

# 2017 MSCP AND PRESERVE LANDS STATUS REPORT



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Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch County Preserve



## Environmental Stewardship

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) owns and maintains more than 47,500 acres of biological open space.

Management and stewardship activities take place on all County preserves. Activities performed in 2016 include access control, park ranger patrols, maintenance and monitoring of existing restoration and mitigation sites, revegetation efforts utilizing local native plants, invasive species control and removal, tree planting, trail rehabilitation, erosion control, vector control, and fuel management activities.



DPR staff received specialized training for pest identification and management for both Gold Spotted Oak Borer (GSOB, left) and the Polyphagous/Kuroshio Shot Hole Borer (SHB) in 2016. This

training and implementation of rapid response procedures have helped prevent the spread of these pests.

DPR's Comprehensive Tree Replacement Program replaces trees lost to drought and invasive pests with a goal of no net loss of trees. For every tree removed in a developed park, three are planted. This past fiscal year, more than 1,200 trees were removed and replaced with more than 5,000. The replanted trees are a much more diverse mix of native species than those removed. DPR continues to seek collaborative planting opportunities with volunteers, students, community workers, Cal-Fire work crews and others. In 2016, the Community Involved Vocational Inmate Crew Service completed a large tree planting project at Dos Picos Park.

Additionally, DPR prepares 30 to 50 right-of-entry permits per year, many for scientific studies. In 2016, these studies focused on species such as mountain lion, mule deer, golden eagle, coastal California gnatcatcher, coastal cactus wren, burrowing owl, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher and arroyo toad. Processing fees were not charged for the permits in the past. A fee structure, however, will be implemented in the future.

## Restoration Highlights

At El Monte Park, 1.4 acres of coastal sage scrub habitat were restored. Native species planted include San Diego sunflower, coyote brush, and California sagebrush, California yarrow, California lilac, and three types of sage. At Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch Preserve, 0.36 acres of land was also restored.

## Future Restoration

DPR will continue to implement its Comprehensive Tree Program by planting large trees at parks throughout the County.

DPR is committed to restoring and enhancing our open space. To supplement ongoing environmental stewardship, DPR regularly seeks grant funding. Grant applications were submitted for the rehabilitation of the Brown Fill Property at the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park and the restoration of the San Elijo Lagoon, which will include reconfiguration of lagoon elevations in order to increase hydraulic efficiencies, address existing water quality impairments, and establish a more stable and connected gradient of balanced habitat types.

## Active Restoration Grants

DPR received several grants to help fund stewardship activities. Multiple grant projects are underway countywide and are at varying stages of completion. In 2016, the County was awarded several grants including two through the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP), one by the California River Parkways Grant Program through the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), and one through California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Natural Communities Conservation Plan Local Assistance Grant Program (NCCP LAG).

### 2016 SANDAG TRANSNET EMP

#### Quino Checkerspot Butterfly Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

- The goal of this 18-month grant is to enhance Quino checkerspot butterfly habitat and connectivity for the Otay Lakes/Rancho Jamul complex in the Otay River Valley
- Activities include restoration of redundant dirt roads bisecting Quino habitat and invasive species removal and control. Access control measures such as fencing and signage will deter off-road vehicles and prevent impacts to the restoration site



## 2016 California Natural Resources Agency

### Tijuana River Valley Tamarisk Removal and Habitat Restoration

- This project supplements ongoing riparian habitat restoration in the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park. Over 3 years, DPR will remove invasive tamarisk trees and other non-native plants in a 2-acre area adjacent to the river
- Planting native species will restore the river corridor's biological habitat and functions. Interpretative panels along the trail will highlight the importance of the river park restoration

## 2016 NCCP LAG

### Quino Checkerspot Butterfly Restoration and Enhancement

- In partnership with the City of Chula Vista, this project will reduce threats to the Quino checkerspot butterfly by increasing and improving Quino habitat within the Otay Ranch preserve. The butterfly has been designated as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act since 1997
- The partners will remove and control invasive species and plant plantago erecta, the Quino host plant

## Acquisition Highlight

In 2016, the County acquired 23 acres in the unincorporated areas east of State Route 67 and Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch Preserve. The property contains mostly coastal sage scrub and is in the approved Mitigation Area of the South County Subarea Plan of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP).

The County also acquired more than 170 acres adjacent to San Luis Rey River and Keys Creek Preserve within the North County Plan area.



## Partnerships/Research

### Pallid Bat and Townsend's Big-eared Bat Study (San Diego Natural History Museum)

The goal of this study was to collect data on the distribution of pallid and Townsend's big-eared bats throughout the county. The study focused on County-owned properties in the northern, southern, and eastern portions of the county. This information gathered helps determine the status of these species in the region by referencing past records of their distributions.



### Ramona Grasslands Preserve Raptor Foraging Study (San Diego County and SANDAG)

This 3-year study, which began in September 2013, was completed in August 2016. The study collected baseline information on eagle and other raptor activity within the preserve. Data gathered on species abundance and distribution in the preserve is useful in informing management decisions in the preserve.

### Biocontrol of Shot Hole Borers (UC Riverside)

This 5-year study started in July 2016 to research the invasive species known as the polyphagous/Kuroshio Shot Hole Borer (SHB) at multiple parks and preserves through southern California. County properties include the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park, Guajome Regional Park, Rancho Guajome Adobe, Live Oak Regional Park, San Luis Rey River Park, San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve and Wilderness Gardens Preserve. The goal is to create an informed risk model for the spread of the fungus that hosts these invasive insects.



## Department of Parks and Recreation Preserve Lands

1998 Baseline: 28,000 acres

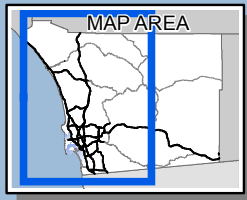
As of December 2016: 47,500 acres

## Acquisition Funding

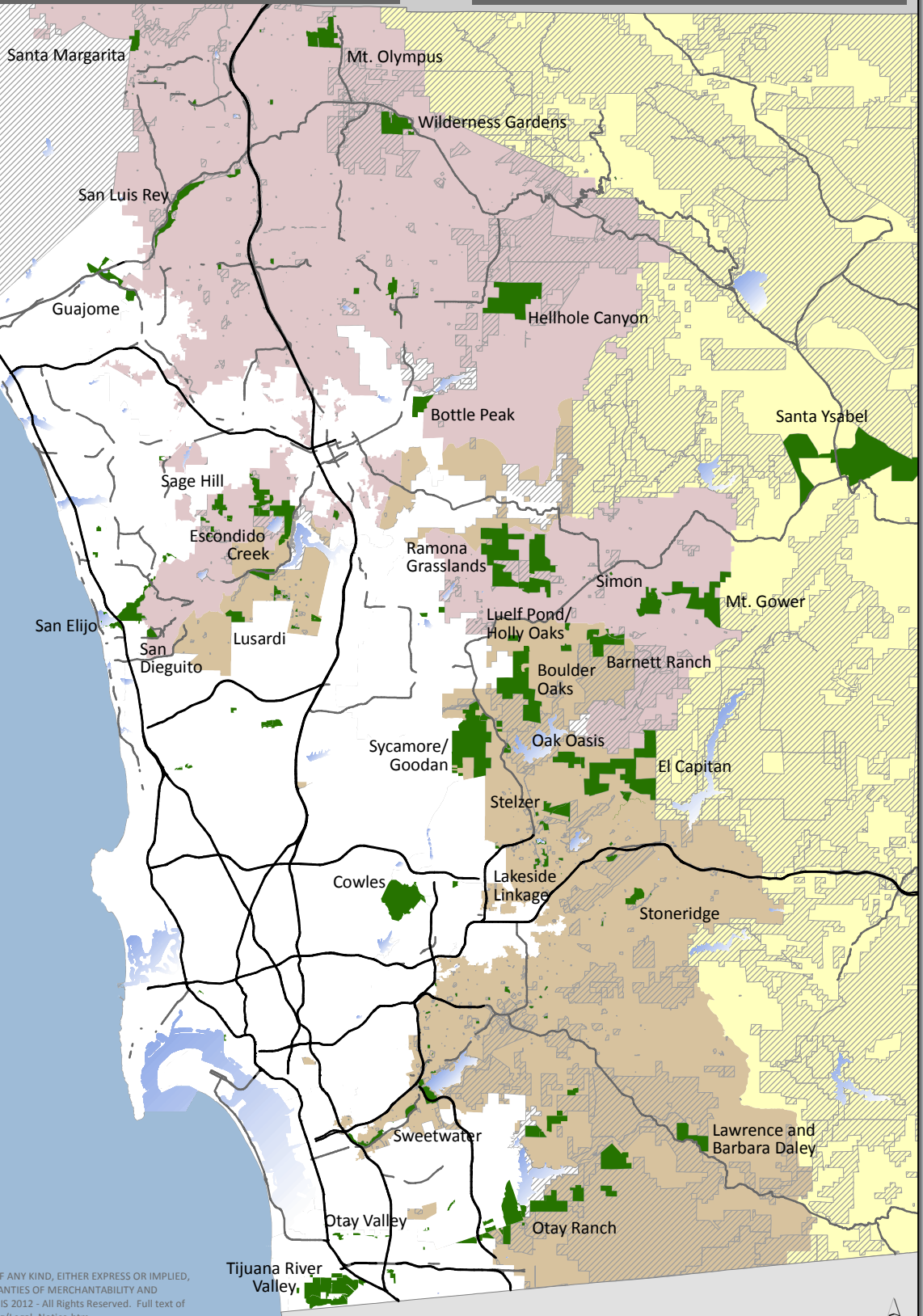
County Contribution: \$ 79.4 million

Partners Contribution: \$ 90.2 million

Total Acquisition Cost: \$ 169.6 million



- DPR Lands
- Public Lands
- East County MSCP**
  - Study Area Boundary
- North County MSCP**
  - Study Area Boundary
- South County MSCP**
  - Study Area Boundary



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Projection: State Plane, Zone VI, Datum NAD 83. Units Feet.  
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