

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Specific Plan

California Government Code (S.65450) authorizes the County of San Diego to adopt Specific Plans. This Specific Plan provides the guidelines for preparation of the subdivision and improvement plans and determines permitted land uses, densities, maximum residential units, required public facilities and compliance with applicable County policies. It is anticipated that refinements such as final road and trail alignments, minor changes in Planning Area configuration will occur during the development of the Final Map and Site Plans. Such refinements, with approval of the Director of Planning & Development Services (PDS), will not require amendments to this Specific Plan provided the number of residential dwelling units is not exceeded and the overall character of the Community is maintained.

1.2 Project Description

The Newland Sierra Project (also referred herein as “Community” or “Project”) proposes the development of a 1,985-acre mixed-use community within the unincorporated area of San Diego County designed in accordance with the Community Development Model. The majority of the Community is within the Twin Oaks Valley community of the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan area and a portion is within the Bonsall Community Planning area as shown in **Figure 1 – Vicinity Map**. The proposed Specific Plan includes a residential component consisting of 2,135 dwelling units which equates to an overall density of 1.08 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) over the entire 1,985 acres. The Community Development Model has influenced the design and pattern of the seven neighborhoods (also referred to as planning areas for planning purposes) with the highest densities located in the Town Center. The Town Center permits 81,000 square feet of general commercial uses as well as educational and park uses. The Community also includes an active park system with 14 parks, 18 miles of trails and pathways, and a 6-acre charter school site.

Discretionary approvals submitted concurrently with the Specific Plan include a General Plan Amendment (GPA), Rezone and Tentative Map. Implementing Site Plan(s) will be submitted subsequent to Project approval for setbacks, architecture and private parks.

1.2.1 Residential Component

This Specific Plan proposes a residential community with a maximum of 2,135 homes. Of the 2,135 dwelling units, 1,582 residential units are located in areas designed Semi-Rural 1 (SR-1) and zoned RS (Single Family Residential) and 553 residential units are located in the higher density Town Center and Terraces area that would be designated Village Core Mixed Use (C-5) on the Community Plan Map.

Note: The actual density permitted by the Specific Plan is obtained by dividing the number of dwelling units by the gross acreage, which equals a density of 1.08 dwelling units per acre.

1.2.2 Commercial

The 58.3-acre Town Center is located in the southeastern portion of the Community near the Interstate 15 (I-15) and Deer Springs Road interchange and Caltrans Park and Ride lot. Within the Town Center, the Community will provide 81,000 square feet of commercial space in addition to the residential and other civic uses. This combined 58.3-acre area will have a Community Plan Land Use Designation of Village Core Mixed Use (C-5) and C34 General Commercial-Residential Use Regulations.

1.2.3 Biological Open Space

The Specific Plan proposes to dedicate 1,202 acres of biological open space. This area will be designated Open Space-Conservation (OS-C) and Open Space S80 Use Regulations.

1.2.4 School Site

A 6-acre (K-8) school site is proposed within the Town Center area of the Specific Plan. This site will be zoned C34 Use Regulations.

1.2.5 Parks and Other Facilities

Additional elements of the proposed Community include 14 parks; 7 pocket parks and 14 overlooks; multi-use trails; bike lanes; associated community facilities such as a private recreation facility; and supporting infrastructure. These other facilities will be located in the RS, C34, A70 "Limited Agriculture" or S80 zones.

1.3 Project Setting

1.3.1 Physical Setting

The Project is located within the unincorporated portion of the County of San Diego within the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan area. The North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan area is comprised of many non-contiguous "island" areas interspersed among the cities of Escondido, San Diego, San Marcos, Vista, and Oceanside with the most easterly portion adjacent to Valley Center. The North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan area includes the communities of Hidden Meadows and Twin Oaks Valley. The majority of the Site is located in the community of Twin Oaks Valley. The Site is directly west of I-15, north of State Route 78 (SR-78), and south of State Route 76 (SR-76). The cities of Escondido and San Marcos are approximately 1 mile south of the Site. The project site (also referred herein as "Site") consists

of approximately 1,985 acres and is bounded by I-15 on the east, Deer Springs Road on the south, and Twin Oaks Valley Road on the west, with a small portion of the northwestern edge of the Site traversed by Twin Oaks Valley Road. Gopher Canyon Road is located approximately 1.5 mile north of the northern boundary of the Site as shown in **Figure 2 – Regional Location Map**.

1.3.2 Environmental Resources

The Site is located within the northern portion of the Merriam Mountains, a narrow chain of low mountains generally running north–south with a variety of east–west trending ridgelines and scattered peaks. These mountains originate near the northern end of the City of Escondido and are bordered by Gopher Canyon Road to the north, I-15 to the east, and Twin Oaks Valley Road to the west. Based on topography and geology, the Merriam Mountains extend from the Vista Flume, north of Golden Circle Drive in Escondido, north to Moosa Canyon. Merriam Mountains are approximately 8.5 miles long. The Site is situated on approximately 3 miles of the northern portion of the Merriam Mountains.

The San Marcos Mountains are located northwest of the Site and are significant due to their undeveloped nature, potential to support a wide variety of native wildlife species, and the presence of rare and otherwise special-status plant species, such as tetracoccus, wart-stemmed ceanothus, and southern mountain misery. Much of the northern two-thirds of the Merriam Mountains are considered biologically significant due to its undeveloped nature and potential to provide a major block of habitat that would contribute to regional conservation planning. The Site is located within the draft North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (NCMSCP) and is categorized by the NCMSCP regional habitat evaluation model as having mostly moderate value habitats with smaller areas of high value and very high value habitats.

Vegetation on the Site consists of large blocks of Southern Mixed Chaparral with limited patches of Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub, Live Oak Woodlands, and Southern Willow Scrub and contains relatively few sensitive plant species due to its geographic location and constituent soils. Due to the dense nature of the chaparral covering most of the Site, wildlife movement is generally confined to existing dirt roads. Two well-developed riparian areas exist on the Site: one is west of I-15, draining into the south fork of Moosa Canyon and one is in the South Fork of Gopher Canyon, between the Merriam Mountains and the San Marcos Mountains.

Large granodiorite outcroppings and pinnacles are common throughout this region and the Site. The Site contains undeveloped steep slopes and rock outcroppings that are visually prominent from the I-15 corridor. The South Fork of Moosa Canyon runs from the northern to northeastern vicinity of the Site. In addition, the area is a tributary to the San Luis Rey River (to the north) through the South Fork of Gopher Canyon. The San Luis Rey River is an important riparian corridor containing

extensive woodland vegetation, as well as rare and protected species. Tributaries to the San Marcos Creek are also located in the vicinity and flow southwest towards Batiquitos Lagoon.

The eastern and northern portions of the Site are located within the San Luis Rey-Escondido watershed, the largest hydrologic unit in the San Diego region. The southern portion is located in the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit and San Marcos Hydrologic Area. The Site is also within the coastal subprovince of the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province.

Natural topography of the Site is composed of hills and valleys dominated by significant rock outcroppings with moderate to steeply sloping terrain. On-site elevation ranges from approximately 800 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) near the intersection of Deer Springs Road and I-15 to about 1,765 feet AMSL in the west central portion of the Site. Approximately 52 percent of the Site contains Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) defined steep slope lands. Prominent, generally east–west trending ridgelines divide the Site into five separate drainage basins, which are tributaries to Moosa Canyon, Gopher Canyon, and San Marcos Creek. Gopher Canyon is located north of the Site and a small portion of the South Fork of Gopher Canyon Creek runs southeast to northwest through the northwestern area of the Site, eventually meeting the San Luis Rey River. Both Gopher Canyon and the San Marcos Mountains show favorable attributes as habitat and corridors for larger wildlife.

1.3.3 Existing Land Use

The Site is primarily undeveloped. A number of dirt roads and trails that provide access to each parcel and service roads for existing water infrastructure traverse the Site. Portions of the Site have been and continue to be used for various unauthorized land uses, including horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, off-roading, motorcycling, shooting, and occasional dumping. An abandoned quarry is located in the northwest portion of the Site fronting Twin Oaks Valley Road and an abandoned private landing strip is located in the north central portion of the Site.

Surrounding land uses to the north, west and south of the Site include large-lot, single-family residential development and agricultural uses. Many of the prominent ridges surrounding the Site are occupied by existing homes. Lawrence Welk Village and the community of Hidden Meadows are located to the east of the Site across I-15. South of the Site is a mobile home park, the Golden Door Spa and Resort and estate development along the border of the City of San Marcos and the unincorporated portion of the County of San Diego, as shown in **Figure 3 – Aerial Map and Surrounding Land Uses**.

The Site includes areas designated as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ)-2, which are considered areas where adequate information indicates significant mineral deposits are present, or where there is a high likelihood of their presence. Approximately 600 acres of the Site are classified as

MRZ-2, of which approximately 100 acres have been designated by State Mining & Geology Board (SMGB) as a Regionally Significant Construction Aggregate Resources Area. The remainder of the Site is classified as MRZ-3, which are considered areas containing mineral deposits whose significance cannot be evaluated from available data. Due to the mountainous terrain of the Site, as opposed to an alluvial river valley, these resource designations result from the presence of crystalline and metavolcanic rocks, that when crushed to appropriate sizes could be used as aggregate for construction material.

1.3.4 Planning History

Newland Sierra, LLC submitted an application for a General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan, Rezone and Tentative Map on January 20, 2015. A previous GPA application was filed by Stonegate Merriam Mountains, LLC on June 30, 2004 and was denied by the Board of Supervisors on March 24, 2010.

1.4 Relationship to General Plan

The San Diego County General Plan, the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan and the Bonsall Community Plan provide the overall planning policy framework for the Specific Plan. Chapter 5 of this Specific Plan provides a detailed analysis regarding how and why this Specific Plan is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan. This Specific Plan is intended to further implement the policies of these documents as set forth in the standards and guidelines provided herein.

1.5 Land Use Regulations

1.5.1 Existing Land Use Element Regional Category

The Community lies within the North County Metropolitan Plan area and Bonsall Community Planning area as shown in **Figure 4 – Existing Regional Land Use Categories**. The existing General Plan Regional Category for the Community is Village, Semi-Rural and Rural Lands. The Community includes 1,888 acres in the North County Metropolitan Plan area and 97 acres in the Bonsall Community Plan area.

1.5.2 Proposed Land Use Element Regional Category

The General Plan Amendment proposes to amend the Regional Land Use Element Map to change the boundary of the Village Regional Category Designation (see **Figure 5 – Proposed Regional Land Use Categories**) and to change a portion of the Rural Lands in North County Metropolitan Plan area to Semi-Rural. The acreage in the Village Category will not be increased beyond what is currently designated. The Rural Lands Regional Category in the Bonsall Community Plan area will be retained.

1.5.3 Existing Community Plan Land Use Designations

The 1,888 acres within the North County Metropolitan Plan area currently include four land use designations: General Commercial (4.6 acres), Office Professional (53.6 acres), Semi-Rural 10 (19.6 acres) and Rural Land 20 (1,907.8 acres). The 97 acres in the Bonsall Community Plan area are entirely designated with the Rural Lands 20 Land Use Designation as shown in **Figure 6 – Existing Community Plan Land Use Designations**.

1.5.4 Proposed Community Plan Land Use Designations

The General Plan Amendment proposes to amend the North County Metropolitan Plan map to change approximately 4.64 acres of General Commercial, 53.64 acres of Office Professional and 868 acres of Rural Land 20 to Village Core Mixed Use (C-5) and Semi-Rural SR-1 (1 unit per 1, 2 or 4 gross acres depending on slope) (**Figure 7 – Proposed Community Plan Land Use Designations**) and SR-10 (1 unit per 10 or 20 gross acres depending on slope) and add appropriate language into the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan text describing the specific plan. The remaining lands in North County Metropolitan Plan area and all the lands in Bonsall Community Plan area will be designated as Open Space-Conservation (OS-C). The Specific Plan will allow a maximum of 2,135 dwelling units (1.08 du/ac).

1.5.5 Existing Zoning

The 1,888 acres within the North County Metropolitan Plan area are zoned General Commercial (C36), Office Professional (C30), Rural Residential (RR), Limited Agricultural (A70), Extractive (S82) and General Rural (S92) Use Regulations. The 97 acres within the Bonsall Community Plan area are zoned Rural Residential (RR) as shown in **Figure 8 – Existing Zoning**.

1.5.6 Proposed Zoning

To implement the proposed changes resulting from the General Plan Amendment, the zoning would be changed to C34 (General Commercial/Residential), RS (Single Family Residential) and S80 (Open Space Use Regulations) shown in **Figure 9 – Proposed Zoning**. The area immediately adjacent to Sarver Lane will retain the A70 (Limited Agriculture Use Regulations).

1.5.7 Existing I-15 Corridor Subregional Plan

The I-15 Corridor extends approximately 20 miles from the Escondido city limits to the Riverside County line. It contains the .5 acre to 2-mile “viewshed” area on either side of the freeway, which is what generally can be seen while driving along the I-15. The “B” Design Review Area Special Designator is applied to properties within the corridor, which requires the preparation of a Site Plan in accordance with the Scenic Preservation Guidelines. A “B” Special Area Designator has been applied to the eastern portion of the Site as shown in **Figure 10 – Existing North County Metropolitan I-15 Design Corridor**.

1.5.8 Proposed I-15 Corridor Subregional Plan

As part of the General Plan Amendment, the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan I-15 Design Corridor map will be amended to include only the areas of the Community that are visible from the I-15 as shown in **Figure 11 – Proposed North County Metropolitan I-15 Design Corridor**.

1.6 Yield Analysis

1.6.1 Existing Land Use Designations

The General Plan Update adopted by the Board of Supervisors in August 2011 includes a Land Use Element in which there are standards for calculating the gross density allowed on all property with Slope Dependent land use designations. Yield on Semi-Rural land is calculated per Table LU-2 in the Land Use Element. In this case, approximately 19.6 acres of the property is designated as Semi-Rural 10, which allows 1 du/10 gross acres on land with slopes under 25 percent, and 1 du/20 gross acres on land with slopes over 25 percent. Approximately, 1,907.8 acres of the property is designated as Rural Lands 20, which allows 1du/20 gross acres. Maximum square footage for General Commercial is calculated per Table LU-1 in the Land Use Element. Approximately, 4.6 acres is designated as General Commercial (C-1), which allows a maximum intensity of 0.70 FAR in areas designated Village. Approximately 53.6 acres is designated as Office Professional (C-2), which allows a maximum intensity of 0.80 FAR in areas designated Village. The existing Land Use Designations are shown in **Figure 6 – Existing Community Plan Land Use Designations**. Estimated yield of the existing General Plan based on existing legal parcels is shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1
Commercial and Residential Yield Analysis (Existing Land Use Regulations)**

Land Use	Acres	# of Units/Square Feet
SR-10		
0-25% slope	19.6	5*
25%+	0	0
RL-20	1,907.8	94
C-1	4.6	140,263
C-2	53.6	1,867,853
Total	1,985.6 ac	99 dwelling units and 2,008,116 square feet

* 1 DU/parcel/existing legal lots

1.6.2 Proposed Land Use Designations

The proposed Community Plan Land Use Designations are Semi-Rural 1, Semi-Rural 10, Village Core Mixed Use (C-5) and Open Space-Conservation (OS-C). In this case, approximately 868

acres of the Site will be designated SR-1, which allows 1 du/gross acres on land with slopes under 25 percent, and 1 du/2 gross acres on land with slopes of 25-50 percent, and 1 du/4 gross acres on land with slopes over 25 percent. Approximately 6.6 acres will retain the SR-10 designation. Approximately 58.3 acres will be designated as Village Core Mixed Use (C-3), which allows 30 units per gross acre and a maximum FAR of 0.7. Approximately 1,202 acres of the property will be designated as Open Space-Conservation (OP-C), which allows zero residential density. Estimated yield of the proposed Community Plan Land Use Designations is shown in **Table 2**.

**Table 2
Proposed Yield Analysis (Proposed Land Use Regulations)**

Land Use	Acres	# of Units / SF
SR-1		
0-25% slope	253	253
25-50%	401.6	200
50%+	213.5	53
SR-10		
0-25%	8.2	3*
25%+	0	0
C-5	58.3	1,749 DU and 1,777,684 SF
OS-C	1,051	0
Total	1,985.6 ac	2,258 dwelling units and 1,777,684 square feet

* 1 DU/parcel/existing legal lots

Policy *LU-1.8 Density Allocation on Project Sites* states that projects which have more than one Land Use Designation, and which are subject to a Specific Plan are allowed to transfer densities within the project, even across Land Use Designations boundaries to provide flexibility in project design. The proposed Community Plan designation allows for 2,258 dwelling units as well as 1,777,684 square feet of commercial use; however, the Specific Plan is more restrictive by only allowing for a maximum of 2,135 dwelling units and 81,000 square feet of commercial uses.

1.7 Development Approvals Required

The development application consists of the following land use applications:

1. General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Element for changes to: Land Use Map, North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan and Bonsall Community Plan map, and the Mobility Element;
2. Specific Plan;

3. Rezone;
4. Tentative Maps;
5. Site Plans pursuant to the “V” Setback Regulator and the “B” and “D” Special Area Designator; and
6. Site Plans for private parks.

This Specific Plan (text and map) provides a detailed discussion regarding the proposed uses, their location, density and intensity of uses and the infrastructure necessary to support the proposed uses. It also discusses the phasing and implementation of the Community.

A Rezone implements the uses authorized by the new General Plan designations and also provides the additional detail necessary to implement the specific uses detailed in the Specific Plan text.

A Tentative Map would subdivide the entire Community creating 1,297 parcels within the 1,985-acre Site and identify locations of a roadway system and utility improvements to service the proposed lots. The Tentative Map includes a grading plan, which identifies rough grading quantities and drainage facilities that would serve the entire Community. The grading plans for the Tentative Map depict the preliminary grading for Phases 1 – 3.

A Site Plan is required to be processed per the “V” setback regulator and the “B” and “D” Special Area Regulations included in the zoning. The purpose of the Site Plan is to implement the design standards required by the Specific Plan.

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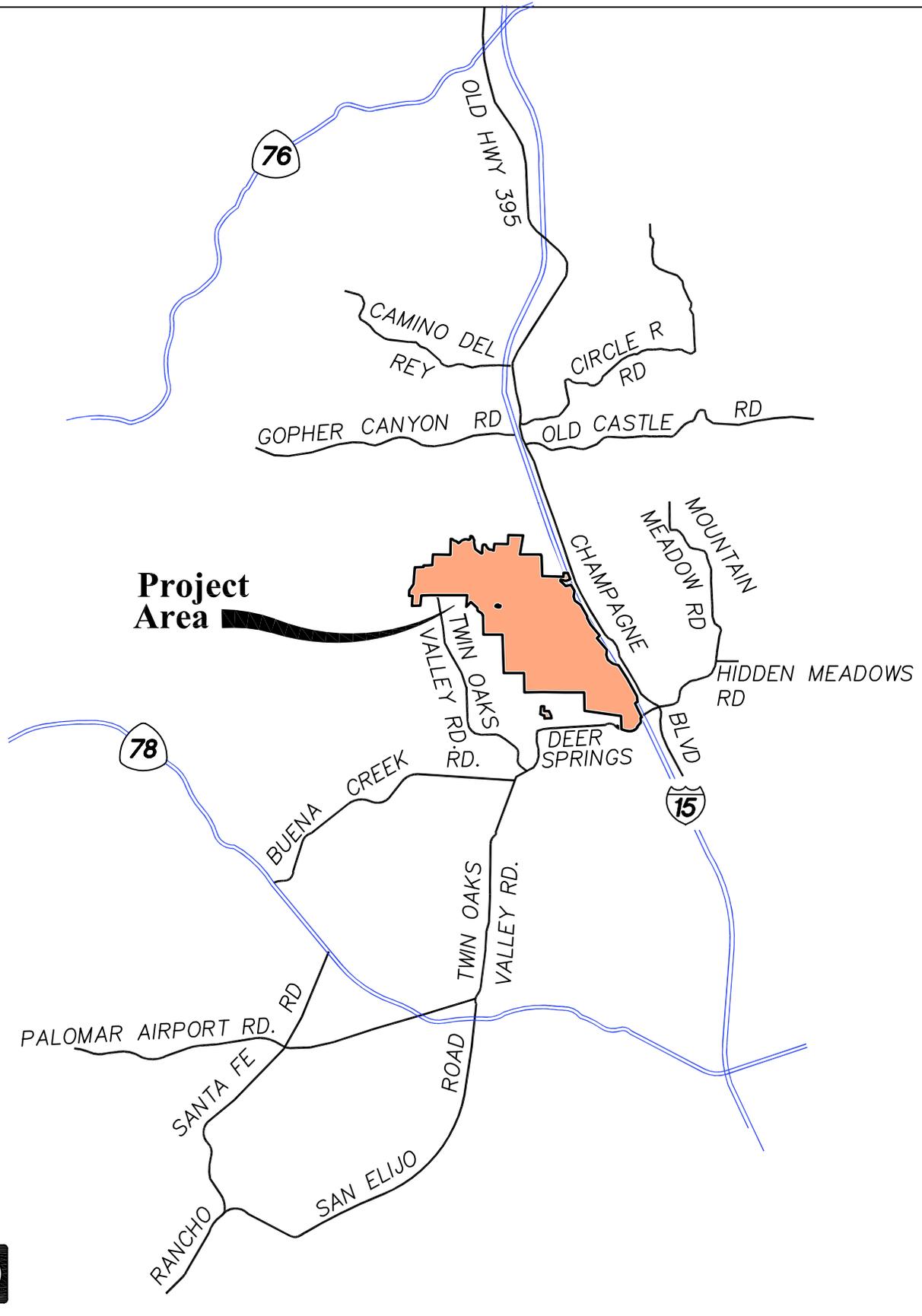


FIGURE 1
Vicinity Map

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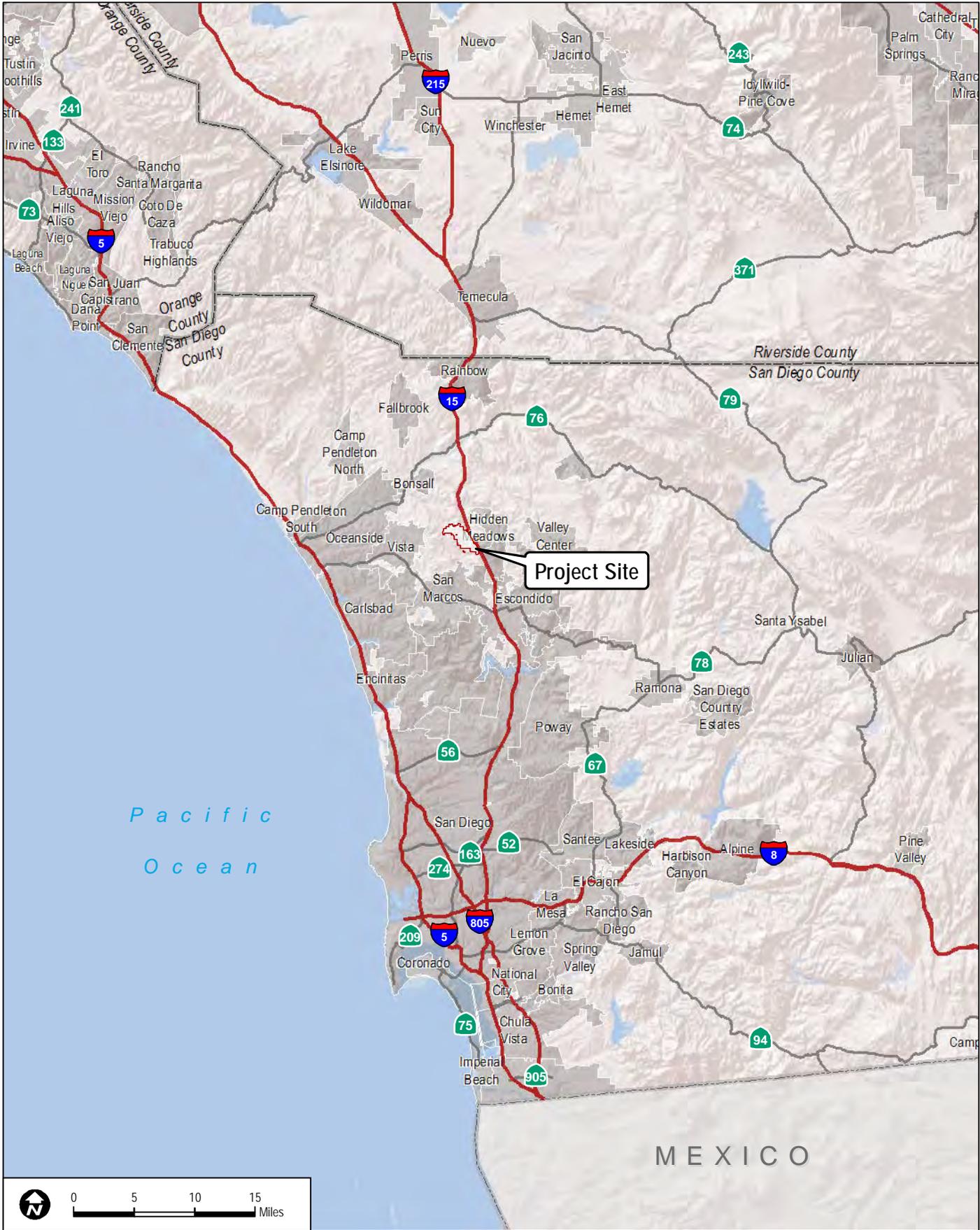


FIGURE 2
Regional Location Map

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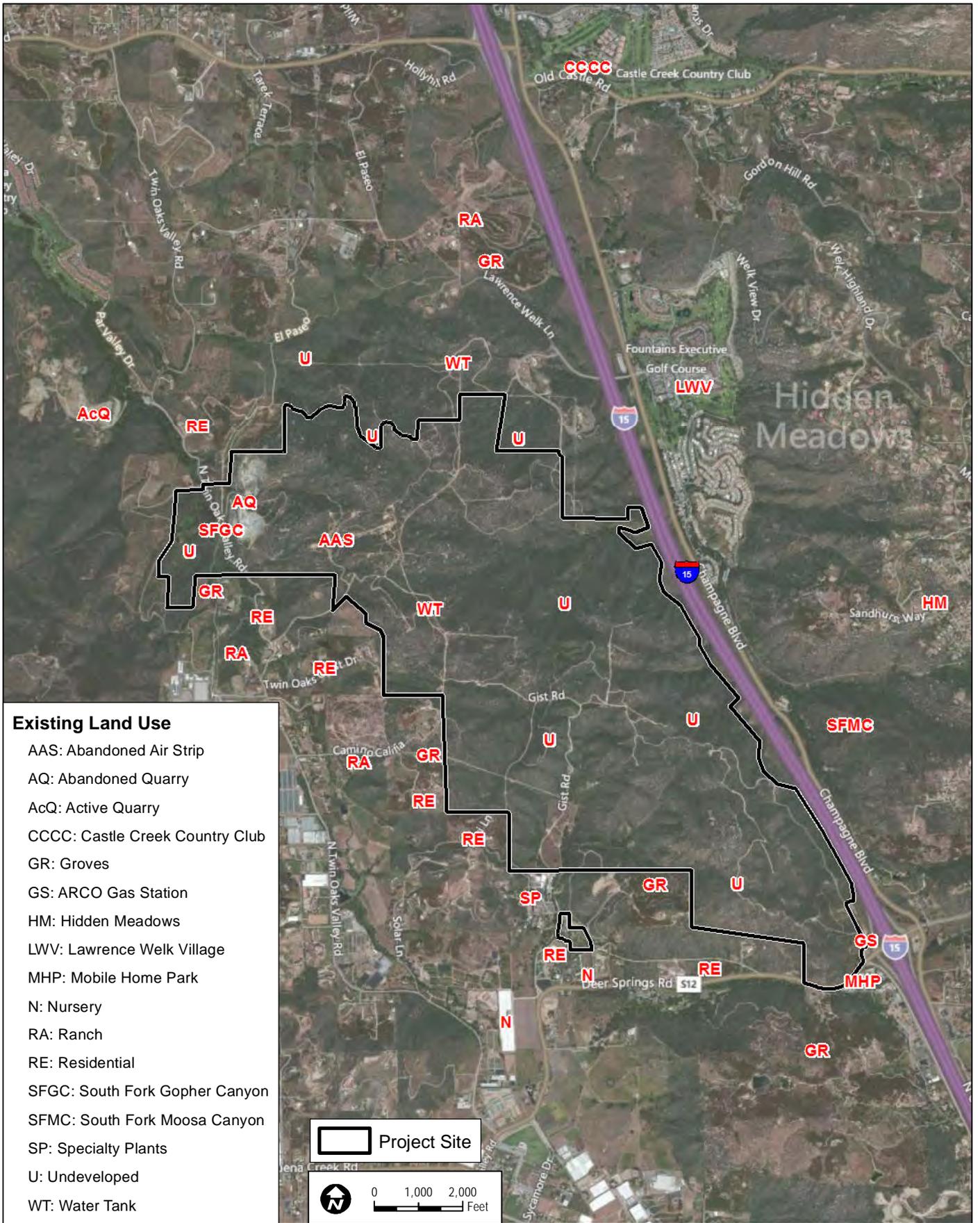
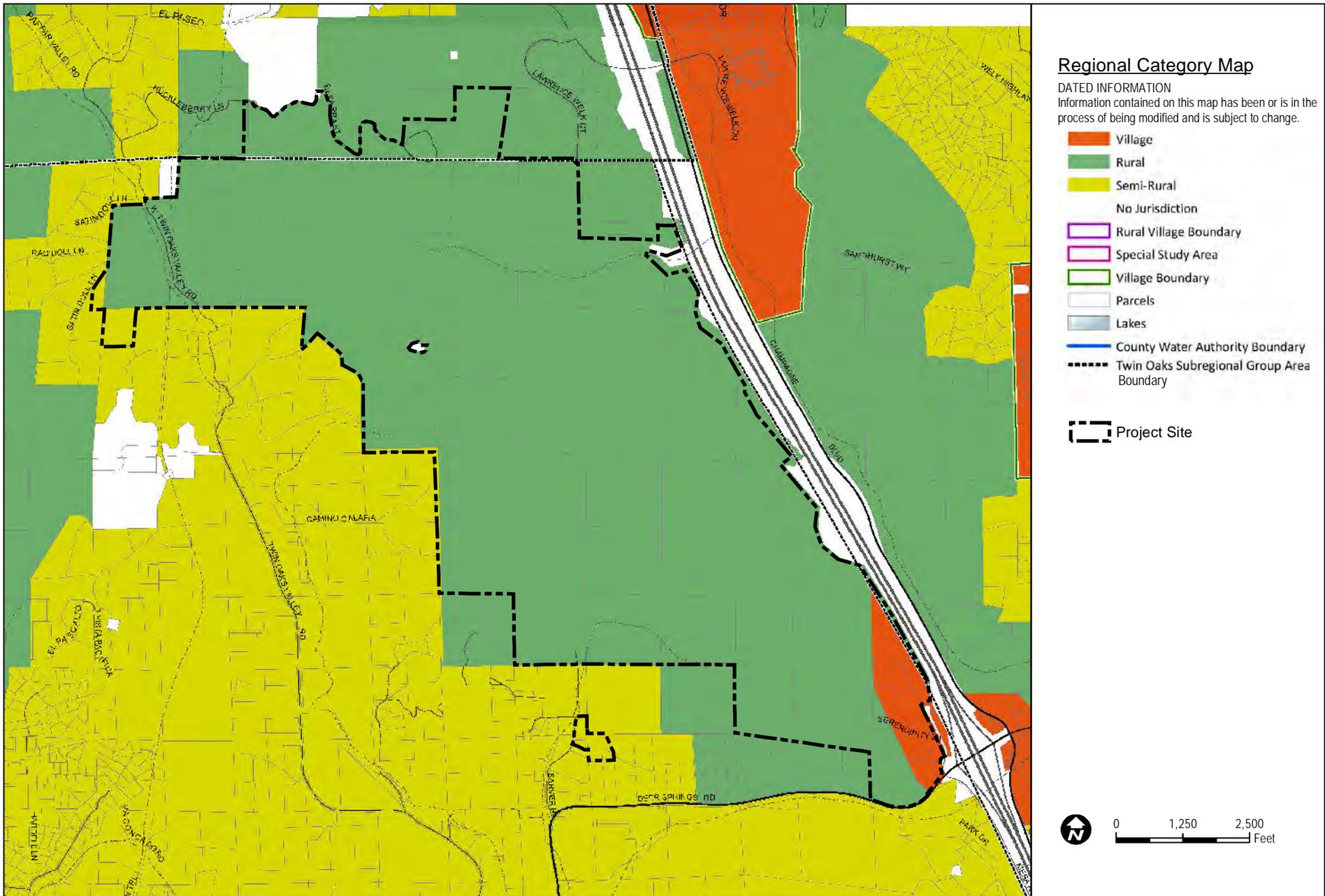


FIGURE 3
Aerial Map and Surrounding Land Uses

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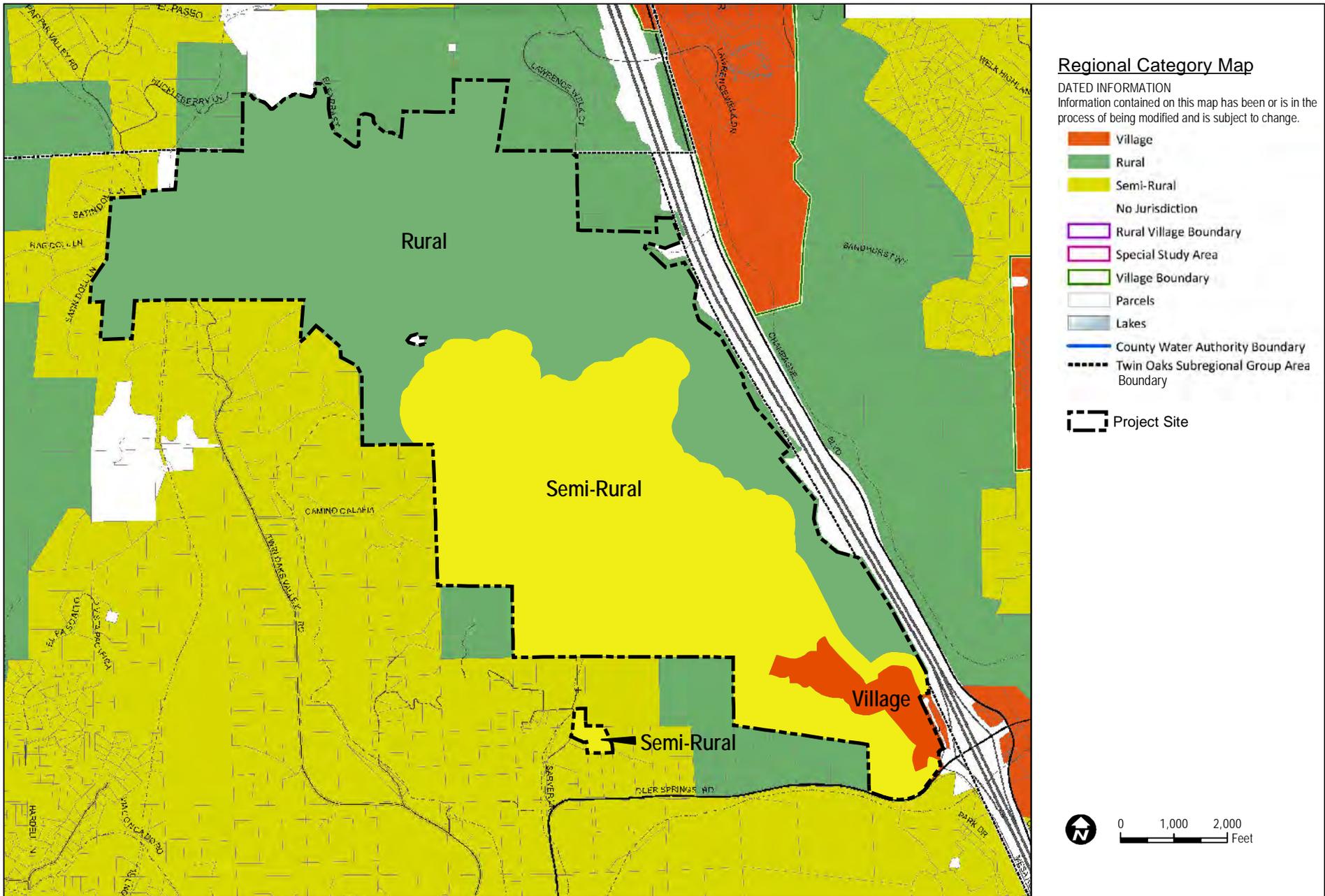


SOURCE: COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

FIGURE 4
Existing Regional Land Use Categories

Newland Sierra Specific Plan

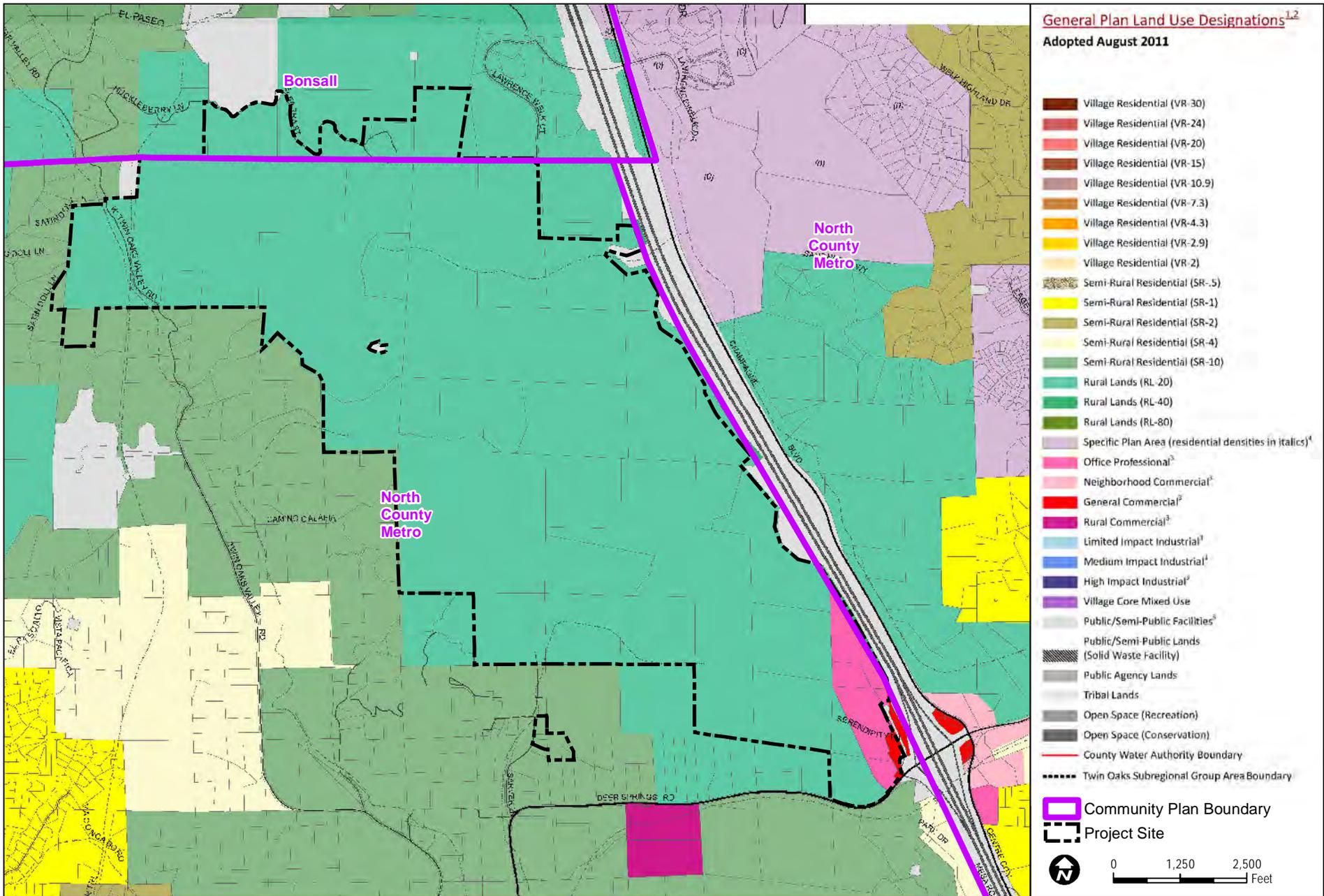
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SOURCE: COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

**FIGURE 5
Proposed Regional Land Use Categories**

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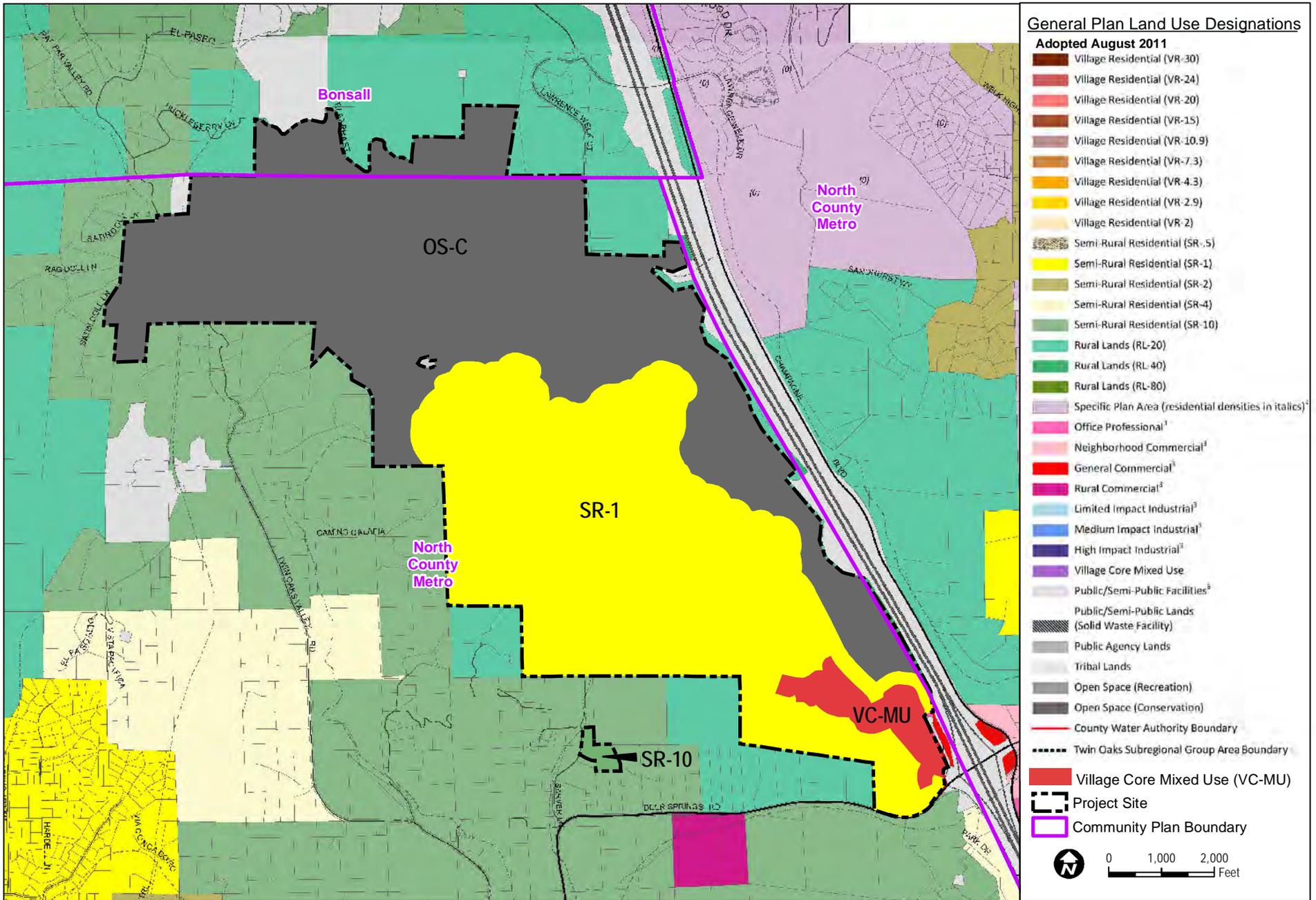


SOURCE: COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

FIGURE 6
Existing Community Plan Land Use Designations

Newland Sierra Specific Plan

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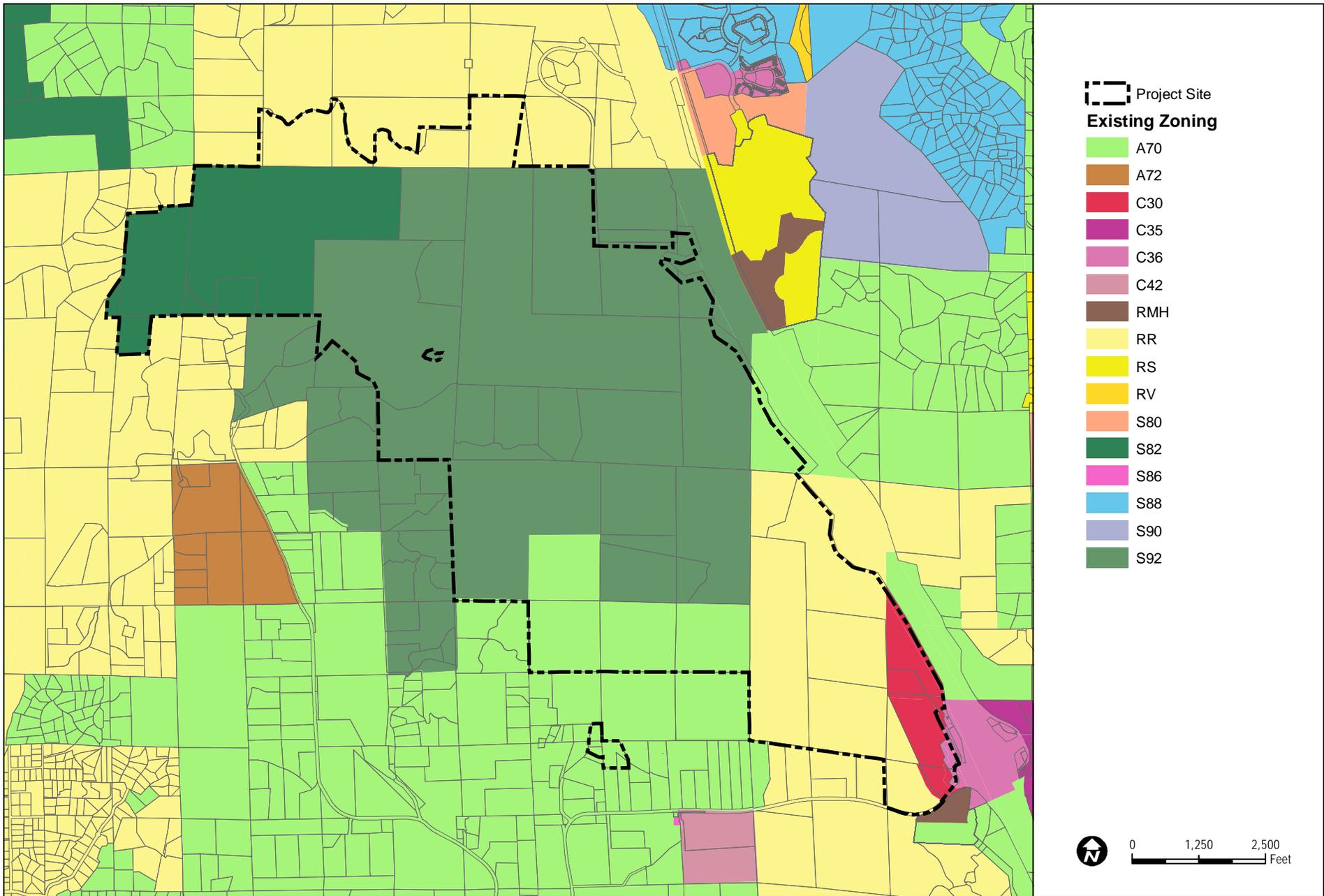


SOURCE: COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

FIGURE 7
Proposed Community Plan Land Use Designations

Newland Sierra Specific Plan

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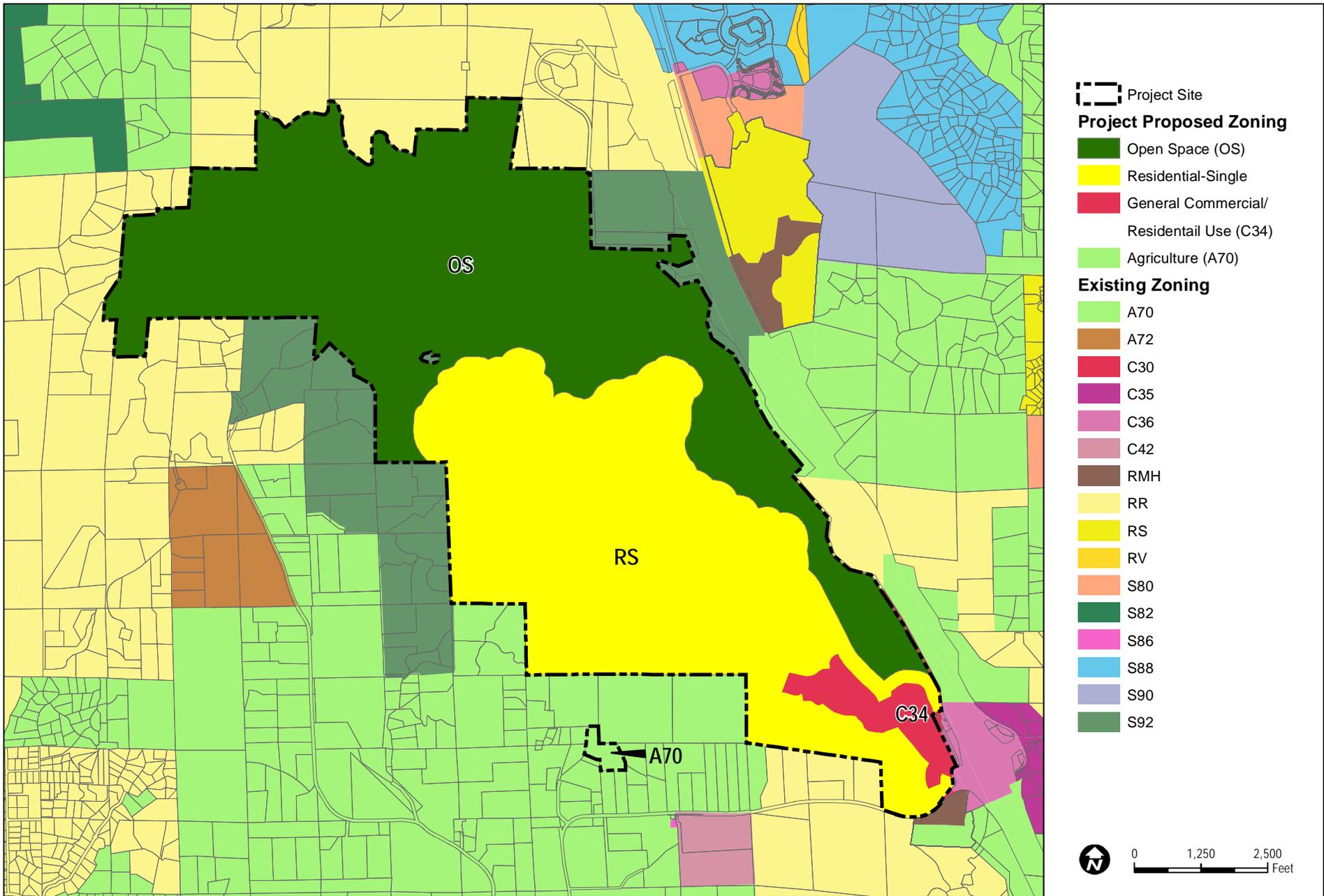


ZONING SOURCE: SANGIS

FIGURE 8
Existing Zoning

Newland Sierra Specific Plan

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ZONING SOURCE: SANGIS

FIGURE 9
Proposed Zoning

Newland Sierra Specific Plan

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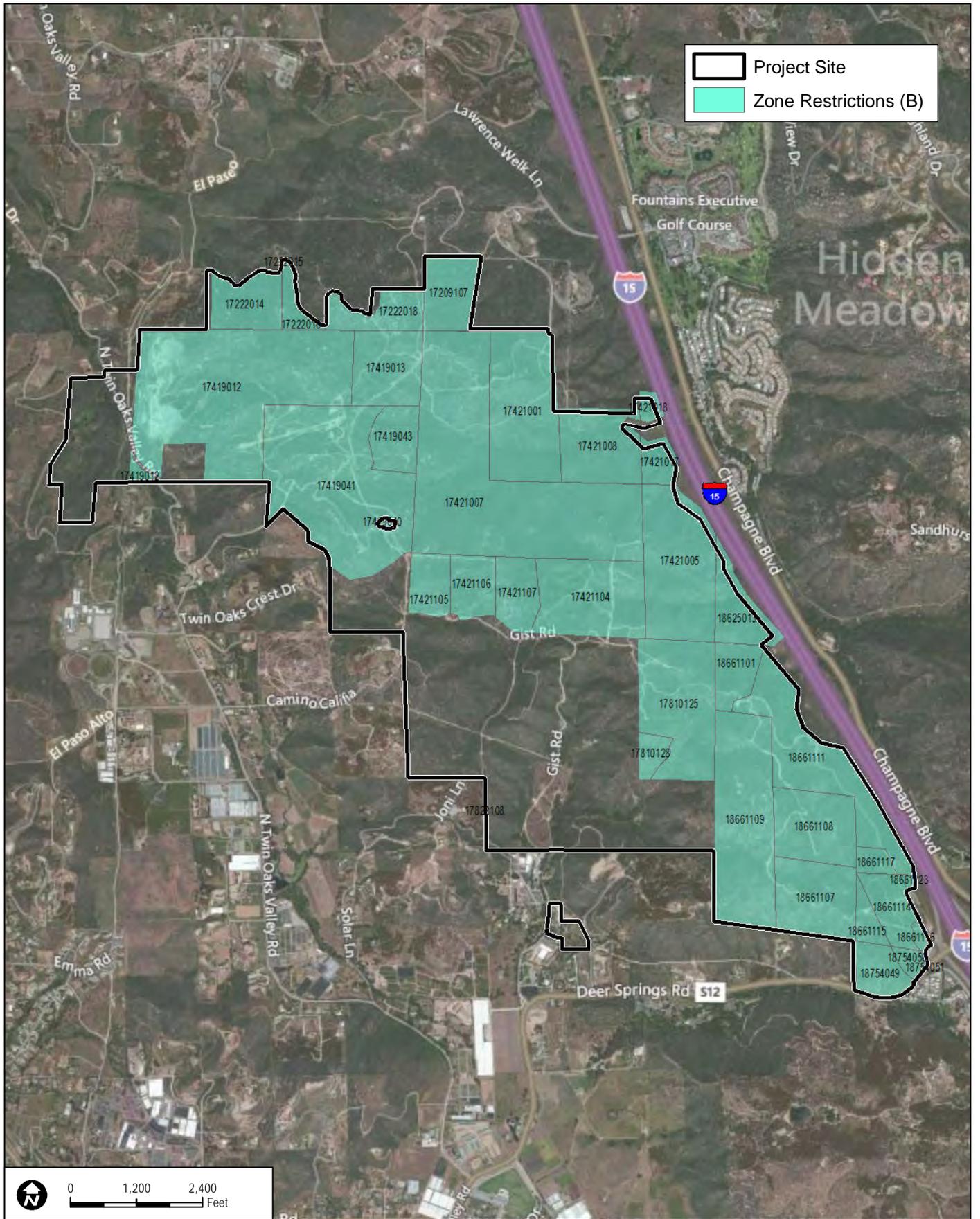


FIGURE 10
Existing North County Metropolitan I-15 Design Corridor

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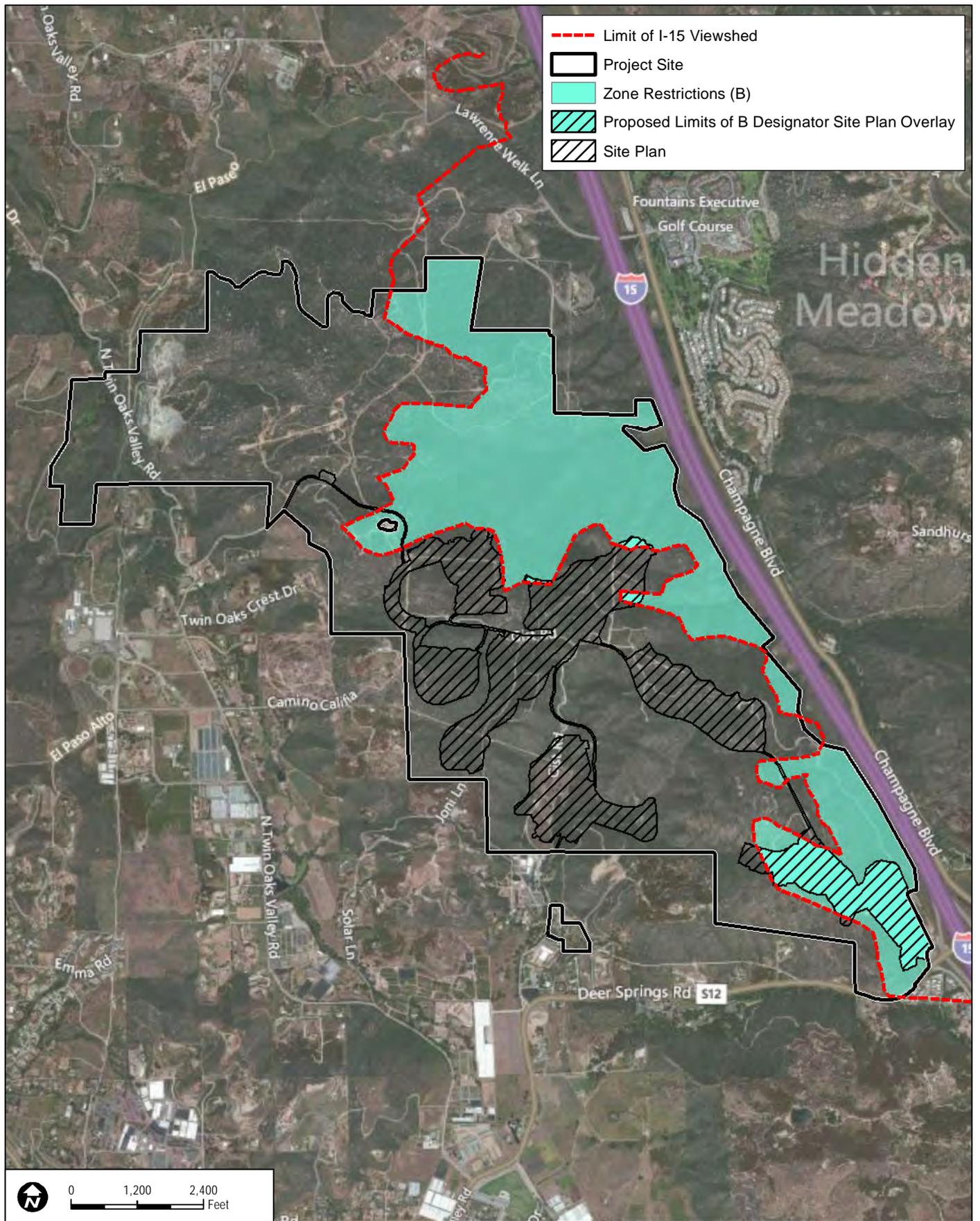


FIGURE 11
Proposed North County Metropolitan I-15 Design Corridor

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