

# County of San Diego 2024 MULTIPLE SPECIES CONSERVATION PROGRAM



*Oakoasis County Preserve*

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a regional conservation program that balances the protection of preserve lands habitat and sensitive species with recreation, development, and agricultural activities within San Diego county. The MSCP protects habitats and species through acquisition, management, and monitoring of dedicated preserve lands.

The County, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Wildlife Agencies), established the MSCP South County Subarea Plan in 1997 to provide habitat and wildlife corridors for 85 native plants and animals – many of them threatened and endangered species.

While protecting species and habitat, the South County Subarea Plan also allows for passive recreational/trail opportunities in select areas of County Preserves. Visitors learn about the vital role of conservation through a variety of environmental education activities that foster connections with nature.



*El Monte County Park*

MSCP PLAN AREA	ACREAGE ACQUIRED SINCE 1998
South County	8,830
North County	16,600
East County	2,820

Since 2000, County land acquisitions have been supported by the Wildlife agencies to develop the draft North and future East County MSCP Plans.

As of December 31, 2024, the County owns and/or manages approximately 47,370 acres within all three MSCP Plan areas. In 2024, 1,130 acres of preserve lands were acquired, which included 347 in the South County Subarea Plan area and 783 acres in the draft North County Plan area.

The MSCP South County Subarea Plan Preserve has assembled 81,566 acres (83%) of the proposed 98,379-acre Preserve, all through County, State and Federal Agencies and private conservation partner acquisitions. County preserve lands contribute 13,729 acres to the MSCP South County Subarea Plan Preserve.

Over 4,448 development permits have been processed since the MSCP South County Subarea Plan was implemented, saving applicants time and money. Also, 39 development project permits were processed in 2024.

**Continued: AMBASSADORSHIP, MONITORING and MANAGEMENT**





**Northern Harrier**



**San Miguel Savory**



**California Gnatcatcher**



**Mule Deer**



**Willow Monardella**

## Ambassadorship

This section highlights all three MSCP Plan areas, and County efforts to create MSCP stewards:

- The County committed over \$246M for acquisitions and related stewardship and management of preserve lands since 1998, investing \$149M of County funding and leveraging \$97M of grant funding. Grant funds, partner contributions and volunteer commitment add invaluable to this budgeted amount.
- Resource Management Plans have been completed for a total of 26 County Preserves.
- In 2024 the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) hosted approximately 750 programs with 21,000 in attendance.
- In 2024, the County offered a wide range of popular educational programs including Hawktober and Hawk Talk, Hike-A-Thon, Discovery Program, Story Trails for Green Friday, TRACK Trails Program, Astronomy Programs, San Diego Festival of Science & Engineering, and the Nature Explorers Program.

## Monitoring & Management

The overall management and monitoring goal of the MSCP is to ensure the biological values of natural resources (MSCP covered plant and animal species, high quality habitat, and wildlife linkage corridors) are maintained or improved over time where land is preserved as part of the MSCP. Forty-nine of the 185 special-status species found on County preserve lands are covered by the MSCP and include San Diego thornmint, San Diego fairy shrimp, coast horned lizard, least Bell's vireo, peregrine falcon, western bluebird, southern mule deer and mountain lion.

Monitoring results of MSCP covered habitat and species guides management decisions and help staff assess the success of habitat restoration and threat reduction efforts. Monitoring also helps to locate passive recreation opportunities in areas where there will be minimal impact to sensitive habitat and covered species. In 2024, the County's Targeted Monitoring Plan was implemented in 12 County preserves. Management actions were implemented on all County preserve lands.

Adaptive management strategies are dynamic and implemented based on MSCP covered habitat and species monitoring results. The strategies include habitat restoration, invasive plant and animal species treatment, and public access control to protect MSCP covered habitat and species.

A total of 13 grant-funded restoration projects, totaling \$23.6M, across 7 County preserves benefited MSCP covered species, such as San Diego thornmint, variegated dudleya, willow monardella, coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, coastal

## FUN FACTS

*Over 185 special-status species are found on County preserve lands*

...

*Approximately, 1,200 native plant and animal species on County preserve lands*

...

*Since 1998, 43 County parks and preserves have been created or expanded*

cactus wren, northern harrier, Cooper's hawk, golden eagle, light-footed Ridgway's rail, arroyo toad, southern pond turtle, southern mule deer, and mountain lion. These projects included habitat restoration, access control, invasive non-native plant or animal control, and a trail alignment study.

MSCP management and monitoring funds staff positions, specialized services, and capital expenses dedicated solely to MSCP monitoring and stewardship activities. MSCP monitoring staff oversee MSCP covered species and habitat monitoring. County Rangers provide operational "boots on the ground" to manage County Preserves.

## FUNDING SUMMARY

SINCE 1998 FOR ALL THREE MSCP PLAN AREAS

**\$246M**

*expended by the County*

**\$97M**

*of grant funds leveraged*



**For more information, visit [sd parks.org](https://sd parks.org) > Plans > MSCP**

**[www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/mscp/](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/mscp/)**