

FINAL
Resource Management Plan for the Hidden Canyon Project,
San Diego County, California
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Prepared for:

County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue
San Diego, California 92123

Project Applicant:

David Resnick
4068 Crystal Court
Boulder, Colorado 80304

Prepared by:

DUDEK
605 Third Street
Encinitas, California 92024
Contact: Vipul Joshi
760.479.4284

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
ACOE	Army Corps of Engineers
BMP	best management practice
BTR	Biological Resources Technical Report
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
NCMSCP	North County Multiple Species Conservation Program
OHV	off-highway vehicle
PAMA	Pre-Approved Mitigation Area
PAR	Property Analysis Record
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
TECC	The Escondido Creek Conservancy
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Resource Management Plan (RMP) has been prepared for the proposed Hidden Canyon Project (proposed project) in accordance with the mitigation requirements identified in the draft Biological Resources Technical Report for the Hidden Canyon Project (BTR; Dudek 2020). This document is consistent with the format and content requirements of the County of San Diego (County) Report Format and Content Requirements: Conceptual Biological Resources Management Plan (County of San Diego 2010a). This RMP covers the management of the habitats to remain as part of the on-site biological open space on the project site.

Proposed mitigation for the project includes approximately 13.33 acres of mafic southern mixed chaparral and coastal sage scrub as on-site open space. The proposed on-site open space consists of all areas outside the development footprint, with the exception of 0.88 acres located in patches too small to offer biological value and therefore considered to be impact neutral. Therefore, the total on-site preservation is 13.33 acres. The on-site open space connects to the adjacent preserve for the Rancho Summit Estates Project managed by the Escondido Creek Conservancy, as well as the Rancho La Costa Preserve managed by the Center for Natural Lands Management. This RMP includes a description of management tasks for the 13.33 acres of on-site open space preserve.

1.1 Purpose of Biological Resources Management Plan

The purpose of this RMP is to provide guidance to ensure preservation and long-term management of the open space preserve. The objectives of this RMP are to:

1. Guide management of vegetation communities/habitats, plant and animal species, and programs described herein to protect and, where appropriate, enhance biological values.
2. Serve as a descriptive inventory of vegetation communities, habitats, and plant and animal species that occur on or use this property.
3. Establish the baseline conditions from which adaptive management will be determined and success will be measured.
4. Provide an overview of the operation, maintenance, administrative, and personnel requirements to implement management goals and serve as a budget planning aid.

A resource analysis is provided in the BTR for the proposed project (Dudek 2020). This report includes (1) a description of the existing biological resources on the project site, including vegetation communities and land covers, jurisdictional resources, plants, wildlife, and wildlife corridors; (2) a discussion of the potential impacts to biological resources that would result from development of the property and the biological significance of these impacts in the context of federal, state, and local laws and policies; and (3) recommended mitigation measures for reducing identified significant impacts to biological resources to less than significant. Mitigation recommendations follow federal, state, and local rules and regulations, including the California

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Environmental Quality Act, the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements (County of San Diego 2010b), and the County's Resource Protection Ordinance (County of San Diego 2007).

1.1.1 Conditions and/or Mitigation Measures that Require an RMP

An RMP is required for projects in the County of San Diego when a planned project proposes open space preservation that would significantly benefit from active management and/or monitoring of biological and/or cultural resources. An RMP is always required when a project proposes open space totaling more than 50 acres or more, regardless of the presence or absence of sensitive species. In the case of the Hidden Canyon open space preserve, the first of these parameters applies.

The project would impact approximately 10.40 acres of vegetation communities and land covers, approximately 10.12 acres of those impacts are too sensitive upland communities which require mitigation. A total of 13.33 acres of comparable habitat is provided in order to adequately mitigate for project impacts (Table 1). The project proposes to meet this mitigation obligation through the preservation of 13.33 acres within proposed on-site open space.

Table 1
Impacts and Mitigation Requirements for the Hidden Canyon Project (Acres)

Vegetation Community/ Land Cover Type	Project Area	Permanent Impacts^a	FMZ^a	Total Impacts	On-Site Preservation^b
Diegan coastal sage scrub ^c	21.43	7.48	1.24	8.72	11.85
Mafic southern mixed chaparral ^c	2.89	0.90	0.51	1.40	1.48
Disturbed habitat	0.56	0.19	0.09	0.28	N/A
Total	24.88	8.58	1.84	10.40	13.33

Notes: FMZ = fuel modification zone; N/A = not applicable.

^a A total of 3.90 acres impacted by grading is also designated as fuel modification zone.

^b The project would avoid 12.71 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub and 1.49 acres of mafic southern mixed chaparral; however, 0.88 acres would be located in patches too small to offer biological value. Therefore, the total on-site preservation is 13.33 acres.

^c Considered special status by the County of San Diego (2010a).

1.1.2 Agency Review and Coordination

This document was written in collaboration with the County of San Diego, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to ensure that agency concerns were adequately addressed. The management of the Hidden Canyon open space preserve, as detailed in this RMP, does not interfere with mitigation and monitoring requirements mandated by CDFW, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or by any other permitting agency.

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1.2 Implementation

1.2.1 Resource Manager Qualifications and Responsible Parties

A resource manager must be designated to be responsible for the long-term management and maintenance of the open space preserve. Because the Hidden Canyon open space preserve is located adjacent to the existing preserve for the Rancho Summit Estates Project, which is currently managed by The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC), TECC is the approved resource manager for the Hidden Canyon open space preserve.

The resource manager, TECC, was approved in writing by the County and wildlife agencies (i.e. USFWS and CDFW). Any change in the designated resource manager shall also be approved in writing by the County and wildlife agencies. Appropriate qualifications for the resource manager include but are not limited to:

- The ability to carry out habitat monitoring or mitigation activities.
- Fiscal stability, including preparation of an operational budget (using an appropriate analysis technique) for the management of this RMP.
- Having at least one staff member with a biological, ecological, or wildlife management degree from an accredited college or university, or having a Memorandum of Understanding with a qualified person with such a degree.
- Experience with habitat resource management in Southern California.

1.2.2 Financial Responsibility and Mechanism

The project applicant is responsible for all RMP funding requirements, including direct funds to support the RMP start-up tasks as well as an ongoing funding source for annual tasks, which is tied to the property to fund long-term RMP implementation. The project applicant shall establish a one-time, non-wasting endowment based on the conceptual cost estimate provided in Section 1.2.3 to fund in perpetuity the long-term management and maintenance of the Hidden Canyon open space preserve. The endowment funds shall be deposited at the San Diego Foundation or another institution approved by the County and wildlife agencies. The endowment funds shall provide distributable income only to the approved resource manager for the purposes allowed by this RMP. The endowment funds may not be used for start-up tasks assigned to the homeowners including: initial purchase and installation of signs, construction of fencing around the open space preserve and regular replacement and/or repair of fencing. Each owner shall be required by covenant to construct a fence between their property boundary and the Open Space interface. The approved resource manager shall inspect fencing monthly and notify the homeowner of any needed repairs and/or replacement. If the homeowner does not repair/replace fencing then the approved resource manager can replace and/or repair the fencing and will have the right to put a lien on the individual homeowner's property.

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1.2.3 Conceptual Cost Estimate

A Property Analysis Record (PAR) has been prepared by TECC and is the basis for the biological resource management tasks identified in this RMP. Table 2 includes the biological resource management tasks that are planned for the open space preserve. Baseline surveys conducted for the open space preserve include vegetation mapping, a review of the site for wetlands and non-wetland waters, focused protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila californica californica*) and focused rare plant surveys (Dudek 2020).

Table 2
Resource Management Tasks

Check if Applies	Tasks	Frequency (Times per Year)	Hours Required Per Year
<i>Biological Tasks</i>			
✓	Update biological mapping	Once every 3 years for first 10 years, then every 10 years thereafter	4 (12 hours every 3 years)
✓	Update aerial photography	Once every 3 years for the first 10 years, then every 10 years thereafter	Included in Update Biological Mapping task
✓	Removal of invasive species	As needed	Not to exceed 65
✓	Species Management/Predator control	As needed	Not to exceed 20
✓	Species surveys (include a separate line for each species): 1. Monitoring surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher (<i>Poliophtila californica californica</i>) 2. Focused rare plant surveys (with emphasis on known populations)	1. Twice a year 2. Once every 5 years	Included in monitoring task 8 (every 5 years)
✓	Monitoring	Monthly	48 (4 hours per month)
<i>Operations, Maintenance, and Administration Tasks</i>			
✓	Establish and maintain database and analysis of data	Annually	8
✓	Write and submit annual report to County and wildlife agencies	Annually	Not to exceed 5
✓	Submit review fees for County review of annual report	Annually	Based on PAR
✓	Review and, if necessary, update Management Plan	Every 5 years	4 (20 hours every 5 years)
	Construct permanent signs	This task will be handled by homeowner	N/A
✓	Replace signs	As needed, estimate 2 signs a year	Included in monitoring task
	Construct permanent fencing/gates	This task will be handled by homeowner	N/A

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Table 2
Resource Management Tasks

Check if Applies	Tasks	Frequency (Times per Year)	Hours Required Per Year
	Maintain permanent fencing/gates	This task will be handled by homeowner	N/A
✓	Remove trash and debris	Monthly	Included in monitoring task
✓	Remove graffiti and repair vandalism	As needed	Included in Monitoring task
<i>Public Use Tasks</i>			
✓	Control public access	As needed, based on monthly monitoring visits	4
✓	Provide Neighbor Education – Community Partnership	As needed, based on monthly monitoring visits	Included in Control Public Access task
<i>Fire Management Tasks</i>			
	Coordinate with applicable fire agencies and access (gate keys, etc.) for these agencies	This task will be handled by homeowner	
✓	Protect areas with high biological importance	Every 5 years	This will be covered with the adaptive management for coastal California gnatcatcher and rare plants.
<i>Post-Fire Tasks</i>			
✓	Fire prevention and response	As needed	Included in PAR contingency funds which total 10 hours per year

Notes: N/A = not applicable; MSCP = Multiple Species Conservation Program; PAMA = Pre-Approved Mitigation Area; DEH = Department of Environmental Health; BMP = best management practice; HOA = Homeowners' Association.

Hours are estimated and may fluctuate based on on-the-ground conditions.

1.2.4 Reporting Requirements

An RMP Annual Report will be submitted to the County and wildlife agencies. The electronic annual report shall discuss the previous year's management and monitoring activities as well as management/monitoring activities anticipated in the upcoming year.

The annual report shall provide a concise but complete summary of management and monitoring methods, identify any new management issues, and address the success or failure of management approaches (based on monitoring). The report shall include a summary of changes from baseline or previous year conditions for species and habitats and address any monitoring and management limitations, including weather (e.g., drought). The report shall also address any management (changes) resulting from previous monitoring results, provide methods for measuring the success of adaptive management, include the endowment status (earnings/expenditures), and work plan for the following year .

For new sensitive species observations or significant changes to previously reported species, the annual report shall include copies of completed California Natural Diversity Database forms with

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evidence that they have been submitted to the state. The report shall also include copies of invasive plant species forms submitted to the state or County.

A fee will be collected by Planning & Development Services upon submittal of the annual report for staff's review time. The RMP may also be subject to an ongoing deposit account for staff to address management challenges as they arise. Deposit accounts, if applicable, are replenished to a defined level as necessary.

1.2.5 RMP Agreement

The County will require an agreement with the applicant when an RMP is required. The RMP Agreement will be executed when the County accepts the Final RMP. The agreement will obligate the applicant to implement the RMP and provide a source of funding (i.e., a one-time deposit into a non-wasting endowment held by the TECC) to pay the cost to implement the RMP in perpetuity. The agreement shall also provide a mechanism for the funds to be transferred to the County if the resource manager fails to meet the goals of the RMP.

The agreement will specify that RMP funding or a funding mechanism be established prior to the construction or use of the property in reliance on the Habitat Loss Permit.

This agreement will be provided once the County approves the final RMP.

2 PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location

The Hidden Canyon project site, which includes the extent of all three parcels, is approximately 24.88 acres, and is located within northern San Diego County in the northeast corner of the former Perkins property which is now known as the Copper Creek Preserve. The project site is situated east of the City of Encinitas, south of the City of San Marcos, and north of the community of Rancho Santa Fe just east of Rancho Santa Fe Road off Rancho Summit Drive (see Figure 1, Project Location). The approximate center of the project is 33°4'44.835" north latitude, 117°12'8.008" west longitude on the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute series topographic Rancho Santa Fe quadrangle map Section 04, 05, and 33, Range 3 West, Township 12 South and 13 South. The proposed project boundary is consistent with the limits of Assessor's Parcel Numbers 223-081-50, 223-081-48, and 223-081-49.

2.2 Environmental Setting

The following is summarized from the BTR for the proposed project (Dudek 2020). The entire project site is undeveloped and located within draft NCMSCP Pre-Approved Mitigation Area (PAMA)-designated lands (see Figure 2, Regional Context). The on-site elevation ranges between 586 and 813 feet above mean sea level. The project site consists of a gently sloping hilltop. Most of the project's southern, western, and northern boundaries abut existing open space, with the remainder of the eastern and northern boundaries adjacent to a small subdivision currently under development by Shea Homes. The project site is located approximately 1,000 feet to the east of the Rancho La Costa Preserve, which contains a portion of San Marcos Creek.

The predominant soil type within the project site is Exchequer rocky silt loam, 30% to 70% slopes with a small amount of San Miguel–Exchequer rocky silt loam, 9% to 70% slopes. These are metavolcanic soils that tend to support sensitive plant species.

2.3 Land Use

Land use within the open space preserve and in the surrounding areas is a mixture of undeveloped lands, residential areas to the south, and a water tank along the northern boundary (Figure 3, On-Site Open Space Preserve). The project site is entirely undeveloped and is connected to open space and existing preserves along the northern and western boundaries.

The proposed project includes the development of three residential development pads, associated driveways, and an access road. Low-water-use, native, and naturalizing plant materials will make up the landscape plant palette. Low-fuel-volume plant materials will be included in compliance with the Fire Protection Plan. As required by the County of San Diego,

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the proposed project would include a 100-foot limited building zone easement that provides a buffer between the proposed preserve and development, and is located immediately adjacent to, but outside of, the proposed preserve (Figure 4, Open Space Preserve Design). The 100-foot limited building zone easement is intended to reduce the edge effects of development on preserve areas. The purpose of this easement is to preclude the need to clear or modify vegetation for fire protection purposes within the adjacent biological open space easement and prohibit the construction or placement of any structure that would require vegetation clearing within the protected biological open space for fuel management purposes. The only exceptions to this prohibition are structures that do not require fuel modification/vegetation management. For this project, the limited building zone and fuel modification zone overlap.

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3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES DESCRIPTION

This section is based on the biological data collected for the project site, as described in the BTR prepared for the proposed project (Dudek 2020). This section only discusses the areas within the proposed open space preserve.

3.1 Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types

Two vegetation communities were identified within the open space preserve and include the following general vegetation communities: coastal sage scrub and mafic southern mixed chaparral (see Figure 3 and Table 3). The status of vegetation communities was determined using Holland (1986), as modified by Oberbauer et al. (2008), and the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements (County 2010b). Refer to the BTR for the proposed project prepared by Dudek (2020) for a more detailed description of the biological resources on site.

Table 3
Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types within the
Hidden Canyon Open Space Preserve

General Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type	Code ^a	Acres
<i>Coastal Scrub</i>		
Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) ^b	32500	11.85
<i>Chaparral</i>		
Mafic southern mixed chaparral ^b	37122	1.48
Total^c		13.33

Notes:

^a Holland (1986) as modified by Oberbauer et al. (2008).

^b Considered special-status by the County of San Diego (2010a).

^c May not sum precisely due to rounding.

3.1.1 Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (32500)

Diegan coastal sage scrub is the widespread coastal sage scrub in coastal Southern California from Los Angeles into Baja California (Oberbauer et al. 2008). Diegan coastal sage scrub is a native plant community composed of a variety of soft, low, aromatic shrubs, characteristically dominated by drought-deciduous species. Diegan coastal sage scrub is characterized by subshrubs with relatively shallow root systems and open canopies. Within the open space preserve, the Diegan coastal sage scrub is composed primarily of four shrub species: black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), and laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*). Approximately 11.85 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub occurs within the open space preserve (Figure 3).

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Areas mapped as Diegan coastal sage scrub within the project site are dominated by California sagebrush. The *Artemisia californica* (California sagebrush scrub) alliance has a rank of G5S5 in CDFW (CDFG 2010) meaning it is globally secure and secure in the state. Diegan coastal sage scrub is not considered special-status by CDFW; however, it requires mitigation per the County Report Format and Content Requirements for Biological Resources (County 2010a).

3.1.2 Mafic Southern Mixed Chaparral (37122)

Mafic southern mixed chaparral is composed of broad-leaved sclerophyllous shrubs that grow to about 6 to 10 feet tall and form dense often nearly impenetrable stands. The plants of this association are typically deep rooted. This habitat occurs on dry, rocky, often steep north-facing slopes with little soil. As conditions become more mesic, broad-leaved sclerophyllous shrubs that resprout from underground root crowns become dominant. Depending upon relative proximity to the coast, southern mixed chaparral is dominated by such representative species as chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) and mission manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*). Mafic southern mixed chaparral occurs on mafic or metavolcanic soils.

The chaparral within the open space preserve is dominated by wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*; California Rare Plant Rank [CRPR] 2B.2 and County List B¹), laurel sumac, and California buckwheat. Approximately 1.48 acres of mafic southern mixed chaparral occur within the open space preserve (Figure 4).

3.2 Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters

The results of the jurisdictional assessment conducted by Dudek biologists in 2016 and 2018 show that there is one potentially jurisdictional 1-foot-wide to 3-foot-wide ephemeral stream channel within the open space preserve (Figure 3). Although this ephemeral stream channel appears to be erosional (i.e., the ordinary high water mark features are not consistent throughout) and does not have an overlapping National Hydrography Dataset flowline, the ephemeral stream channel does convey flows into a larger channel downstream that would provide connectivity to a jurisdictional resource. Therefore, the approximately <0.01-acre (413-linear-foot) ephemeral stream channel would be considered a non-wetland water or streambed potentially under ACOE, RWQCB, and CDFW jurisdiction. There are no jurisdictional wetland or riparian areas within the open space preserve. Based on the lack of hydric soils and hydrophytic vegetation in the ephemeral channel and the presence of well-drained soils, the ephemeral channel does not have the biological functions of a wetland nor does it have populations of wetland dependent species, and therefore it is not considered a resource regulated by the County.

¹ California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR; formally CNPS list) as listed in *California Native Plant Society On-Line Inventory of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants of California* (CNPS 2018). Plants categorized as County List B are rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere (County of San Diego 2010a).

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3.3 Plant Species

A total of 133 vascular plant species, consisting of 97 native species (73%) and 36 non-native species (27%), were recorded within the project site during the 2019 plant surveys. Of that total, two sensitive plant species were directly observed within the open space preserve: 3.21 acres (approximately 93 individuals) of wart-stemmed ceanothus (List B); and 0.28 acre of ashy spike-moss (*Selaginella cinerascens*, List D).

3.4 Fauna

The open space preserve supports habitat for common and special-status upland species. Chaparral and coastal scrub within the project area provide foraging and nesting habitat for migratory and resident bird species and other wildlife species. Additionally, the open space preserve provides cover and foraging opportunities for wildlife species, including reptiles and mammals.

There were 49 species observed in the project site during the 2005 and 2018 focused surveys. Of the total species observed, 47 native species (96%) and 2 non-native species (4%) were recorded, 6 of which are considered special status according to the County guidelines. The following special-status species were observed within and in the direct vicinity the project site: Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), coastal California gnatcatcher, and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*). Although Cooper's hawk, northern harrier, and red-shouldered hawk were observed foraging adjacent or within the project site, these species are not expected to nest in the project site due to the lack of suitable nesting habitat.

3.5 Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors

The project site is entirely within draft NCMSCP PAMA-designated lands and is surrounded by open space and connected to existing preserves along the northern and western boundaries, which could allow for wildlife movement (Figure 2). Due to the surrounding open space, the project site would be considered part of a larger habitat, block but not a wildlife corridor or linkage. The project site has high habitat value according to Figure 3-1 in the draft NCMSCP Habitat Evaluation Model (County of San Diego 2009) given that it supports coastal California gnatcatcher and other smaller to mid-size wildlife species (e.g., birds, reptiles, rabbits, mule deer, or coyote [*Canis latrans*]). These wildlife species would be expected to use the habitat that is located within the adjacent open space preserves for both year-round habitat as well as dispersal corridors during migration or dispersal to new territories. The project site does not include any forested habitats or large drainages, which provide adequate cover for larger wildlife species (i.e., bobcat [*Lynx rufus*] or cougar [*Puma concolor*]), so it is unlikely that these species would occur.

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As stated above, the project site does not function as a wildlife corridor or provide for habitat connectivity. Since the project site is adjacent to existing development associated with residential development and water tank along the northern boundary and the residential development along the eastern boundary, connectivity has already been restricted. Habitat connectivity into adjacent open space preserve areas along the western and northern boundaries of the project site would continue to occur after project implementation. Additionally, 13.33 acres of the project site (53%) will be conserved as an open space preserve, which would allow for continued use through this area (Figure 3). The loss of 10.12 acres of native habitat resulting from the proposed project will not preclude connectivity between areas of high habitat value within the project site vicinity.

3.6 Overall Biological Value

As described in the above sections, the on-site open space preserve supports sensitive upland vegetation communities, rare plants, and special-status wildlife species, including the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (Figure 3). It is adjacent to contiguous areas of undeveloped habitat, providing habitat connectivity to PAMA areas and adjacent preserves (Figure 2).

3.7 Enhancement and Restoration Opportunities

There are no areas that will be temporarily impacted by the proposed project; therefore, revegetation is not proposed for areas within the open space preserve. As stated in Section 3.6, Overall Biological Value, the open space preserve contains high-quality, undisturbed upland habitat and enhancement of the existing habitat is not required to meet the project's mitigation requirements.

4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This RMP identifies activities to manage and preserve the sensitive biological resources within the open space preserve. The main goal is to preserve the 13.33 acres of on-site open space and manage the sensitive plant and wildlife species it supports through vegetation mapping, species specific surveys and management, invasive plant treatment, and public access control.

4.1 Management Goals

Goal: To preserve and manage lands to the benefit of the flora, fauna, and native ecosystem functions reflected in the natural communities occurring within the open space preserve.

A baseline inventory has been collected during the evaluation of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act. As such, ongoing species and habitat monitoring shall occur in accordance with County and regional standards. These standards typically include vegetation mapping every 3 years for the first 10 years and then every 10 years thereafter. Habitat maintenance may be required if vegetation mapping indicates habitat conversion that is detrimental to the preservation of native ecosystem functions. Specific management tasks are described in Section 4.2, Biological Management Tasks.

4.2 Biological Management Tasks

The biological management tasks associated with the open space preserve are outlined in Table 2 of this RMP. Start-up tasks conducted by the resource manager shall include database compilation. It should be noted that the homeowner will be responsible for purchase and installation of signs around the on-site open space preserve (Figure 4). Long-term tasks by the resource manager involve the management and maintenance of the open space preserve in perpetuity, including habitat monitoring and mapping, exotic species control as-needed, and general monitoring and reporting. These habitat management tasks commence immediately upon initiation of long-term management by the resource manager. This section includes a description of each of the tasks required for management of the open space.

4.2.1 Update Biological Mapping and Aerial Photography

Every 3 years (for the first 10 years and then every 10 years thereafter), the resource manager will update the vegetation map on a current aerial photograph of the site. This task includes updating the vegetation mapping over the entire open space preserve and updating the aerial photography.

4.2.2 Removal of Invasive Species

The resource manager will map occurrences of perennial, non-native species that have a rating of moderate or high by the California Invasive Plant Council. Weed control measures will be

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implemented, as necessary, to prevent expansion of existing or establishment of new exotic species in the open space preserve. Manual weeding methods shall be used to the extent practicable. Perennial and biennial exotic plants shall be removed by cutting weed stems off at or below ground level or pulling seedlings manually. Annual weeds will be manually pulled prior to producing mature seed. All cuttings or pulled weeds shall be exported from the open space preserve and disposed of properly. The project landscape planting palette shall be reviewed and approved by the project biologist prior to the issuance of any permits for the project.

The use of herbicide and pesticides for weed and vector control is not proposed within the open space preserve. However, if the use of herbicide is deemed necessary, application should be minimal and may only occur in compliance with all federal and state laws under direct supervision of the resource manager and in consultation with CDFW. Use of chemical herbicides should be determined in coordination with the County Department of Environmental Health. All herbicide use will be applied by backpack sprayers or stump painting directly on target weeds and will involve short-duration, biodegradable chemicals.

4.2.3 Species Surveys

Several special-status species were documented throughout the project site, including in the open space preserve. Special-status plant populations documented within the open space preserve include wart-stemmed ceanothus and ashy spike-moss. Numerous special-status wildlife species were documented in the project area and are listed in Section 3.4, Fauna. Long-term management of the open space preserve would ensure high quality habitat in-perpetuity for these species. Additional protective measures shall be implemented for the coastal California gnatcatcher and special-status plants based on the mitigation requirements outlined in the BTR.

Protective measures to monitor and manage coastal California gnatcatcher and special-status plant species shall be implemented to help ensure the persistence of these species in the open space. The following surveys shall be conducted, during the appropriate time of year, every 5 years for special-status plant and twice a year for coastal California gnatcatcher.

- **Coastal California gnatcatcher.** Two site visits will occur annually in February and March (TECC can determine the best timing for these two visits as long as it coincides with the appropriate time of year for this species). These two surveys will be combined with the monthly monitoring visits.
- **Rare plant surveys.** Rare plant surveys shall be conducted within open space, with emphasis on surveying the known locations of rare plants. Additional locations of plants that are state- or federally listed, have a CRPR 1B and 2, and/or are County lists A–D will be recorded. All special-status species locations will be mapped and the population estimated.

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4.2.4 Species Management

Based on the species surveys described earlier, management tasks for the rare plant populations and special-status wildlife species may be required. This includes weed control and predator control. Predator control is not anticipated at this time; however, if predators such as feral cats, raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), or other species cause nest failure or other detrimental effects on wildlife species, trapping or other predator control methods may be used.

4.2.5 Monitoring

Prior to any clearing, grading, or construction on the project site, TECC shall meet with the contractor(s) responsible for site development to discuss efforts by all involved to avoid impacts to adjacent areas of undisturbed, sensitive native habitat. The intent of this meeting shall be to inform the attendees of the sensitivity of the habitat in this area, and thus presumably minimize losses. It should be noted that the project applicant is responsible for the initial management of the open space preserve during construction. Funding for biological monitoring during construction is not provided by the endowment.

Long-term monthly monitoring, as required by the County, of the open space preserve to document any changes will be conducted by the resource manager. TECC shall visit the open space each month in order to monitor the overall conditions of the open space and determine if any management tasks are required. The monitoring program will analyze vegetative growth patterns, changes in floristic composition or diversity, and other factors relating to habitat viability. Management tasks may include any of the following: trash or debris removal, graffiti and/or vandalism cleanup, checking for off-roading activities, and replacement of signs demarcating the open space preserve.

4.3 Adaptive Management

The resource manager is responsible for interpreting the results of site monitoring to determine the ongoing success of the RMP. If it is necessary to modify the plan between regularly scheduled updates, plan changes shall be submitted to the County and wildlife agencies for approval, as required.

4.4 Operations, Maintenance, and Administrative Tasks

Table 2 and Section 4.2, Biological Management Tasks, describe a list of tasks such as vegetation mapping, and regular visits to be conducted by the resource manager. Regular visits will occur monthly and annually.

Resource Management Plan for the Hidden Canyon Project

4.4.1 Goals

Goal: To manage, maintain, and administer the proposed project in an ongoing setting to ensure the integrity of the preserved open space preserve.

4.4.2 Tasks

The general operations, maintenance, and administrative tasks to be conducted by the resource manager will include the tasks noted in the following subsections.

4.4.2.1 Annual Monitoring Reports

An annual monitoring report will be submitted to the County and the wildlife agencies that will summarize the overall condition of vegetation communities and sensitive species in the open space preserve, outline proposed management tasks for the following year, and provide results of management activities proposed in the previous report. Submitted annually by the end of January, this annual monitoring report will compare the most recent data with those collected in previous years, evaluate sensitive species status and local wildlife corridor use, and outline appropriate remedial measures, per County guidelines. Site photographs from fixed photo documentation points shall be provided as part of the monitoring reporting effort. These shall clearly depict the height and cover of the native vegetation, condition of the fences and signs, and any problems not needing emergency response. The annual monitoring report will also address any adaptive management (changes) resulting from previous monitoring results, and provide a methodology for measuring the success of adaptive management. Copies of California Natural Diversity Database forms submitted to the state for any new sensitive species observations or significant changes to species previously reported will be included, as will copies of invasive plant species forms submitted to the state or County. Fees for County review will also be included with submittal of the annual report.

The results of all updated vegetation mapping (every third year) and sensitive species monitoring will be included in the appropriate annual monitoring reports.

4.4.2.2 Management Plan Review

This RMP will be reviewed every 5 years to determine the need for revisions or updates to reflect any changes in site conditions and modifications to maintenance/recovery efforts. Due to changing conditions within the open space preserve, it may be necessary to revise the tasks outlined in this plan to ensure continued success of the stated goals.

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4.4.2.3 Access Control

Access to the open space preserve shall only include the resource manager and other authorized agents. Exceptions to this shall be in an emergency or as otherwise specified by the resource manager in consultation with resources agencies and the County. Access to the open space preserve shall primarily occur during the dry season to prevent impacts to annual vegetation. To prevent human-induced degradation of the open space preserve due to illegal occupancy, trespassing (especially off-highway vehicle [OHV] activity), removal of resources, or dumping of trash or debris, the resource manager will restrict public access to the open space preserve. Permanent signage will be posted consistent with California Penal Code requirements at locations of unauthorized trails entering the open space preserve and shall be maintained by the resource manager. Figure 4 shows the proposed sign locations. Open space signage shall be installed along the open space boundaries that interface with other open space, and where open space is adjacent to roadways and residential areas and shall be corrosion resistant, a minimum of 6 inches by 9 inches, on posts not less than 3 feet in height from the ground surface, and must state the following:

Sensitive Environmental Resources

Area Restricted by Easement

Entry without express written permission from the County of San Diego is prohibited. To report a violation or for more information about easement restrictions and exceptions, contact the County of San Diego,
Planning & Development Services
Reference: (PDS2016-LDGRMJ-30097)

The signs must be in good condition and visible at all times, and must be replaced, repaired, and/or cleaned as directed by TECC.

4.4.2.4 Fencing/Barriers

Because the open space preserve is located adjacent to other undeveloped land, perimeter fencing around the open space preserve is not planned. Fencing will be placed along the edge of grading for each of the three pads and the preliminary fencing is shown on Figure 4. The final design and location of the fencing will be given to TECC. The fencing can be any material but glass or other transparent material that would potentially lead to bird-strike issues. The main entrances shall be gated to keep public off the road providing access to the residential area and open space preserve, as shown on Figure 4.

4.4.2.5 Illegal Occupancy

Currently, there is no obvious illegal use of the project site or open space preserve. However, the resource manager will survey the open space preserve for evidence of illegal access, encroachments (i.e., landscaping and/or play areas by adjacent owners), and encampments concurrently with other

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monthly site management activities and file a report with the local Sheriff's Department, if necessary, to ensure the open space preserve remains free of human occupancy.

4.4.2.6 Removal of Resources

Removal of any plants, animals, rocks, minerals, or other natural resources from the open space preserve is prohibited unless determined to be beneficial to the management of the open space preserve and allowed by the wildlife agencies. Hunting is also prohibited in the open space preserve. The resource manager will maintain a log of illegal collecting and may report individuals caught removing natural resources from the open space preserve to the USFWS, CDFW, County, and/or the San Diego County Sheriff's office. The resource manager may allow and supervise seed collection and plant cuttings as part of revegetation efforts within the open space preserve and/or in nearby areas. Any such collected plant materials shall be performed under the direct supervision of the resource manager and should be limited to such that is necessary and in accordance with state law to ensure successful revegetation while not adversely affecting local plant populations.

4.4.2.7 Trash Removal and Vandalism Repair

The resource manager will conduct general trash removal and removal of illegally dumped material within the open space preserve during regular monthly monitoring site visits. All litter shall be removed from the open space preserve. The handling, transport, and disposal of any hazardous materials or hazardous wastes found in the open space preserve shall be subject to all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. The regulations dictate the qualifications of the personnel and the type of methods and equipment used for removal of hazardous material. Notification of any toxic spills or unlawful dumping of hazardous wastes in the open space preserve shall be immediately reported to the County and to CDFW.

Additionally, damage caused by vandalism or removal of signs and/or fencing will be repaired immediately. Upon initiation of the open space preserve, existing trash will be removed to provide for a clean baseline.

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4.5 Public Use Tasks

The open space preserve will not include public trails or facilities. The main entrance, which allows current access to the existing trails within the vicinity of the open space preserve, shall be gated to exclude public entry. The open space preserve is intended to serve primarily as a habitat preserve and as such is not compatible with public use activities. Existing unsanctioned trails, used mainly by bicycles, will be decommissioned, blocked with fencing, and signage will be installed prior to turnover to the resource manager. Activities that will be specifically prohibited include:

- Use of herbicides (except to remove non-native species, as necessary), pesticides, rodenticides, biocides, fertilizers, or other agricultural chemicals
- Use of OHVs and any other motorized vehicles except in the execution of management duties
- Grazing or other agricultural activity of any kind
- Recreational activities including, but not limited to, horseback riding, hiking, biking, target shooting, hunting, or fishing
- Commercial or industrial uses
- Construction, reconstruction, or placement of any building or other improvement, billboard, or sign
- Depositing or accumulation of soil, trash, ashes, refuse, waste, bio-solids, or any other material
- Planting, introduction, or dispersal of non-native or exotic plant or animal species
- Altering the general topography of the open space preserve, including but not limited to building of roads and flood control work
- Removing, destroying, or cutting of trees, shrubs, or other vegetation, except as required by federal, state, or local law or by governmental order for (1) emergency fire breaks, (2) maintenance of existing roads, (3) prevention or treatment of disease, or (4) required mitigation programs
- Manipulating, impounding, or altering any natural watercourse, body of water, or water circulation on the open space, except as specified for restoration activities, and activities or uses detrimental to water quality, including but not limited to degradation or pollution of any surface or subsurface waters

4.6 Fire Management Element

Fire is a natural ecological component of the Mediterranean-type climate of San Diego County. As required by the County of San Diego, the proposed project would include a 100-foot limited building zone easement that provides a buffer between the proposed preserve and development,

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and is located immediately adjacent to, but outside of, the proposed preserve. The 100-foot limited building zone easement is intended to reduce the edge effects of development on preserve areas. The purpose of this easement is to preclude the need to clear or modify vegetation for fire protection purposes within the adjacent biological open space easement and prohibit the construction or placement of any structure that would require vegetation clearing within the protected biological open space for fuel management purposes. Contingency funds will be used for prevention of and is response to any catastrophic events (e.g. flooding, fire, or severe unnatural erosion) that occur within the on-site preserve resulting in significant habitat modifications.

As a component of general monitoring responsibilities, and especially following severe storms, fires, floods or other significant disturbance events, the resource manager shall inspect the preserve for erosion problems. For the purposes of this RMP, significant unnatural erosion is erosion that affects an area that is greater than 100 square feet and over 6 inches in depth, and/or erosion that may affect water quality and wetland resources or lead to instability of slopes or the loss/conversion of habitat. Should significant erosion be detected, the resource manager will evaluate the need for repair; the resource manager's investigation will include an attempt to identify the cause(s) and means by which the damage has occurred. The PAR provides a lump sum contingency budget to address potential post-fire erosion issues in the event of a wildfire. In the event of severe erosion with potentially costly remedies not anticipated by the RMP or PAR, funding to implement erosion control will not be derived from annual management funds. In this case, the resource manager will consult with the County to determine a plan of action that will include the identification of funding sources. Minor incidents of erosion (e.g., the formation of rivulets through upland areas) shall be left untreated unless it is perceived that the erosion will cause the loss of sensitive habitat and/or create a hazardous situation that would constitute a threat to human health and safety.

The degree of urgency to remediate erosion problems within the preserve will depend on the severity of the erosion, how quickly it is progressing, and what will happen until it is remediated.

In the event that erosion becomes a recurring problem or periodic but severe, the resource manager will develop an erosion control plan. The plan will address (1) erosion causes and (2) the type and placement of physical features to counteract or stem erosive forces, and may include (3) preparation of a conceptual plan to revegetate affected areas with native seed. If the source of an erosion problem within the preserve lies outside the preserve, the cause shall be identified and the responsible party or parties made accountable.

5 MANAGEMENT CONSTRAINTS

This RMP has been written to satisfy the requirements of the County and attempts to identify possible issues in the future; however, unforeseeable changes may occur that are out of the control of the resource manager. For example, changes in rainfall patterns may affect the populations of sensitive plant and wildlife species within the open space preserve. Likewise, changes in other environmental factors such as air pollution, hazardous waste runoff, and erosion could have detrimental effects on the habitat within the management areas. An adaptive management approach will be taken to provide the flexibility to address unforeseen conditions.

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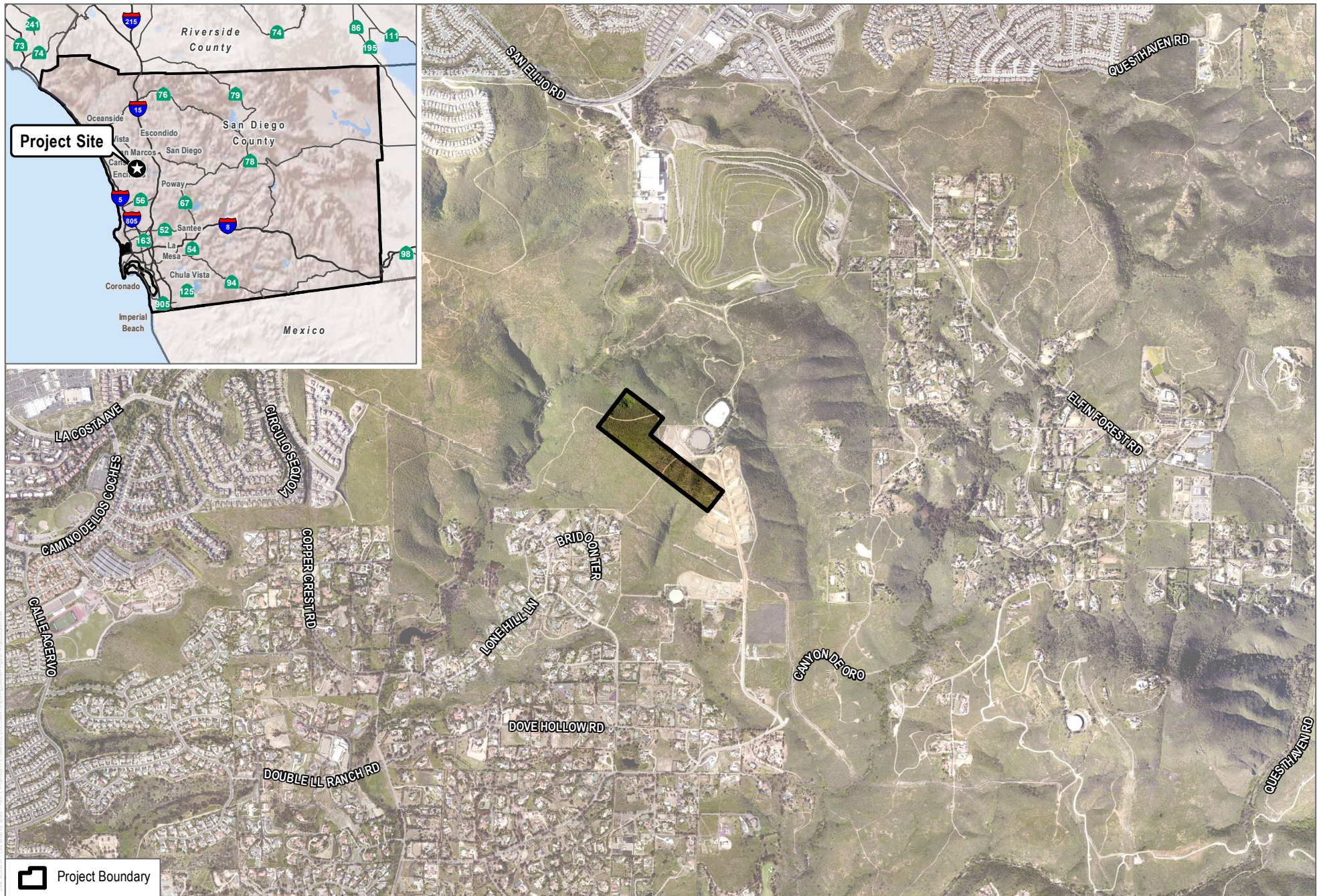
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SOURCE: Shapouri 2018; SANGIS 2017, 2018

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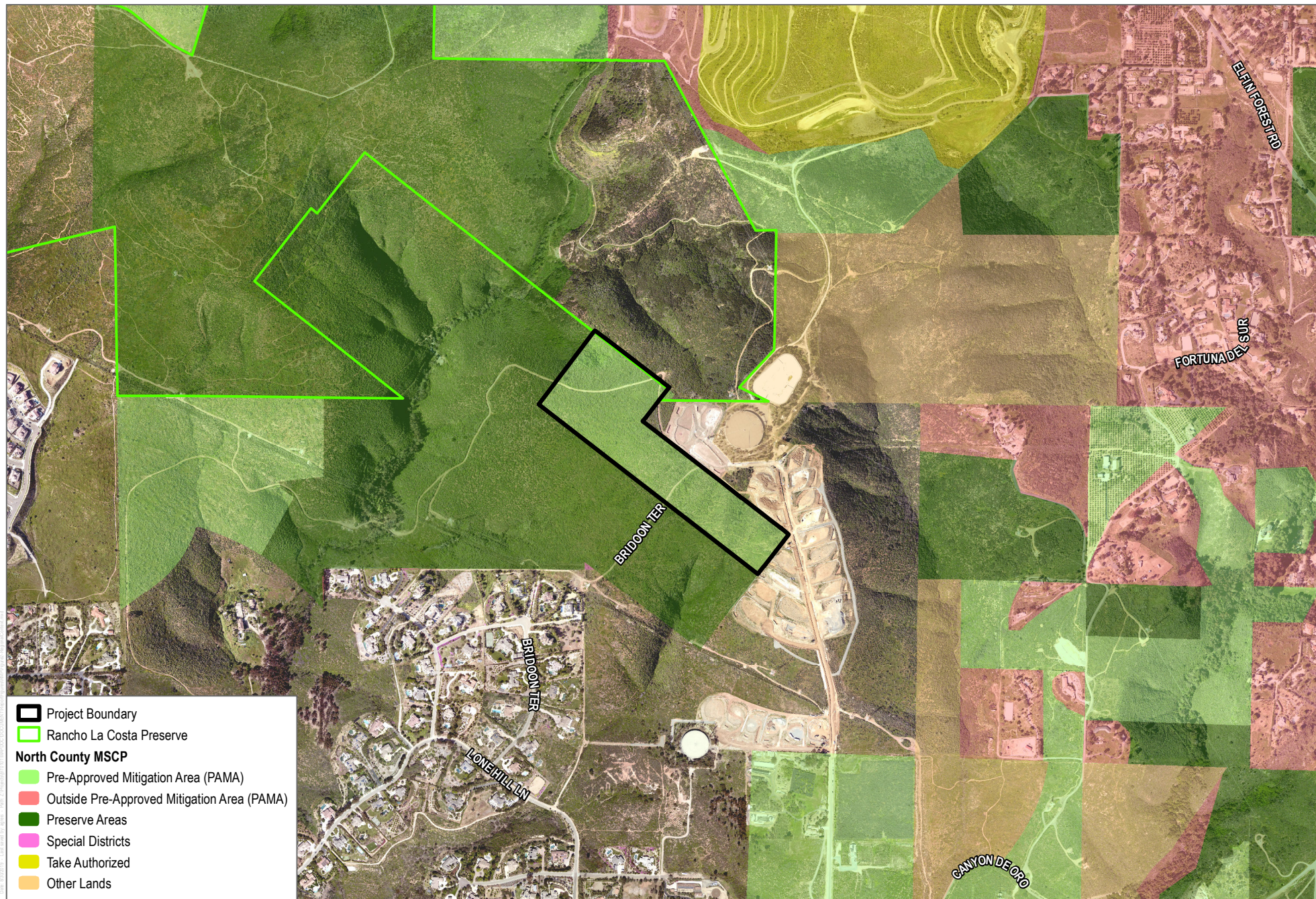


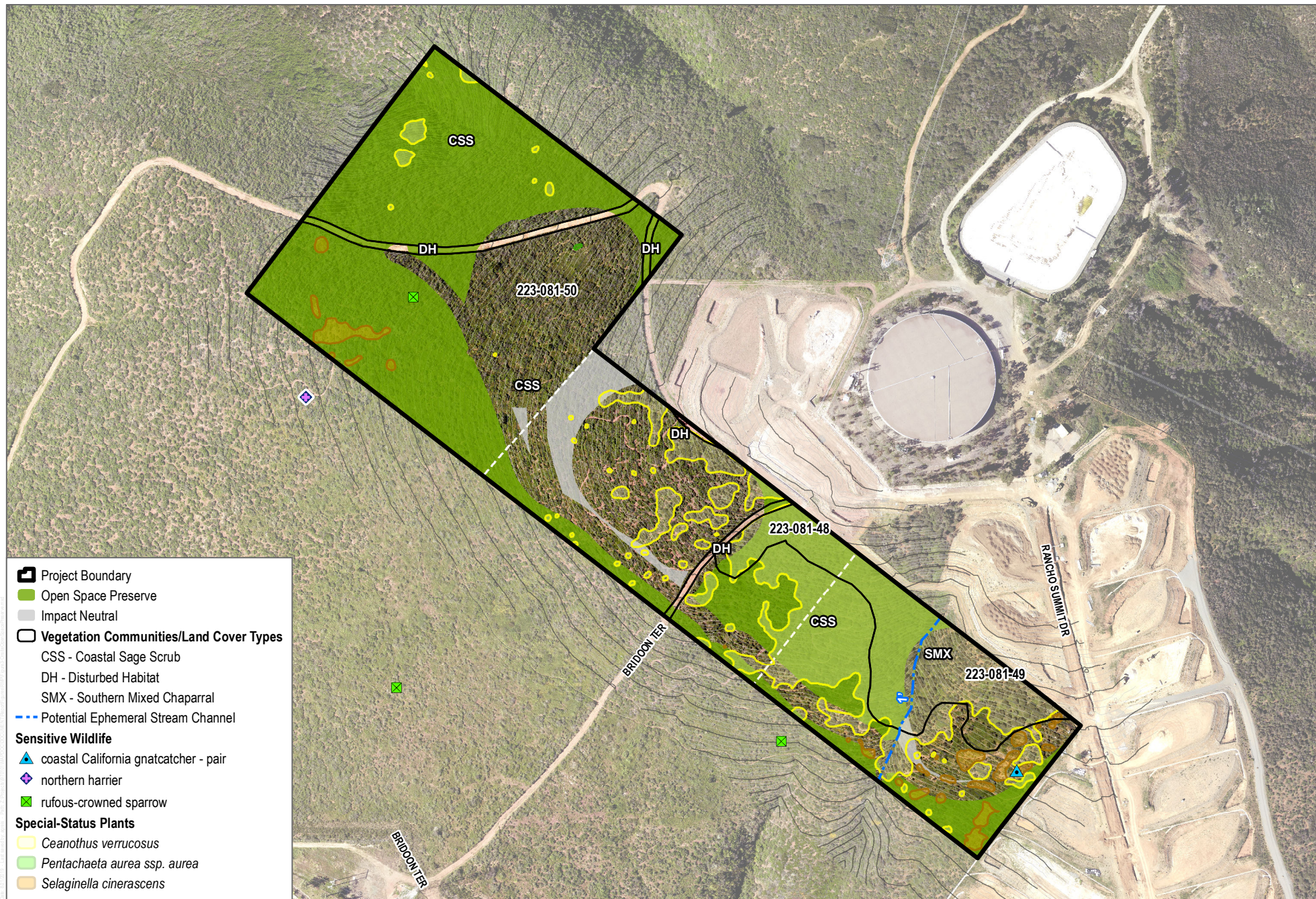
FIGURE 2

Regional Context

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SOURCE: Shapouri, 2018; SANGIS 2017, 2019

FIGURE 3

On-Site Open Space Preserve

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SOURCE: Shapouri, 2018; SANGIS 2017, 2019

DUDEK



0 200 400 Feet

FIGURE 4

Open Space Preserve Design

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