

**Encinas Creek  
Habitat Conservation Area**  
(Formerly known as the North County Habitat Bank)  
(CNLM No: S041)  
(USFWS: FWS-SDG-08B0381)

**Annual Work Plan**  
October 2010 - September 2011

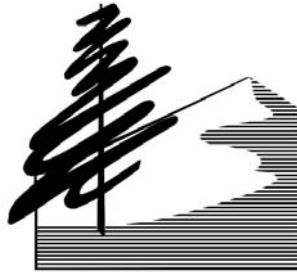
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October, 2010

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## **I. Introduction**

This annual work plan has been developed from the guidelines for goals and objectives set forth in the North County Habitat Bank Long-Term Management Plan (HMP) (Helix 2007). The HMP includes management requirements set forth by the City of Carlsbad (City), the United States Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). CNLM holds title to the North County Habitat Bank Habitat Conservation Area (HCA or Preserve), and has changed its name to Encinas Creek Habitat Conservation Area. The Preserve is located about ½ mile east of Interstate 5 along the south side Palomar Airport Road, east of Costco and west of Hidden Valley Road.

CNLM has managed the HCA since May of 2007 at which time we received the entire endowment to fund the long-term management of the HCA. The HCA is currently being used by Westmark Development Corporation (Westmark) as a wetlands mitigation bank. Westmark is the Bank Owner and handles all credit sales and accounting. Westmark restored several acres of disturbed wetland pursuant to a restoration plan (Helix 2007b) and received regulatory signoff for final success criteria in December of 2007 (ACOE, 2007).

The purpose of this work plan is to identify the tasks and budget required to complete the management activities for the upcoming fiscal year that will begin on October 1, 2010 and end on September 30, 2011. Unless otherwise stated, all tasks will be performed by CNLM's Preserve Manager Patrick McConnell and Ranger, Justin Trujillo.

### **Summary of Tasks and Goals for the Fiscal Year:**

- Install signs as necessary
- Monitor large and medium sized mammal use of the site using wildlife cameras
- Note all animal species observed and map locations of any sensitive species
- Remove nonnative plant species
- Conduct brown-headed cowbird trapping (*Molothrus ater*)
- Patrol and conduct site enforcement on a regular basis
- Conduct surveys for least Bell's vireo and coastal California gnatcatcher
- Report and describe data collected and management actions taken on the Preserves to the wildlife agencies
- Install and mend fencing as necessary

Appendix 1 (*Task Schedule*) identifies the approximate schedule of field work throughout the fiscal year and Appendix 2 depicts the location of the Preserve.

## **II. Management Activities**

The following sections identify and describe the activities to be performed during the upcoming fiscal year. Based upon the Property Analysis Record (PAR) developed by the CNLM to outline long-term management tasks and costs, management activities for the HCA can be broken down into seven tasks: Capital Improvements, Biological Surveys, Habitat Restoration and Maintenance, Public Services, Reporting, Office Maintenance, and Operations. Each of these

categories will be discussed below.

## **A. Capital improvements**

CNLM has posted signs along Palomar Airport Road and on the gate at the west end of the HCA. CNLM will maintain the signs as necessary. The gate is maintained by Vista Sewer/Vallecitos Water District. CNLM will notify them if it requires maintenance.

## **B. Biological Surveys**

The HMP provides a general framework for biological monitoring activities. CNLM's primary goal in the next few years will be to monitor the use of the site by sensitive species, primarily the coastal California gnatcatcher (CAGN)(*Polioptila californica californica*) and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). We will also use wildlife cameras to document wildlife movement through the property. There are no sensitive plant species known to occur. If sensitive plant species are observed, they will be noted and mapped.

### **1. Least Bell's vireo, California Gnatcatcher & Avifauna Monitoring**

**Objectives:** Document the number of LBV and monitor their breeding activity. Survey for the CAGN.

Spring 2010 will be the forth year of LBV surveys. One pair was observed in the summer of 2008, one pair and three males were observed during the 2009 breeding season and one pair was observed in the 2010 breeding season. No nests have been found during these three years.

In 2010, the preserve manager will monitor for presence/absence of the species, and note family groups, if they are observed. No nest monitoring will occur by the preserve manager.

All sensitive bird species will be mapped and noted.

### **2. Wildlife Movement**

The goals of tracking wildlife movement are to determine which species use the preserve and how frequently, and to document the use of the preserves by potential predators to the LBV and predators to those species (such as opossums) which impact LBV nests. In addition, we are interested in wildlife movement along Encinas Creek.

One wildlife camera was installed in 2009. We will set a camera up for two two-month sessions during the fiscal year.

## **C. Habitat Maintenance and Restoration**

The HCA was cleared of most zero tolerant nonnative plant species as part of the wetland creation and enhancement. CNLM observed small patches of pampas grass resprouting, but for the most part, the site is very free of zero tolerance nonnative plant species. We will remove any zero tolerant nonnative plant species as we observe them. We noted patches black mustard

(*Brassica nigra*) near the southeast corner of the preserve. This species will be treated in the spring of 2010.

Brown-headed cowbird trapping. Center staff have noticed a number of brown-headed cowbirds within the HCA during each years bird surveys. As a result, CNLM will be installing 1 trap for one to two months in the months of April and May to attempt to capture cowbirds.

#### **D. Public Services**

Public Services tasks include the patrolling of the Preserve and the response to emergencies.

- 1. Patrols:** Patrols will be performed approximately one time per month. Routine mending of small fence breaks and replacement of signs are the main tasks. Observations of animal sightings and new human impacts will be gathered during patrols as well.
- 2. Emergency Response:** Hours have been allocated from the current budget for management to respond to emergencies on the Preserves. Such emergencies could include response to wildfires, problems reported by neighbors and trespass.
- 3. Public Outreach:** No public outreach is planned for the upcoming year.

#### **E. Reporting**

Activities included within reporting requirements include the management of the Preserves database/GIS system, the photo-documentation stations, and the production of various status reports to the USFWS, CDFG and CNLM administration.

- 1. Database/GIS Management** Data derived from routine patrols and restoration activities will be entered into and maintained in the Preserves existing database and GIS system by CNLM. Efforts will be made to coordinate and standardize database fields and parameters with other reserves.
- 2. Photo-documentation Stations** Photo-documentation occurred at permanent stations that were established in the spring of 2009. These will be updated in future years.
- 3. Reports**
  - a. Year-End/Agency Reports:** By the end of October 2011, a year-end report will be prepared by the preserve manager detailing the results of the year's management activities. This report will include recommendations for the continuation of various activities for the following fiscal year and will be submitted to the City of Carlsbad, USFWS and CDFG as required under permit reporting conditions.
  - b. Annual Work Plan:** The work plan for this upcoming fiscal year will be formulated by October, 2011 and will be based upon experiences during previous year's operations. This work plan will be submitted to the City of Carlsbad, USFWS and CDFG.

c. **Management Plan:** The current management plan will likely be updated in 2011 or 2012.

## **F. Office Maintenance**

Preserve management will maintain offices in an organized manner to facilitate maximum efficiency. This section of the budget includes outlays for general office work, utilities, and telephones, among other items/tasks.

## **G. Operations**

Operations include the training and professional growth of preserve management personnel, and inspection of the HCA by CNLM administration. Funds have been allocated in the current budget for both the Area Manager and the Preserve managers to attend classes or seminars during the next fiscal year. Also included within this category of activity are employee reviews.

## **III. Workload and Budgets**

1. **Supervision and Staffing:** The Area Manager will be supervised by CNLM's Director of Conservation Science, Deborah Rogers. Tasks and priorities will be coordinated by the Area Manager and approved by Ms. Rogers. The Area Manager, Markus Spiegelberg will supervise the Preserve Managers, Jessica Vinje and Patrick McConnell and any Rangers.
2. **Budgeting:** A budget has been prepared for this fiscal year and every effort will be made by Preserve Management to allocate time and expenses according to this estimated budget. The total budget for this fiscal year is \$19,868.

## **IV. References**

ACOE, 2007. North County Habitat Bank Success Criteria Determination. Department of the Army. December 17, 2007.

Helix, 2007. North County Habitat Bank Long-Term Management Plan. Helix Environmental Planning, Inc. December 28, 2007.

Helix, 2007b. North County Habitat Bank Final Wetland Restoration Plan. Helix Environmental Planning, Inc. April 30, 2007.

## **V. Appendices**

## Appendix 1: Task Schedule

<b>Task</b>	<b>October- December 2010</b>	<b>January-March 2011</b>	<b>April to June 2011</b>	<b>July to September 2011</b>
<b>Bird Surveys</b>		X	X	
<b>Wildlife Camera</b>	X		X	
<b>Cowbird Trapping</b>			X	
<b>GIS/database</b>	X	X		
<b>Habitat Maintenance</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Fencing/signage</b>	X	As necessary	As necessary	As necessary
<b>Patrolling</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Reports</b>	X			X



## **Appendix 2: Preserve Location Maps**

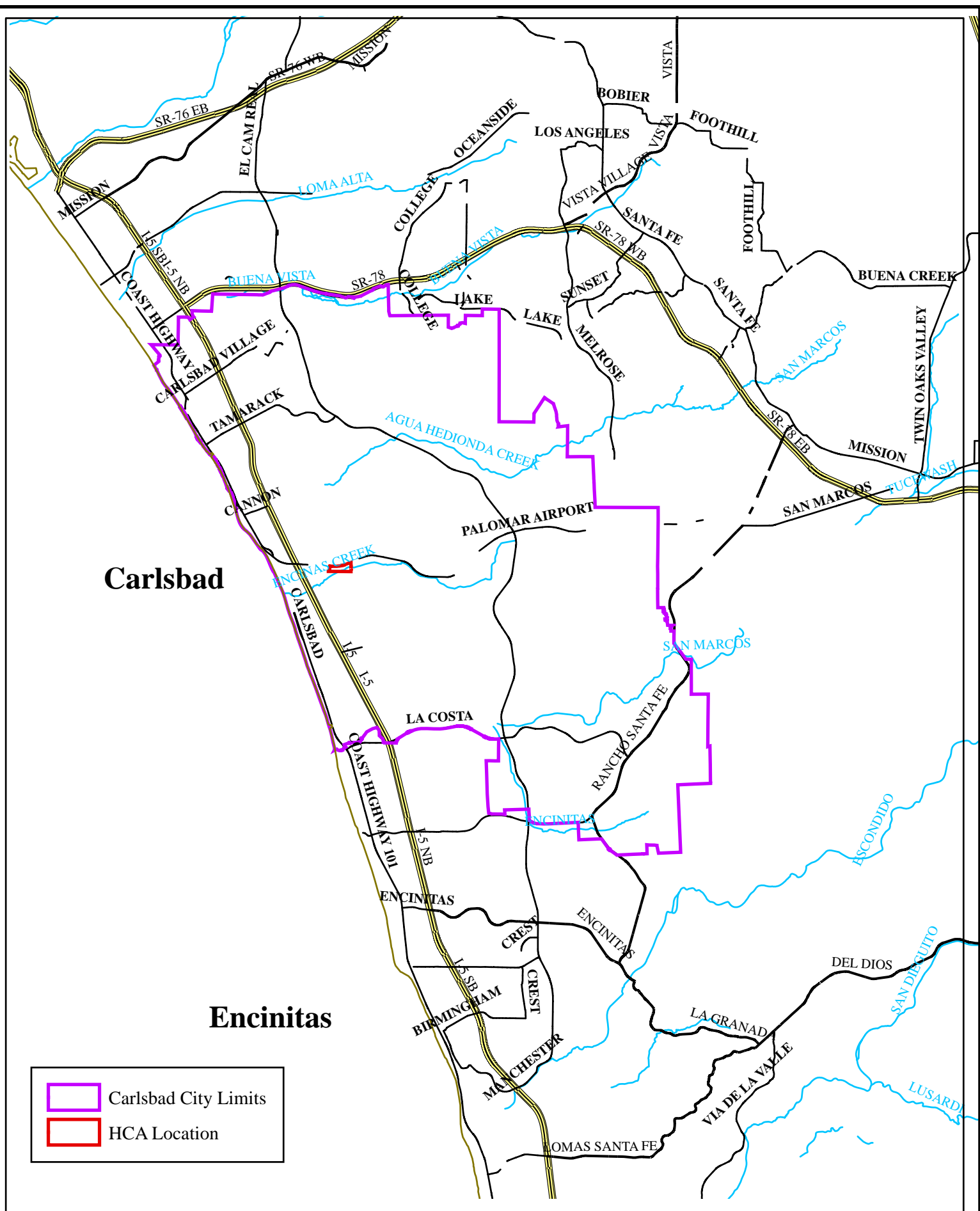


Figure 1. HCA Location

Encinas Creek (NCHB) HCA- City of Carlsbad, CA

3,800 1,900 0 3,800 Feet

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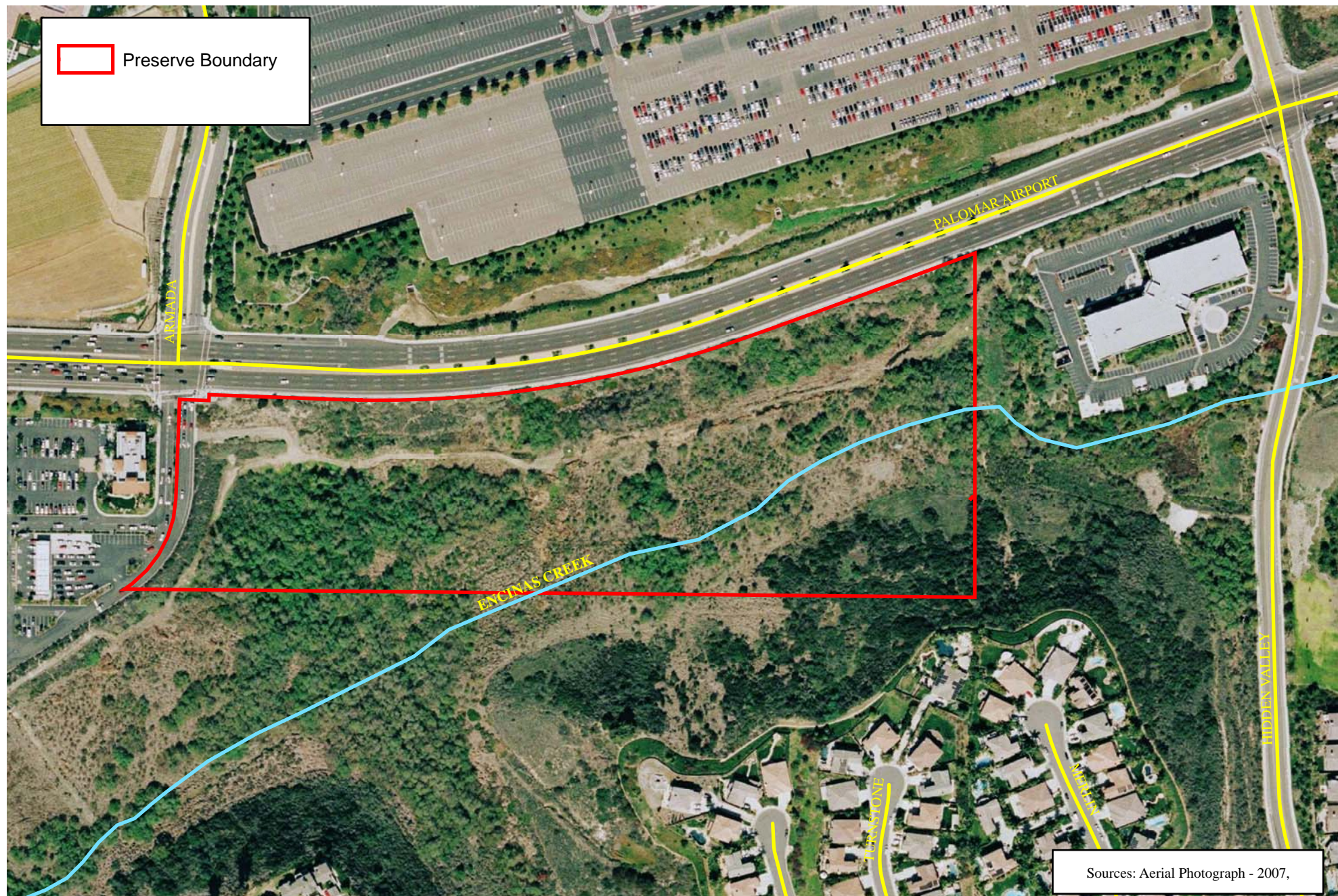


Figure 2  
HCA Vicinity  
*Encinas Creek HCA (NCHB) - City of Carlsbad, California*

