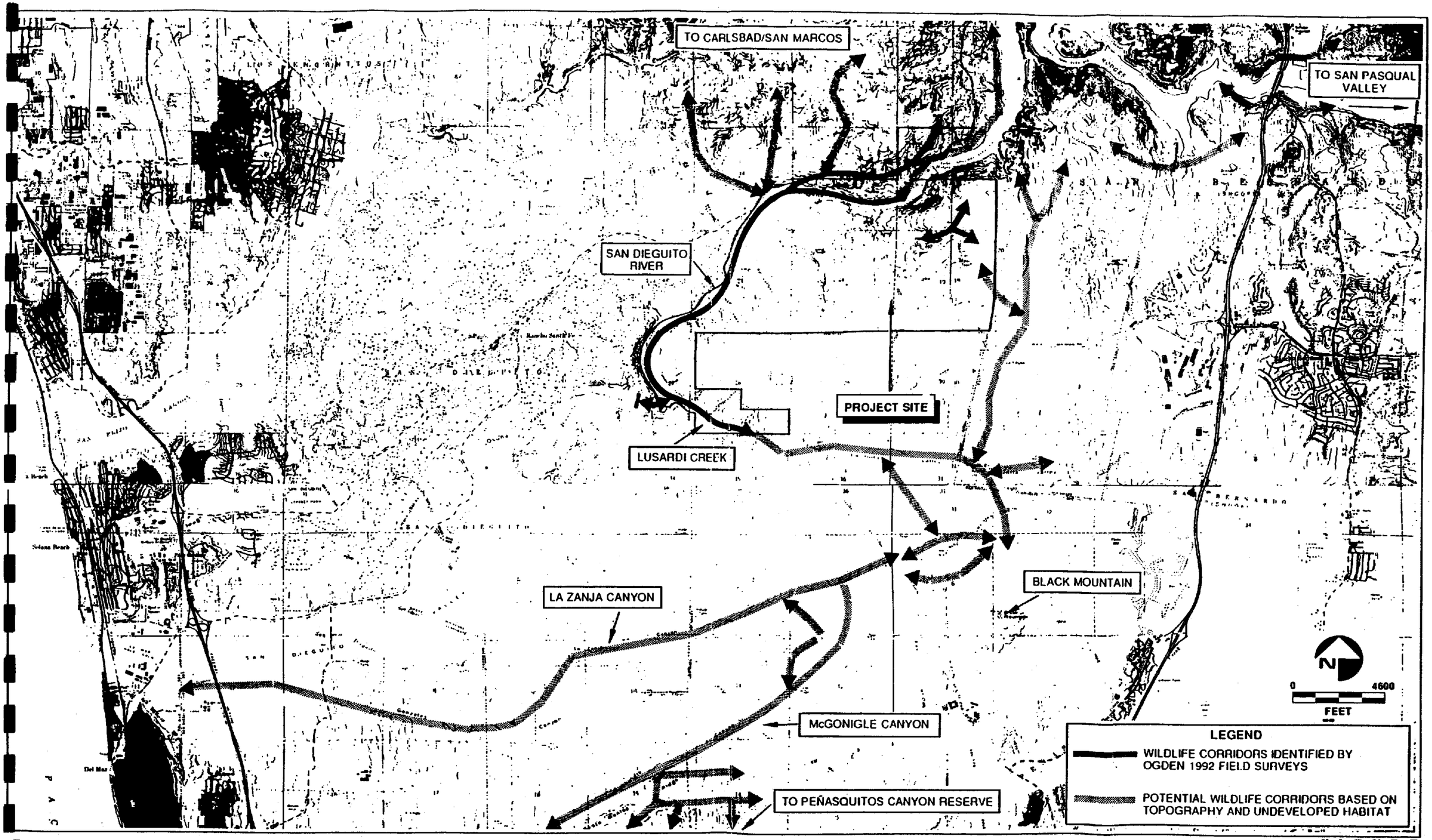
Habitat linkages are defined as natural areas that not only provide connectivity between habitat patches but also provide year-round foraging and reproduction habitat for resident plants and animals (Ogden 1995d). Corridors are defined as narrower connections that allow for wildlife movement and dispersal.

Wildlife Movement Corridors

A wildlife corridor can be defined as a linear landscape feature that allows animal movement between two patches of habitat or between habitat and geographically discrete resources (e.g., water). It is useful to differentiate between regional and local wildlife corridors. Regional corridors link two or more large areas of natural open space and are necessary to maintain demographic and genetic exchange between wildlife populations residing within these geographically distinct areas. Local corridors allow resident animals access to necessary resources (e.g., water, food, cover, or den sites) within a large habitat patch and they may also function as secondary connections to the regional corridor system.

The San Dieguito River Valley and adjacent slopes form an important regional wildlife movement corridor (Figure 4.2-1). A variety of large animal species have been detected in the river valley (such as mountain lion, mule deer, and bobcat) indicating the valley is suitable for large animal movement. The steep topography serves to funnel animals between Lake Hodges Dam and the relatively flat San Dieguito River Valley to the west where animals can choose to continue to travel south and then west with the river, or can travel north across Del Dios Highway, or can turn east at Lusardi Creek. The San Dieguito River connects wildlife habitats in the east part of the county (e.g., Poway and Escondido) with habitats north of the Del Dios Highway (Olivenhain, San Marcos, and Carlsbad) and habitats to the west (Del Mar), and to the south (Black Mountain, Peñasquitos Canyon). This corridor is important as habitat in the area is becoming increasingly fragmented and the linkages between large blocks of habitat become developed.

Lusardi Creek is an important regional corridor between the San Dieguito River Valley to the west and Black Mountain to the east (Figure 4.2-1). It provides topography and vegetative cover for animals moving through the southern portion of the SPA. Numerous small intermittent drainages and drainage swales throughout the site may also function as



OGDEN

Wildlife Corridors within the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area and Vicinity

FIGURE **4.2-1**

local movement corridors providing access to interior habitat areas of the SPA and surrounding areas.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

The Santa Fe Valley SPA supports a substantial portion of an important regional California gnatcatcher core reserve population (Ogden 1993, 1995c). The Lake Hodges/Santa Fe Valley core gnatcatcher population is linked by coastal sage scrub and other natural habitats with other core reserves to the north (southeast Carlsbad, Olivenhain/Del Dios), and to the east (Escondido/San Pasqual Valley, north Poway). Much of the habitat between these population areas has been developed or is proposed for development (Figure 4.2-2)

The San Dieguito River Valley and coastal sage scrub and other natural habitats bordering it, provide linkages between core gnatcatcher populations to the north, east, and south. Coastal sage scrub in this linkage also provides essential breeding habitat for this species. There are substantial distances between some populations (e.g., Lake Hodges/Santa Fe Valley and Black Mountain populations) which may be beyond the dispersal capability of an individual gnatcatcher. Because of the increasing habitat fragmentation in the region and the importance of genetic exchange between populations, it is essential to preserve any existing linkages between core populations.

The San Dieguito River linkage is especially important as a part of the linkage between eastern gnatcatcher populations (Escondido, North Poway), the north shore of Lake Hodges, and gnatcatcher populations to the north of the SPA (Olivenhain/Mount Israel, Carlsbad, and San Marcos). The San Dieguito River heads south at the northwest end of the SPA and the linkage continues south to Lusardi Creek. At this juncture, gnatcatchers can travel east to Black Mountain or continue southwest toward Del Mar.

There is a second California gnatcatcher habitat linkage which is parallel to and south of the San Dieguito River linkage. This linkage retains the east to west connectivity within the Lake Hodges/Santa Fe Valley core gnatcatcher population area and connects gnatcatchers to the east at 4S Ranch. The linkage consists of coastal sage scrub along the south shore of Lake Hodges and 4S Ranch and extends west through sage scrub in the east-central portion of the Santa Fe Valley SPA. The coastal sage scrub, with high gnatcatcher occupancy, continues west through the SPA along south-facing ridges. It links up with a north to south running ravine and heads northwest through patchy scrub and chaparral habitats until

OGDEN

FIGURE

4.2-2

Coastal California Gnatcatcher Core Populations

it connects with the San Dieguito River Valley gnatcatcher linkage at the northwest corner of the SPA.

These two linkages are critical to maintain connectivity of regional California gnatcatcher populations especially in light of other planned and approved developments in the area including 4S Ranch. Black Mountain Ranch. and Rancho Cielo.

4.2.2 Specific Plan Area Impacts

Impacts to vegetation communities. sensitive plant and wildlife species. and wildlife corridors and habitat linkages are evaluated in this section.

Impacts can be divided into the following four categories: direct, indirect. permanent. and temporary. Direct impacts occur when biological resources are altered. disturbed. destroyed. or removed during the course of project implementation. Examples of direct impacts include such activities as removal, grading, or brushing of vegetation, diverting or channelizing surface water flows, filling wetland habitats, severing or degrading wildlife corridors the loss of individual species from habitat clearing, loss of foraging, nesting, or burrowing habitat for wildlife species, and habitat disturbance.

Indirect impacts occur when project-related activities affect biological resources in a manner other than direct. Potential indirect impacts include elevated noise levels, increased lighting, increased human activity, introduction of nonnative predators (e.g., domestic cats and dogs) and invasive plant species, increased erosion and sedimentation of stream channels

Both direct and indirect impacts can be classified as either temporary or permanent, depending on the duration of the impact. Temporary impacts are impacts that may be considered reversible effects on biological resources. Permanent impacts are those impacts resulting in the irreversible removal, disturbance, or destruction of biological resources.

Criteria for Significance

Criteria or thresholds for determining the significance of an impact are presented in the following sections to clarify and quantify, to the extent feasible, at what point an impact to a biological resource is considered significant. Significance thresholds are also presented

here to achieve consistency when evaluating the impacts associated with the different project alternatives. In general, the primary criteria for determining significance are the sensitivity ratings assigned to certain biological resources by the federal and state resource agencies (e.g., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), USFWS, CDFG). The County generally uses the sensitivity ratings provided by these resource agencies when listing sensitive resources or assessing the significance of potential impacts at the local or regional level. Therefore, determinations of significance in this document will focus on the sensitivity ratings of biological resources and the degree to which the resource may be affected (e.g., temporary versus permanent impacts).

The significance of an impact can be evaluated at various geographic and spatial scales. For example, biological resources could be considered sensitive on a local scale but not at a larger regional scale. For this analysis, the local scale consists of the SPA, and the regional scale coastal San Diego County. Significance criteria are based on County of San Diego (1991) CEQA guidelines and guidelines provided in Nelson (1981), and can be applied to significance determinations at both local and regional scales. Nelson (1981) was one of the first published articles to formally organize ecological criteria for significance determination.

For organizational and consistency purposes, sensitive biological resources (excluding wildlife corridors and habitat linkages) in this document are divided into three groups based on higher, moderate, and lower sensitivity ratings. As discussed above, significance thresholds are based in large part on the current regulatory status of the resource. Therefore, by grouping resources with equivalent or similar regulatory status, significance criteria can be established that apply to all resources within a group. For example, most impacts to the highest sensitivity group resources (e.g., wetlands, federally and state-listed species) are considered significant, while a determination of significance for impacts to the moderate (e.g., nonsensitive natural habitats, federal C2 candidate species) and lower sensitivity groups (e.g., agricultural lands, locally sensitive species) will be more dependent on such factors as setting (e.g., population size, habitat quality), and the magnitude and nature of the impacts (i.e., temporary versus permanent). It should also be noted that grouping and the determination of significance for different types of resources are sometimes based on a different set of criteria (e.g., moderate "sensitivity" vegetation communities are "nonsensitive" natural habitats, while moderate "sensitivity" plant species are based on their CNPS status (i.e., federal C2 candidate and CNPS Lists 1 and 2 taxa)).

Specific significance thresholds are defined in the following sections for vegetation communities, sensitive plants and wildlife, wildlife corridors, and habitat linkages.

Organization of Impacts Analysis

For the purpose of the impacts analysis, the Specific Plan land use categories are aggregated into three designations: 1) "Open Space," which includes Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas) and, due to proximity to the San Dieguito River Valley, those areas within the Balcor tentative map golf course that will be preserved, enhanced, and/or revegetated with native plant species after construction; 2) Very Low and Rural residential designations; and 3) "Developed," which includes Open Space II (areas within the Balcor and McCrink Ranch tentative map golf courses that will be revegetated with turf or other nonnative/ornamental plant species after construction), residential (excluding Very Low and Rural), commercial, community facilities, roadways, clubhouse, resort, and driving range. It is assumed that 100 percent of the land within Open Space will be preserved and managed as permanent open space, while all land within the Developed areas will be lost to development.

Proposed Specific Plan Biological Resources Protection

The Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan was formulated taking into consideration the biological resources present on the SPA. The Santa Fe Valley SPA *Opportunities and Constraints Study* indicated the existence of significant biological resources within the SPA. A Biological Resources Sensitivity map was used by the Specific Plan planners and county staff to determine future development and preservation areas. The Specific Plan proposes to permanently protect a large portion of the site's environmental resources, approximately 1,400 acres or 44 percent of the SPA. The Specific Plan identifies an open space network within Santa Fe Valley to be established through dedication of open space easements and/or dedication of land to the County or a conservator agency through the discretionary permit process.

The Specific Plan's Conservation and Open Space Element, identifies two open space categories of the Specific Plan. Open Space-I identifies environmentally sensitive lands designated for permanent open space protection. These areas are intended to be dedicated as permanent open space as part of a regional open space corridor and habitat preserve system. In addition, these areas are also intended to meet the objectives of the Natural

Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP), therefore, qualifying the Specific Plan for permitting authority under the 4(d) rule or as a subarea under the NCCP (see further discussion of NCCP under the heading California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages in this section). The Open Space-I areas are not to be disturbed by any uses except those identified on the Specific Plan such as the proposed bridge river crossing, trails and a trail staging area, and essential public facilities such as utility lines and/or poles.

Open Space-II identifies both sensitive and nonsensitive lands designated for both passive and active recreational uses. These areas are intended to serve as a buffer between sensitive Open Space-I areas and the more intensive development areas (i.e., residential). Uses permitted in Open Space-II include golf courses, irrigation/water storage ponds, trails, and essential public facilities such as utility lines and/or poles. The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Specific Plan gives direction for implementing conservation of sensitive biological resources through its related goals, policies, and implementation strategies.

The D2 designator proposed by the Specific Plan to be applied to lands within the Very Low and Rural residential designated areas, and the low residential area in the southwestern portion of the SPA, was also taken into consideration for this impact analysis (see Figure 3-4 for areas that are labeled with the D2 designator). According to the Specific Plan, the objective of this designator is to assure that all feasible measures are taken to maximize the amount and viability of sensitive habitat resources in environmentally sensitive areas approved for residential development in the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan (County of San Diego 1995).

Standards for protection of coastal sage scrub and/or chaparral have been developed and include maximizing connectivity, minimizing brush clearing for fire control, and dedication of open space easements outside the development envelope to the County. Standards for vernal pools include maximizing protection, conducting site-specific studies to document habitat value, providing offsite mitigation as appropriate, and dedicating open space easements, including buffers, to the County. According to the D2 designator, the development envelope (exclusive of access roads/driveways) within the Rural and Very Low residential areas is limited to 1.5 acres per parcel on parcels that contain sensitive biological resources. Because the location of these development envelopes is not currently known, and the distribution of sensitive biological resources has not been quantified at the parcel level, the impact analysis for these areas was done qualitatively.

Impact Analysis

Impacts to the following habitats are analyzed below:

- Group 1 - Sensitive habitats: wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S., and sensitive uplands
- Group 2 - Nonsensitive habitats
- Group 3 - Maintained lands

Table 4.2-2 presents acreages of direct impacts to vegetation communities resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan. Vegetation communities within the SPA, along with proposed Specific Plan land uses, are shown on Plate 1.

Group 1 – Wetlands and Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.

Criteria for Significance Determination

Wetland habitat is considered a sensitive and declining resource by several regulatory agencies including the USFWS and CDFG. Wetland vegetation communities are also given the highest priority within the state inventory by the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) (Holland 1986), and are considered sensitive by the County of San Diego (1980 and 1991). The ACOE also exerts jurisdiction over all waters of the U.S., which includes wetlands and unvegetated waters. In addition, ACOE and CDFG policies of "no net loss" of wetland habitat require that all impacts to wetlands be mitigated by in-kind creation of wetland habitat at a minimum ratio of 1:1. For these reasons, all direct and indirect impacts to wetland habitat and unvegetated waters of the U.S. are adverse and significant.

Direct Impacts

Implementation of the proposed SPA development would result in the direct, permanent loss of approximately 16.3 acres of wetlands and 0.9 acres of unvegetated waters (including seasonal streambeds) of the U.S. (Table 4.2-2). These impacts include the loss

Table 4.2-2

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN AREA BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in SPA	Acreage (% of total)			
		Open Space[1]	Developed[3]		
			Very Low Density and Rural Residential[2]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
GROUP I: SENSITIVE HABITATS					
WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.					
Wetlands					
Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh	35.1	29.4 (83.8)	0.0 (0.0)	0.8 (2.3)	4.9 (13.9)
Southern Willow Scrub	25.8	22.6 (87.6)	0.0 (0.0)	1.8 (7.0)	1.4 (5.4)
Mulefat Scrub	.6.2	5.1 (82.3)	0.2 (3.2)	0.1 (1.6)	0.8 (12.9)
Tamarisk Scrub	0.5	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (40.0)	0.3 (60.0)
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	21.7	21.5 (99.1)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (0.9)
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.3	0.3 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Vernal Pool	0.2	0.0 (0.0)	0.16 (80.0)[4]	0.0 (0.0)	0.04 (20.0)[5]
Disturbed Wetland	3.6	2.8 (77.8)	0.0 (0.0)	0.3 (8.3)	0.5 (13.9)
Swale/Wetland Ecotone	6.7	1.7 (25.4)	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (3.0)	4.8 (71.6)
Total Wetlands	**100.1**	**83.4 (83.2)**	**0.4 (0.4)**	**3.4 (3.4)**	**12.9 (12.9)**
Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.					
Natural Floodchannel/Streambed	13.7	13.7 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Seasonal Streambed[7]	(4.1)	2.8 (68.3)	0.5 (12.2)	0.2 (4.9)	0.6 (14.6)
Open Water	20.9	20.8 (99.5)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (0.5)
Total Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	**34.6**	**34.5 (96.4)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.1 (1.6)**
TOTAL WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	**134.7**	**117.9 (87.5)**	**0.4 (0.3)**	**3.4 (2.5)**	**13.0 (9.7)**
SENSITIVE UPLANDS					
Coastal Sage Scrub[6]	1315.0	767.1 (58.3)	224.0 (17.0)	80.7 (6.1)	243.0 (18.5)
Undisturbed	965.0	628.7 (65.2)	188.8 (19.6)	16.8 (1.7)	130.5 (13.5)
Disturbed	350.0	138.4 (39.5)	35.2 (10.0)	63.9 (18.3)	112.5 (32.1)
Coastal Sage Scrub/Chaparral	41.5	19.5 (47.0)	7.6 (18.3)	3.4 (8.2)	11.0 (26.5)
Southern Maritime Chaparral	13.5	10.4 (77.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.2 (9.1)	1.8 (13.3)
Perennial Grassland	24.6	21.6 (87.8)	0.7 (2.8)	1.5 (6.1)	0.8 (3.3)

Table 4.2-2 (Continued)

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN AREA BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in SPA	Acreage (% of total)			
		Open Space[1]	Very Low Density and Rural Residential[2]	Developed[3] Open Space II - Disturbed	Developed[3] All Other Development
Coast Live Oak Woodland	1.9	1.4 (73.7)	0.0 (0.0)	0.4 (21.0)	0.1 (5.3)
Rock Outcrops	2.0	2.0 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
TOTAL SENSITIVE UPLANDS	**1394.4**	**822.0 (58.8)**	**232.3 (16.6)**	**87.4 (6.2)**	**256.7 (18.4)**
TOTAL GROUP 1 HABITATS	**1533.2**	**939.9 (61.3)**	**232.7 (15.2)**	**90.6 (5.9)**	**269.7 (17.6)**
GROUP 2: NONSENSITIVE HABITATS					
Chaparral	470.8	309.5 (65.7)	127.2 (27.0)	7.0 (1.5)	27.1 (5.8)
Nonnative Grassland	251.3	47.2 (18.8)	13.4 (5.3)	58.4 (23.2)	132.3 (52.6)
Eucalyptus Woodland	44.8	32.4 (72.3)	0.5 (1.1)	4.1 (9.2)	7.8 (17.4)
Ruderal Habitat	263.6	59.6 (22.6)	18.9 (7.2)	24.8 (9.4)	160.3 (60.8)
TOTAL GROUP 2 HABITATS	**1030.5**	**448.7 (43.5)**	**160.0 (15.5)**	**94.5 (9.2)**	**327.5 (31.8)**
GROUP 3: MAINTAINED LANDS					
Agricultural Land	510.2	33.8 (6.6)	21.3 (4.2)	76.9 (15.1)	378.2 (74.1)
Developed	89.4	34.5 (38.6)	10.1 (11.3)	11.9 (13.3)	32.9 (36.8)
TOTAL GROUP 3 HABITATS	**599.6**	**68.3 (11.4)**	**31.4 (5.2)**	**88.8 (14.8)**	**411.1 (68.6)**
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	**3163.3**	**1456.9 (46.1)**	**424.1 (13.4)**	**273.7 (8.6)**	**1008.3 (31.9)**

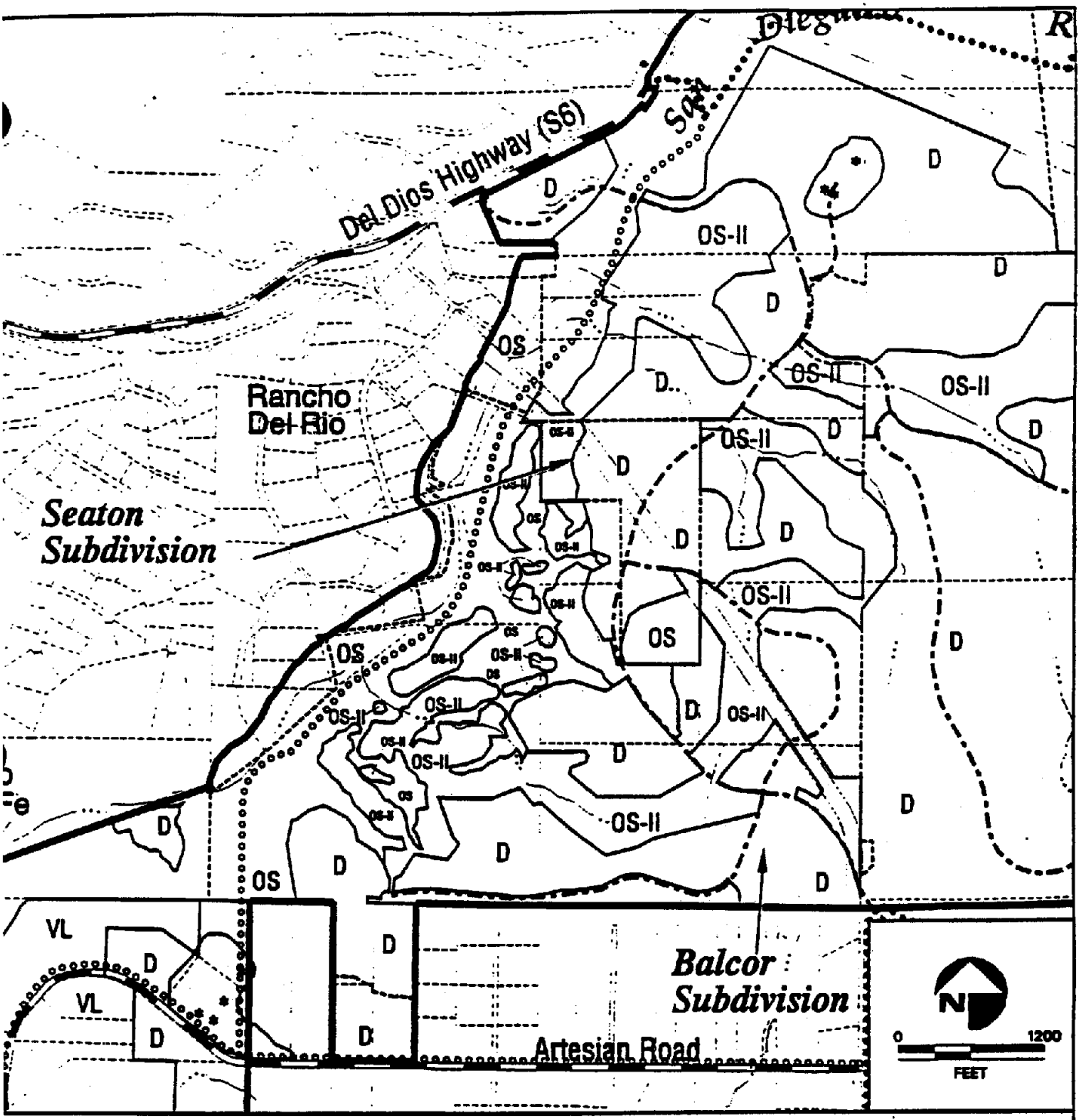
1 Open Space includes Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas) and Open Space II - Preserved (areas in golf course with native vegetation).
2 Very Low Density Residential is 1 dwelling unit/4 - 5.9 acres, Rural Residential is 1 dwelling unit/6 acres and larger. Residential development in these areas is subject to special site plan criteria ("D2" designator) to minimize impacts to sensitive resources (i.e., sensitive habitats and species, wildlife corridors, and habitat linkages).
3 Developed includes Open Space II Disturbed (turf and nonnative vegetation areas in golf course, and equestrian facility), Residential (excluding Very Low Density and Rural), Commercial, Community Facilities, roadways, clubhouse, resort, and driving range.
4 This acreage is the area covered by 4 vernal pool basins at a single location in the southwestern SPA. The total vernal pool watershed at this location encompasses 12.0 acres, of which approximately 11.8 acres is upland habitat.
5 This acreage is the area covered by 4 vernal pool basins at a single location in the northwestern SPA. The total vernal pool watershed at this location encompasses 6.2 acres, of which approximately 6.1 acres is upland habitat.
6 Includes Diegan coastal sage scrub and coyote bush scrub.
7 Seasonal streambed acreage is shown because it is jurisdictioned habitat. This acreage is already accounted for in the coincident habitat (e.g., chaparral) and is not counted in the total habitat acreages.
Note: Numbers may not sum to totals as shown, due to rounding.

of at least 4 vernal pool basins covering approximately 0.04 acre in the northwestern corner of the SPA within the Balcor tentative map area (Figure 4.2-3). The watershed for these pools, which includes both the vernal pool basins and surrounding upland habitat (approximately 6.2 acres in size) would also be directly impacted (Plate 1). Total direct impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. represents approximately 12.2 percent of the total acreage of these habitats in the SPA.

In addition to the impacts discussed above, additional acreage of wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. could be directly impacted in areas proposed for Very Low and Rural residential development as well as low residential development in the southwestern portion of the SPA. Approximately 0.9 acre of these habitats occurs in these areas, including at least 4 vernal pool basins covering approximately 0.2 acre in the southwestern corner of the SPA (Figure 4.2-3). In addition, the vernal pool watershed in this area encompasses approximately 12.0 acres, most of which is coastal sage scrub habitat (Plate 1). The exact acreage of impacts would depend upon the distribution of these habitats among the parcels within the Very Low and Rural residential development areas, the degree to which those parcels are subdivided, and the degree to which direct impacts to these habitats can be avoided or minimized through appropriate placement of development envelopes as per the standards of the D2 designator. Currently, single-family residential development envelopes on parcels containing sensitive resources are restricted to a maximum of 1.5 acres per parcel. This acreage includes fuel management zones, but does not include access roads and driveways.

Permanent loss of approximately 16.3 acres of wetlands and 0.9 acres of unvegetated waters of the U.S., and direct impacts to approximately 6.2 acres of the watershed for the resources would represent significant, adverse impacts.

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Specific Plan contains goals and policies relevant to the protection of wetlands. The overall goal of the Conservation and Open Space Element is to conserve significant environmental resources including wetlands. Proposed development is subject to the following standards where the resources to be protected involves wetland habitat:



Vernal Pool Watershed

Vernal Pool Basins

Tentative Map Boundary

Proposed Road

Proposed Paved Trail

Proposed Unpaved Trail

Proposed Land Use

(aggregated from Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Land Use Map)

OS	OPEN SPACE (OS-I (Sensitive Resources Protection Area) and OS-II areas in golf course preserves or revegetated with native vegetation)
OS-II	OPEN SPACE-II DISTURBED (golf course turf and surrounding areas planted with nonnative/ornamental species, and equestrian facility)
VL	VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (1 du/4 acres) and RURAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (1 du/5 acres)
D	DEVELOPED (all developed areas designated on Land Use Map including Residential, (except Very Low and Rural), Commercial, Community Facilities, roadways, clubhouse, resort, and driving range

Base Map Legend

Specific Plan Boundary

Parcel Boundaries

Easement

Major Road

USGS 'Blue Line' Stream

FIGURE

4.2-3

Vernal Pool Basins and Watersheds

07/21/05

1. Disturbance to wetland habitat shall be limited to the maximum extent practical.

2. Site specific studies shall be prepared to document the amount and habitat value of the wetland resources.

3. There shall be no net loss of wetland habitat. Wetland impacts shall be mitigated as necessary to accomplish this standard.

Although the Specific Plan proposes to preserve wetlands where possible, the proposed development footprint would impact a significant number of wetland acres. Therefore, the project will be required to either avoid wetlands or obtain the appropriate wetlands permits and mitigate permitted wetland loss.

Indirect Impacts

Potential indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. include decreased water quality, fugitive dust emissions, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, genetic contamination of native plants, and degradation of habitat due to increased human access. While the production of fugitive dust emissions is expected to occur during the construction stage of the project only, the remaining indirect impacts could be permanent. All of the indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. would be significant.

Water quality in wetlands can be reduced by stream siltation resulting from increased erosion in and adjacent to wetland habitat, as well as from spills of toxic materials (e.g., equipment fuel and oil) in construction staging areas. Water quality can also be affected by runoff from adjacent residential, commercial, and recreational development (e.g., golf courses and parks) that is contaminated by toxic materials, fertilizers, and pesticides, as well as by pesticides and fertilizers used in revegetation efforts adjacent to wetlands. Decreased water quality adversely affects wetland vegetation, aquatic animals, and terrestrial wildlife that depend upon wetlands for water, food, and cover.

Fugitive dust emissions produced by construction activities could settle on wetland vegetation. This process could occur anywhere within the SPA in which wetlands are adjacent to construction activities. Little information exists on the effects of dust on vegetation. However, a continual cover of dust may reduce the overall vigor of individual

plants by reducing their photosynthetic capabilities and increasing their susceptibility to pests or disease. The use of invasive, nonnative plant species (e.g., certain species of eucalyptus) in ornamental plantings can result in colonization of wetland habitat by these species, and displacement of native wetland plants. Nonnative plants could also colonize sites disturbed by construction activities, even in temporarily disturbed areas that are to be revegetated with native species. Areas that will remain unvegetated after construction, such as shoulders along permanent access roads and fire fuel management zones (both cleared and thinned zones) around buildings, are particularly suited for establishment of nonnative plant populations. Roadways can also act as corridors for the movement of weedy plant species into areas previously free of nonnatives.

Increases in human activity in the area could result in trampling and degradation of sensitive wetland vegetation, habitat fragmentation from the creation of authorized and unauthorized roads and trails, by disturbance or removal of existing vegetation, and illegal dumping of lawn and garden clippings and other refuse. In addition, upland habitat that serves as buffer zones to wetlands will be permanently lost due to implementation of the proposed project.

Group 1 – Sensitive Upland Habitats

Criteria for Significance Determination

Sensitive upland habitats are nonwetland habitats that are considered sensitive by the resource agencies and/or County (1980, 1991) and are given the highest inventory priority by the CNDDB (Holland 1986). Sensitive upland habitats within the SPA are coastal sage scrub, southern maritime chaparral, perennial grassland, coast live oak woodland, and rock outcrops.

Coastal sage scrub was listed as the third most extensive vegetation community in San Diego County over 25 years ago (CDFG 1965); however, Oberbauer and Vanderwier (1991) suggest that nearly 72 percent of the County's original sage scrub habitat has been destroyed or modified, primarily due to urban expansion. Coastal sage scrub is also considered habitat for the federally threatened California gnatcatcher, and therefore receives regulatory protection from the USFWS. Southern maritime chaparral is restricted in distribution and is often associated with coastal sandstone formations. Sensitive species

characteristic of this habitat include Del Mar manzanita, wart-stemmed ceanothus, and summer-holly, among others.

Perennial grassland is considered sensitive because of its limited distribution, potential to support sensitive plant species, and regional reduction by agricultural activities and urban and rural development. Oak woodlands are considered sensitive primarily due to their limited acreage, high wildlife value, gradual loss as a result of development, and lack of regeneration. Rock outcrops often support unique floristic assemblages, with many of the characteristic plant species being wholly or partially restricted to this habitat. Rock outcrops, and the crevices within them, also represent potential roosting and nesting sites for a number of sensitive reptile, bird, and bat species. For these reasons, all direct and indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats are adverse and significant.

Direct Impacts

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in the direct, permanent loss of approximately 344.1 acres (24.7 percent of the total within the SPA) of sensitive upland habitats (Table 4.2-2). These impacts include 323.7 acres of coastal sage scrub (147.3 acres undisturbed, 176.4 acres disturbed), 14.4 acres (34.7 percent) of coastal sage scrub/chaparral, 3.0 acres of southern maritime chaparral (22.4 percent), 2.3 acres of perennial grassland (9.4 percent), and 0.4 acre of coast live oak woodland (21.0 percent).

Additional acreage of sensitive upland habitat could be directly impacted within areas designated for Very Low and Rural residential development. Approximately 232.3 acres of these habitats occur in these areas, including approximately 224.0 acres of coastal sage scrub and 0.7 acre of perennial grassland. As discussed above for wetlands and unvegetated waters, the exact acreage of impacts would depend upon the distribution of these habitats, the amount of future subdivision within existing parcels, and the degree to which direct impacts to these habitats can be avoided or minimized as required by the D2 designation review procedures. The low residential development area north of Artesian Road is predominantly coastal sage scrub and is also covered by the D2 designator. Direct impacts to sensitive upland habitat would be significant.

Indirect Impacts

Potential indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats includes fugitive dust emissions, soil erosion on slopes during project construction, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, genetic contamination of native plants, and degradation of habitat due to habitat fragmentation, edge effect, and increased human access. The effects of these impacts on regulated upland habitats are similar to those to wetland habitat and unvegetated waters of the U.S. as discussed above.

In addition to those impacts, increases in the moisture regime from runoff associated with irrigation of landscaped areas could alter conditions in areas supporting upland vegetation that is adapted to xeric (dry) conditions. The potential for this to occur is not limited to any particular site within the SPA. This runoff could also be contaminated with fertilizers and pesticides, as well as toxic materials, that would adversely affect the native vegetation. Both the increase in moisture regime and poor water quality could promote establishment of nonnative plants and displace native species. Indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitat would be significant.

Group 2 – Nonsensitive Habitats

Criteria for Significance Determination

Chaparral, nonnative grassland, eucalyptus woodland, and ruderal habitat are relatively abundant and widely distributed at both local and regional scales. In addition, none of these habitats is under immediate threat from agricultural or urban land uses, is considered critical habitat for federally or state-listed species, or receives regulatory protection from the resource agencies. Therefore, impacts to these habitats are generally considered adverse, but not significant.

If, however, the diversity or population size of sensitive plant or animal species is high within any of these habitats, the habitat functions as an important regional habitat linkage or wildlife movement corridor, or the habitat functions as a buffer to wetland habitat, impacts to those habitats would be considered adverse and significant. It is also possible that if the magnitude of the impact (i.e., total acreage of habitat impacted) is great enough, impacts to the habitat would also be adverse and significant, regardless of the presence or absence of sensitive species or the habitat's functional role as a corridor or habitat linkage.

Direct Impacts

Approximately 11.0 acres of chaparral lost to the SPA development (Table 4.2-2) is dominated by wart-stemmed ceanothus, a federal C2 candidate plant species. Impacts to this species are discussed in more detail under sensitive plant species impacts. The incremental reduction of perching and foraging habitat for raptors is considered cumulatively significant on a regional basis. This impact is mitigated through participation in the NCCP and subarea planning process.

Each of the nonsensitive habitats within the SPA occurs adjacent to wetland habitat (i.e., functions as a wetland buffer) and/or within wildlife movement corridors or habitat linkages at one or more locations. While habitats such as eucalyptus woodland and ruderal habitat are considered degraded relative to native habitat (e.g., chaparral), they do have some functional value as wetland buffers and habitat for wildlife movement. Therefore, an undetermined percentage of the acreage of each of the nonsensitive habitats that will be directly impacted within the SPA represents losses of wetland buffers and wildlife movement corridors or habitat linkages. A more detailed discussion of impacts to wildlife corridors and habitat linkages is presented below.

Indirect Impacts

The effects of these impacts on nonsensitive habitats are similar to those discussed above for sensitive upland habitats. These effects are not expected to be significant with a combination of open space preservation and best construction practices.

Group 3 Habitats – Maintained Lands

Agricultural and developed lands are either unvegetated or are dominated by agricultural or ornamental species and, therefore, have very low or no value as habitat for native plant and animal species. These lands contribute very little to the biological diversity of the region and receive no protection from the resource agencies. Therefore, impacts to these lands are generally not considered significant.

Sensitive Plants

This section analyzes impacts to three groups of plant species that differ in sensitivity status. Those groups are:

- Group 1 - Federally and state-listed species, species proposed for listing, and federal C1 candidate species
- Group 2 - Federal C2 candidate species, and CNPS List 1B and List 2 species
- Group 3 - CNPS List 4 species

Impacts to sensitive plant species as a result of implementation of the Specific Plan are summarized in Table 4.2-3. Locations of sensitive plant species within the SPA, along with proposed Specific Plan land uses, are shown on Plate 2.

Relevant data collected during field surveys include the number (population size) and location of each sensitive plant species. The number of individuals is sometimes approximate (estimates for large populations of shrubs or clonal species) and is used for assessing the overall magnitude of an impact rather than for describing a precise population size.

Group 1 Plants – Federally and State-listed Species, Species Proposed for Listing, and Federal C1 Candidate Species

Criteria for Significance Determination

Because of their overall rarity and rate of decline, any direct or indirect impact to a Group 1 plant species would be adverse and significant. In addition, the County may consider any loss of a federally or state-listed plant species as significant and unmitigable (County of San Diego 1991).

Table 4.2-3

SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED IN THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN AREA BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Species	Total Number of Individuals in SPA	Number of Individuals (% of total)			
		Open Space[1]	Very Low Density and Rural Residential[2]	Developed[3] Open Space Category Two - Disturbed	Developed[3] All Other Development
Group 1: Federally or State-Listed Species, Species Proposed For Listing, and Federal C1 Candidates					
Del Mar Manzanita	447	406 (90.8)	0 (0.0)	31 (6.9)	10 (2.2)
Encinitas Baccharis[4]	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined	0 (0.0)
Sticky Dudleya	1,287	1,287 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Group 2: Federal C2 Candidates and CNPS List 1B and List 2 Species					
California Adolphia	3,601	2,522 (70.0)	247 (6.9)	593 (16.5)	239 (6.6)
San Diego Sagewort	200	200 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Orcutt's Brodiaea[5]	480	480 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Wart-stemmed Ceanothus[6]	301.5	218 (72.3)	71.9 (23.8)	2.8 (0.9)	8.8 (2.9)
Summer-holly	272	231 (84.9)	0 (0.0)	11 (4.0)	30 (11.0)
Variegated Dudleya	300	300 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
San Diego Barrel Cactus	120	78 (65)	7 (5.8)	0 (0.0)	35 (29.2)
San Diego Marsh-elder	3,603	3,272 (90.8)	0 (0.0)	302 (8.4)	29 (0.8)
Nuttal's Scrub Oak[7]	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined
Group 3: CNPS List 4 Species					
Southern Mountain Misery	50	0 (0.0)	50 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Spiny Rush	2,706	2,617 (96.7)	1 (<0.1)	60 (2.2)	28 (1.0)
Ashy Spike-moss[6]	5.2	2.0 (38.5)	2.1 (40.4)	0 (0.0)	1.1 (21.2)

Table 4.2-3 (Continued)

SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED IN THE SANTA FE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN AREA BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

1 Open Space includes Open Space Category One (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas) and Open Space Category Two - Preserved (areas in golf course with native vegetation).
2 One dwelling unit/4 - 5.9 acres.
3 Developed includes Open Space Category Two - Disturbed (areas in golf course planted with turf and other nonnative/ornamental plant species, and equestrian facility), Residential (excluding Very Low Density and Rural Residential), Commercial, Community Facilities, roadways, clubhouse, resort, and driving range.
4 Historic sighting in northeastern SPA not verified; high to moderate potential to occur in other unsurveyed areas in northeastern SPA.
5 Includes population observed in 1994 in northern SPA that is not shown on Plate 3.
6 Occurrences are shown as acres of habitat supporting this species.
7 Species observed in western SPA but population size not determined.

Direct Impacts

San Diego Thorn-mint. San Diego thorn-mint was recorded on the northern shoreline of one of the ponds in the west-central portion of the McCrink Ranch Tentative Map area (Ogden 1995c; Plate 2). During 1992 surveys of this area, however, this population had been extirpated by agricultural activities. Another population of this species was encountered in 1992 just outside of the southwestern portion of the SPA, on the slopes north of Lusardi Creek. Although all potential habitat for San Diego thorn-mint (i.e., clay soils in grassland and open scrub and chaparral) was surveyed in 1992, this species was not encountered within the SPA. Because of considerable annual variation in the occurrence and size of populations of many native annual species, however, there is a moderate potential for San Diego thorn-mint to occur within the SPA, especially in the relatively undisturbed, southwesternmost portion. If this species were to be reestablished on site, the potential for significant project-related impact would occur.

Del Mar Manzanita. The Del Mar manzanita population within the SPA includes approximately 447 shrubs at 5 locations (Plate 2). Of this number, at least 10 shrubs would be directly impacted by development, and an additional 31 plants by the proposed golf course within the Balcor tentative map area. However, the project would preserve over 90 percent of the population within OS-I; therefore, the impact is not significant.

Encinitas Baccharis. An historical sighting of Encinitas baccharis was reported from a single location on the steep, chaparral covered slopes in the northeasternmost portion of the SPA, north of Del Dios Highway (Plate 2). This species also occurs on ridgetops to the east of the SPA on the adjacent 4S Ranch property (Dudek 1991). Most of the area in and around this historical sighting is proposed for preservation; however, direct impacts to Encinitas baccharis could occur just north of the historical sighting in an area proposed for Very Low and Rural residential development. Because of the proximity of this proposed residential area to the historical sighting, and the presence of suitable habitat, there is a high potential for this species to occur there.

There is also a moderate potential for Encinitas baccharis to occur on the upper slopes and ridgelines in the northwestern portion of the SPA, south of the San Dieguito River. While most of this area is proposed for preservation, a portion does fall within an area proposed for Very Low and Rural residential Development. This area would be subject to the D2

designator: therefore, compliance with the D2 designator would either preserve this species or appropriate mitigation would be required.

Sticky Dudleya. A single population of sticky dudleya occurs within the north-central portion of the SPA, on cliff faces and rock outcrops along a tributary to the San Dieguito River (Plate 2). Because the entire population of sticky dudleya is on land proposed for preservation, no direct impacts to this species would occur.

Indirect Impacts

Significant indirect impacts that could potentially occur to Group 1 plant species include many of the same indirect impacts discussed above for upland vegetation communities. All four Group 1 species discussed above could be adversely affected to varying degrees by fugitive dust emissions, soil erosion on slopes, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, degradation of habitat due to habitat fragmentation, edge effects, and increased human access, and increases in the moisture regime from runoff associated with irrigation of landscaped areas.

Because San Diego thorn-mint is a small herbaceous annual, it is particularly susceptible to trampling, soil erosion, and competition from nonnative plant species. Although the only population currently known from the vicinity of the SPA occurs just outside of its southwestern boundary, the offsite increase in human activity in the area could put this population at risk.

Increases in human activity in the SPA would increase the potential that the sticky dudleya population be impacted by horticultural collecting. This population would also be at risk from trampling by hikers wandering off trails.

Group 2 Plants – Federal C2 Candidate Species and CNPS List 1B and List 2 Species

Criteria for Significance Determination

In general, County (1991) guidelines stipulate an allowable loss of sensitive plants (excluding federally and state-listed species) due to development of 0 to 20 percent of their population on a project site. Therefore, the loss of greater than 20 percent of a population

of a Group 2 plant species within the SPA would be considered adverse and significant. Losses of less than 20 percent of a species' population may be significant, however, if impacts are to a major population, a significant portion of a major population, or a population important to the genetic diversity, geographic range, or diversity of occupied habitat of that species. Major population is defined for each species according to its biology, including patterns of distribution, growth, and reproduction. For example, a species which is aggregated into several large populations would have different population characteristics and dynamics than a species that occurs in small numbers at widely scattered localities.

Direct Impacts

Nine different Group 2 plant species occur within the SPA, including California adolphia, San Diego sagewort, Orcutt's brodiaea, wart-stemmed ceanothus, summer-holly, variegated dudleya, San Diego barrel cactus, San Diego marsh-elder, and Nuttal's scrub oak. Impacts to each of these species are discussed below and presented in Table 4.2-3.

California Adolphia. Approximately 3,601 California adolphia occur at scattered locations throughout the SPA (Table 4.2-3). Of that number, 70.0 percent (2,522 individuals) of the population occurs in areas proposed for preservation (OS-I), while 6.9 percent (247 individuals) of the population is in areas designated for Very Low and Rural residential development (subject to the D2 designator). Based on a 1.5-acre development envelope per legal lot, per the D2 designator, up to 93 (2.6 percent) of the California adolphia could be impacted within the Very Low and Rural residential development areas; these impacts could be avoided or minimized, however, by siting development envelopes in areas where this species does not occur. The remainder of the California adolphia population (832 individuals, 23.1 percent) occurs in areas proposed for the remaining land uses, and therefore would be considered lost to development. Although relatively large populations occur at a number of locations throughout coastal San Diego County, the Del Dios-Lake Hodges area supports one of the larger extant populations of this species (Reiser 1994). While levels of impact to this species are above the County's guidelines for development projects (20 percent in County of San Diego 1991a), the overall protection of a large number of plants in a contiguous open space system (OS-I) reduces the impact to less than significant.

San Diego Sagewort. One hundred percent of the known population of San Diego sagewort within the SPA occurs on land proposed for preservation. Therefore, no adverse significant impacts to this species are anticipated.

Orcutt's Brodiaea. One hundred percent of the known population of Orcutt's brodiaea within the SPA occurs on land proposed for preservation. Although not encountered, there is a moderate potential for this species to occur in drainages in the southwestern portion of the SPA. Because most of this area is proposed for open space dedication or Very Low and Rural residential development, substantial losses of any newly discovered populations are not expected to occur. Therefore, direct impacts to Orcutt's brodiaea are not significant.

Wart-stemmed Ceanothus. Wart-stemmed ceanothus is dominant or co-dominant in 301.5 acres of chaparral within the SPA (Table 4.2-3). Approximately 72.3 percent (218.0 acres) of that habitat occurs in areas proposed for preservation, while 23.8 percent (71.9 acres) of the population is in areas designated for Very Low and Rural residential development. Up to 27.0 acres (8.8 percent of the total acreage within the SPA) of ceanothus-dominated chaparral could be impacted within the Very Low and Rural residential development areas; however, these impacts could be avoided or minimized by siting development envelopes in areas where this species does not occur. The remainder of the wart-stemmed ceanothus population (11.6 acres, 3.8 percent) occurs in areas proposed for all other land uses, and therefore would be considered lost to development. Although relatively large populations occur at a number of locations throughout coastal San Diego County, the Mt. Israel-Lake Hodges area supports the largest extant population of this species (Reiser 1994). Because the proposed Specific Plan would preserve at least 72 percent of this species, impacts would not be significant.

Summer-holly. Summer-holly occurs at several scattered locations in the northeastern and southwestern SPA. Of the 272 individuals encountered, 231 (84.9 percent) occur in areas proposed for preservation, while the remainder (41 individuals) would be lost to development (Table 4.2-3). Significant impacts to this species would not occur.

Variegated Dudleya. A single population of approximately 300 variegated dudleya was encountered along the northeastern boundary of the SPA, all of which is in an area proposed for preservation (Table 4.2-3; Plate 2). Significant impacts to this spcies are not anticipated.

San Diego Barrel Cactus. San Diego barrel cactus occurs at several scattered locations throughout the SPA, with the majority of the population located on the slopes north of Lusardi Creek (Plate 2). Approximately 65 percent (78 out of 120 individuals) are in areas proposed for preservation, while the remaining individuals (42) occur in areas proposed for Very Low and Rural residential development and other land uses (Table 4.2-3). Significant impacts to this species are not anticipated.

San Diego Marsh-elder. San Diego marsh-elder is relatively common in the drainages in the SPA in freshwater marsh and riparian habitats (Plate 2). Approximately 90.8 percent (3,272) of this species' population within the SPA occurs in areas proposed for preservation, therefore impacts are not significant.

Nuttal's Scrub Oak. At the time of 1992 field surveys, Nuttal's scrub oak was not listed as sensitive by the resource agencies, CNPS, or County, and therefore the size of its population within the SPA was not determined, nor were its occurrences mapped. It was noted, however, that this species occurs in chaparral on slopes along the San Dieguito River and Lusardi Creek in the southwestern SPA. Sites supporting this species along the San Dieguito River are proposed for a combination of open space preservation and golf course and low density residential development. Impacts are not considered significant.

Group 3 Plants – CNPS List 4 Species

Because the County (1991) does not provide specific significance criteria for non-listed species that differ in rarity or regulatory status (e.g., federal C2 candidates versus CNPS List 4 species), the same allowable loss (0 to 20 percent) for Group 2 plants would also apply to Group 3 species. It is unlikely, however, that impacts to less than 20 percent of a Group 3 species' population on a site would be considered significant unless those impacts were to a substantial portion of the regional distribution of that species.

Impacts to Group 3 plant species found onsite (southern mountain misery, spiny rush, and ashy spike-moss) are not considered significant because either a large portion of the population will be preserved or the population is not considered a substantial portion of the regional distribution.

Impacts to Sensitive Wildlife Species

This section analyzes impacts to three groups of wildlife species that differ in sensitivity status. These groups are:

- Group 1 - Federally and state-listed species, species proposed or petitioned for listing, federal C1 candidates, and species protected by the Bald Eagle Protection Act

- Group 2 - Federal C2 and C3 candidate species and California Species of Special Concern that are not currently proposed for listing

- Group 3 - Locally sensitive species as identified by Everett (1979) and SDHS (1980a, 1980b)

This section reviews impacts to sensitive wildlife species that have been recorded, or are expected to occur, within the SPA. Due to the mobility of wildlife species, individuals detected adjacent to the SPA are considered to occur within the SPA if the appropriate habitat is present. The number of individuals impacted is based on an overlay of the proposed land uses on the sensitive wildlife database.

Potential indirect impacts from human activity, noise, light, dust, pollutants, and erosion are discussed, as appropriate, within the evaluation of an individual species or a group of species. Potential direct and indirect impacts to wildlife linkages and corridors are discussed in the following section. Impacts to sensitive wildlife species detected or expected to occur onsite are summarized in Table 3 in Appendix B. Potential impacts to species with only a low potential to occur in the SPA are discussed in the Biological Resources Technical Report, but are not discussed here.

Group 1 Wildlife – Federally and State-listed Species, Species Proposed or Petitioned for Listing, Federal C1 Candidates, and Species Protected by the Bald Eagle Protection Act

Criteria for Determination of Significance

A significant impact to the Group 1 species would occur if individuals or essential habitat (e.g., nesting habitat or breeding season foraging habitat) for these species is adversely affected by the proposed project. Significance of impacts for Group 1 species is determined on a species-specific basis considering such factors as relative population size (if known), expected population density, overall distribution and abundance within the SPA and surrounding region, projected direct and indirect impacts to suitable habitat, and the degree of protection of the species in the vicinity of the SPA. Species within the three sensitivity groups are discussed in taxonomic order: crustaceans/insects, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals.

In general, a loss of essential habitat for Group 1 species is considered significant. A determination of whether a habitat is important or essential is based in part on whether the species may breed in the habitat within the project impact areas.

Analysis of Impacts

Riverside and San Diego Fairy Shrimp. Riverside fairy shrimp were not detected during cursory February 1995 surveys of the two vernal pool complexes within the SPA (Figure 4.2-3). San Diego fairy shrimp were detected in the relatively undisturbed pools at the southwestern portion of the SPA. These pools are in an area proposed as Low residential development and subject to the D2 designator. The pools could be preserved if site plans are developed to ensure avoidance of vernal pool habitat and watershed as per the standards of the D2 designator. The northwestern pools are proposed as Medium residential development and would be lost to development.

If protective measures are not implemented, impacts to San Diego fairy shrimp are likely to occur in the southwestern vernal pools. Because of the level of disturbance and lack of previous sightings, it is less likely that impacts to this species would also occur in the northwestern pools. Although Riverside fairy shrimp were not detected, impacts could also occur to this species if it were found to be present within the SPA in the future.

Indirect impacts to fairy shrimp and vernal pool habitat are potentially significant with implementation of this plan. Fairy shrimp in the southwestern vernal pools could be adversely impacted by modification of the watershed, causing changes in run-off patterns that could affect the formation and chemistry of the vernal pools. Other potential indirect impacts include contamination with herbicides, pesticides, and other toxic substances of the pool watersheds, increased human and domestic animal access leading to degradation of vernal pool habitat, and increased off-road vehicle activity that could crush eggs and destroy vernal pools (Ogden 1995d; MBA 1991).

However, these impacts could be avoided by effective use of the D2 designator which could retain vernal pools and their associated watershed in combination with contiguous natural open space. Significant effects to potential Riverside fairy shrimp habitat may occur and would need to be resolved with additional surveys prior to development.

Quino Checkerspot. Quino checkerspot was not detected in the Specific Plan SPA, although no focused butterfly surveys were conducted. The larval host plant *(Plantago* spp.) occurs within the SPA. Quino checkerspot has only a low potential to occur onsite due to its apparent extirpation from most of the county (Brown 1991). The proposed Specific Plan would result in development of 702.0 acres (37.8 percent) of this species' potential habitat (vernal pools, coastal sage scrub, perennial grasslands, nonnative grasslands, and ruderal). Additional acreage of potential habitat could be lost in areas proposed for Very Low and Rural residential development. Overall, up to approximately 60 percent of this species' potential habitat within the SPA would be preserved. Direct impacts to this species would not be significant.

Golden Eagle. Resident golden eagles would lose approximately 39.1 percent (1,006.4 acres) of potential foraging habitat (coastal sage scrub, chaparral, perennial grassland, nonnative grassland, coast live oak woodland, rock outcrops, and agriculture) to development within the SPA. An additional 386.6 acres of potential foraging habitat occurs within the Very Low and Rural residential development areas, which could be fragmented by the plan.

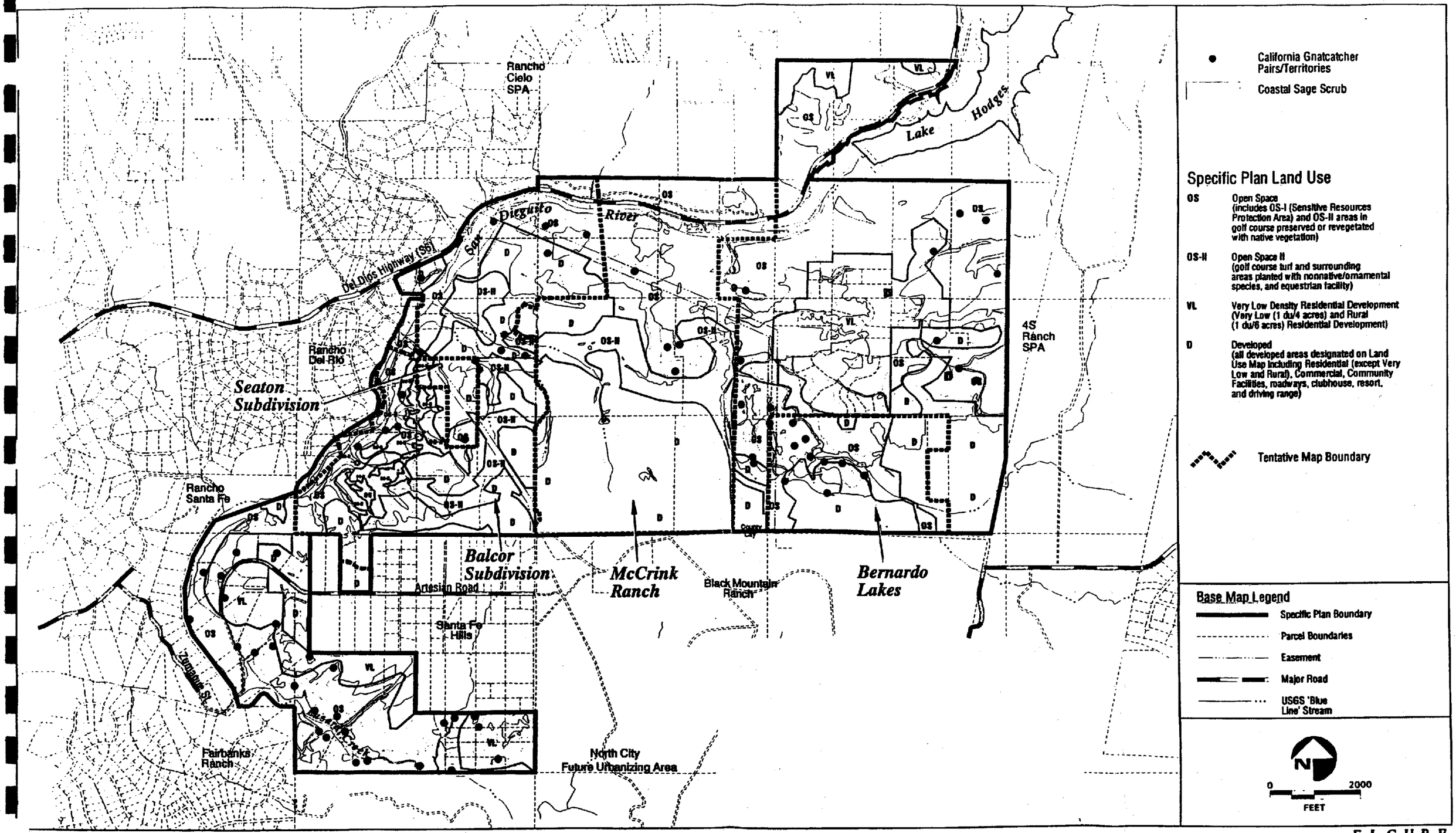
An alternate golden eagle nest site in the vicinity of the Lake Hodges Dam is located within 500 feet of the proposed Very Low and Rural residential development north of Del Dios Highway. This nest site has not been documented as active in at least the last four years

(Ogden unpubl.). An active golden eagle territory at Lake Hodges is associated with nine alternate nest sites, including the one in the SPA. There is the potential for indirect impacts from residential development on the ridge above this nest site. The pair could abandon the nest site altogether due to the proximity of residential development and associated human activity although this nest has not been occupied for four years. The eagles could also be impacted by rodent control programs involving the poisoning of California ground squirrels *(Spermophilus beecheyi)* and other rodents. Any impacts to golden eagle are considered to be cumulatively significant. This cumulative effect is being addressed by the ongoing NCCP and subarea planning efforts which are setting aside significant acreage in open space within and adjacent to the San Dieguito River Valley.

California Gnatcatcher. Direct impacts to California gnatcatchers may occur as a result of permanent loss of birds, and/or loss of occupied or potentially occupiable coastal sage scrub habitat. This loss of habitat can impair essential behavioral activities such as breeding, feeding, sheltering, and dispersal. The proposed Specific Plan would reduce breeding habitat and constrain important linkages and dispersal corridors in the western and south-central portions of the SPA (Figure 4.2-4). Detailed discussions of impacts to California gnatcatcher linkages are presented below under wildlife corridors.

The level of direct impact to California gnatcatcher territories and habitat is presented in Table 3 in Appendix B. As shown in this table and on Figure 4.2-4, the project would directly impact approximately 17 gnatcatcher territories, and potentially impact another 9 territories in the Very Low and Rural residential areas. Application of the D2 designator would reduce these impacts. Up to 47 territories may be retained in the OS-I area.

Within the SPA, all coastal sage scrub habitat (Diegan coastal sage scrub, coyote bush scrub, and coastal sage scrub/chaparral) is considered potential California gnatcatcher habitat. Under the Specific Plan, 323.7 acres (24.6 percent) of coastal sage scrub habitat would be developed. An additional 224.0 acres of coastal sage scrub habitat occurs within the Very Low and Rural residential development areas. A portion of the habitat would be lost to development in these areas as well as the Low residential area north of Artesian Road; but effective use of the D2 designator will minimize the impacts.



OGDEN

California Gnatcatcher Pairs/Territories within Santa Fe Valley SPA

FIGURE 4.2-4

07/31/99

The number of gnatcatcher territories in any one area varies within and between years depending on natural variation in population density, occurrence of habitat disturbance (e.g., wildfires), and survey effort. Although gnatcatcher territories have not been delineated in the field, their locations may be inferred based on the distribution of adult gnatcatcher sightings, habitat type, and topography. Estimation of territories impacted (both directly and indirectly) was based on such an inference. The maximum carrying capacity of the sage scrub within the SPA is expected to be greater than the number of pairs documented due to the presence of burned/disturbed sage scrub and the lack of survey information for a portion of the SPA. Impacts to the California gnatcatcher are considered significant.

Group 2 Wildlife – Federal C2 and C3 Candidate Species and California Species of Special Concern

Criteria for Significance Determination

In determining impacts and levels of significance, factors considered for the Group 1 species were evaluated for each Group 2 species individually. These factors include relative population size (if known), expected population density, overall distribution and abundance within the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan SPA and surrounding region, projected direct and indirect impacts to suitable habitat, and the degree of protection of these species (singly and as a group) in the vicinity of the SPA. Determination of significance for Group 2 species is also analyzed with a broader focus on the condition and functioning of habitats and ecosystems. This broader ecosystem approach is consistent with regional planning programs (e.g., NCCP).

In general, some loss of suitable habitat for Group 2 species can occur without the impact being significant. A determination of whether a habitat is important or essential is based in part on the degree to which the species is expected to utilize impact areas of the SPA.

Impacts

There would be no substantial effects to populations or essential habitats of any Group 2 wildlife species by implementation of the Specific Plan.

Group 3 Wildlife – Locally Sensitive Species

There would be no substantial effects to populations or essential habitats of any Group 3 wildlife species by implementation of the Specific Plan. The effective use of the Specific Plan's D2 designator and participation in the NCCP and subarea planning process would minimize effects to Group 2 species which include western spadefoot toad, southwestern pond turtle, upland amphibians and reptiles, and raptors associated with open foraging habitat. The Santa Fe Valley Biological Resources Technical Report contains a detailed analysis of these species.

Wildlife Movement Corridors

Criteria for Significance Determination

A significant impact to wildlife corridors would occur if an identified corridor is substantially affected by the proposed project. The permanent blockage or substantial constriction by direct or indirect effects of a regional movement corridor would constitute a significant adverse effect. Permanent blockage or substantial constriction by direct or indirect effects of a local movement corridor where there are no alternate local movement corridors available would also be considered significant.

Analysis of Impacts

Wildlife corridors may be adversely impacted by loss of habitat within the corridor, by barriers to movement such as roads, constricted segments, interference from humans and predators, lack of cover, and incompatible adjacent land uses. Other indirect impacts may result from construction and road noise, human activity, and lighting. Corridors for large mammals (mountain lions, bobcats, and mule deer) should encompass the entire drainage (rim to rim topography) and contain adequate vegetative cover (Ogden 1992f, 1995d). Wider corridors are necessary where topographical relief or cover is lacking. At a minimum, wildlife movement corridors should be at least 500 feet in width with 250 feet of buffer zone on either side of the corridor. The most constrained segments should be less than 500 feet in length and a minimum of 400 feet in width (Ogden 1992f). Compatible land uses (e.g., golf course or agriculture) may buffer wildlife corridors.

Wildlife movement along the San Dieguito River Valley will be affected by an overall reduction of available habitat, constrictions of natural open space at a number of locations, and the placement of a roadway bridge across the river. Generally, the retention of natural open space varies from 400 feet to 900 feet along the western border of the Specific Plan area (Figure 4.2-5, Plate 1). This distance includes the riverine wetland habitats, but does not include currently undeveloped lands offsite to the west. Where the corridor is restricted to the recommended minimum of 400 feet, those stretches of the corridor are short and do not pose a significant problem. The riverine corridor is buffered in the east by golf course and driving range. The golf course, which is a links style course amidst coastal sage scrub where it is adjacent to the river, provides a development setback of over 1,000 feet along much of the corridor. The corridor is buffered by steep topography along most of its western edge.

The westernmost 4,000 feet of the river corridor is relatively narrow or lacks cover due to previous agricultural disturbance. This corridor segment is, however, bordered by steep topography on the west and by Very Low residential land use on the east. Effective use of the D2 designator could provide additional width to the corridor in this segment.

Wildlife movement up Lusardi Creek will not be significantly impeded by the development plan. The corridor along the creek measures 700 - 1,000 feet at the narrowest points but is generally much wider (Figure 4.2-5, Plate 1). The Very Low residential land use borders the corridor on the north and should increase natural habitat in the corridor through the effective use of the D2 designator. The Very Low residential land use potentially constricts the corridor as it leaves the site and crosses onto the Black Mountain Ranch property. The D2 designator should allow for some minimal corridor width onsite, and plans for Black Mountain Ranch show an open space corridor of approximately 1,600 feet adjacent to the creek at this point. Thus, the Lusardi Creek corridor is adequate and consistent with offsite plans.

The proposed wildlife movement corridor between the McCrink Ranch and Bernardo Lakes tentative map areas linking the SPA with Black Mountain Ranch in the southeastern SPA is not currently used as a movement corridor and is not functional as designed. It also does not link with an existing functional corridor to the south. Only by substantially modifying the topography, widening the corridor and its buffer, and conducting extensive habitat restoration would this proposed corridor be functional. Allowance would also have to be made by the project to the south for an underpass for wildlife use at the proposed Camino

del Norte roadway. This proposed corridor could provide linkage for California gnatcatchers if it is restored, and a connective coastal sage scrub corridor is restored on Black Mountain Ranch.

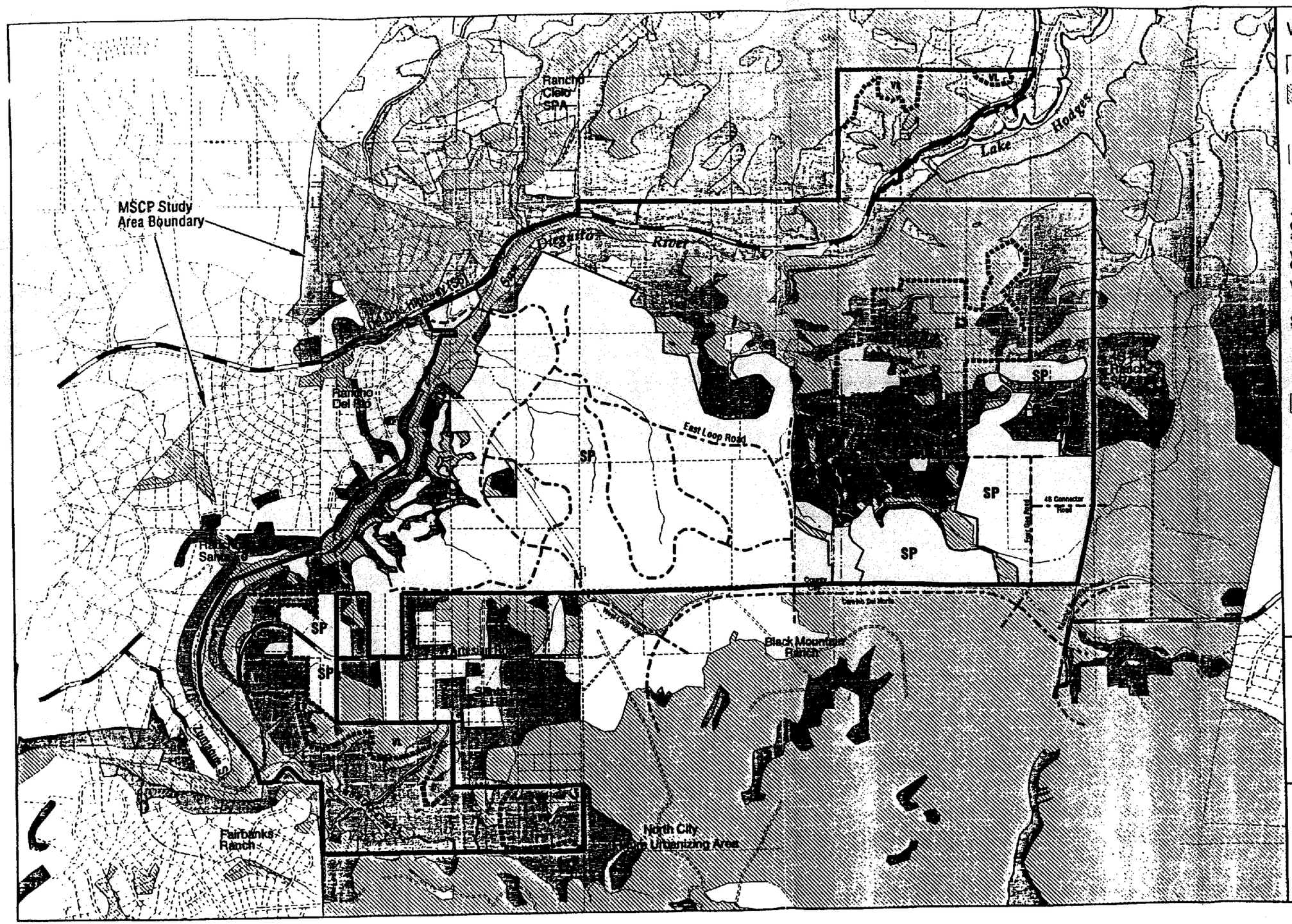
California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

Criteria for Significance Determination

A significant impact to California gnatcatcher linkages would occur if an identified linkage is substantially affected by the proposed project. The permanent blockage or substantial constriction of a linkage by direct or indirect effects would constitute a significant adverse effect. Impacts are significant if a linkage ceases to function as essential breeding habitat through direct and indirect impacts.

Analysis of Impacts

The habitat linkage for the gnatcatcher that would remain after development of the SPA is relatively narrow between the San Dieguito River and the proposed golf course (Figure 4.2-5, Plate 1). This narrow linkage averages about 200 feet and extends roughly 1.5 miles before encountering more extensive habitat and the Very Low residential land use area in the southern area of the SPA. The narrowness of the linkage is augmented somewhat by the proposed links-style golf course, but represents marginal breeding capacity for the species (possibly two breeding territories). The regional database of gnatcatcher home range size suggests that a typical gnatcatcher home range for the Santa Fe Valley area would likely be between 5 and 10 acres (Ogden 1995c). The narrow linkage may not preclude breeding by the species, but the territories may not reliably support the species over time due to isolation and increased edge effects. Edge-affected coastal sage scrub habitat can be expected to have lower gnatcatcher productivity and adult survival (Paton 1994, Alberts et al. 1993, Vissman 1993). The length of the linkage may also affect the ability of the species to effectively disperse between core populations. Typical dispersal distances for banded gnatcatchers are usually less than 1.5 miles (Ogden 1992a, Atwood et al. 1995, G. Braden pers. comm.). Thus, the gnatcatcher linkage along the western edge of the SPA is constrained by the length and narrow width of the linkage which reduces the long-term reliability of the connection to ensure adequate dispersal and genetic exchange between core populations.



Vegetation*

- Coastal Sage Scrub
- Other Vegetation (includes chaparral, grassland, wetland, oak woodland, eucalyptus woodland, and disturbed habitat)
- Developed (includes agriculture and existing development)

*Vegetation within Specific Plan Area shown only within Open Space (Open Space-I and Open Space-II Preserved) and Very Low Density/Rural Residential categories.

Vegetation outside of SPA shown only within Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) study area.

Vegetation mapping source: MSCP (Ogden 1995).

Specific Plan Area

- Boundary Line Between Proposed Preserved Open Space and Development
- SP — Proposed Specific Plan Development
- Areas of Very Low Density and Rural Residential Development (D2 designator applies)
- Proposed Road

Base Map Legend

- Specific Plan Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Easement
- Major Road
- USGS 'Blue Line' Stream

N

0 2000

FEET

FIGURE

4.2-5

07/31/95

OGDEN

Habitat Connectivity with Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Implementation

The gnatcatcher habitat linkage between 4S Ranch SPA and Santa Fe Valley is potentially constrained by development (Figure 4.2-5, Plate 1). A short 2000-foot-wide habitat connection across Four Gee Road provides connectivity to 4S Ranch from the eastern portion of the SPA, but the habitat connection to the west (north of Camino Santa Fe) necessarily crosses the Very Low residential area in the east-central portion of the SPA. Gnatcatcher movement across this area will rely on the effective use of the D2 designator to maintain connectivity of sensitive coastal sage scrub habitat.

The Lusardi Creek linkage to Black Mountain and Los Peñasquitos Canyon would be constrained by Very Low residential development in the southwestern portion of the Specific Plan. This is a constriction point for east-west gnatcatcher movement, especially with the likely future development of the adjacent Black Mountain Road and the City of San Diego Future Urbanizing Area. The long-term maintenance of natural vegetation with 4- to 6-acre residential parcels would require continual monitoring and enforcement by the County to ensure that a viable habitat linkage is maintained.

Although direct impacts to coastal sage scrub and California gnatcatcher habitat linkages would occur, the open space preserve (OS-I) proposed for Santa Fe Valley, in conjunction with adjacent open space plans (i.e., Rancho Cielo and 4S Ranch), is expected to constitute mitigation for these impacts based on a subregional habitat approach. An open space design for the Santa Fe Valley SPA was developed by the County of San Diego in consultation with the USFWS and CDFG. This consultation took place as part of the subarea planning process for the NCCP program. The onsite preservation of coastal sage scrub will complement other contiguous open space designs within the subarea. The process will ultimately lead to the acquisition of a Section 10(a) permit under the federal Endangered Species Act for the "take" of California gnatcatchers and coastal sage scrub habitat. The process requires the formation of a viable open space system and considers overall ecosystem continuity rather than absolute acreage. Losses of coastal sage scrub habitat onsite have been accepted by the resource agencies. An important aspect of the process is the development of a Subarea Habitat Management Plan which is essential to the monitoring and maintenance of the natural open space. This should include undeveloped acreage within the Very Low and Rural residential development areas on the SPA.

In addition to the Specific Plan's open space design, land supporting coastal sage scrub in areas proposed for Very Low and Rural residential development are subject to the Specific Plan's D2 designator that requires avoiding impacts to sensitive resources to the degree

feasible and maximizing contiguity of the coastal sage scrub linkage. The total area where grading is permitted for house, parking areas and other outdoor use areas, exclusive of access driveways, is known as the development envelope. According to the Specific Plan, development envelopes are to be limited to one-quarter acre per building site, or to the amount of site area not containing sensitive habitat as determined by the Director, whichever is greater. Areas for leach lines are not required to fall within the development envelope provided such areas are revegetated to their natural state. Clearing for fuel modification is to be limited to the minimum required by the applicable fire district, but may be located outside the development envelope. Development envelopes are also to be located to maximize connectivity of sensitive habitat, both within the individual lot and between adjacent lots, and to maximize opportunities for corridors of natural habitat through development areas. Open space easements are to be dedicated to the County of San Diego for all land outside the approved building envelope. Habitat disturbance is prohibited in the open space easements other than clearing to satisfy fuel modification requirements.

Because all of the Group 1 upland habitats are considered sensitive and declining resources by the regulatory agencies and/or the County, direct impacts to sensitive upland habitats associated with implementation of the Specific Plan are adverse and significant. The Specific Plan in combination with the D2 designator will preserve over 70 percent of the sensitive upland habitats. This total includes all of the rock outcrops, an estimated 90 percent of the perennial grassland, 77 percent of the southern maritime chaparral, 74 percent of a very small coast live oak woodland, and over 70 percent of the coastal sage scrub. Coastal sage scrub accounts for 94 percent of the sensitive upland habitat acreage onsite. The inherent effects of the open space design on the California gnatcatcher and the maintenance of habitat linkages and movement corridors is addressed in Sections 4.4.3.1 and 4.4.4. The overall impact to sensitive habitats is also strongly related to the configuration and continuity of the preserved habitat and the amount and type of edge effects. These factors affect the viability and capacity of the habitat to support sensitive species. In this regard, the open space design of the Specific Plan has been tentatively accepted by the resource agencies as part of the framework for the local Subarea Plan as per the NCCP regional planning process.

4.2.3 Level of Significance

Vegetation Communities - Group 1 Habitats

Because all wetland and Group 1 upland habitats are considered sensitive and a declining resource by the regulatory agencies and the County, direct impacts to wetlands and upland habitat associated with implementation of the Specific Plan are significant.

Vegetation Communities - Group 2 Habitats

Because none of the Group 2 habitats (chaparral, nonnative grassland, eucalyptus woodland, and ruderal habitat) is considered sensitive by the regulatory agencies or the County, direct impacts to most of the nonsensitive habitat within the SPA are adverse but not significant. Although the exact acreage has not been determined, the direct loss of those portions of the nonsensitive habitats that function as wetland buffers and/or wildlife movement corridors and habitat linkages is significant, but mitigable by the combination of effective open space planning onsite, the use of the D2 designator, and wetland permitting processes.

Vegetation Communities - Group 3 Habitats

Because maintained lands have little or no biological importance, and they contribute very little to regional biological diversity, direct and indirect impacts to them are not significant.

Sensitive Plants - Group 1

San Diego Thorn-mint. At this time, no direct impacts to San Diego thorn-mint are anticipated. If, however, populations of this species are discovered within the SPA through preconstruction surveys in the future, direct impacts could be significant depending upon the location of the population(s) and the land use proposed for the area where it occurs.

Del Mar manzanita. Because over 90 percent of the onsite Del Mar manzanita will be preserved, impacts are not significant.

Encinitas baccharis. At this time, the presence of Encinitas baccharis within the SPA cannot be verified. If the presence of this species is verified, direct impacts could potentially be significant depending upon the location of the population(s) and the land use proposed for the area where it occurs.

Sticky dudleya. Because the entire population of sticky dudleya is on land proposed for preservation, no direct impacts to this species would occur.

Indirect impacts. Indirect impacts to Group 1 plant species associated with the production of fugitive dust emissions, soil erosion on slopes, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, and increases in the moisture regime would be significant if protective measures are not implemented to avoid or minimize those impacts.

Sensitive Plants - Group 2

California adolphia. While levels of impact to this species are above the County's guidelines for development projects (20 percent), the overall protection of a large number of plants in a contiguous open space system (OS-I) reduces the impact to less than significant.

Impacts to the remaining Group 2 plant species: wart-stemmed ceanothus, variegated dudleya, San Diego marsh-elder, and Nuttal's scrub oak are not considered significant.

Sensitive Plants - Group 3

Because of the relatively small number of shrubs that could be impacted, and because those impacts may be avoided or minimized, direct impacts to southern mountain misery, spiny rush, and ashy spike-moss are not significant.

Wildlife Species - Group 1

Fairy shrimp. Direct and indirect impacts to the San Diego fairy shrimp may be significant. These effects may be avoided by effective use of the D2 designator which may retain vernal pools and their associated watershed in combination with contiguous natural open space. Significant effects to potential Riverside fairy shrimp habitat may occur and would need to be determined with additional surveys prior to development activity.

Quino checkerspot. Direct impacts to potential habitat for Quino checkerspot from implementation of the Specific Plan are not significant.

Golden eagle. Golden eagle would be impacted by the incremental loss of foraging habitat and potential indirect impacts to a nesting site. All direct and indirect impacts to golden eagle are considered cumulatively significant when taken into consideration with other projects in the vicinity (Rancho Cielo, 4S Ranch, Olivenhain Water Storage project, and Black Mountain Ranch). Impacts to this species are being addressed by the ongoing regional NCCP and subarea planning efforts.

California gnatcatcher. Direct and indirect impacts to California gnatcatcher and associated habitat would be significant. The reduction of habitat linkages and increased edge effects would have adverse effects on California gnatcatchers and their habitat.

Wildlife Species - Group 2

None of the Group 2 wildlife species would be substantially affected by implementation of the Specific Plan.

Wildlife Species - Group 3

There would be no significant effects to populations or essential habitats of any Group 3 wildlife species.

Wildlife Movement Corridors

Impacts to wildlife corridors would be adverse, but not significant.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

The San Dieguito River Valley, Lusardi Creek, and 4S Ranch habitat linkages are regionally important in maintaining landscape connectivity between California gnatcatcher core populations within the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan, as well as to adjacent core populations located to the north, south, and east. The overall open space design on the Santa Fe Valley SPA was tentatively accepted by the state and federal wildlife agencies as

part of the foundation of the local subarea plan per the NCCP regional planning process. The effectiveness of the retained linkages will rely on the habitat management program established by the subarea plan, the judicious use of the D2 designation, and through habitat recovery and rehabilitation in designated open space preserves.

With the implementation of mitigation measures in Section 4.2.4, all impacts to biological resources will be mitigated.

4.2.4 Mitigation Measures

Wetlands

- Wetland impacts shall be avoided and minimized through project redesign, where feasible per discretionary permit review, application of the D2 designator, and state and federal permitting processes (1603 and 404, respectively). Site-specific wetland delineation studies shall be prepared to document the amount and habitat value of the wetland resources including vernal pools.

- All unavoidable impacts shall be mitigated by creation and/or enhancement of wetland habitat onsite or offsite within the vicinity of the SPA (e.g., Lusardi Creek drainage) at a mitigation ratio of no less than 1:1. Mitigation will include the preparation of a detailed wetland mitigation plan and dedication of the mitigation areas as permanent open space.

- The loss of the disturbed vernal pools in the northwestern portion of the SPA could be mitigated by acquiring the land containing the vernal pools and adjacent watershed in the southwestern SPA. If this mitigation measure is feasible, it should include preparation of a vernal pool management plan, and dedication of the vernal pools and surrounding watershed as permanent open space. Identification and protection of watershed is critical to protecting the hydrology of the vernal pool system and associated pollinators of vernal pool species. This impact could also be mitigated by acquisition or restoration of vernal pools offsite.

- Appropriate vegetated buffers shall be established around all wetland habitat and unvegetated waters. Buffer widths will vary depending upon the type (e.g., unvegetated drainage versus riparian forest) and quality of the habitat, adjacent land uses, whether the habitat functions as a wildlife movement corridor or habitat linkage (see below), and whether it supports sensitive plant or wildlife species.

- An open space easement, including appropriate buffer areas around vernal pools, shall be dedicated to the County of San Diego and shall prohibit disturbance of any kind.

- Activities in wetland habitat and buffers shall be limited to passive recreation (e.g., hiking). Fencing should be used to protect particularly sensitive areas such as wetland dominated by herbaceous species (e.g., vernal pools, freshwater marsh) and populations of sensitive plant species.

- To mitigate for impacts associated with increased runoff from developed areas, a drainage control plan shall be prepared by a qualified geologist or hydrologist. Mitigation will also include the use of unlined drainage channels, energy dissipating structures, detention ponds, and permeable materials on paved surfaces where practical, reduction of irrigation requirements through the use of native, drought-tolerant vegetation, and conducting necessary irrigation operations to minimize runoff and evaporation.

- To mitigate for impacts associated with erosion and sedimentation during construction, construction activities adjacent to wetlands and unvegetated waters shall be conducted during the dry season where feasible, standard erosion control procedures (e.g., temporary berms, sandbags, sedimentation/desiltation basins) shall be used, disturbance to vegetated slopes shall be minimized, and graded slopes shall be revegetated immediately after construction is completed.

- To reduce impacts associated with decreased surface water quality, fueling zones shall be established during construction that are at least 50 feet from wetlands and drainages. In addition, a spill prevention and control program shall be implemented, the proper use and disposal of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and other toxic materials shall be encouraged, alternative methods for

pest-control and fertilization shall be encouraged, and retention ponds and infiltration trenches and basins shall be incorporated into the project design for the removal of nutrients, sediments, and toxicants.

- Only native wetland plant species indigenous to the area shall be used for wetland enhancement and revegetation. The use of invasive nonnative species, such as pampas grass (*Cortaderia* spp.) and giant reed (*Arundo donax*), shall be prohibited in all landscaped areas throughout the SPA. Cultivars of native plants and native species from different geographic regions shall also be prohibited. All plant material used for wetland enhancement and revegetation shall be collected onsite or in the vicinity of the SPA, to the degree feasible.

- Standard dust control procedures shall be used to reduce fugitive dust emissions during construction.

- To mitigate for impacts associated with increased human activity, access trails shall be limited to existing roads and trails and entry into wetland habitats shall be discouraged by fencing and other barriers. A public education program that includes signage along trails shall be implemented to inform residents about the value and sensitivity of wetland habitats.

- Protection of vernal pool resources shall include preservation of supportive watershed to avoid indirect impacts of human presence and siltation.

Sensitive Upland Habitats

Coastal Sage Scrub

- Uplands identified for natural open space preservation which have been disturbed by various activities including agriculture shall be restored to coastal sage scrub or other native scrub or grassland habitat as dictated by location and soils. This mitigation requirement will offset some of the internal losses of habitat while adding coastal sage scrub to the preserve and establishing better habitat linkage and cover for wildlife movement.

Southern Maritime Chaparral

- Direct impacts to southern maritime chaparral shall be minimized to the extent feasible during final design of the Balcor tentative map golf course.

Perennial Grassland

- Direct impacts shall be mitigated by avoidance to the extent feasible. Unavoidable impacts shall be mitigated by onsite enhancement/restoration of this habitat, adjacent to existing stands of perennial grassland in areas to be dedicated as open space.

Coast Live Oak Woodland

- The single small (approximately 0.4 acre) stand of coast live oak woodland in Open Space II (McCrink Ranch tentative map) shall be avoided through project redesign, if feasible. Unavoidable impacts to this habitat should be mitigated by onsite habitat creation at a ratio of no less than 3:1 and dedication as permanent open space.

Sensitive Plant Species

- Field surveys shall be conducted for San Diego thorn-mint (early spring) and Encinitas baccharis (any time of year) prior to development of the Very Low and Rural residential development areas in the southwestern and northeastern portions of the SPA, respectively. Newly discovered populations shall be preserved, if feasible. Unavoidable losses shall be mitigated by acquiring and preserving an offsite population(s), within an area that can be incorporated into a regional preserve system. Based on past experience, the success of relocating existing populations is questionable, and therefore would not represent sufficient mitigation alone. Seed from impacted populations should, however, be salvaged for germ plasm storage and experimental introduction studies.

- Impacts to California adolphia and wart-stemmed ceanothus should be avoided to the extent feasible. For unavoidable impacts, incorporation of these species into coastal sage scrub (California adolphia) and chaparral (wart-stemmed

ceanothus) revegetation and enhancement plant palettes is recommended. Material used in these plant palettes must be collected onsite. Introduction of these species should be done in areas that are contiguous with existing populations in areas dedicated for open space preservation.

- Impacts to summer-holly, San Diego barrel cactus, and San Diego marsh-elder should be avoided to the extent feasible. For unavoidable impacts, salvage of plant materials (seed, stem cuttings, individual plants) in areas to be impacted and incorporate the materials into revegetation and habitat enhancement plant palettes.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

- Focused preconstruction surveys for Riverside and San Diego fairy shrimp shall be conducted to determine their status in the northwestern vernal pools. If either fairy shrimp species is found, an appropriate mitigation program would be required which may include acquisition of onsite or offsite vernal pools.

- To prevent impacts to San Diego fairy shrimp, and potentially to Riverside fairy shrimp, future residences, roads, structures, and other potentially detrimental land uses shall be located away from the southwestern vernal pool complex through the D2 designator process. The group of pools and their associated watershed shall be preserved in permanent open space. Indirect impacts to the vernal pools and the associated watershed shall be minimized by following appropriate construction practices; banning the introduction of pesticides, herbicides, and pollutants into the watershed; providing a buffer zone around the preserved vernal pools; and restricting human and off-road vehicular activity in the preserved and buffer open space.

- Lands that contain important stands of coastal sage scrub or represent critical linkages in areas designated with the D2 designator shall be considered for public acquisition through the regional funding program established as part of the regional habitat planning programs.

- For any construction zones within 1,000 feet of the riparian habitat along the San Dieguito River and Lusardi Creek, preconstruction surveys for

southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bells' vireo shall be conducted. If either one of these species is observed in the riparian habitat in these areas, construction shall be prohibited within 1,000 feet of the habitat during these species' breeding periods.

Wildlife Movement Corridors

- Habitat previously disturbed and/or used for agricultural purposes shall be restored within areas identified to be preserved as natural open space (i.e., Open Space I). These areas shall be restored to coastal sage scrub, chaparral, or native grassland as dictated by adjacent habitats and soils. Restoration shall be prioritized along the San Dieguito River north of the confluence with Lusardi Creek.

- The D2 designator shall be utilized to provide a wider more contiguous wildlife corridor in the southwesternmost portion of the SPA (i.e., adjacent to Lusardi Creek).

- With the exception of the golf course in the Balcor tentative map area, only passive recreation (i.e., hiking trails) shall be allowed within the buffer to the San Dieguito River Valley corridor.

- Outdoor lighting of the clubhouse shall be minimized. Lighting and nighttime activity on the golf course and associated facilities (e.g., parking areas, storage and maintenance facilities) shall be prohibited.

- Lighting of the bridge over the San Dieguito River shall be minimized. Fencing along the roadway leading onto the bridge shall be constructed to direct wildlife movement under the bridge and away from the roadway.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

- The D2 designator shall be used to avoid fragmentation of habitat and widen linkages to accommodate dispersal and breeding within the three linkage areas identified (i.e., between the San Dieguito River and the proposed golf course, between the 4S Ranch SPA and Santa Fe Valley, and the Lusardi Creek to

Black Mountain to Los Peñasquitos Canyon linkage). Disturbed lands identified for preservation shall be restored to coastal sage scrub along these linkages, or other native scrub or grassland habitat as dictated by location and soils.

4.2.5 Tentative Map Area Impacts

This section presents impacts associated with the four proposed tentative maps within the Santa Fe Valley SPA: the Balcor Subdivision, the McCrink Ranch Subdivision, the Seaton Subdivision, and the Bernardo Lakes Subdivision. The tentative map subdivisions are shown in Figures 3-7 through 3-10 in Section 3 of this EIR. The following discussion focuses primarily on significant impacts that are unique or specific to one or more of the tentative maps. Impacts that are broader in scope or that are more appropriately addressed at the Specific Plan level are presented in Section 4.2.2. The organization of this impact analysis is similar to that used for the SPA (Section 4.2.2). Significance criteria for impacts to the various biological resources (e.g., vegetation communities, sensitive plants, sensitive wildlife) are the same as those presented in Section 4.2.2. Mitigation measures for significant impacts are discussed above (at the SPA level only) in Section 4.2.4.

Balcor Subdivision Tentative Map Impacts

Vegetation Communities

Group 1: Habitats Wetlands and Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.

Direct impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. within the Balcor tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-4 and on Plate 1. Approximately 4.8 acres (14.4 percent of the total within the tentative map) of wetland habitat and 0.2 acre (2.8 percent) of unvegetated waters of the U.S. would be lost to development within this tentative map. These impacts represent approximately 30 and 22 percent of the total impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters, respectively, within the SPA. Of these wetland impacts, at least 4 vernal pool basins covering approximately 0.04 acre, and approximately 6.1 acres of adjacent upland habitat (primarily disturbed coastal sage scrub and nonnative grassland) that serve as a buffer or watershed to these pools, would be directly impacted. Direct impacts associated with the proposed golf course within this tentative map include 2.9 acres of wetlands (0.8 acre of freshwater marsh, 1.4 acres of southern willow scrub, 0.2 acre of

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE BALCOR SUBDIVISION TENTATIVE MAP BY LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total TM)		
			Developed[2]	
		Open Space[1]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
GROUP 1: SENSITIVE HABITATS				
WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.				
Wetlands				
Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh	8.5	7.6 (89.4)	0.8 (9.4)	0.1 (1.2)
Southern Willow Scrub	8.9	6.9 (77.5)	1.4 (15.7)	0.6 (6.7)
Mulefat Scrub	0.2	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Tamarisk Scrub	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	12.6	12.5 (99.2)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (0.8)
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Vernal Pool	0.04	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.04 (100)[3]
Disturbed Wetland	2.1	1.4 (66.7)	0.3 (14.3)	0.4 (19.0)
Swale/Wetland Ecotone	0.9	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (22.2)	0.7 (77.8)
Total Wetlands	**33.2**	**28.4 (84.5)**	**2.9 (8.6)**	**1.9 (5.7)**
Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.				
Natural Floodchannel/Streambed	2.0	2.0 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Seasonal Streambed[5]	(0.2)	0.1 (50.0)	0.1 (50)	0.0 (0.0)
Open Water	4.7	4.6 (97.9)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (2.1)
Total Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	**6.7**	**6.6 (97.1)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.1 (1.4)**
TOTAL WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	**39.9**	**35.0 (87.5)**	**2.9 (7.5)**	**2.0 (5.0)**
SENSITIVE UPLANDS				
Coastal Sage Scrub[4]	273.3	111.2 (40.7)	59.6 (21.8)	102.6 (37.5)
Undisturbed	78.3	54.0 (69.0)	4.0 (5.1)	20.4 (26.1)
Disturbed	195.0	57.2 (29.3)	55.6 (28.5)	82.2 (42.2)
Coastal Sage Scrub/Chaparral	11.0	4.1 (37.3)	3.4 (30.9)	3.5 (31.8)
Southern Maritime Chaparral	13.5	10.4 (77.0)	1.2 (8.9)	1.8 (13.3)

Table 4.2-4 (Continued)

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE BALCOR SUBDIVISION TENTATIVE MAP BY LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total TM)		
			Developed[2]	
		Open Space[1]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
Perennial Grassland	2.3	0.7 (30.4)	1.5 (65.2)	0.1 (4.3)
Coast Live Oak Woodland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Rock Outcrops	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
TOTAL SENSITIVE UPLANDS	**300.1**	**126.4 (42.1)**	**65.8 (21.9)**	**108.0 (36.0)**
TOTAL GROUP 1 HABITATS	**340.4**	**161.4 (47.4)**	**68.7 (20.2)**	**111.7 (32.9)**
GROUP 2: NONSENSITIVE HABITATS				
Chaparral	21.9	3.1 (14.2)	6.3 (28.8)	12.6 (57.5)
Nonnative Grassland	145.4	2.5 (1.7)	57.4 (39.5)	85.5 (58.8)
Eucalyptus Woodland	16.3	15.2 (93.3)	0.4 (2.4)	0.7 (4.3)
Ruderal Habitat	51.2	10.8 (21.1)	13.7 (26.8)	26.7 (52.1)
TOTAL GROUP 2 HABITATS	**234.8**	**31.6 (13.5)**	**77.8 (33.1)**	**125.5 (53.4)**
GROUP 3: MAINTAINED LANDS				
Agricultural Land	62.2	8.3 (13.3)	21.5 (34.6)	32.4 (52.1)
Developed	8.6	4.6 (53.5)	1.0 (11.6)	2.9 (33.7)
TOTAL GROUP 3 HABITATS	**70.8**	**12.9 (18.2)**	**22.5 (31.8)**	**35.3 (49.9)**
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	**645.6**	**205.9 (31.8)**	**169.0 (26.1)**	**272.5 (42.1)**

1 Open Space includes Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas) and Open Space II - Preserved (areas in golf course with native vegetation).

2 Developed includes Open Space II Disturbed (turf and nonnative vegetation areas in golf course, and equestrian facility), Residential (excluding Very Low Density and Rural), Commercial, Community Facilities, roadways, clubhouse, resort, and driving range.

3 This acreage is the area covered by 4 vernal pool basins at a single location in the northwestern SPA. The total vernal pool watershed at this location encompasses 6.2 acres, of which approximately 6.1 acres is upland habitat. Due to agricultural activities, the vernal pools at this location are highly disturbed, low quality pools.

4 Includes Diegan coastal sage scrub and coyote bush scrub.

5 Seasonal streambed acreage is shown because it is jurisdictioned habitat. This acreage is already accounted for in the coincident habitat (e.g., chaparral) and is not counted in the total habitat acreages.

Note: Numbers may not sum to totals as shown, due to rounding.

mulefat scrub, 0.3 acre of disturbed wetland, and 0.2 acre of swale/wetland ecotone) and 0.1 acre of unvegetated seasonal streambed. None of the impacts to wetlands or unvegetated waters is associated with the golf course clubhouse or driving range.

Indirect impacts to wetlands include decreased water quality, fugitive dust emissions, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant species, genetic contamination of native plants, and degradation of habitat due to increased human presence. In particular, runoff from the Balcor golf course, driving range, and adjacent residential development that could contain fertilizers, pesticides and other contaminants could affect water quality and indirectly impact wetland habitat in the San Dieguito River. A more detailed discussion of these impacts is presented in the Specific Plan impact analysis. A number of mitigative measures (refer to Section 4.2.4) can be taken to avoid or minimize most indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters.

Group 1: Sensitive Upland Habitats

Direct impacts to sensitive upland habitats within the Balcor tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-4 and on Plate 1. Approximately 173.8 acres of sensitive upland habitat would be lost within this tentative map, including 162.2 acres (59.3 percent of the total within the tentative map) of coastal sage scrub, 6.9 acres of coastal sage scrub/chaparral (62.7 percent), 3.0 acres (22.2 percent) of southern maritime chaparral, and 1.6 acres (69.6 percent) of perennial grassland. Direct impacts associated with the proposed golf course include the loss of 59.6 acres of coastal sage scrub (4.0 acres undisturbed, 55.6 acres disturbed), 1.2 acres of southern maritime chaparral, and 1.5 acres of perennial grassland. An additional 12.0 (9.8 acres undisturbed, 2.2 acres disturbed) and 13.5 (0.9 acre undisturbed, 12.6 acres disturbed) acres of coastal sage scrub would be directly lost as a result of construction of the clubhouse and driving range, respectively. All direct and indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats would be adverse and significant.

In addition, the coastal sage scrub within this tentative map forms a habitat link between sage scrub occupied by California gnatcatchers along Lusardi Creek and occupied habitat in the north-central and northeastern portions of the SPA. Impacts to California gnatcatchers and coastal sage scrub habitat linkages are further discussed in the following sections.

Potential indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats include fugitive dust emissions, soil erosion on slopes during project construction, introduction of invasive, nonnative plant

species, genetic contamination of native plants, increases in the moisture regime from runoff, and degradation of habitat due to habitat fragmentation, edge effect, and increased human presence. A more detailed discussion of these impacts is presented in the Specific Plan impact analysis (Section 4.2.2). Most of these indirect impacts can, however, be avoided or reduced by implementing the mitigative measures outlined in Section 4.2.4.

Group 2 Habitats

Direct impacts to Group 2 habitats within the Balcor Subdivision tentative map are summarized in Table 4.2-4 and on Plate 1. None of the direct impacts to Group 2 habitats associated with this tentative map would be significant.

Group 3 Habitats

Direct impacts to Group 3 habitats within the Balcor Subdivision tentative map are summarized in Table 4.2-4 and on Plate 1. None of the direct or indirect impacts to Group 3 habitats associated with this tentative map would be significant.

Sensitive Plant Species

Group 1 Plants

The only Group 1 plant species that occurs within the Balcor Subdivision tentative map is Del Mar manzanita. Of the approximately 310 individuals in the tentative map, 269 (86.8 percent of the total within the tentative map) are in areas proposed for permanent open space, while the remaining 41 (13.2 percent) shrubs would be lost to development of the golf course and residential development in the southern portion of the tentative map (Table 4.2-5, Plate 2). These losses also account for 100 percent of the direct impacts to this species within the SPA (Table 4.2-3).

Group 2 Plants

Impacts to Group 2 plant species resulting from development of the Balcor tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-5 and on Plate 2. Direct impacts to California adolphia (236 individuals, 43.3 percent of the total within the tentative map) are not considered significant. Direct impacts to wart-stemmed ceanothus (approximately 11.1 acres of

Table 4.2-5

SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED WITHIN THE BALCOR TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Species	Total Number of Individuals in TM	Number of Individuals (% of total)		
			Developed[2]	
		Open Space[1]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
Group 1: Federally or State-Listed Species, Species Proposed For Listing, and Federal C1 Candidates				
Del Mar Manzanita	310	269 (86.8)	31 (10)	10 (3.2)
Group 2: Federal C2 Candidates and CNPS List 1B and List 2 Species				
California Adolphia	545	309 (56.7)	104 (19.1)	132 (24.2)
San Diego Sagewort	200	200 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Wart-stemmed Ceanothus[3]	20.3	9.2 (45.3)	3.2 (15.8)	7.9 (38.9)
Summer-holly	264	230 (87.1)	11 (4.2)	23 (8.7)
San Diego Barrel Cactus	11	6 (54.5)	0 (0.0)	5 (45.5)
San Diego Marsh-elder	208	180 (86.5)	27 (13.0)	1 (0.5)
Nuttal's Scrub Oak[4]	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined
Group 3: CNPS List 4 Species				
Spiny Rush	192	143 (74.5)	36 (18.8)	13 (6.8)

1 Open Space includes Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas) and Open Space II - Preserved (areas of native vegetation in golf course).

2 Developed includes Open Space II - Disturbed (areas in golf course planted with turf and other nonnative/ornamental plant species). Residential (excluding Very Low Density), Commercial, Community Facilities, roadways, clubhouse, resort, and driving range.

3 Occurrences are shown as acres of habitat supporting this species.

4 Species observed in southwestern TM but population size not determined.

retention of chaparral habitats onsite and within the Specific Plan. Direct impacts to all other Group 2 plant species would be adverse, but not significant. San Diego marsh-elder could be substantially affected by the indirect effects of increased streambed erosion, decreased water quality, and habitat degradation.

Group 3 Plants

Impacts to Group 3 plant species resulting from development of the Balcor Subdivision tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-5 and on Plate 2. Although above the County's maximum allowable loss (20 percent) for development projects, direct impacts to spiny rush (48 individuals, 25.5 percent of the tentative map total) would not jeopardize either species' local or regional populations.

Adverse indirect impacts could potentially occur to the spiny rush population both within the Balcor Subdivision tentative map as a result of increased streambed erosion, decreased water quality, and overall habitat degradation. Section 4.2.4 includes mitigative measures that could be implemented to reduce these impacts.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

Fairy Shrimp

A small group of highly degraded vernal pools in the northern portion of this tentative map would be directly impacted by proposed residential development. Although not encountered during cursory field surveys, Riverside and San Diego fairy shrimp could potentially occur in these pools. Focused surveys for these species during a year with adequate rainfall would be necessary to determine their presence or absence at this location.

California Gnatcatcher

A minimum of 8 California gnatcatcher territories (approximately 162 acres of coastal sage scrub) would be directly lost as a result of development within the Balcor tentative map. These losses represent approximately 57 percent of the territories within the tentative map. Of the territories impacted, 3 would be directly impacted by the golf course and driving range, 1 by the clubhouse, and 4 by residential development. It should be noted that 2 territories would be partially impacted by development within the Balcor Subdivision

Of the territories impacted, 3 would be directly impacted by the golf course and driving range, 1 by the clubhouse, and 4 by residential development. It should be noted that 2 territories would be partially impacted by development within the Balcor Subdivision tentative map, and partially by the Seaton tentative map, with the overall effect of both territories being lost (Figure 4.2-4).

Indirect impacts to California gnatcatchers and their habitat would occur due to fragmentation of the remaining coastal sage scrub habitat within the tentative map, especially in the area proposed for the golf course. Reduced nesting and reproductive success could occur from the high levels of human activity in or adjacent to coastal sage scrub, especially in "islands" of habitat incorporated into the golf course. The introduction of herbicides, pesticides and other toxic materials associated with golf course maintenance could adversely impact both gnatcatchers and their habitat. A more detailed discussion of the affects of habitat fragmentation and edge effects is presented in the analysis of impacts to coastal sage scrub habitat linkage below.

Because the California gnatcatcher is listed as a federally threatened species, all direct and indirect impacts to it and its habitat would be considered significant.

Other Wildlife

This tentative map also impacts a variety of sensitive species and their habitats in the northwest corner of the site such as orange-throated whiptail, heron species, black-shouldered kite, northern harrier, Bell's sage sparrow, black-tailed jackrabbit, and others (see Section 4.2.2). These impacts are cumulatively significant in a regional context, and are addressed and mitigated through the NCCP process and the local subarea plan.

Wildlife Corridors

The Balcor tentative map could impact wildlife movement along the San Dieguito River and one of its tributaries. The San Dieguito River Valley is recognized as a regional corridor that provides for movement of large mammals (e.g., mule deer, bobcat, mountain lion) between Lake Hodges and the San Pasqual Valley to the east and Lusardi Creek/La Jolla Valley and Black Mountain to the south.

Although the tentative map would not block this corridor, it would reduce the combined width of the corridor and adjacent buffer to less than 400 feet at the proposed bridge crossing over the river (Figures 3-7 and 4.2-5). Despite this constriction, wildlife should be able to move under this bridge. During flood events, however, wildlife may have to move through the area by traversing around the bridge. This would only be possible on the east side of the bridge, where they would have to cross the proposed road, driving range, and golf course. Fencing in this area could hinder wildlife movement during the rainy season and the potential for roadkills increases if wildlife were forced to cross the road.

Indirect impacts to the San Dieguito River corridor are associated primarily with the increase in human activity in the area, especially on the golf course and at the clubhouse. Lighting of the clubhouse, resort, bridge and roadway, and golf course facilities at night could also discourage wildlife movement along the river.

Also within the northern one-half of the Balcor tentative map, a local movement corridor associated with a drainage between the San Dieguito River and irrigation ponds on the adjacent McCrink Ranch tentative map would be impacted (Plate 1). This corridor is expected to be used by small mammals, birds, and possibly larger reptiles to access this reliable source of water. Because these ponds will be retained as part of the McCrink Ranch tentative map development, the source of water would still be available to wildlife. This is especially true of the western-most pond that currently abuts the eastern end of the riparian corridor on the Balcor tentative map, and that would be incorporated into the McCrink Ranch golf course. Development of the proposed golf course within the Balcor tentative map, however, would fragment the corridor by eliminating portions of the wetland habitat along the drainage. Edge effects from the surrounding golf course and resort would further degrade the corridor. While wildlife may continue to travel between the river and the ponds after project implementation, the effects of fragmentation and edge effect may reduce the value of both the open water habitat (i.e., ponds) and the narrow riparian corridor.

The proposed Balcor tentative map does not permanently block the San Dieguito River regional movement corridor, and golf courses are generally considered a compatible use of movement corridor buffers. In addition, if allowances are made for wildlife movement around the east end of the bridge during the rainy season, direct impacts to this corridor would be adverse but not significant. Indirect impacts associated with the increase in human activity could be reduced by implementing the mitigative measures outlined in

Section 4.2.4. Impacts to the local corridor within the tentative map would be adverse but not significant because there are alternative open space linkages providing access between the river and the McCrink Ranch irrigation ponds.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

The Balcor tentative map encompasses the San Dieguito River, river floodplain, and adjacent slopes from just east of where the river diverges south away from Del Dios Highway to approximately 1.5 miles south of the highway. With the exception of riparian and other wetland habitat along the river and its tributaries, much of this land supports coastal sage scrub, nonnative grassland, and ruderal habitat. Because of past agricultural activities, the coastal sage scrub currently consists of small, highly fragmented patches of good to moderate quality habitat distributed throughout a matrix of highly disturbed, low quality scrub and nonnative habitat. Although this coastal sage scrub (273.3 acres) is in relatively poor condition, it supported gnatcatchers in 1992 (Figures 4.2-4 and 4.2-5).

Because the land adjacent to the southwestern SPA (i.e., San Dieguito River Valley and western La Jolla Valley) does not currently function as a sage scrub habitat linkage to other gnatcatcher populations (with the possible exception of occasional dispersal to Black Mountain over disturbed habitat along Lusardi Creek), the only remaining reliable opportunity for genetic exchange for the Santa Fe Valley-Lusardi subpopulation is by dispersal along the river valley to the north. Maintaining the habitat within the Balcor tentative map as a linkage capable of supporting breeding gnatcatchers is important for the long-term viability of the Santa Fe Valley-Lusardi gnatcatcher subpopulation.

Implementation of the Balcor development would reduce the number of gnatcatcher territories from 14 to 6 in the northern portion of the sage scrub linkage along the western river valley. Three of the territories retained are located at the northernmost end of this linkage, leaving only 3 territories over a distance of 1.5 miles within the linkage (i.e., between Del Dios Highway and the southern boundary of the tentative map). South of the Balcor tentative map, proposed Very Low and Rural residential development along the river north of Lusardi Creek could further reduce the carrying capacity of the habitat within this linkage. The cumulative effects of the Balcor tentative map and the Very Low and Rural residential designated lands could marginalize the adequacy of this linkage.

Enhancement of disturbed coastal sage scrub on the proposed links-style golf course could improve the vegetative aspect of the habitat, but these gains in habitat quality may be offset by the effects of habitat fragmentation and edge effects. Considerable human activity on the golf course and adjacent residential development could reduce the likelihood of successful gnatcatcher breeding.

Balcor Level of Significance

Significant impacts identified for the Balcor Tentative Map are listed below:

- Wetlands. All direct and indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. are significant and require federal and state wetland permits.

- Uplands. All direct and indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats (coastal sage scrub and perennial grassland) are significant.

- Fairy shrimp. Focused surveys for Riverside and San Diego fairy shrimp must be completed in order to determine if significant impacts would occur to these species.

- California gnatcatcher. Because this species is listed as federally threatened, all direct and indirect impacts would be significant.

- Impacts to Group 2 wildlife species would be cumulatively significant in a larger San Diego context and is addressed through participation in the NCCP program.

With the implementation of mitigation measures in Section 4.2.4 and specific mitigation measures for Balcor tentative map impacts, all impacts to biological resources will be mitigated.

Balcor Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures listed in Section 4.2.4 for the SPA also apply to the Balcor tentative map. The following measure is specific to the Balcor tentative map:

- A substantial amount of acreage associated with the development of the golf course is proposed for "native enhancement." This transition acreage shall be restored to native coastal sage scrub to the extent feasible to maximize the effectiveness of the habitat for dispersing or breeding California gnatcatchers. Native species should clearly predominate the percent cover and composition of the native enhancement areas. Complementary species (size, drought tolerance) or ornamental accent plants should be used sparingly. No invasive species should be utilized.

McCrink Ranch Subdivision Tentative Map Impacts

Vegetation Communities

Wetlands and Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.

Direct impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. within the McCrink Ranch tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-6 and on Plate 1. Approximately 1.3 acres (8.1 percent of the total within the tentative map) of wetlands, including 0.4 acre of freshwater marsh, 0.6 acre of southern willow scrub, 0.1 acre of mulefat scrub, 0.1 acre of tamarisk scrub, and 0.1 acre of swale/wetland ecotone, would be lost to development. Approximately 0.3 acre of unvegetated waters of the U.S. would also be directly impacted. These combined impacts represent about 9.5 percent of the total impacts to wetlands and waters within the SPA.

Five irrigation ponds currently exist within the McCrink Ranch tentative map (Figure 3-8). These ponds were created by damming several of the drainages and filling them by capturing natural runoff from the surrounding slopes and pumping water from the San Dieguito River. A sixth pond was also observed in the southwestern corner of the tentative map area during 1992 surveys. However, this pond has since gone dry.

All five of the existing ponds will be incorporated into the tentative map development, primarily within the proposed golf course. One of these ponds will be refilled as part of the development project. Because these ponds will be retained, no impacts to open water habitat would occur. Portions of the wetland vegetation around these ponds would, however, be impacted by the proposed development, and these impacts are reflected in the above discussion and in Table 4.2-6. The sixth pond located in the southwestern portion

Table 4.2-6

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE MCCRINK RANCH TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total)		
		Open Space[1]	Developed[2]	
			Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
GROUP 1: SENSITIVE HABITATS				
WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.				
Wetlands				
Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh	6.8	6.4 (94.1)	0.0 (0.0)	0.4 (5.9)
Southern Willow Scrub	6.7	6.1 (91.0)	0.4 (6.0)	0.2 (3.0)
Mulefat Scrub	0.2	0.1 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (50.0)
Tamarisk Scrub	0.5	0.4 (80.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (20.0)
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	1.2	1.2 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.1	0.1 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Vernal Pool	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Disturbed Wetland	0.4	0.4 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Swale/Wetland Ecotone	0.1	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (100)
Total Wetlands	**16.0**	**14.7 (91.9)**	**0.4 (2.5)**	**0.9 (5.6)**
Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.				
Natural Floodchannel/Streambed	0.1	0.1 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Seasonal Streambed[4]	(0.9)	0.6 (67)	0.2 (22.2)	0.1 (11.1)
Open Water	13.0	13.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	**13.1**	**13.1 (97.9)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**
TOTAL WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	**29.1**	**27.8 (94.7)**	**0.4 (2.0)**	**0.9 (3.1)**
SENSITIVE UPLANDS				
Coastal Sage Scrub[3]	179.9	145.5 (80.9)	16.8 (9.3)	17.7 (9.8)
Undisturbed	150.6	131.0 (87.0)	12.7 (8.4)	6.9 (4.6)
Disturbed	29.3	14.5 (49.5)	4.1 (14.0)	10.8 (36.9)
Coastal Sage Scrub/Chaparral	0.3	0.3 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)

Table 4.2-6 (Continued)

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE MCCRINK RANCH TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total)		
			Developed[2]	
		Open Space[1]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
Southern Maritime Chaparral	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Perennial Grassland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Coast Live Oak Woodland	1.3	0.9 (69.2)	0.4 (30.8)	0.1 (7.7)
Rock Outcrops	1.6	1.6 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
TOTAL SENSITIVE UPLANDS	**183.1**	**148.3 (81.0)**	**17.2 (9.4)**	**17.8 (9.7)**
TOTAL GROUP 1 HABITATS	**212.4**	**176.1 (82.8)**	**17.6 (8.3)**	**18.7 (8.8)**
GROUP 2: NONSENSITIVE HABITATS				
Chaparral	65.3	60.0 (91.9)	0.7 (1.1)	4.6 (7.0)
Nonnative Grassland	39.7	23.3 (58.7)	1.0 (2.5)	15.3 (38.5)
Eucalyptus Woodland	8.8	3.7 (42.0)	3.6 (40.9)	1.5 (17.0)
Ruderal Habitat	77.8	1.5 (1.9)	10.9 (14.0)	65.4 (84.1)
TOTAL GROUP 2 HABITATS	**191.6**	**88.5 (46.2)**	**16.2 (8.4)**	**86.8 (45.3)**
GROUP 3: MAINTAINED LANDS				
Agricultural Land	312.2	9.8 (3.1)	55.4 (17.7)	247.1 (79.1)
Developed	28.0	10.2 (36.4)	10.9 (38.9)	6.9 (24.6)
TOTAL GROUP 3 HABITATS	**340.2**	**20.0 (5.9)**	**66.3 (19.5)**	**254.0 (74.7)**
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	**744.2**	**284.6 (38.2)**	**100.1 (13.5)**	**359.5 (48.3)**

1 Open Space is Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas).
2 Developed includes Open Space II Disturbed (turf and nonnative vegetation areas in golf course, and equestrian facility), Residential (excluding Very Low Density), Commercial, Community Facilities, and roadways.
3 Includes Diegan coastal sage scrub and coyote bush scrub.
4 Seasonal streambed acreage is shown because it is jurisdictioned habitat. This acreage is already accounted for in the coincident habitat (e.g., chaparral) and is not counted in the total habitat acreages.
Note: Numbers may not sum to totals as shown, due to rounding.

of the tentative map is in an area proposed for residential development. Because this pond does not occur in a drainage, it is unlikely that it would support wetland vegetation or open water habitat naturally, and therefore would not be within the jurisdiction of the ACOE or CDFG. Its loss was not considered an impact to wetlands or unvegetated waters.

Sensitive Upland Habitats

Impacts to sensitive upland habitats are shown on Table 4.2-6 and Plate 1. Approximately 34.5 acres of coastal sage scrub would be lost to development, the majority of which (19.6 acres) is undisturbed. The only other Group 1 habitat affected is 0.5 acre of coast live oak woodland. The loss of coastal sage scrub is considered a significant impact. The small reduction of the oak woodland is an adverse impact which could be alleviated by minor redesign along the margin of the golf course.

Group 2 Habitats

Direct impacts to Group 2 habitats within the McCrink Ranch tentative map are summarized on Table 4.2-6 and are shown on Plate 1. None of these direct effects is considered significant. Only 5 percent of the 103 acres affected is chaparral and this represents just 8 percent of the chaparral in the tentative map.

Group 3 Habitats

Direct impacts to Group 3 habitats within the McCrink Ranch tentative map are summarized in Table 4.2-6 and on Plate 1. None of these impacts are considered significant.

Sensitive Plant Species

Group 1 Plants

The only Group 1 plant species that occurs within the McCrink Ranch tentative map is sticky dudleya (Table 4.2-7). This species will not be directly impacted. Restrictions on activity in preserved natural open space will alleviate any indirect effects.

Table 4.2-7

SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED WITHIN THE MCCRINK RANCH TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Species	Total Number of Individuals in TM	Number of Individuals (% of total)		
			Developed[2]	
		Open Space I[1]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development[2]
Group 1: Federally or State-Listed Species, Species Proposed For Listing, and Federal C1 Candidates				
Sticky Dudleya	1,145	1,145 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Group 2: Federal C2 Candidates and CNPS List 1B and List 2 Species				
California Adolphia	1,494	929 (62.2)	490 (32.8)	75 (5.0)
Wart-stemmed Ceanothus[3]	50.2	49.2 (98.0)	0 (0.0)	1.0 (2.0)
Summer-holly	7	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (100.0)
San Diego Barrel Cactus	17	17 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
San Diego Marsh-elder	2,381	2,153 (90.4)	200 (8.4)	28 (1.2)
Group 3: CNPS List 4 Species				
Spiny Rush	1,152	1,114 (96.7)	24 (2.1)	14 (1.2)
Ashy Spike-moss[3]	1.0	0.96 (96.0)	0 (0.0)	0.03 (3.0)

1 Open Space is Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas).
2 Developed includes Open Space II - Disturbed (areas in golf course planted with turf and other nonnative/ornamental plant species), Residential (excluding Very Low Density), Commercial, Community Facilities, and roadways.
3 Occurrences are shown as acres of habitat supporting this species.

Group 2 Plants

Impacts to Group 2 plant species resulting from the McCrink Ranch tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-7 and on Plate 2. Direct impacts to California adolphia (565 plants), summer-holly (7 plants), San Diego marsh-elder (228 plants), and an estimated 1 acre of wart-stemmed ceanothus do not constitute significant effects.

Group 3 Plants

Impacts to Group 3 plants are shown on Table 4.2-7 and Plate 2. They amount to a small number of spiny rush (38 plants) and a small fraction of an acre of ashy spike-moss. These effects do not constitute significant reductions of these species.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

California Gnatcatcher

Portions of 3 to 4 territories are affected by the tentative map development envelope. All of these sightings are on the border of the proposed development area and none is internal to the proposed development area. Any direct or indirect effect to loss of this listed species is considered significant. The open space plan proposed for this area would mitigate these impacts.

Group 2 Wildlife

This tentative map incrementally affects upland Group 2 species, but is not considered substantial within the tentative map. Only 16 percent of the supportive natural upland habitats within the tentative map is lost. This effect is cumulatively significant on a regional basis and is addressed through participation in the NCCP program. Similarly, wetland-associated Group 2 species would be affected by the tentative map, but this effect is tempered by the retention of the San Dieguito River and adjacent drainages in natural open space and the retention of the system of ponds onsite as part of the golf course and wetland restoration.

Group 3 Wildlife

No significant impacts would occur to Group 3 wildlife species as a result of the implementation of the McCrink Ranch subdivision.

Wildlife Corridors

The McCrink Ranch tentative map, in retaining the San Dieguito River and adjacent open space in Open Space I, maintains the natural wildlife corridor through the northern portion of the SPA. No impacts to wildlife corridors would occur.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

As noted above, the preservation of the northern portion of the tentative map allows for gnatcatcher dispersal along the river and eastward past the northern limits of the Bernardo Lakes tentative map to 4S Ranch. Proposed golf course development causes some reduction in gnatcatcher linkage where the arm of the course swings northward (Figure 4.2-4). Much of this area is currently disturbed however, and the golf course should not preclude gnatcatcher movement around or even across the course.

McCrink Ranch Level of Significance

Significant impacts identified for the McCrink Ranch Tentative Map are listed below:

- Wetlands. All direct and indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. are significant and require federal and state wetland permits.

- Uplands. All direct and indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats (coastal sage scrub and coast live oak woodland) are significant.

- Impacts to Group 2 wildlife species would be cumulatively significant within the San Diego region, and is addressed through participation in the NCCP program.

With the implementation of mitigation measures in Section 4.2.4 and specific mitigation measures for McCrink Ranch tentative map impacts, all impacts to biological resources will be mitigated.

McCrink Ranch Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures for wetlands and uplands, discussed in Section 4.2.4, would apply to the McCrink Ranch tentative map. No additional measures are required.

Seaton Subdivision Tentative Map Impacts

Vegetation Communities

Wetlands and Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.

Direct impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. within the Seaton tentative map are presented in Table 4.2-8 and on Plate 1. Approximately 0.3 acre (100 percent of the total within the tentative map) of wetlands, including 0.1 acre of freshwater marsh and 0.2 acre of mulefat scrub, would be lost to development. Unvegetated waters would not be directly impacted by this tentative map.

Because of the sensitivity and biological importance of wetland habitat, all direct impacts to wetlands would be significant and require federal and state permits.

Sensitive Upland Habitats

Approximately 16.5 acres of sensitive upland habitat would be lost within the Seaton tentative map, including 9.0 acres (64.3 percent of the tentative map total) of coastal sage scrub and 7.5 acres of coastal sage scrub/chaparral. These impacts combined represent approximately 5 percent of the total impacts to these two habitats within the SPA. Undisturbed coastal sage scrub that supported a pair of gnatcatchers in 1992 would be retained in open space in the southern portion of the tentative map. This acreage will be connected to other natural open space, albeit this connectivity includes native enhanced slopes and a golf course. The long-term viability of this patch of habitat, and its value as gnatcatcher breeding habitat may be reduced because of adjacent development if the tentative map were implemented.

Table 4.2-8

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE SEATON SUBDIVISION TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total)		
		Open Space I[1]	Developed[2]	
			Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
GROUP 1: SENSITIVE HABITATS				
WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.				
Wetlands				
Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh	0.1	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (100)
Southern Willow Scrub	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Mulefat Scrub	0.2	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (100)
Tamarisk Scrub	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Vernal Pool	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Disturbed Wetland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Swale/Wetland Ecotone	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total Wetlands	**0.3**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.3 (100)**
Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.				
Natural Floodchannel/Streambed	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Seasonal Streambed[4]	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Open Water	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	**0.0**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**
TOTAL WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	**0.3**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.3 (100)**
SENSITIVE UPLANDS				
Coastal Sage Scrub[3]	14.0	5.1 (36.4)	4.3 (30.7)	4.7 (33.6)
Undisturbed	6.1	5.0 (82.0)	0.1 (1.6)	1.0 (16.4)
Disturbed	7.9	0.1 (1.3)	4.2 (53.2)	3.7 (46.8)
Coastal Sage Scrub/Chaparral	7.5	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	7.5 (100)

Table 4.2-8 (Continued)

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE SEATON SUBDIVISION TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total)		
			Developed[2]	
		Open Space I[1]	Open Space II - Disturbed	All Other Development
Southern Maritime Chaparral	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Perennial Grassland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Coast Live Oak Woodland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Rock Outcrops	0.0	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
TOTAL SENSITIVE UPLANDS	**21.5**	**5.1 (23.7)**	**4.3 (20.0)**	**12.2 (56.7)**
TOTAL GROUP 1 HABITATS	**21.8**	**5.1 (23.4)**	**4.3 (19.7)**	**12.5 (57.3)**
GROUP 2: NONSENSITIVE HABITATS				
Chaparral	4.3	1.9 (44.2)	0.0 (0.0)	2.4 (55.8)
Nonnative Grassland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Eucalyptus Woodland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Ruderal Habitat	12.6	0.1 (0.8)	0.2 (1.6)	12.3 (97.6)
TOTAL GROUP 2 HABITATS	**16.9**	**2.0 (11.8)**	**0.2 (1.2)**	**14.7 (87.0)**
GROUP 3: MAINTAINED LANDS				
Agricultural Land	0.6	0.6 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Developed	1.0	0.5 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.5 (50.0)
TOTAL GROUP 3 HABITATS	**1.6**	**1.1 (68.8)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.5 (31.2)**
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	**40.3**	**8.2 (20.3)**	**4.5 (11.2)**	**27.7 (68.7)**

1 Open Space is Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas).
2 Developed includes Open Space II Disturbed (turf and nonnative vegetation areas in golf course, and equestrian facility), Residential (excluding Very Low Density), Commercial, Community Facilities, and roadways.
3 Includes Diegan coastal sage scrub and coyote bush scrub.
4 Seasonal streambed acreage is shown because it is jurisdictioned habitat. This acreage is already accounted for in the coincident habitat (e.g., chaparral) and is not counted in the total habitat acreages.
Note: Numbers may not sum to totals as shown, due to rounding.

In addition, the coastal sage scrub within this tentative map is part of a habitat linkage between sage scrub occupied by California gnatcatchers along Lusardi Creek and occupied habitat in the north-central and northeastern portions of the SPA. Impacts to California gnatcatchers within this tentative map are discussed below, while impacts to the coastal sage scrub habitat linkage are discussed in the Balcor tentative map impact analysis.

Indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats would be similar to those presented for the Balcor Subdivision tentative map. Most of these indirect impacts can, however, be avoided or reduced by implementing the mitigative measures outlined in Section 4.2.4.

Because of the sensitivity and biological importance of sensitive upland habitat, all direct impacts to them would be significant.

Group 2 Habitats

No significant direct or indirect impacts to Group 2 habitats would occur as a result of the development proposed within the Seaton Subdivision tentative map.

Group 3 Habitats

None of the direct or indirect impacts to Group 3 habitats associated with this tentative map would be significant.

Sensitive Plant Species

No Group 1 plant species occur within the Seaton tentative map, and therefore no direct impacts would occur to these species.

Indirect impacts could potentially occur to the stand of California adolphia (approximately 300 individuals) that will be retained in open space in the southern portion of the tentative map. These plants, and the patch of coastal sage scrub in which they occur, will be isolated from other stands of native habitat by a golf course and development.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

A single pair of California gnatcatchers was observed in 1992 in a patch of undisturbed coastal sage scrub in the southern portion of the Seaton Subdivision tentative map (Plate 2). Although this patch of habitat would be retained in open space, it would be partially surrounded by development, and therefore will likely be influenced adversely by edge effects. Two additional pairs of gnatcatchers were detected in the northern portion of the tentative map. The habitat supporting these gnatcatchers would be lost by development occurring within both the Seaton and Balcor subdivision tentative maps. In addition, the Seaton tentative map is within the existing coastal sage scrub habitat linkage that occurs along the San Dieguito River within the western SPA. Impacts to this linkage are discussed in detail in the Balcor tentative map impact analysis. No other Group 1 wildlife species would be impacted by the Seaton Subdivision tentative map.

Because it is listed as a federally threatened species, all direct and indirect impacts to the California gnatcatcher would be adverse and significant. The open space plan design as part of the Specific Plan is expected to mitigate these significant impacts.

Group 2 Wildlife

No group 2 wildlife species would be significantly impacted by direct or indirect effects of development within the Seaton tentative map.

Group 3 Wildlife

No group 3 wildlife species would be significantly impacted by direct or indirect effects of development within the Seaton tentative map.

Wildlife Corridors

No significant direct or indirect effects would occur to regional or local wildlife movement corridors as result of development within the Seaton tentative map.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

Coastal sage scrub and coastal sage scrub/chaparral habitats within the Seaton tentative map are within the sage scrub habitat linkage along the western portion of the SPA (Plate 1). Three of the 16 gnatcatcher territories within the northern portion of this linkage (i.e., the habitat between Del Dios Highway and the southern boundary of the Balcor tentative map) are at least partially within the Seaton tentative map (Figure 4.2-4). Development within the Seaton tentative map would account for a very minor percent of the impacts to potential gnatcatcher habitat within the northern portion of the SPA's San Dieguito River Valley gnatcatcher habitat linkage. Therefore, the reduction in functional reliability of this linkage from this tentative map alone would not be significant. The combined impacts of development within both the Seaton and Balcor tentative maps, however, would reduce the carrying capacity of the linkage in this area by over 62 percent (16 to approximately 6 territories); therefore, impacts associated with the Seaton tentative map to this habitat linkage would be cumulatively significant. The Specific Plan's open space design is expected to mitigate this impact.

Seaton Level of Significance

Significant impacts identified for the Seaton Tentative Map are listed below:

- Wetlands. All direct and indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. are significant and require federal and state wetland permits.

- Uplands. All direct and indirect impacts to sensitive upland habitats (coastal sage scrub) are significant.

- Impacts to Group 2 wildlife species would be cumulatively significant within the San Diego region, and is addressed through participation in the NCCP program.

With the implementation of mitigation measures in Section 4.2.4. all impacts to biological resources will be mitigated.

Seaton Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures for wetlands and uplands, discussed in Section 4.2.4 would apply to the Seaton Tentative Map. No additional measures are required.

Bernardo Lakes Tentative Map Impacts

Vegetation Communities

Wetlands and Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.

Direct impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. within the Bernardo Lakes tentative map are shown on Table 4.2-9 and Plate 1. An estimated 3.7 acres of wetlands will be lost to development. This total includes 0.4 acre of marsh, 0.2 acre of southern willow scrub, 0.3 acre of mulefat scrub, and 2.8 acres of swale/wetland ecotone. An additional, but very minor reduction of unvegetated waters (0.1 acre) would be lost also. Because of the sensitivity of wetlands, any loss is considered a significant impact.

Sensitive Upland Habitats

The impacts to sensitive uplands are shown in Table 4.2-9 and on Plate 1. An estimated 32 acres of sensitive upland habitats will be directly affected by the tentative map. All of this total is coastal sage scrub with the majority of the total (76 percent) being undisturbed coastal sage scrub. This reduction of habitat is considered to be a significant impact because of its sensitivity and capability to support California gnatcatcher and other sensitive species. The open space plan proposed for the SPA is expected to mitigate this impact.

Group 2 Habitats

The total impact to Group 2 habitats is 38.1 acres and is not considered significant.

Group 3 Habitats

Group 3 impacts total 57.3 acres and are not considered significant.

Table 4.2-9

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE BERNARDO LAKES TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total)		
		Open Space I[1]	Very Low Density and Rural Residential[2]	Developed[3]
GROUP I: SENSITIVE HABITATS				
WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.				
Wetlands				
Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh	10.5	10.2 (97.1)	0.0 (0.0)	0.4 (3.8)
Southern Willow Scrub	3.1	2.9 (93.5)	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (6.5)
Mulefat Scrub	0.7	0.4 (57.1)	0.0 (0.0)	0.3 (42.9)
Tamarisk Scrub	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Vernal Pool	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Disturbed Wetland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Swale/Wetland Ecotone	4.2	1.4 (33.3)	0.0 (0.0)	2.8 (66.7)
Total Wetlands	**18.5**	**14.9 (80.5)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**3.7 (20.0)**
Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.				
Natural Floodchannel/Streambed	0.1	0.1 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Seasonal Streambed[5]	(0.2)	0.1 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.1 (50.0)
Open Water	0.7	0.7 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total Unvegetated Waters of the U.S.	**0.8**	**0.8 (90.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**
TOTAL WETLANDS/UNVEGETATED WATERS OF THE U.S.	**19.3**	**15.7 (81.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**3.7 (19.5)**
SENSITIVE UPLANDS				
Coastal Sage Scrub[4]	86.8	54.9 (63.2)	0.0 (0.0)	32.0 (36.9)
Undisturbed	74.6	50.3 (67.4)	0.0 (0.0)	24.3 (32.6)
Disturbed	12.2	4.6 (37.7)	0.0 (0.0)	7.7 (63.1)
Coastal Sage Scrub/Chaparral	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)

Table 4.2-9 (Continued)

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES IN THE BERNARDO LAKES TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Vegetation Community	Total Acreage in TM	Acreage (% of total)		
		Open Space I[1]	Very Low Density and Rural Residential[2]	Developed[3]
Southern Maritime Chaparral	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Perennial Grassland	0.3	0.3 (100)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Coast Live Oak Woodland	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Rock Outcrops	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
TOTAL SENSITIVE UPLANDS	**87.1**	**55.2 (63.4)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**32.0 (36.7)**
TOTAL GROUP 1 HABITATS	**106.4**	**69.9 (66.6)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**35.7 (33.6)**
GROUP 2: NONSENSITIVE HABITATS				
Chaparral	0.0	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Nonnative Grassland	25.9	4.9 (18.9)	0.0 (0.0)	20.9 (80.7)
Eucalyptus Woodland	0.9	0.2 (22.2)	0.0 (0.0)	0.7 (77.8)
Ruderal Habitat	19.2	2.7 (14.1)	0.0 (0.0)	16.5 (85.9)
TOTAL GROUP 2 HABITATS	**46.0**	**7.8 (17.0)**	**0.0 (0.0)**	**38.1 (82.8)**
GROUP 3: MAINTAINED LANDS				
Agricultural Land	65.3	14.4 (22.1)	0.0 (0.0)	50.9 (77.9)
Developed	8.6	2.3 (26.7)	0.1 (1.2)	6.3 (73.3)
TOTAL GROUP 3 HABITATS	**73.9**	**16.7 (22.6)**	**0.1 (0.1)**	**57.2 (77.4)**
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	**226.3**	**95.4 (42.0)**	**0.1 (0.0)**	**131.0 (57.9)**

1 Open Space is Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas).
2 One dwelling unit/4 - 5.9 acres. Residential development in these areas is subject to special site plan criteria ("D2" designator) to minimize impacts to sensitive resources (i.e., sensitive habitats and species, wildlife corridors, and habitat linkages).
3 Developed includes Residential (excluding Very Low Density), Commercial, Community Facilities, and roadways.
4 Includes Diegan coastal sage scrub and coyote bush scrub.
5 Seasonal streambed acreage is shown because it is jurisdictioned habitat. This acreage is already accounted for in the coincident habitat (e.g., chaparral) and is not counted in the total habitat acreages.

Sensitive Plant Species

No Group 1 plant species are present in the tentative map: thus no direct impacts will occur to these species. Two Group 2 plant species are impacted by the Bernardo Lakes tentative map (Table 4.2-10): California adolphia (16 plants) and San Diego barrel cactus (28 plants). These losses are not considered significant due to the low number affected and their low sensitivity status. No impacts to Group 3 plants will occur.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

Five California gnatcatcher sightings/territories may be directly affected by the Bernardo Lakes tentative map. All of these occurrences are in the west-central portion of the tentative map south of the drainage. This impact is addressed cumulatively on the basis of habitat and open space design through the NCCP process.

Both upland and wetland-associated Group 2 species will be incrementally impacted by the tentative map. These effects are being addressed through the Specific Plan and the subarea planning process (NCCP).

No Group 3 wildlife species would be significantly affected by the tentative map.

Wildlife Corridors

The Bernardo Lakes tentative map will not directly affect any identified wildlife movement corridor. The tentative map allows for a possible open space connection to Black Mountain Ranch to the south along its western boundary and retains west to east drainage across the property within an open space easement.

California Gnatcatcher Habitat Linkages

The northeastern portion of the Bernardo Lakes tentative map (Unit 3 on Figure 3-10) blocks a coastal sage scrub linkage across the northern portion of the property. This linkage is blocked offsite, however, by proposed development along Four Gee Road. The gnatcatcher linkage would go around the northern portion of proposed development in McCrink Ranch, across natural open space in the northern portion of the Bernardo Lakes tentative map, and northward across Four Gee Road into 4S Ranch. The viability of this

Table 4.2-10

SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED WITHIN THE BERNARDO LAKES TENTATIVE MAP BY AGGREGATED LAND USE CATEGORY

Species	Total Number of Individuals in TM	Number of Individuals (% of total)	
		Open Space I[1]	Developed[2]
Group 2: Federal C2 Candidates and CNPS List 1B and List 2 Species			
California Adolphia	48	32 (66.7)	16 (33.3)
Orcutt's Brodiaea	50	50 (100.0)	0 (0.0)
San Diego Barrel Cactus	39	11 (28.2)	28 (71.8)
San Diego Marsh-elder	90	90 (100)	0 (0.0)
Group 3: CNPS List 4 Species			
Spiny Rush	45	45 (100.0)	0 (0.0)
Ashy Spike-moss[3]	0.5	0.5 (100.0)	0 (0.0)

1 Open Space is Open Space I (Sensitive Resource Protection Areas).
2 Developed includes Residential (excluding Very Low Density), Commercial, Community Facilities, and roadways.
3 Occurrences are shown as acres of habitat supporting this species.

linkage is dependent on the effective use of the D2 designator north of the Bernardo Lakes tentative map to retain adequate habitat to allow breeding and dispersal.

Bernardo Lakes Level of Significance

Significant impacts identified for the Bernardo Lakes Tentative Map are listed below:

- Wetlands. All direct and indirect impacts to wetlands and unvegetated waters of the U.S. are significant and require federal and state wetland permits.

- Uplands. All direct and indirect impacts to coastal sage scrub are significant.

- Impacts to Group 2 wildlife species would be cumulatively significant within the San Diego region, and is addressed through participation in the NCCP program.

With the implementation of mitigation measures in Section 4.2.4, all impacts to biological resources will be mitigated.

Bernardo Lakes Mitigation Measures

The mitigation for wetlands and uplands, discussed in Section 4.2.4, would apply to the Bernardo Lakes Tentative Map. No additional measures would be required.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

4.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.3.1 Existing Conditions

The following is summarized from the Santa Fe Valley Cultural Resources Technical Report on file at the County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use. According to CEQA and the Office of Historic Preservation, a cultural (historical) resource "includes, but is not limited to, any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California" (Office of Historic Preservation 1994). "For the purposes of CEQA, [Appendix K] an 'important archaeological resource' is one which:

A. Is associated with an event or person of:

   1. Recognized significance in California or American history, or
   2. Recognized scientific importance in prehistory.

B. Can provide information which is both of demonstrable public interest and useful in addressing scientifically consequential and reasonable or archaeological research questions;

C. Has a special or particular quality such as oldest, best example, largest, or last surviving example of its kind;

D. Is at least 100 years old and possesses substantial stratigraphic integrity; or

E. Involves important research questions that historical research has shown can be answered only with archaeological methods." (CEQA, Appendix K 1984)."

The determination of the "importance" of a cultural resource varies according to the nature of the resource being evaluated. For example, evaluation of importance of a standing structure would entail a review of records with emphasis placed on association with persons or events of historical significance, and architectural or engineering criteria. Whereas, evaluation of importance of a prehistoric archaeological site is more often accomplished by means of a limited testing (excavation or recording) program in order to

"identify scientifically consequential and reasonable or archaeological research questions" (CEQA. Appendix K 1984). The term "important" is used in reference to resources. whereas "significant" refers to impacts.

Survey Methodology

Survey of the Santa Fe Valley Specific Plan Area (SPA) was conducted by Ogden between July 28 and August 28, 1992 with subsequent minor surveys. The survey was, in general. performed by a single team of trained archaeologists ranging in size from three to six persons. The survey methodology incorporated walk-over transects of 2,350 acres not previously surveyed or inadequately surveyed given today's more stringent state and county standards and requirements (minus areas omitted due to survey limitations, see below). Survey personnel, while spaced at fifteen meter intervals. identified 59 previously unrecorded sites and relocated 34 previously recorded sites over the SPA. These sites ranged from prehistoric scatters of lithic tools and debris to extensive occupation locales to historic artifact scatters, deposits and structural features. In addition, 49 cultural resource finds were recorded as isolates given the sparse artifact density (less than ten artifacts within 100 square meters) and lack of site association (in general, greater than 30 meters from an archaeological site).

The Santa Fe Valley SPA survey was limited by three factors: terrain, large portions of the property contain exceedingly steep terrain; ground visibility, as evidenced by large stands of chaparral and dense grass; and access. Data concerning cultural resources within these unsurveyed parcels are limited to documents on file with the South Coastal Information Center, the San Diego Museum of Man, the County of San Diego. and various institutions and repositories. Sources include, but are not limited to, previous cultural resource studies, California state archaeological inventory (site) forms. historic maps. regional histories, and aerial photographs.

An archaeological records and literature search was conducted for the project area by the South Coastal Information Center and the San Diego Museum of Man. The records search emphasized previously identified cultural resources and cultural resource studies undertaken within the SPA and a one mile radius the project area. Analysis of records search data identified 35 previously recorded archaeological sites within the area of the Santa Fe Valley SPA (Table 4.3-1). Reference sources. notably the South Coastal Information Center and the San Diego Museum of Man, have led to the identification of

CULTURAL RESOURCES SITE SUMMARY

Ogden Temporary Number	State Trinomial	Site Type	Features	Area (sq. m)	Original Survey	Original Recorder and Year	Status	Subsurface	Specific Plan/ Tentative Map	Constraint Level	Anticipated Impacts
	SDI-148	LS		4000		Treganza	Not Tested	Not Likely	†	4	No
	SDI-149	TC/BM		13000	Harris Site Complex	Carnegie 1938	Tested	Present	Balcor	1	No
	SDI-316	Oc		25480	Harris Site Complex	UCLA 1958	Tested	Present	Balcor	1	Yes
	SDI-317	Oc		9120		UCLA 1958	Tested	Present	Balcor	2	No
	SDI-318	LS		5040	Harris Site Complex	UCLA 1958	Tested	Present	Balcor	4	No
	SDI-319	LS/TC		20880	Harris Site Complex	UCLA 1958	Tested	Present	Balcor	4	No
SFV- S 48	SDI-320	LS		2025		UCLA 1958	Not Tested	Likely	Balcor	2	No
	SDI-532/4,935A	Oc		37800	Harris Site Complex	UCLA 1959	Tested	Present	Balcor	1	No
	SDI-4,935B	Oc		20800	Harris Site Complex	Westec 1977	Tested	Present	Balcor	1	Yes
	SDI-5,101	LS		17600		Museum of Man	Not Tested	Likely	McCrink	3	Yes
	SDI-5,616	TC/BM		39270		S. Gregg 1978	Tested	Present	Bernardo Lakes	3	No
SFV- S 4 & 5	SDI-5,617	Qu/LS		15227	Artesian Trails	S. Gregg 1978	Tested	Not Present	Bernardo Lakes	4	No
SFV- S 2	SDI-5,618	BM		1296	Artesian Trails	S. Gregg 1978	Tested	Not Present	Bernardo Lakes	4	No
SFV- S 11	SDI-5,619	TC		1496	Artesian Trails	S. Gregg 1978	Tested	Not Present	Bernardo Lakes	4	No
SFV- S 36	SDI-9,817	TC	Rock Ring	2315	Santa Fe Squares	D. Hanna 1983	Tested	Not Present	Specific Plan	3	Yes
SFV- S 3 & 6H	SDI-10,493/H	Oc/HS		32054	Artesian Trails	Westec 1986	Tested	Present	Bernardo Lakes	2	Yes
SFV- S 13	SDI-11,596	BM/TC	Rock Ring	55	Artesian Trails	Mooney Assoc. 1990	Not Tested	Not Likely	Bernardo Lakes	3	No
SA 680- S 6/H	SDI-11,825/H	TC/HT		81684	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Tested	Present	Balcor/McCrink	4	No
	SDI-12,027	LS		2945	Camino Ruiz Survey	Van Horn 1990	Not Tested	Likely	McCrink	3	Yes
	SDI-12,028	LS		1200	Camino Ruiz Survey	Van Horn 1990	Not Tested	Likely	McCrink	3	No
SFV- S 21	SDI-12,029	Oc/BM		874	Camino Ruiz Survey	Van Horn 1990	Not Tested	Likely	Specific Plan	3	No
SA 680- S 1H	SDI-12,653H	HS		150	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Specific Plan	3	No
SA 680- S 2	SDI-12,654	LS		942	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	McCrink	3	Yes
SA 680- S 3	SDI-12,655	BM		20	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Specific Plan	3	No
SA 680- S 7/H	SDI-12,658/H	HT/LS		825	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	McCrink	4	No
SA 680- S 8	SDI-12,659	LS		66	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	McCrink	4	No
SA 680- S 9	SDI-12,660	LS		1767	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Tested	Present	Balcor	4	No
SA 680- S 13	SDI-12,664	BM		78	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Balcor	4	No
SA 680- S 14	SDI-12,665	LS		59	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Balcor	4	No
SA 680- S 15	SDI-12,666	LS		6840	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Tested	Not Present	Balcor	4	No
SA 680- S 32	SDI-12,684	RA/Oc		1255	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Likely	McCrink	1	No
SA 680- S 33/H	SDI-12,685/H	RA/BM		200	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Bern Lakes/McCk	1	No
SA 680- S 34	SDI-12,686	LS		1368	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Balcor/McCrink	3	Yes
SA 680- S 35	SDI-12,687	BM		4712	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Specific Plan	3	No
SA 680- S 36	SDI-12,688	TC		16500	SA 680/SF 728 Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Likely	Balcor	2	Yes
SFV- S 1	SDI-13,010	TC		66359	Santa Fe Valley Survey	Ogden 1992	Tested	Present	Bernardo Lakes	4	No
SFV- S 7	SDI-13,011	BM	Cairn	23	Santa Fe Valley Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Bernardo Lakes	3	No
SFV- S 8	SDI-13,012	BM/LS		412	Santa Fe Valley Survey	Ogden 1992	Tested	Not Present	Bernardo Lakes	4	No
SFV- S 9	SDI-13,013	TC		7607	Santa Fe Valley Survey	Ogden 1992	Tested	Present	Bernardo Lakes	4	Yes
SFV- S 10H	SDI-13,014H	HS		1021	Santa Fe Valley Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Likely	Specific Plan	3	Yes
SFV- S 12/H	SDI-13,015/H	LS/HT		7323	Santa Fe Valley Survey	Ogden 1992	Not Tested	Not Likely	Specific Plan	3	No