



Oakoasis County Preserve Tree Planting

Land Stewardship and Environmental Education

Management and stewardship activities took place on all County properties in 2019. Adaptive management strategies are dynamic and implemented based on MSCP covered habitats and species monitoring results.

These strategies, in 2019, included habitat restoration, invasive plant and animal species treatment and public access control to protect MSCP covered habitats and species.

Environmental education is a critical component of land stewardship as thousands of 2019 park visitors were made aware of the incredible diversity of San Diego County's plant and animal species. The visitors learned how to protect native plants and animals for future generations through actions that can take place both on conserved lands and at home.

Biological Monitoring

Biological monitoring is a critical element in properly managing the County's open space lands. Threat assessments, habitat conditions and the presence of MSCP covered species are all identified during these surveys. Monitoring results help DPR respond quickly to any threats that may be affecting MSCP covered species, in addition to identifying when site conditions have changed, and management methods should be modified.

In 2019, implementation of the County's Targeted Monitoring Plan across six County Preserves documented 24 MSCP covered species, while baseline surveys conducted on three additional recent County acquisitions documented nine MSCP covered species.



Cooper's Hawk



Golden Eagle

Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

The County actively seeks grants to assist with open space management activities. In 2019, grant funded projects across six County Preserves benefited MSCP covered species, such as coastal cactus wren, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, northern harrier, Cooper's hawk, arroyo toad, southwestern pond turtle, and Hermes copper butterfly.

These projects included habitat restoration, access control, and invasive, non-native plant species control. They were funded by seven grants totaling \$2,613,334 from two San Diego Association of Government TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program grants, one California Natural Resources Agency Proposition 84 River Parkways grant, one CDFW Natural Community Conservation Planning Local Assistance Grant, one CDFW Proposition 1 grant, one San Diego River Conservancy Proposition 1 grant, and one Wildlife Conservation Board Proposition 68 grant.

Partnerships and Research

Monitoring and research partnership projects assist the County with stewardship and adaptive management strategies by identifying new biological threats as well as determining which management methods are appropriate for various habitats and situations.

A total of 14 research projects were conducted across twenty-four County preserves in 2019. Monitoring and research topics included American badger, golden eagle, invasive shot hole borer, and a variety of other MSCP covered species and habitats. Research occurred on County preserves through the County's right-of-entry (ROE) permit process. ROE's were granted to federal and state agencies, local universities, museums, and environmental organizations.

County Owned Open Space Land in all 3 MSCP Plan Areas, as of Dec. 31, 2019

South County	13,100
North County	13,100
East County	15,400
Total	41,600

North County and East County MSCP Plan Areas

The County continues its efforts with open space preservation in the entire County, not just within the MSCP South County Subarea Plan. The draft North County Plan is currently under development and the East County Plan will be developed in the future.

INFORMATION



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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

2019 MSCP AND PRESERVE LANDS STATUS REPORT



San Diego County MSCP History

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a regional conservation planning program whose goal is to balance protection of habitat and species with recreation, development, and agricultural activities within the San Diego region. In 1997, the County of San Diego (County), along with 11 other jurisdictions, developed the MSCP together with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Wildlife Agencies), and community stakeholders. That effort resulted in several subarea plans, including the 50-year South County MSCP, established in 1997, between the County and Wildlife Agencies.



Hermes Copper Butterfly

Benefits

This 50-year agreement preserves, protects and connects the most valuable biological habitats while allowing development to occur in less sensitive areas. While protecting sensitive biological habitats, the South County MSCP also allows for passive recreation and trail opportunities in select areas. Visitors learn about the vital role of conservation through a variety of environmental education activities that encourage connections with nature.

2019 Key Accomplishments

At the close of 2019, the County celebrated 22 years of implementing the MSCP Subarea Plan.

Land Acquisition Highlights

- A total of 567 acres were acquired by the County within the MSCP Subarea Plan to protect Diegan sage scrub, chaparral, and coast live oak woodland.
- As of December 31, 2019, the County, Wildlife Agencies, and private conservation partners have assembled 79,188 acres (80%) of the proposed 98,379-acre MSCP Preserve.
- Of the 79,188 acres in the MSCP Preserve, 13,099 acres are County properties.

Habitat Restoration Highlights

- Lakeside Linkage Preserve: Habitat restoration for coastal cactus wren and Hermes copper butterfly included treatment of invasive, non-native plant species and installation of native plant species, including cholla cactus, buckwheat, and spiny redberry.
- Sycamore Canyon and Goodan Ranch Preserve: Restoration efforts of thirty-two acres of riparian habitat included treatment and removal of invasive, non-native plant species, which benefit several MSCP covered species including Belding's orange-throated whiptail, northern harrier, and Cooper's hawk.

Research and Environmental Education

- The United States Geological Survey continued a two-year study of assessing coastal cactus wren habitat and conducting surveys for nesting locations and the species presence or absence on multiple County properties.
- The County hosts an average of 1,500 environmental education programs each year, including serving over 17,000 youth at 28 parks, preserves, and campgrounds.

County of San Diego Open Spaces

The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) owns approximately 42,000 acres of open space land. These properties are regularly maintained, managed and monitored, and habitat restoration and enhancement projects are continually implemented and completed by the County. Educational outreach efforts are also conducted by the County. In addition, Conservation research is performed on open space lands by County partners.

MSCP South County Subarea Plan Highlights



Skyline County Preserve

Land Acquisitions

A total of 567 acres of new acquisitions grew three County Preserves and added two new County Preserves. New lands were added to Ramona Grasslands County Preserve (121 acres), Dictionary Hill County Preserve (2 acres) and Goodan Ranch /Sycamore Canyon County Preserve (20 acres). Two new preserves, Skyline County Preserve (262 acres) and Iron Mountain County Preserve (162 acres), were established. The new acquisitions conserved native habitats such as Diegan coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and coast live oak woodland.

