

Resource Management Plan  
for  
**Louis A. Stelzer County Park**  
**San Diego County**



June 2009

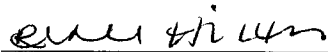


LOUIS A. STELZER  
COUNTY PARK

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

June 30, 2009

Approved by:



Renee Hilton, Assistant Director  
County of San Diego  
Department of Parks and Recreation

6/30/09

Date

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El Capitan and Oakoasis Preserves and El Monte and Louis A. Stelzer  
Regional Parks, San Diego County, California

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Louis A. Stelzer County Park (Park) is an approximately 374-acre day-use park and was the first park in San Diego County designed to be handicapped accessible. The Park is located at 11470 Wild Cat Canyon Road, Lakeside an unincorporated community of San Diego County (County). The Park is within the upper San Diego River watershed, approximately 1.2 miles north of the Lake Jennings Reservoir and 4.9 miles west of El Capitan Reservoir (Figures 1 and 2). The Park consists of developed recreation areas including trails, picnic and barbecue areas, playground equipment, and parking lots, as well as areas of high value natural communities. In addition, 11 known cultural resource sites have been identified within the Park. The Park is included in the County of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) preserve system.

### **1.1. Purpose of Resource Management Plan**

This Resource Management Plan (RMP) has been prepared as a guidance document to manage and preserve the biological and cultural resources within the Park, and to provide Area-Specific Management Directives (ASMDs) pursuant to the requirements of the County's MSCP Subarea Plan (County of San Diego 1997), the Framework Management Plan (County of San Diego 2001), and Sections 10.9A and 10.9B of the Implementing Agreement (County of San Diego 1998). These sections specify that the County will be responsible for managing lands which it owns or acquires within the MSCP preserve system.

This RMP will:

- a) guide the management of vegetation communities/habitats, plant and animal species, cultural resources, and programs described herein to protect and, where appropriate, enhance biological and cultural values;
- b) serve as a guide for appropriate public uses of the property;
- c) provide a descriptive inventory of the vegetation communities/habitats, plant and animal species, and the archaeological and/or historical resources that occur on this property;
- d) establish the baseline conditions from which adaptive management will be determined and success will be measured; and
- e) provide an overview of the operation and maintenance requirements to implement management goals.

Chapter 5 of this RMP includes ASMDs for Louis A. Stelzer County Park.

It is recognized that County-owned land is only a small portion of the MSCP preserve system. The County does ensure management of other lands that are dedicated as a conservation easement for discretionary project mitigation through requiring land developers to prepare Resource Management Plans. The County will spearhead a larger coordinated effort to ensure that other conserved lands in the area that make up

the MSCP preserve are also being monitored and managed consistent with this RMP and the overall goals of the MSCP Plan and County's MSCP Subarea Plan when a regional funding source is identified pursuant to Section 10.9C of the Implementing Agreement.

### **1.1.1 MSCP Background**

The MSCP is a cooperative habitat program that encompasses 582,000 acres and establishes a 172,000-acre preserve system in southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP covers 85 plant and animal species and 23 vegetation communities. Agencies participating in the MSCP include the County, other local jurisdictions, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Local jurisdictions and special districts implement their respective portions of the MSCP Plan (City of San Diego 1998) through Subarea plans, which describe specific implementing mechanisms for the MSCP. The combination of the subregional MSCP Plan and Subarea plans serve as a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Program pursuant to the California NCCP Act of 1991 and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Louis A. Stelzer County Park is owned and operated by the County and is included under the County of San Diego South County MSCP Subarea Plan (County of San Diego 1997).

### **1.1.2 County Subarea Plan**

The South County MSCP Subarea Plan (MSCP Subarea Plan) was adopted in October 1997. The MSCP Subarea Plan is subdivided into three segments: Lake Hodges, South County, and Metro-Lakeside-Jamul, with Louis A. Stelzer County Park in the latter segment. In this segment, preserve boundaries were not designated; rather, pre-approved mitigation areas consisting of high-value habitats were identified and a set of preserve design goals and criteria for cores and linkages were established for consideration during project review.

### **1.1.3 Framework Management Plan and Area-Specific Management Directives**

According to Section 6.3.1 of the MSCP Plan and as a condition of the Implementing Agreement with the Wildlife Agencies (Section 10.10), the County was required to prepare a Framework Management Plan for the portion of the MSCP preserve within the MSCP Subarea Plan's boundaries. The Framework Management Plan sets forth management goals and objectives, along with general management directives that apply to all areas of the MSCP Subarea Plan.

The Framework Management Plan states that appropriate recreational activities shall be accommodated in concurrence with the goals of the MSCP and MSCP Subarea Plan, as follows:

- a) Public access and passive recreation are permitted uses within specified areas of the preserve. Access points, new trails and facilities, and a public control plan

will be included in the specific framework habitat management plans and the area-specific management directives.

- b) Riding and hiking trails will be allowed within the preserves to allow passive recreational opportunities for the public. Passive recreation includes hiking, scientific research, bird watching, and under specified conditions and locations identified in approved projects and or management plans, mountain biking, horseback riding, sailing, sun bathing, fishing, and swimming. Equestrian, hiking, and bicycles may be allowed when in accordance with approved management plans and are consistent with the County of San Diego Subarea Plan. All recreational activities will be required to avoid impacts to narrow endemics or unique critical populations of specific species, unless the activities are in “take” authorized areas as identified or allowed under the MSCP.

The Framework Management Plan incorporates a requirement for the subsequent preparation and implementation of ASMDs. These directives are required to be developed following baseline surveys using generally accepted practices and procedures for management of biological preserves, and in compliance with the criteria established by the Framework Management Plan and Table 3-5 of the MSCP Plan. They are intended to be specific management actions that are appropriate for the habitats and species found in a local area and take into account the particular circumstances of the given area. In addition to addressing the general directives of the Framework Management Plan and species-specific management requirements of MSCP Table 3-5, ASMDs are required to address fuel management activities. Chapter 5 of this RMP includes ASMDs for Louis A. Stelzer County Park.

## **1.2. Implementation**

### **1.2.1 Management Approach**

A key concept of the MSCP is the use of “Adaptive Management Techniques” directed at the conservation and recovery of individual species. This term refers to modifying management actions when monitoring of the resources indicates that changes are needed. It is particularly useful where there is uncertainty regarding the efficacy of certain management measures and/or the needs of target species. Adaptive management and an associated monitoring program are designed to inform land managers of the status and trends of covered species, natural communities, and landscapes in a manner that provides data to allow informed management actions and decisions.

It is anticipated that the recommended management actions provided in this RMP will be dynamic in nature. Applying adaptive management, the effectiveness and appropriateness of recommended management actions would be determined through review of management goal and objective achievement so that changes can be made to management directives and implementation measures as needed. Adaptive management techniques depend upon the specific issues impacting the resources. Therefore, the techniques herein may be subject to change or revisions when applied.

Additionally, the monitoring protocols/requirements for MSCP covered species and habitats will be revisited periodically by participants of the MSCP and are subject to change based on adoption of updated protocols. It is anticipated that this RMP will be revised once every five years, as needed. The RMP may be revised on a shorter time scale if there is a change in circumstance, for example, acquisition of additional Park land.

### **1.2.2 Responsible Parties/Designation of Land Manager**

The County is responsible for management, biological monitoring, and meeting the conditions of MSCP coverage on County-owned lands conserved as part of the MSCP preserve system. The Park is fully owned and operated by the County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the DPR District Park Manager assigned to the Park is the land manager. DPR (District Park Manager and staff of the Resources Management Division) will be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the RMP.

The Park is located in the management district of one supervising park ranger, one senior park ranger, 1.5 park rangers, one park maintenance worker, and four MSCP seasonal employees. Park rangers patrol the Park daily. It is expected that many of the implementation measures, especially the maintenance tasks, will be carried out by the rangers who are most familiar with the site and currently patrol the Park.

### **1.2.3 Regulatory Context**

The County's park rangers manage County parks and enforce park rules and regulations pursuant to San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances Title 4, Division 1, Chapter 1 County Parks and Recreation. In addition, per County Code of Regulatory Ordinance Sec 41.111, 41.112, 41.113, all wildlife, plant, historical artifacts, and geologic features are protected and are not to be damaged or removed. Any person who violates any provision of Sections 41.111, 41.112, 41.113 is guilty of a misdemeanor as provided in Sections 11.116, 11.117, and 11.118 of this Code, punishable by fines up to \$2,500 a day for each day the person violates these sections. The park rangers will contact law enforcement who will cite the offending individual. In addition, if an individual does not comply with signs within a facility and ignores park ranger instructions, the individual could potentially be charged with a misdemeanor by law enforcement.

### **1.2.4 Limitations and Constraints**

Implementation and the timing of many of the management directives will be based on funding in any fiscal year and will be determined through the DPR Operations Division who will prioritize park/preserve needs in their work plan for the fiscal year based on the priority of the directives in the RMP for each park/preserve.

## **2.0 PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 Property Location**

Louis A. Stelzer Park is located at 11470 Wildcat Canyon Road, Lakeside, CA, 92040. The Park is located within unsectioned portions of the El Cajon and San Vicente Reservoir U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangles within portions of the Mexican-era El Cajon Land Grant, and also in the San Vicente Reservoir USGS quadrangle, Township 15 South, Range 1 East, Sections 7 and 8 (Figures 1 and 2). The Assessor's Parcel Numbers for the Park are: 391-050-05, 391-090-10, and 392-050-20.

### **2.2 Geographical Setting**

The natural setting within the Park is characterized by steep coastal foothills with ridgelines separated by drainages. The Park is situated north of the San Diego River and north of the Lake Jennings Reservoir. A blue-line stream occurs within the Park. Elevations range between approximately 1,200 feet (366 meters) above mean sea level (AMSL) along the western and eastern ridgelines and approximately 440 feet (134 meters) AMSL in the southeastern corner of the Park.

#### **2.2.1 Site Access**

The Park is open to the public daily between 9:30 and sunset and is closed Christmas Day. The Park is accessible via Wildcat Canyon Road off of Willow Road, east of State Route 67 and north of Interstate 8. Wildcat Canyon Road bisects the Park and provides direct access, through a gated entrance along the east side of the road, to the developed portion of the Park and parking area. In addition, there is a private residential road through the north central portion of the Park which provides access to private property, and another private road that loops through the southeast portion of the Park which provides access to San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) structures.

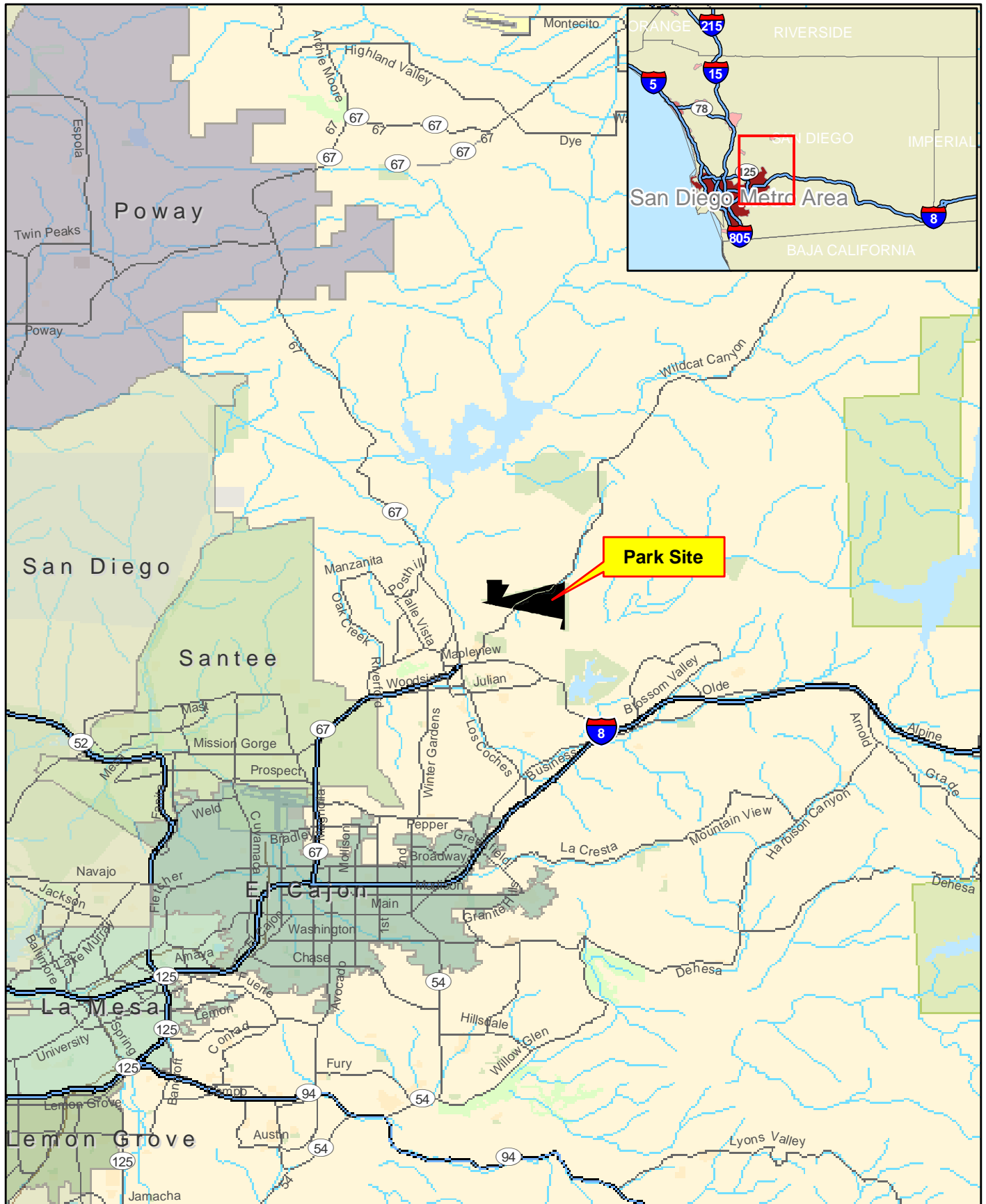
#### **2.2.2 MSCP Context**

The Park is included within the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul segment of the County's MSCP South County Subarea Plan. The entire Park is identified as Pre-Approved Mitigation Area (PAMA) and is considered part of the MSCP preserve (Figure 3).

## **2.3 Physical and Climatic Conditions**

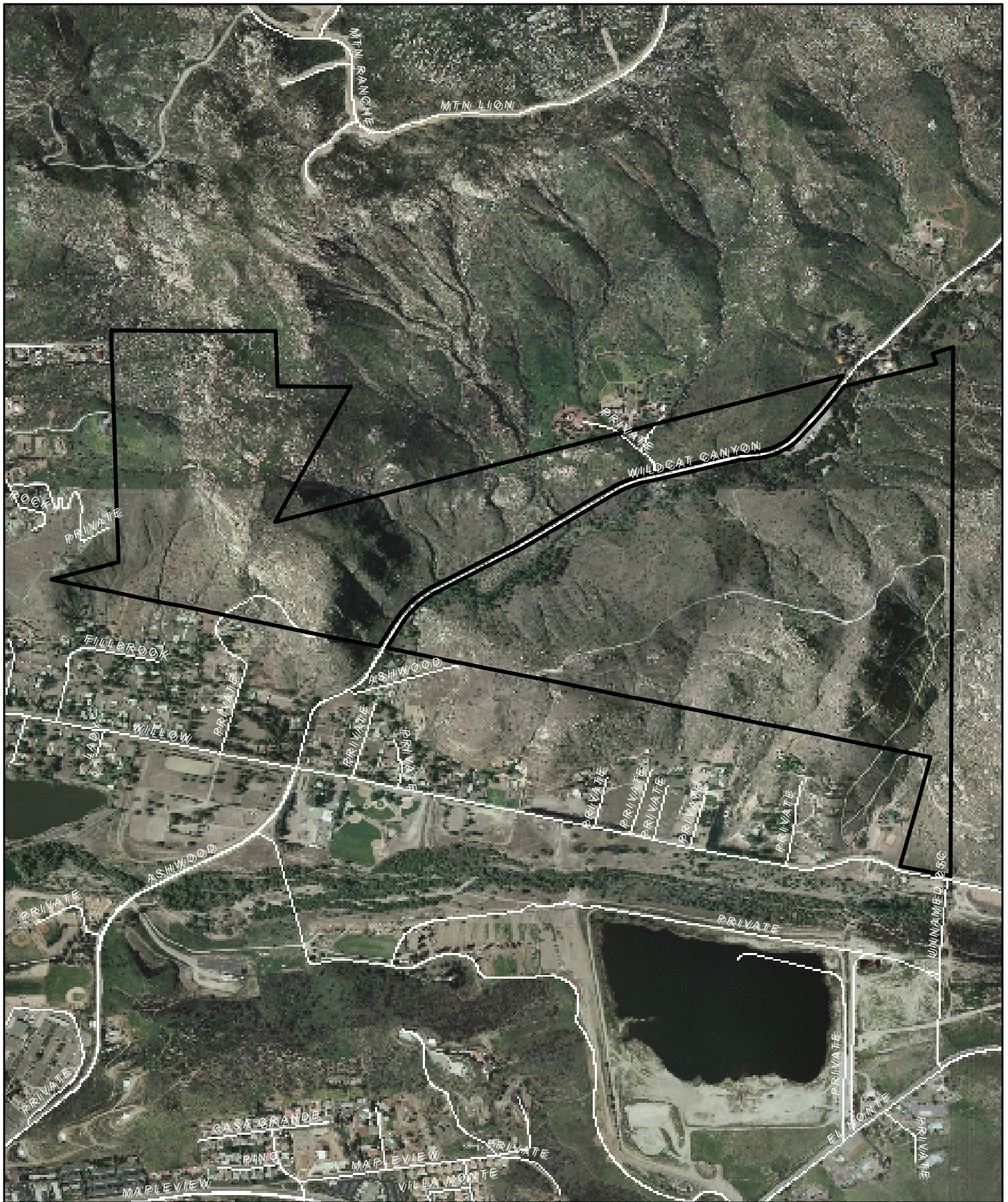
### **2.3.1 Geology and Soils**

The Park is situated atop the southern California batholith consisting of Cretaceous granitic rocks. These rocks form the majority element of this massive feature that underlies roughly two-fifths of San Diego County. In the Park, this exposed granitic bedrock is comprised of either the Woodson Mountain Granodiorite or the Green Valley Tonalite Formations, which consist principally of granodiorite, tonalite (quartz diorite), and minor occurrences of granite (Strand 1962).



SOURCE: ESRI Streetmap USA (2006)

Figure 1  
Regional Location  
Stelzer County Park



SOURCE: ESRI Imagery

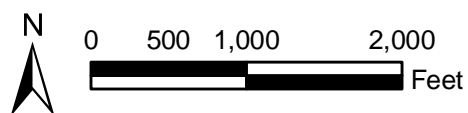
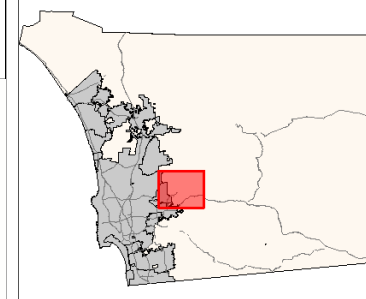
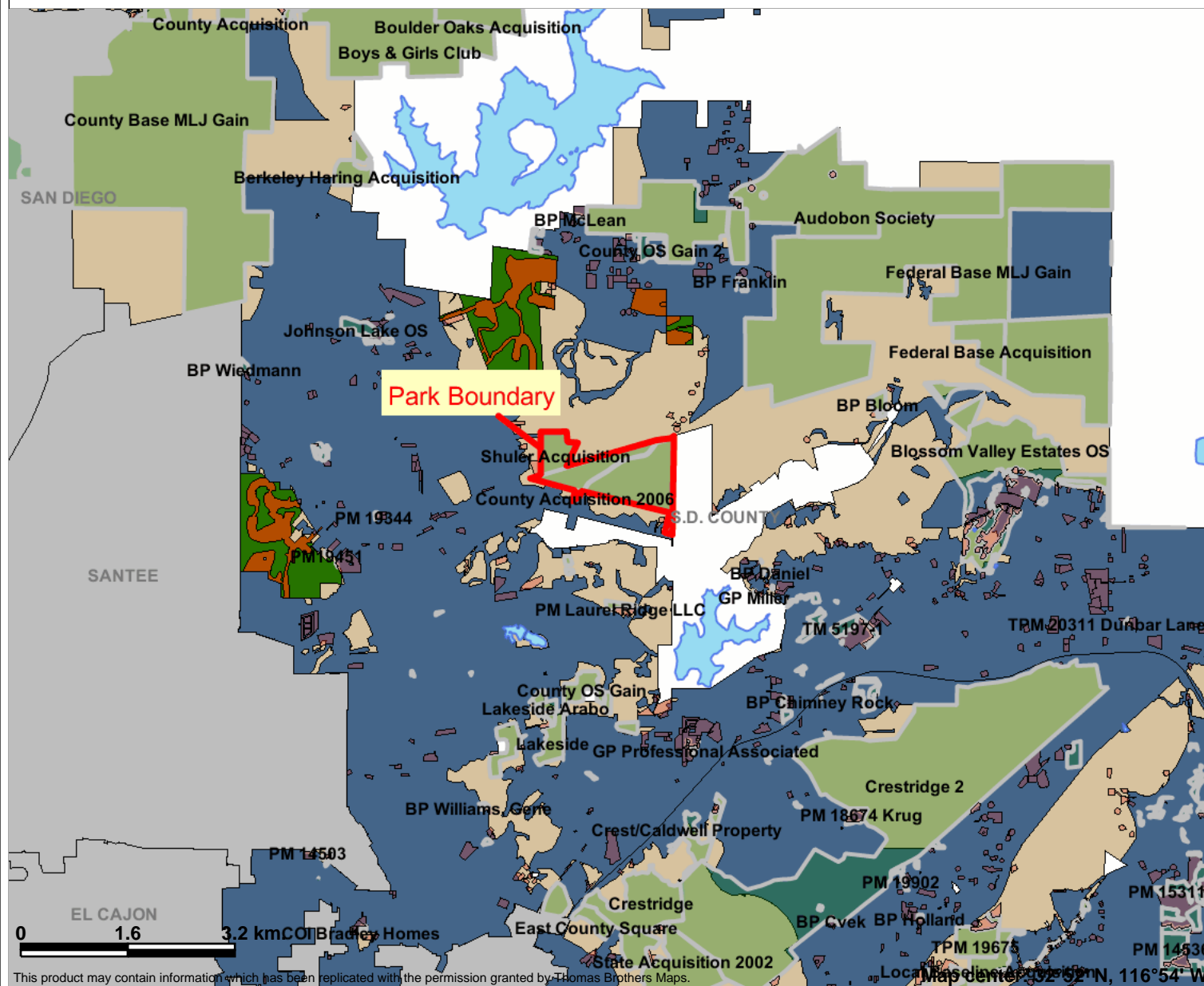


Figure 2  
Park Vicinity  
Stelzer County Park

# Figure 3. Stelzer County Park MSCP Designations



## Legend

### Water Bodies

Water Bodies

### Habitrak 2005 Data

Habitrak Gain

Habitrak Loss

### MSCP\_Designations - South

Hardline Preserve

Pre-Approved Mitigation Area (PAMA)

Major Amendment Area

Minor Amendment Area

Minor Amendment Area Subject to Special Considerations

Conserved Subject to Agreement with Wildlife Agencies

Santa Fe Valley Open Space II

Santa Fe Valley 'D' Designator

Otay Ranch Areas Where No Take Permits will be Issued

Take Authorized Area

Unincorporated Land in Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment

Other

### Incorporated Areas

S.D. COUNTY

Other



Scale: 1:90,193



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Several general soil associations are represented within the Park and include: Acid igneous rock land, the Cieneba series, Fallbrook series, Ramona series, and Visalia series (Figure 4). Each of these series is described in detail below.

### Acid Igneous Rock Land

Acid igneous rock land is rough broken terrain. The topography ranges from low hills to very steep mountains. Large boulders and rock outcrops cover 50 to 90 percent of the total area. The soil material is loam to loamy coarse sand in texture and is very shallow over decomposed granite or basic igneous rock. Vegetation communities associated with this soil type within the Park include coastal sage/chaparral scrub.

### Cieneba Series

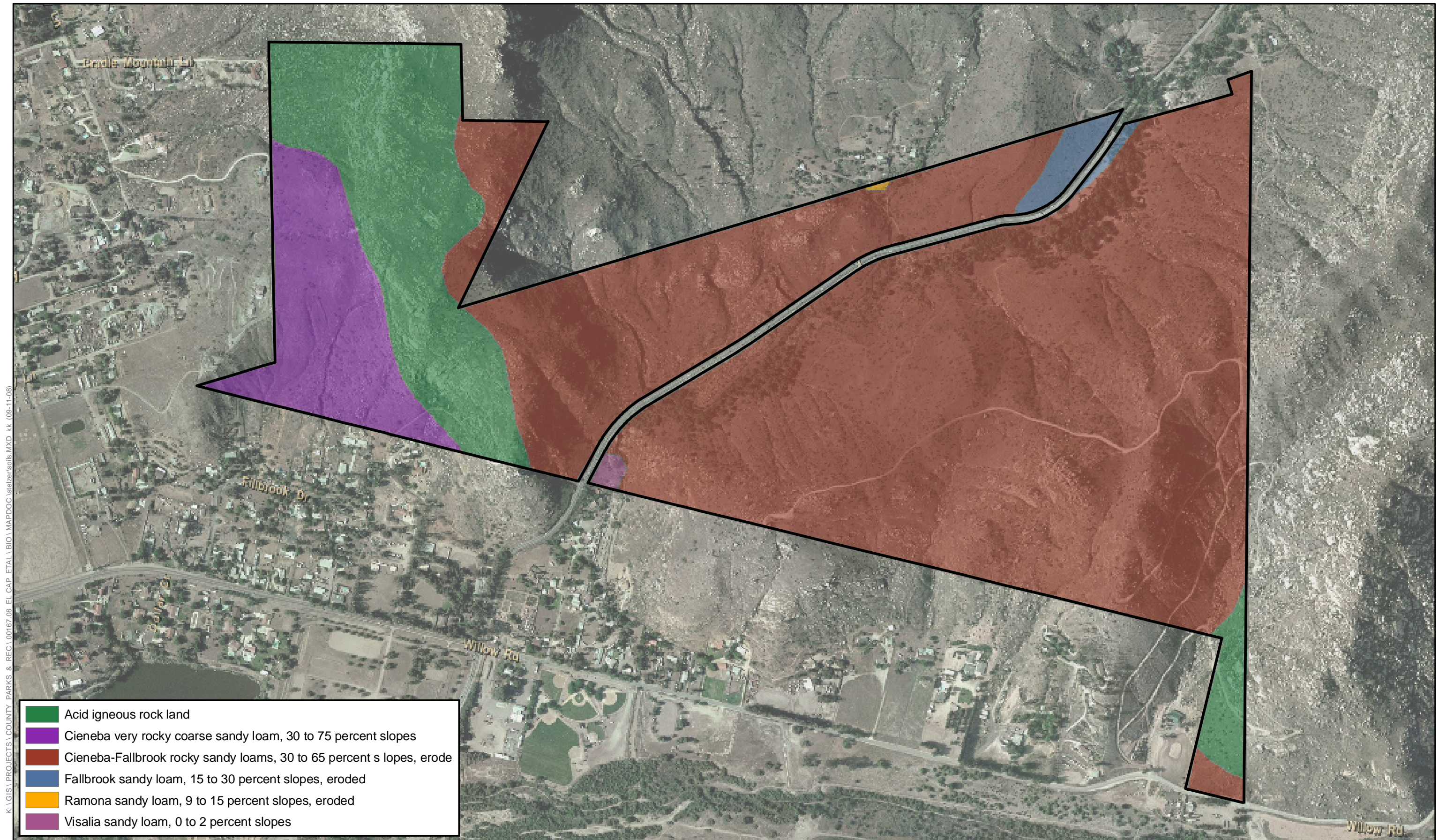
The Cieneba soil series is characterized as excessively drained very shallow to shallow, coarse sandy loams and is usually found on slopes ranging from 5 to 75 percent. It is found on uplands at elevations ranging from 200 to 3,000 feet (61 to 914 meters) AMSL. It is usually 10 to 20 inches (25.4 to 50.8 centimeters) thick and medium acidic. The topsoil ranges from brown to dark brown in color and coarse sandy loam to sandy loam in texture. The layer below this consists of weathered granodiorite. Runoff is high to very high and the erosion hazard is very high. Boulders and rock outcrops are present. Specific soil types found in the Park consist of Cieneba very rocky coarse sandy loam (30 to 75 percent) and Cieneba-Fallbrook rocky sandy loams (30 to 65 percent slopes, eroded). This soil complex is about 55 percent Cieneba coarse sandy loam and 40 percent Fallbrook sandy loam. Vegetation communities associated with this soil type within the Park include coastal sage/chaparral scrub and non-native grassland.

### Fallbrook Series

The Fallbrook soil series is characterized with moderately deep to deep, well-drained sandy loams and is usually found on slopes ranging from 2 to 30 percent. It is found on uplands at elevations ranging from 200 to 2,500 feet (61 to 762 meters) AMSL. The surface layer is usually 6 inches (15.3 centimeters) thick and slightly acidic. The topsoil is brown in color and sandy loam in texture. The subsoil is reddish-brown to light reddish-brown, slightly acidic and neutral, very sandy clay loam and loam, and is approximately 41 inches (104.2 centimeters) thick. For the sandy loams, runoff is slow to medium and the erosion hazard is slight to moderate. The specific sandy loam soil type found in the Park is Fallbrook sandy loam (15 to 30 percent slopes, eroded). Vegetation communities associated with this soil type within the Park include coastal sage/chaparral scrub.

### Ramona Series

The Ramona soil series is characterized by moderately well drained, very deep sandy loams with sandy clay loam subsoil and is usually found on slopes ranging from 0 to 30 percent. It is found on terraces and alluvial fans at elevations ranging from 200 to 1,800 feet (61 to 549 meters) AMSL. The surface layer is usually 17 inches (43.2 centimeters)



SOURCE: ESRI Imagery



Figure 4  
Soils Map  
Stelzer County Park

thick and slightly to medium acidic. The topsoil is yellowish-brown and brown in color and sandy loam in texture. The subsoil is brown and yellowish-brown, slightly acidic and neutral, sandy clay loam, and is more than 43 inches (109.2 centimeters) thick. Below this layer the soil consists of yellowish-brown, neutral, light, coarse sandy clay loam. Runoff is slow to medium and the erosion hazard is slight to moderate. The specific soil type found on the Park is Ramona sandy loam (9 to 15 percent slopes, eroded). This soil type supports a small amount of coast live oak woodland habitat found in the northeastern portion of the Park.

### Visalia Series

The Visalia soil series is characterized by moderately well drained, very deep sandy loams and is usually found on slopes ranging from 0 to 15 percent. It is found on alluvial fans and floodplains at elevations ranging from 400 to 2,000 feet (122 to 610 meters) AMSL. The surface layer is usually 12 inches (30.5 centimeters) thick and slightly acidic. The topsoil is dark grayish-brown in color and sandy loam in texture. The subsoil is dark grayish-brown, slightly acidic, sandy loam and loam and is more than 60 inches (152.4 centimeters) thick. Runoff is very slow to medium and the erosion hazard is slight to moderate. The gravelly sandy loam consists of approximately 15 percent gravel. The specific soil type found in the Park is Visalia sandy loam (0 to 2 percent slopes). Southern coast live oak woodland habitat occurs on this soil type at the westernmost portion of the Park.

## **2.3.2 Climate**

A semi-permanent, Pacific high-pressure cell, located over the Pacific Ocean, dominates San Diego County's climate. This cell drives the dominant on-shore circulation, maintaining clear skies for much of the year. Summers at the Park are typically warm and dry, while winters are mild with occasional rain (USDA 1973).

The Western Regional Climate Center, a collaborative project of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency and the Desert Research Institute, maintains a climatic station in El Cajon, the closest such station to the Park. Data collected at the station indicate that the area experiences a normal mean temperature of approximately 65 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) (18.3 degrees Celsius; °C), with a mean maximum temperature of 77.8°F (25.4°C) and a mean minimum of 52.4°F (11.3°C). The El Cajon area tends to experience more sunshine than the coastal regions of southern California due to its inland location. In a normal year, precipitation at the Park averages 15 to 18 inches and falls mostly in the winter and spring (San Diego County Flood Control District 2007).

A predominant feature of the local climate is the sea-breeze/land-breeze cycle. During the daytime, particularly in the summer, on-shore winds move inland with speeds of approximately seven to ten miles per hour (mph). Easterly land breezes of approximately two to four mph often occur at night. Surrounding rugged terrain, which induces turbulence into the airflow, modifies the influence of this cycle. This cycle is also periodically affected by land airflow that dominates weather patterns. The most

widely recognized of these are the Santa Ana conditions, during which strong, hot and dry easterly winds prevail for two- or three-day periods.

### **2.3.3 Hydrology**

The Park is situated within the San Diego River Watershed area. Designated beneficial uses for the San Diego River and its tributaries include: municipal and domestic supply; agricultural supply; industrial service supply; industrial process supply; contact and non-contact water recreation; warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; wildlife habitat; and rare, threatened, or endangered species habitat (California RWQCB 1994). A single southwest-trending blue-line stream, Wildcat Canyon Creek, occurs along the central portion of the Park and is a tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 5).

### **2.3.4 Fire History**

According to the County of San Diego fire burn history data, portions of the Park have burned in 1953 and 1981. Most recently, the majority of the Park burned in the 2003 Cedar Fire with the exception of the developed area of the Park along Wildcat Canyon Creek (SanGIS 2008) (Figure 6). The Park is located within the jurisdiction of the Lakeside Fire Protection District.

## **2.4 Land Use**

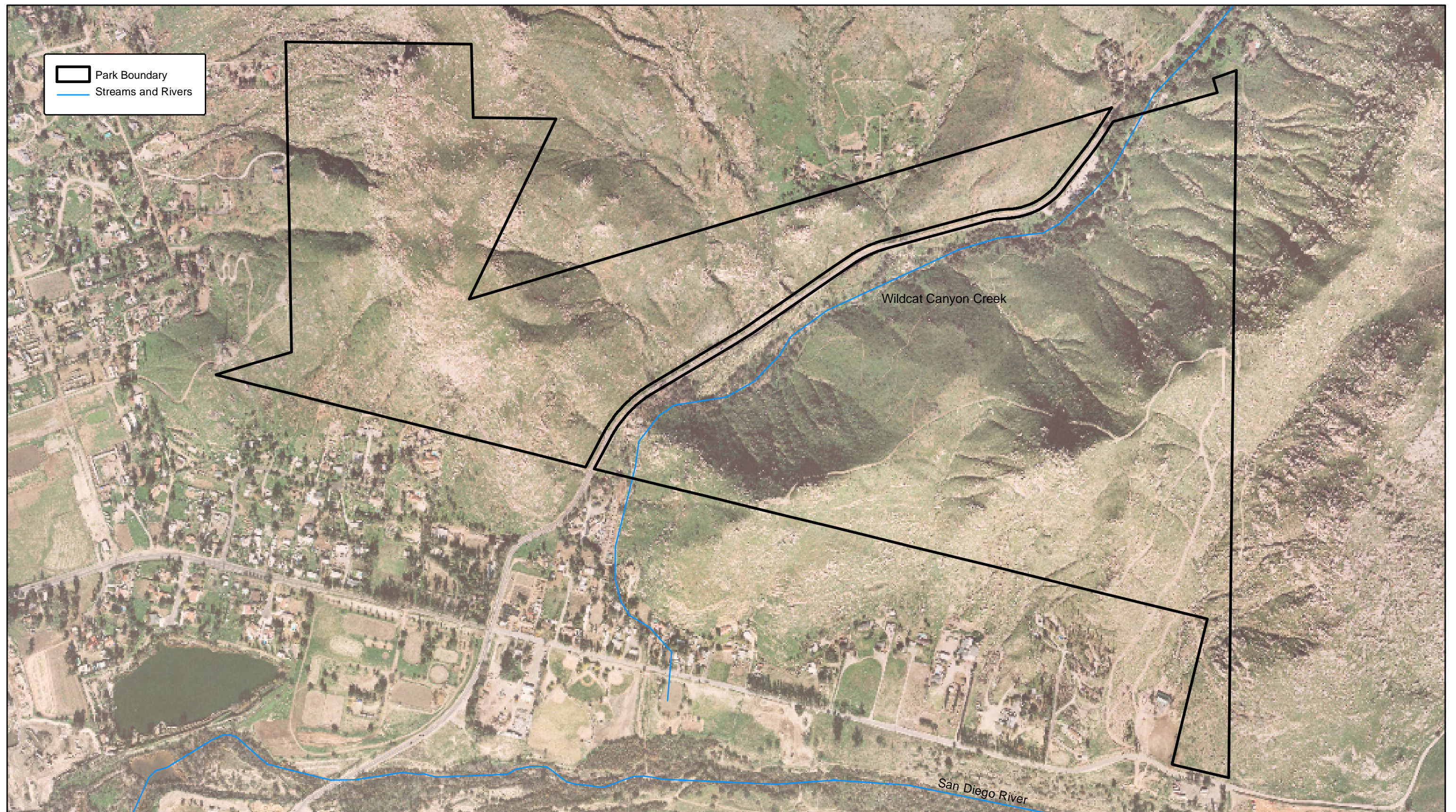
### **2.4.1 On-Site Land Use**

The Park is an approximately 374-acre day-use park. The developed portion of the Park, located east of Wildcat Canyon Road in the northeastern portion of the property, contains a ranger station, picnic and barbecue areas, playground areas, a horseshoe pit, public restrooms and associated parking lot with a gated entrance (Figure 7). The remainder of the property east of Wild Cat Canyon Road remains undeveloped with minimal disturbed areas consisting of a trail system, and SDG&E transmission towers and access roads.

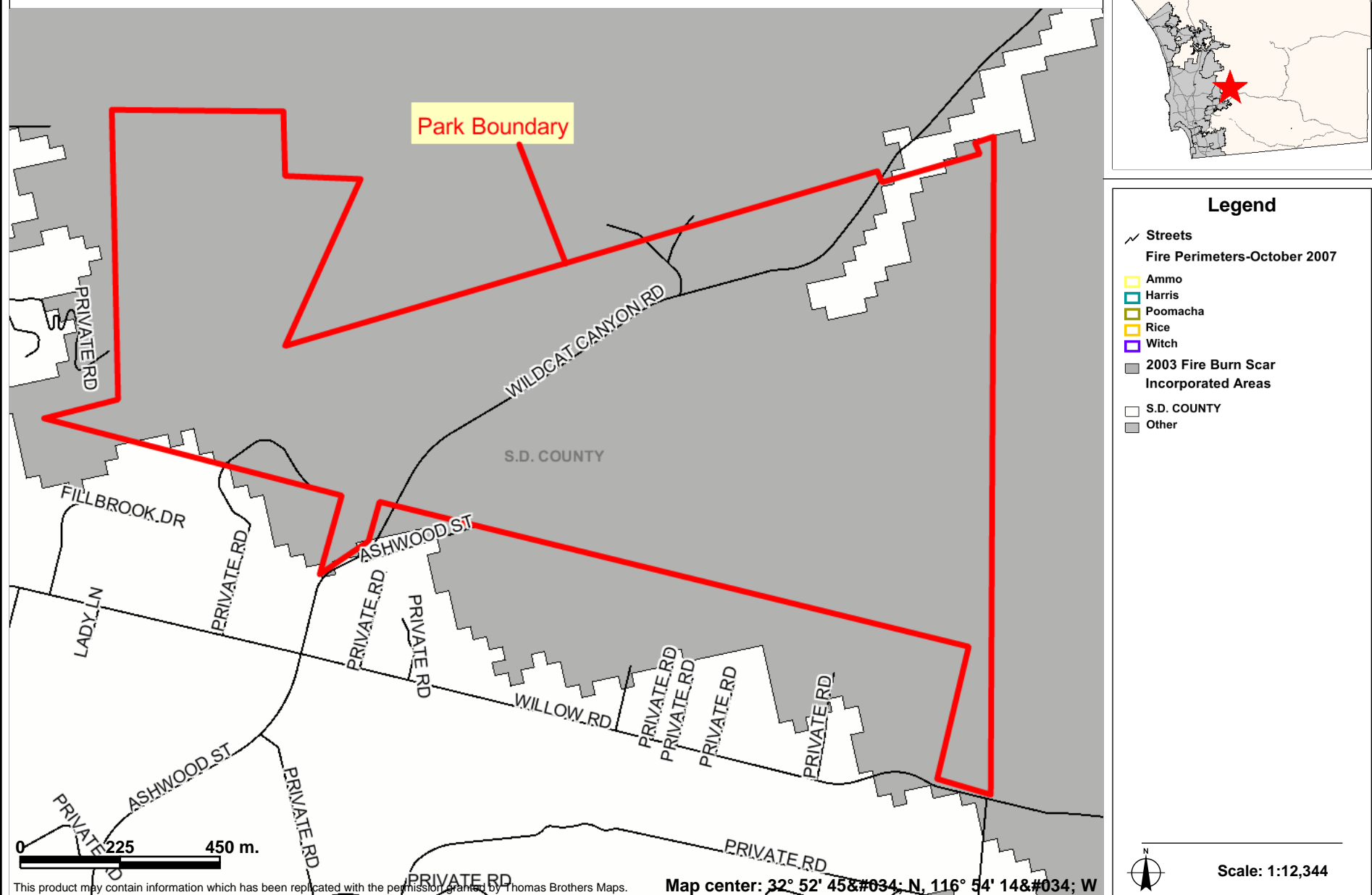
To the west of Wildcat Canyon Road, the Park property consists of an undeveloped hillside dominated by high value coastal sage/chaparral scrub habitat. In addition, SDG&E transmission towers and an associated access road occur in the southeast portion of the Park.

### **2.4.2 Adjacent Properties**

The Park is surrounded by vacant undeveloped land, open space, and spaced rural residential uses. The eastern boundary of the Park is immediately adjacent to undeveloped vacant land owned by the Helix Water District, and lies approximately 0.6 mile northeast of Lake Jennings. To the north of the Park are spaced rural residences and dedicated open space associated with the High Meadow Ranch development. Spaced rural residences occur along the western and southern boundaries of the Park.

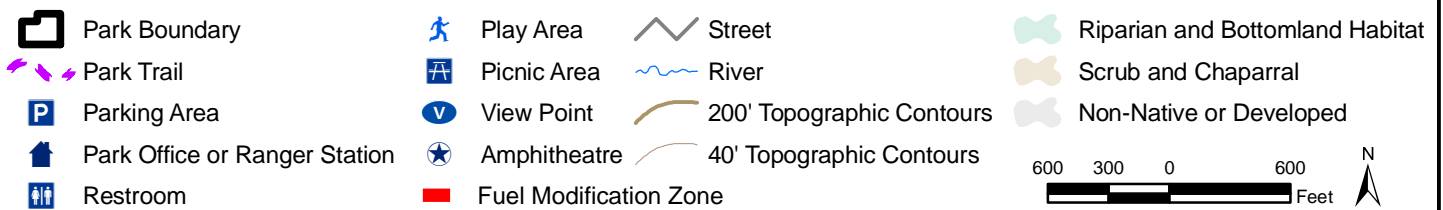
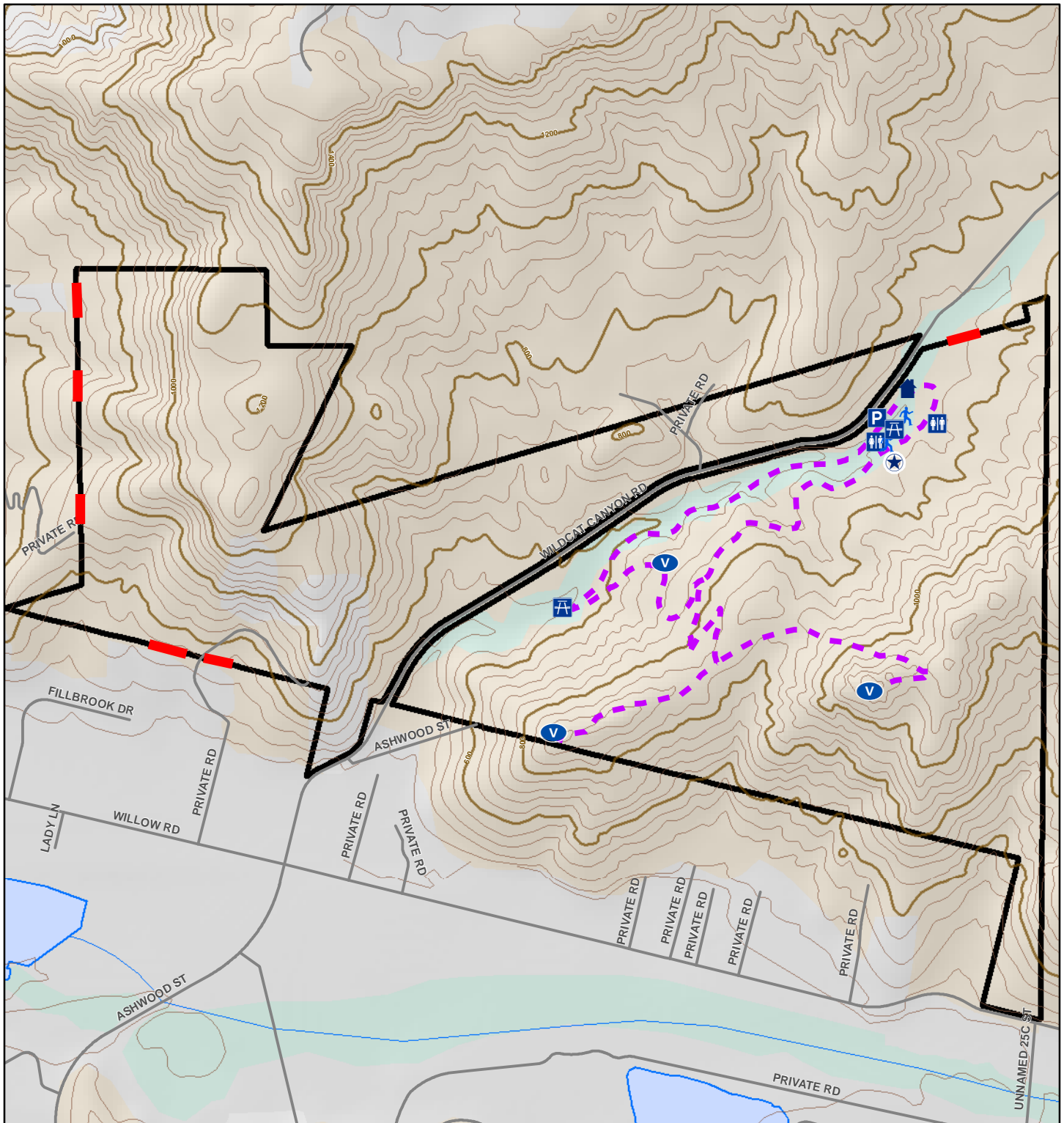


### Figure 6. Stelzer County Park Fire History



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Figure 7  
Land Use Map  
Stelzer County Park

### **2.4.3 Easements or Rights**

Several easements and/or right-of-ways cross through the Park boundary. The County maintains an 84-foot right-of-way along Wildcat Canyon Road for provision of road improvements and other underground and overhead improvements. In addition, SDG&E holds a 150-foot wide transmission corridor easement associated with the existing high voltage power lines that traverse the southern boundary of the Park, and maintains various access roads within the Park. SDG&E conducts operation and maintenance activities for their facilities in accordance with the SDG&E Subregional Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) (SDG&E 1995). The SDG&E NCCP was approved by the Wildlife Agencies and is consistent with this RMP.

## **2.5 Trails**

The Park contains approximately 1.1 miles of hiking trails. These trails traverse through the understory of the southern coast live oak riparian forest habitat located just east of Wildcat Canyon Road (Figure 7). Several single track trails also connect the oak riparian areas to several dirt access roads located along the eastern most ridge tops. The dirt roads located along these ridge tops are maintained by SDG&E for the purpose of accessing their facilities within and immediately adjacent to the Park. There are no public hiking trails west of Wildcat Canyon Road.

### 3.0 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In 2008 (February to October) Jones & Stokes Associates, Inc. conducted baseline biological resources surveys of the Park. The results of these surveys can be found in the biological resources report entitled, *Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation, Stelzer County Park*, dated December 2008, and attached as Appendix A. The survey results were used in the preparation of this RMP.

The 2008 surveys documented six land cover types and 308 species that were detected throughout the Park. These surveys detected 192 plant species, 41 bird species, 23 mammal species (six small mammals, seven medium and large bodied mammals, and 10 bats), 13 herpetiles (one amphibian and 12 reptiles), and 39 invertebrate species. This list includes 27 sensitive species, of which two plant and five wildlife species are MSCP-covered species.

#### 3.1 Vegetation Communities/Habitat

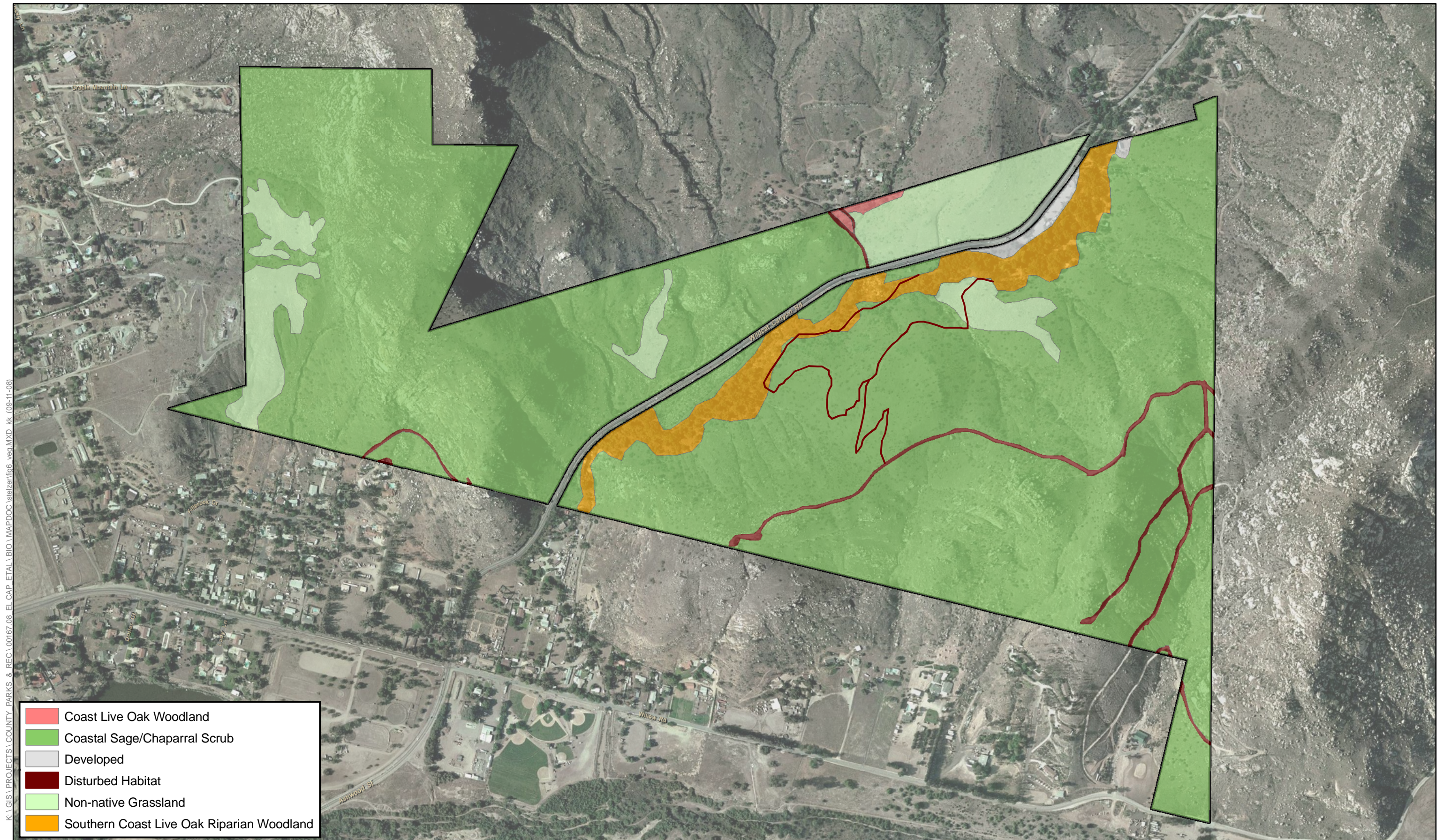
Vegetation communities and land cover types present within the Park consist of southern coast live oak riparian forest, coastal sage-chaparral scrub, coast live oak woodland, non-native grassland, disturbed habitats and developed lands (Figure 8, Table 1). A description of the vegetation communities and the dominant plant species detected during the survey are found below.

**Table 1.** Vegetation Communities within the Park

<b>Vegetation Community</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	19.7
Coastal Sage-Chaparral Scrub	317.5
Non-native Grassland	30.5
Coast Live Oak Woodland	0.7
Disturbed Habitat	0.5
Developed (associated with Park structures and parking lot adjacent to Wildcat Canyon Road).	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>374.5</b>

#### Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest (Holland Code 61310)

Southern coast live oak riparian forest is a dense evergreen sclerophyllous riparian forest dominated by coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). According to Holland (1986), it is richer in herbs and poorer in understory shrubs than other riparian communities. It



SOURCE: ESRI Imagery



typically occurs in bottom lands and outer floodplains along larger streams, on fine-grained, rich alluvium. Approximately 19.7 acres of southern coast live oak riparian forest on the Park occurs just east of Wildcat Canyon Road. Characteristic species include mule-fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicanus*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), stinging nettle (*Urtica urens*) and umbrella sedge (*Cyperus involucratus*).

#### Coastal Sage-Chaparral Scrub (Holland Code 37G00)

Coastal sage-chaparral scrub consists of a mixture of herbaceous, somewhat shrubby, and shrubby species that form a vegetation community with features of both coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral. The approximately 317.5 acres of this habitat within the Park appears to be a post-fire successional community. The abundance of non-native plant species, as well as the sparse distribution of typically dominant shrub species indicate disturbance within this community. Dominant species observed on site included chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), foxtail chess (*Bromus madritensis*), slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*).

Coastal sage-chaparral scrub habitat within the Park is currently considered low quality with low potential to support sensitive species such as coastal California gnatcatcher. Passive revegetation is ongoing.

#### Non-Native Grassland (Holland Code 42200)

Non-native grassland is characterized by a dense to sparse cover of annual grasses reaching up to three feet (one meter), which may include numerous native wildflowers, particularly in years of high rainfall. These annuals germinate with the onset of the rainy season and set seeds in the late spring or summer. This community is usually found on fine-textured soils that proceed from moist or waterlogged in the winter to very dry during the summer and fall (Holland 1986). Non-native grasslands, in many circumstances, have replaced native grasslands as a result of disturbance (directly manmade [e.g., mechanical disturbance, grazing] or natural [i.e., altered fire cycles]). At the Park, this community has likely replaced Diegan coastal sage scrub. Most of the areas mapped as non-native grassland would typically be dominated by shrub species and it is likely that the 2003 Cedar Fire has converted these shrublands to non-native grasslands. The approximately 30.5 acres of non-native grassland primarily occurs within areas of the Park west of Wildcat Canyon Road.

#### Coast Live Oak Woodland (Holland Code 71160)

Coast live oak woodland is typically dominated by coast live oak trees that reach 30 to 80 feet (nine to 24 meters) in height. The shrub layer within this habitat is usually poorly developed, but may include toyon (*Heteromoles arbutifolia*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*) or Mexican elderberry while the herb layer is continuous and typically

dominated by non-native grasses. This community typically occurs on north-facing slopes and shaded ravines in southern California (Holland 1986). Onsite the 0.7 acre of this habitat is found within the northeastern portion of the Park.

#### Disturbed Habitat (Holland Code 11300)

The approximately 0.5 acre of disturbed habitat within the Park consists of existing trails and dirt roads.

#### Developed Land (Holland Code 12000)

The approximately 5.6 acres of developed land within the Park consist of existing paved roads, buildings, and other Park-related infrastructure.

### **3.2 Plant Species**

#### **3.2.1 Plant Species Present**

Floristic inventories detected 192 plant species at the Park. The Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation (Appendix A) includes the complete list of all species observed during the surveys.

#### **3.2.2 Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Plants Present**

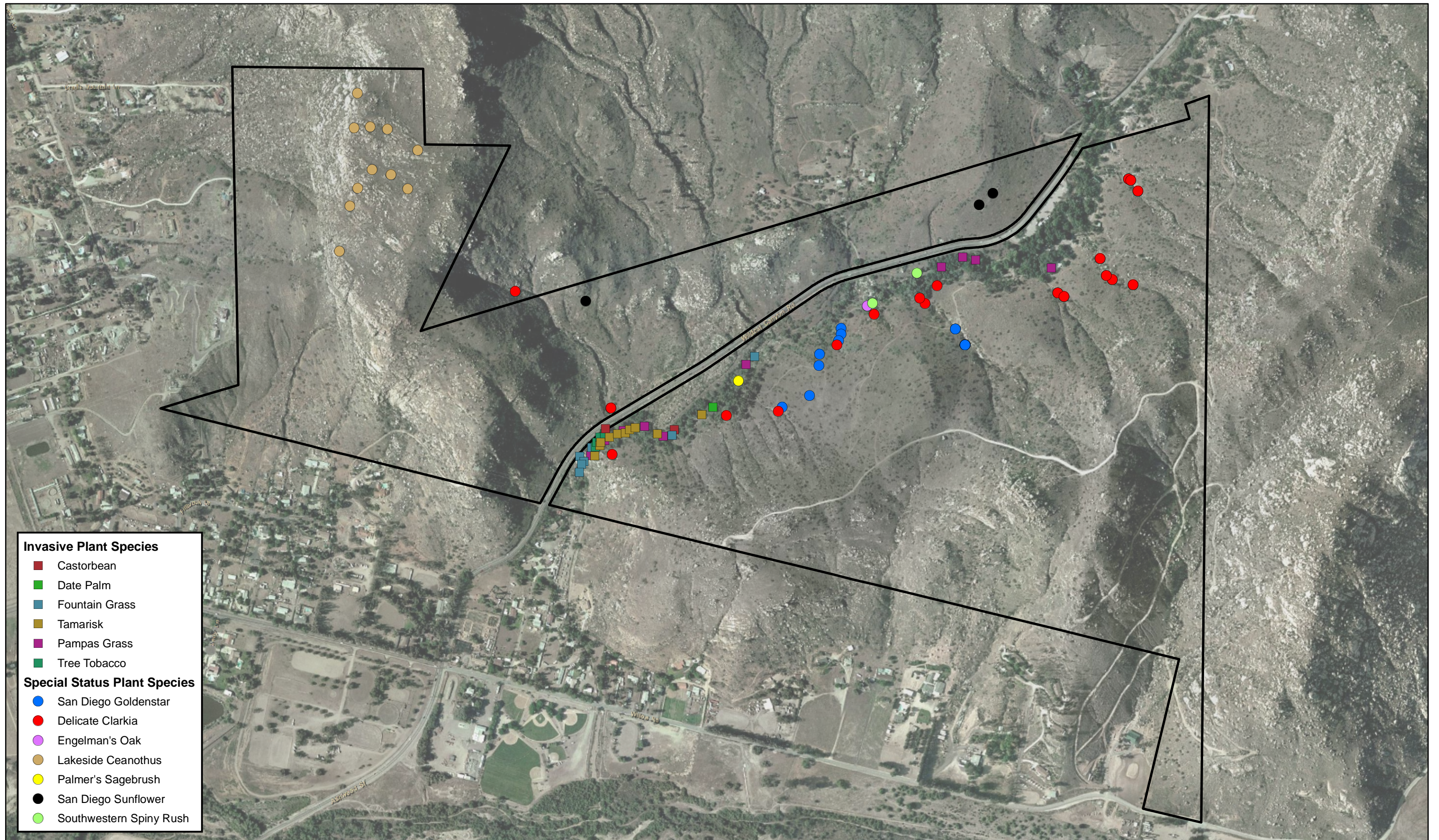
A special-status plant species is one listed by federal or state agencies as threatened or endangered; considered to be of special status by one or more special interest groups, such as the California Native Plant Society (e.g., CNPS List 1, 2, 3, and 4 Plant Species); is included on the County's Sensitive Plant list (Group A, B, C, or D Listed Plants); or is covered under the MSCP.

Seven special status plant species were detected within the Park (Figure 9) including: delicate clarkia (also known as Campo clarkia) (*Clarkia delicata*), Lakeside ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*), San Diego goldenstar (*Bloomeria [Muilla] clevelandii*), San Diego sunflower (*Viguiera laciniata*), Palmer's sage brush (*Artemisia palmeri* var. *palmeri*), Engelmann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*) and southwestern spiny rush (*Juncus acutus* sp. *leopoldii*). Each of these species is addressed below in more detail

#### Delicate Clarkia (also known as Campo Clarkia) (*Clarkia delicata*)

##### *CNPS List 1B, San Diego County Group A*

Delicate clarkia is an annual wildflower that is typically found on the periphery of oak woodland habitats and within cismontane chaparral. This species occurs within and adjacent to the southern coast live oak riparian forest and within several smaller drainages.



SOURCE: ESRI Imagery



0 250 500 1,000  
Feet

Figure 9  
Special Status & Invasive Plant Species  
Stelzer County Park

Lakeside Ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*)*CNPS List 1B, San Diego County Group A, MSCP Covered Species*

Lakeside ceanothus is known from an extremely small range (southern Ramona to the foothills of Lakeside). Typically, this *ceanothus* species occurs in dense, almost impenetrable chaparral with a mix of chamise and other shrubs such as manzanita. Lakeside ceanothus is found within the rocky chaparral located along the westernmost portion of the Park.

San Diego Goldenstar (*Bloomeria [Muilla] clevelandii*)*CNPS List 1B, San Diego County Group A, MSCP Covered Species*

San Diego goldenstar is a perennial corm that is typically found on clay soils in valley grasslands near mima mound topography or in the vicinity of vernal pools. Recent taxonomic changes have moved this species from the genus *Muilla* to the genus *Bloomeria*. San Diego goldenstar is found on clay soils just east of the coast live oak riparian forest within the Park.

San Diego Sunflower (*Viguiera laciniata*)*CNPS List 4, San Diego County Group D*

San Diego sunflower is associated with arid Diegan coastal sage scrub at a variety of elevations. Its distribution is primarily south of Highway 78 to the international border. At the Park, this species occurs sporadically within the coastal sage-chaparral scrub.

Palmer's Sagebrush (also known as San Diego Sagewort) (*Artemisia palmeri*)*CNPS List 4, San Diego County Group D*

Palmer's sagebrush is typically found along creeks and drainages near the coast and within inland chaparral. Palmer's sagebrush is found within the southern coast live oak riparian forest associated with Wildcat Canyon Creek.

Engelmann Oak (*Quercus engelmannii*)*CNPS List 4, San Diego County Group D*

Engelmann oak is commonly found in the foothills between 500 and 4,000 feet (152 and 1,219 meters). Growing up to 40 feet (12 meters) tall, this tree has flat, grey-blue-green leaves and tolerates less water than coast live oak. Larger oaks are sometimes found growing in savannah grasslands, but may also occur as a shrubby element within chaparral. Engelmann oaks are still relatively abundant throughout their range in

southern California. One Engelmann oak was observed within the coast live oak riparian forest.

Southwestern Spiny Rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopoldii*)

*CNPS List 4, San Diego County Group D*

Southwestern spiny rush is associated with intermittent streambeds and seeps. This species was observed within the understory of the southern coast live oak riparian forest associated with Wildcat Canyon Creek.

### **3.2.3 Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Plants with High Potential to Occur**

Only one special status plant, Palmer's goldenbush (*Ericameria palmeri* var. *palmeri*), has a high potential to occur within the Park.

Palmer's Goldenbush (*Ericameria palmeri* var. *palmeri*)

*CNPS List 2, San Diego County Group B,*

This species has been reported as occurring within the Park, but was not identified during focused botanical surveys in 2008. The blooming period for this species is September through November; a focused survey was performed for this species in October 2008, but results were negative.

### **3.2.4 Non-native and/or Invasive Plant Species**

Patches of invasive plants were detected within the westernmost portions of Wildcat Canyon Creek. Invasive plants observed include: castor bean (*Ricinus communis*), Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), African fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*), tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) and tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*) (Figure 9). The majority of these species were detected in the downstream portion of Wildcat Canyon Creek near the southern boundary of the Park. Only pampas grass was found interspersed along the entire creek bed. These invasive, non-native species are considered California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) listed plants with overall ratings of "limited" to "high".

Native to the Ethiopian region of tropical east Africa, castor bean has become naturalized in tropical and warm temperate regions throughout the world, and is becoming an increasingly abundant weed in the southwestern United States. This species is very common along stream banks, river beds, bottom lands, and just about any hot area where the soil is well drained and with sufficient nutrients and moisture to sustain growth. The Cal-IPC inventory categorizes castor bean as having an overall rating of "limited". A "limited" rating signifies species that are invasive, but their ecological impacts are minor on a statewide level or there was not enough information to justify a higher score. Their reproductive biology and other attributes result in low to

moderate rates of invasiveness. Ecological amplitude and distribution are generally limited, but these species may be locally persistent and problematic.

Canary Island date palm is a tree that has escaped cultivation in southern California to invade stream corridors as well as orchards and, occasionally, landscaped areas. As the name implies, Canary Island date palm is native to the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. Growing to 25 meters tall, Canary Island date palms tend to grow in clusters that form a dense canopy that excludes light from reaching beneath them, leading to a loss of native plants under palm trees. The Cal-IPC inventory categorizes Canary Island date palm as having an overall rating of “limited”.

Fountain grass is a perennial grass which primarily grows along the southern California coast. This species is well adapted to fire, and plants can recover to pre-burn density, even increase in density, following a burn (Cal-IPC 2009). It is categorized by the Cal-IPC inventory as having an overall rating of “moderate”. A “moderate” rating signifies species that have substantial and apparent, but generally not severe, ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure. Their reproductive biology and other attributes are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal, though establishment is generally dependent upon ecological disturbance.

Originally from Bolivia and Argentina, tree tobacco has naturalized in the southwestern United States, becoming a common weed. The species is found in wetland-riparian areas, but can be found in non-wetland areas. The leaves of tree tobacco are toxic. The Cal-IPC inventory categorizes tree tobacco as having an overall rating of “moderate”.

Tamarisk was introduced from Eurasia and is now widespread in the United States. The species is found in desert washes, riparian areas, seeps and springs. Tamarisk is associated with dramatic changes in geomorphology, groundwater availability, soil chemistry, fire frequency, and plant community composition. High amounts of leaf litter can increase the frequency of fire where tamarisk is dominant in cover; moreover, this species resprouts vigorously following fires. The Cal-IPC inventory categorizes tamarisk as having an overall rating of “high”. A “high” rating signifies species that have severe ecological impacts on physical processes, plant and animal communities, and vegetation structure. Their reproductive biology and other attributes are conducive to moderate to high rates of dispersal and establishment. Most are widely distributed ecologically.

Pampas grass is a large perennial grass that was introduced as an ornamental plant and for erosion control. Each plume produces up to 100,000 seeds that are widely dispersed by wind and develop without fertilization. This species quickly colonizes bare ground, but establishment is generally poor where the seedlings must compete with other grasses or sedges (Cal-IPC 2009). The Cal-IPC inventory categorizes pampas grass as having an overall rating of “high”.

### 3.3 Wildlife Species

#### 3.3.1 Wildlife Species Present

##### Invertebrates

A complete list of invertebrate species identified on the Park below the level of family is included in the faunal list of the Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation (Appendix A).

##### *Butterflies*

Butterfly species observed during the 2008 surveys include: desert orangetip (*Anthocharis cethura*), Sara's orangetip (*Anthocharis sara*), Behr's metalmark (*Apodemia mormo virgulti*), perplexing hairstreak (*Callophrys affinis perplexa*), Gabb's checkerspot (*Chlosyne gabbii*), monarch (*Danaus plexippus*), funereal duskywing (*Erynnis funeralis*), southern blue (*Glaucopsyche lygdamus australis*), Acmon blue (*Icaricia acmon*), common buckeye (*Junonia coenia*), mourning cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*), pale swallowtail (*Papilio eurymedon*), western tiger swallowtail (*Papilio rutulus*), cabbage white (*Pieris rapae*), checkered/common white (*Pontia protodice*), white checkered skipper (*Pyrgus albescens*), west coast lady (*Vanessa annabella*), red admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*), and painted lady (*Vanessa cardui*).

The monarch was the only special status butterfly observed during the 2008 surveys. While not detected, both Quino checkerspot (*Euphydryas editha quino*) and Hermes copper (*Lycaena hermes*) have potential to occur within the Park based on the presence of their primary host plants, dwarf plantain (*Plantago erecta*) and spiny redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*), respectively.

##### *Other Invertebrates*

Twenty other invertebrate species were captured in the pitfall traps associated with the herpetological arrays or observed during other fieldwork. These species were identified in the field or photographed and provided to a local entomologist to identify. No invertebrate species were collected.

##### Amphibians

No amphibian species were captured in the pitfall traps during the 2008 sampling period at the Park. One native amphibian species, Pacific chorus frog (*Pseudacris regilla*), was detected near Wildcat Canyon Creek during active searches. This species is presumed to be breeding in Wildcat Canyon Creek.

##### Reptiles

During the 2008 sampling at the Park, 12 reptile species were detected including: San Diego horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillii*), orange-throated whiptail (*Cnemidophorus hyperythrus beldingi*), coastal western whiptail (*Cnemidophorus tigris*

*stejnegeri*), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), granite spiny lizard (*Sceloporus orcutti*), side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), Gilbert's skink (*Eumeces gilberti*), San Diego ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus similis*), southern alligator lizard (*Elgaria multicarinata*), granite night lizard (*Xantusia henshawi*), striped racer (*Masticophis lateralis*), and coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis vigultea*). Two additional species, coastal rosy boa (*Lichanura trivirgata roseofusca*) and red diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber ruber*) were observed by park rangers. A complete list of herpetofauna observed within the Park during the 2008 herpetological surveys is included in the faunal list of the Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation (Appendix A).

## Birds

Avian species richness (total species detected) was found to be moderate at the Park. In total, 41 bird species were detected with 28 bird species detected during the point counts and 13 detected during other fieldwork. These included year-round residents, winter-only species, breeding species that migrate to the Neotropics, and species that are strictly migratory through the Park, neither breeding nor wintering there. A complete list of avian species observed within the Park during the 2008 surveys is included in the faunal list of the Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation (Appendix A).

The Park's avifauna is a mixture of species that are closely associated with the riparian habitat and the coastal sage scrub recovering from fire. These species include: red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), black-chinned hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*), Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), ash-throated flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*), pacific slope flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*), canyon wren (*Catherpes mexicanus*), Bewick's wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), house wren (*Troglodytes aedon*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), lazuli bunting (*Passerina amoena*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), and lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*).

The Park has a good diversity of raptors (birds of prey), including seven raptor species observed: turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), red-shouldered hawk, red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), and great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*). These birds are using the Park for foraging and some species have potential to breed on site; however, no active raptor nests were observed.

The nocturnal bird surveys documented three nocturnal species using the Park: barn owl, great horned owl, and common poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*). The Park supports moderate to high potential for two additional nocturnal species: western screech-owl (*Megascops kennicottii*) and lesser nighthawk (*Chordeiles acutipennis*). These species could be present in small numbers, though were not detected during the 2008 surveys.

There is no reasonable potential for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) or least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) to occur at the Park beyond rare and brief visits, due to lack of suitable habitat. It is likely that other subspecies of willow flycatcher pass through the Park in spring and fall, though they were not recorded during the 2008 surveys. Coastal California gnatcatchers (*Polioptila californica californica*) were observed in the Park before the 2003 Cedar Fire, and may once again inhabit the Park if the habitat recovers to its pre-fire condition.

## Mammals

A complete list of mammal species observed within the Park during the 2008 surveys is included in the faunal list of the Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation (Appendix A).

### *Small Mammals*

In total, six small mammal species were recorded at the Park during small mammal trapping and other surveys including: California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi nudipes*), Dulzura pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*), California mouse (*Peromyscus californicus insignis*), northern Baja mouse (*Peromyscus fraterculus*), American deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus gambelii*), and Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*). These species were detected through capture, direct observation, or sign. The trapping results indicate that the Park has moderate diversity in small mammal species with 58 captures from five species. The species detected are commonly found in the habitats at the Park.

### *Medium to Large Mammals*

A total of seven medium to large mammal species were detected in the Park during the 2008 surveys including: desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), common raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), bobcat (*Felis rufus*), domestic horse (*Equus caballus*), and southern mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus fuliginata*).

### *Bats*

A total of 10 bat species were detected during the three seasons of bat monitoring in 2008. The most active bat species detected were the big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*), canyon bat (*Parastrellus hesperus*), and pocketed free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops femorosaccus*). Species detected infrequently included the small-footed myotis (*Myotis ciliolabrum*), California myotis (*Myotis californicus*), and Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*). There were several species detected during all three monitoring sessions including the canyon bat, pocketed free-tailed bat, and Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*). The big free-tailed bat and western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis*) were detected only during the spring. Species detected only during the summer included the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), California myotis, and Townsend's big-eared bat.

### 3.3.2 Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Wildlife Present

This section discusses special-status wildlife species observed at the Park (Figure 10). A special-status wildlife species is one listed by federal or state agencies as threatened or endangered; is included on the County's Sensitive Animal List (Group 1 or 2 Species); or is covered under the MSCP. Nineteen special-status wildlife species were detected at the Park. Each of these 19 species is addressed below in more detail.

#### Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)

##### *San Diego County Group II*

The monarch butterfly is a milkweed butterfly (subfamily Danainae), in the family Nymphalidae. It is perhaps the best known of all butterflies. Monarch butterflies migrate through San Diego County and are typically found in migratory concentrations on mature stands of trees (e.g., eucalyptus). One monarch butterfly was observed in flight within the northeastern portion of the Park.

#### San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillii*)

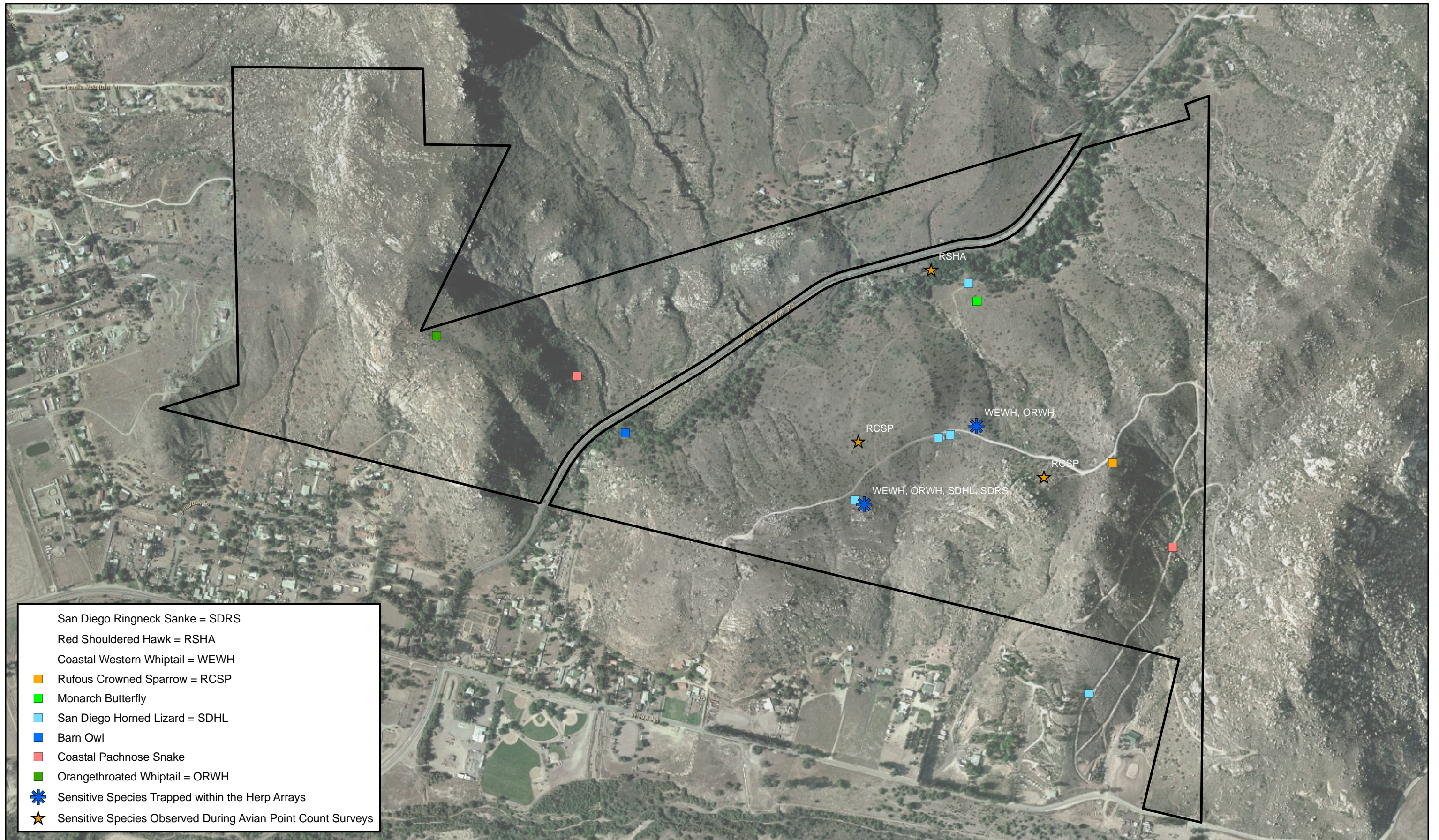
##### *State Species of Special Concern, MSCP Covered Species, San Diego County Group II*

The San Diego horned lizard is a large lizard that historically was found in Kern, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties southward to Baja California, Mexico. Horned lizards inhabit a variety of vegetation communities including coastal sage, annual grassland, chaparral, oak woodland, riparian woodland, and coniferous forest (Stebbins 2003). Loose, fine soils with a high sand content, an abundance of prey and open areas with limited overstory typify suitable habitat for this species (Jennings and Hayes 1994). The San Diego horned lizard insectivorous diet consists mostly of native harvester ants (*Pogonmyrmex* sp.) which make up over 90% of their prey items, but it is an opportunistic feeder that will take other insects including termites, beetles, flies, wasps, and grasshoppers (Stebbins 2003, Jennings and Hayes 1994). This species has disappeared from about 45% of its former range and a number of factors have led to this decline including habitat fragmentation and degradation, loss of native prey to exotic species, and extensive collection for the curio trade (Jennings and Hayes 1994). The specialized diet of harvester ants has made horned lizards especially vulnerable to extirpation since the introduction of Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*). This species was captured in one of the two arrays in March 2008.

#### Orange-Throated Whiptail (*Cnemidophorus hyperythrus beldingi*)

##### *State Species of Special Concern, MSCP Covered Species, San Diego County Group II*

The orange-throated whiptail is a medium-sized lizard that ranges from southern California (specifically Corona del Mar in Orange County and Colton in San Bernardino



County) southward to the tip of Baja California, Mexico. Historically, most populations of the orange-throated whiptail were found on floodplains or terraces along streams in brushy areas with loose soil and rocks (McGurty 1980). Habitat types they are known to use include chaparral, non-native grassland, coastal sage scrub, juniper woodland, and oak woodland. California buckwheat is an important indicator of appropriate habitat for orange-throated whiptails (Dudek 2000). This plant species is a colonizer of disturbed, sandy soils and usually indicates open shrub spacing that is required for foraging and thermoregulatory behavior. Orange-throated whiptail appears to be a dietary specialist with most (> 85%) of its prey being comprised of termites (Dudek 2000). The decline of orange-throated whiptails is likely due to loss of habitat to agriculture and urban development. This species was captured numerous times throughout the 2008 trapping program in both arrays.

Coastal Western Whiptail (*Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus*)

*San Diego County Group II*

Coastal western whiptail is a medium-sized slender lizard that is found in arid and semiarid desert to open woodlands where the vegetation is sparse so running is easy (Stebbins 2003). Its range includes coastal southern California and western Baja California. The decline of coastal western whiptails is likely due to loss of habitat to agriculture and urban development. This species was captured numerous times throughout the 2008 trapping program in both arrays.

San Diego Ringneck Snake (*Diadophis punctatus similis*)

*San Diego County Group II*

The San Diego ringneck snake is a small, thin snake that prefers moist habitats, including wet meadows, rocky hillsides, gardens, farmland, grassland, chaparral, mixed coniferous forests, and woodlands (Stebbins 2003). It is secretive in its behavior, usually found under the cover of rocks, wood, bark, boards, and other surface debris. Ringneck snakes eat small salamanders, tadpoles, small frogs, small snakes, lizards, worms, slugs, and insects. This species range includes San Diego County along the coast and into the Peninsular Range, southwestern San Bernardino County, and barely south into northern Baja California (Stebbins 2003). Threats to this species include habitat degradation and fragmentation from urban development. One San Diego ringneck snake was captured in March 2008.

Coast Patch-Nosed Snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgutea*)

*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

The coast patch-nosed snake is a medium-sized, slender snake that is a habitat generalist which makes use of whatever vegetative cover is available and thrives in most environments. It is also a generalist in its diet, opportunistically feeding on

anything it can overpower including small mammals, lizards, and the eggs of lizards and snakes. The species ranges from Creston in San Luis Obispo County southward into Baja California (Stebbins 2003). This species' decline is likely due to conversion of habitat to development, agriculture or non-native plant species. This species was observed during surveys of the Park.

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

*San Diego County Group I*

Turkey vultures are often seen foraging over woodlands and nearby open country (Unitt 2004). They prefer dry, open country, ranch lands and along roadsides where carrion is common. They nest in crevices among granite boulders (Unitt 2004). The turkey vulture's range has been retracting from the coast due to human disturbance, loss of foraging habitat and pesticide contamination (Unitt 2004). Turkey vultures were observed foraging over the Park.

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

*State Species of Special Concern, MSCP Covered Species, San Diego County Group I*

The northern harrier is associated with open grassland and marshes. This species typically forages in open, undisturbed habitat and nests on the ground in areas of dense low-growing vegetation to help conceal the nest. Nesting harriers are now considered rare and the known breeding population in San Diego County is estimated at 25 to 75 pairs (Unitt 2004). As with other ground nesting grassland birds, the northern harrier population is on the decline due to urban sprawl (Unitt 2004). A northern harrier was observed foraging over the Park.

Red-Shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)

*San Diego County Group I*

The red-shouldered hawk was once an uncommon breeder of lowland riparian woodlands, but has been thriving in urban environments with large trees such as gum (*Eucalyptus sp.*) (Unitt 2004). On the west coast, this species is found in California and northern Baja California and is common throughout San Diego County (Unitt 2004). A red-shouldered hawk was observed once during the point counts in June in the riparian forest south of the ranger office and most likely breeds somewhere in this riparian corridor. The canopy is fairly thick in some areas precluding observation of nests.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

*San Diego County Group II*

The barn owl is the owl species that is most tolerant to urban development (Unitt 2004). It will nest in buildings, nest boxes, at the base of the leaves in palm trees, and in cavities in native trees. Even though this species is tolerant of human development, dense housing communities do not provide suitable nesting habitat and loss of birds to increased traffic has a negative effect on the species (Unitt 2004). A barn owl was heard during a nocturnal survey in April and then one was flushed in the riparian forest during a diurnal site visit in September. This bird may breed nearby or in the oak trees found on the Park, but no active nests were observed during the point counts.

Southern California Rufous-Crowned Sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*)

*MSCP Covered Species, San Diego County Group I*

The southern California rufous-crowned sparrow is a resident species that is closely associated with coastal sage scrub, steep rocky hillsides, burned chaparral, and openings in mature chaparral (Unitt 2004). Preferring open habitat with approximately 50% shrub cover, this species seeks cover in shrubs, rocks, grass, and forb patches (Dudek 2000, Unitt 2004). The southern California subspecies is restricted to semiarid coastal sage scrub and sparse chaparral from Santa Barbara south to the northwestern corner of Baja California (Dudek 2000). Southern California rufous-crowned sparrows are declining due to loss of appropriate habitat and are sensitive to habitat fragmentation (Unitt 2004). Southern California rufous-crowned sparrows were detected throughout the recovering coastal sage-chaparral scrub.

Dulzura Pocket Mouse (*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*)

*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

Dulzura pocket mouse is mainly active on the ground, but also climbs shrubs and small trees when feeding (CDFG 2005). This species can become torpid by day at any time of the year, and is inactive in cold wet weather. It breeds in spring to early summer and occurs from sea level to approximately 7,900 feet (2,408 meters) AMSL (CDFG 2005). This species prefers dense chaparral and is less common in dry grassland and desert scrub. Twenty-one individuals were captured at the Park.

Southern Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus fuliginata*)

*MSCP Covered Species, San Diego County Group II*

Southern mule deer are common across the western U.S. in a variety of habitats from forest edges to mountains and foothills (Whitaker 1996). Southern mule deer prefer edge habitats, rarely travel or forage far from water, and are most active around dawn and dusk. Southern mule deer individuals were observed and were photographed by the camera stations within the Park.

Small-Footed Myotis (*Myotis ciliolabrum*)*San Diego County Group II*

The small-footed myotis is found throughout most of western North America, from southwestern Canada south into Mexico (BCI 2008). There is not much information on the habitat requirements of this species, but it has been documented under rock slabs and in crevices, mine tunnels, under loose tree bark, and in buildings (BCI 2008). This species hibernates in caves, typically in small groups. Reasons for decline are poorly understood as there is little research conducted on this species. This species was detected during all three seasons of bat monitoring. There is minimal roosting habitat for this species available on site; therefore, the Park may just be used for foraging by this species.

Yuma Myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*)*San Diego County Group II*

The Yuma myotis is found throughout much of the western U.S. and up into Canada (BCI 2008). The species is always found near lakes, creeks or ponds where the species forages over the water. Typically, individuals skim low over the water and snatch up flying insects, but they can forage in other mesic areas. The species roosts by day usually in buildings or bridges, but have been documented using mines or caves (BCI 2008). Yuma myotis are threatened by loss of riparian habitat and the decline in permanent water sources in the southwest. This species was detected during the summer bat monitoring session only. Both suitable roosting and foraging habitat for the Yuma Myotis occurs in the Park.

Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

Townsend's big-eared bat occurs throughout the drier portions of California (Zeiner et al. 1990). It is non-migratory and hibernates from approximately October through April. A wide variety of natural communities are occupied, but mesic sites are preferred. They capture a variety of prey while in flight, which is slow and maneuverable, and they are capable of hovering (Zeiner et al. 1990). The species is known to roost predominantly in caves but will use lava tubes, mines, tunnels, buildings, and other man-made structures (BCI 2008). They are extremely sensitive to disturbance at their roosting sites and have suffered severe population declines throughout much of the U.S. (BCI 2008). This species was detected during the summer bat monitoring session only. The Townsend's big-eared bat is likely not roosting at the Park, but instead using it for foraging. The mines located in the adjacent El Capitan Preserve provide roosting habitat for this species.

Pocketed Free-Tailed Bat (*Nyctinomops femorosaccus*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

Pocketed free-tailed bats are rarely found in southwestern California. These bats live in arid desert areas and roost in crevices high on cliff faces in rugged canyons (BCI 2008). Nursery colonies are relatively small and usually include fewer than 100 individuals. This species primarily forages on large moths, especially over water. The regional status and species trends are unclear, but it is likely vulnerable to disturbance, especially at roosts, and perhaps also to threats to food supply from man-made toxins. This species was detected during all three seasons of bat monitoring. The pocketed free-tailed bat is likely not roosting in the Park as there are no cliffs, but the adjacent El Capitan Preserve provides suitable roosting habitat for this species. The individuals detected are likely using the Park as a place to forage.

Big Free-Tailed Bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*)*San Diego County Group II*

Big free-tailed bats are typically found in desert and arid grasslands with rocky outcrops, canyons, or cliffs (BCI 2008). This species roosts on cliffs and occasionally in buildings. Isolated populations can be found throughout the southwestern U.S. into Mexico. The regional status and species trends are unclear, but it is likely vulnerable to disturbance, especially at roosts, and perhaps also to threats to food supply from man-made toxins. This species was detected during the spring bat monitoring session only. The big free-tailed bat is likely not roosting in the Park as there are no cliffs, but the adjacent El Capitan Preserve does provide suitable roosting habitat. The individuals detected are using the Park as a place to forage.

Western Mastiff Bat (*Eumops perotis*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

Western mastiff bats are the largest native bats in the United States. This subspecies occurs from the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada and the coastal ranges (south of San Francisco Bay) southward into Mexico (BCI 2008). In southern California, they are found throughout the coastal lowlands up to drier mid-elevation mountains, but avoid the Mohave and Colorado deserts (Zeiner et al. 1990). Habitats include dry woodlands, shrublands, grasslands, and occasionally even developed areas. This big bat forages in flight and most prey species are relatively small, low to the ground, and weak-flying. For roosting, western mastiff bats appear to favor rocky, rugged areas in lowlands where abundant suitable crevices are available for day roosts (BCI 2008). Roost sites may be in natural rock or in tall buildings, large trees or elsewhere. The reasons for the species decline are poorly understood but probably are related to disturbance, habitat loss, and perhaps widespread use of pesticides. This species was detected during the spring bat monitoring session only. The western mastiff bat is likely not roosting in the

Park as there are no cliffs, but the adjacent El Capitan Preserve does provide suitable roosting habitat. The individuals detected are using the Park as a place to forage.

### **3.3.3 Rare, Threatened or Endangered Wildlife with High Potential to Occur**

Additional information on the species listed below can be found in the Baseline Biological Resources Evaluation (Appendix A).

#### Quino Checkerspot Butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*)

##### *Federally Endangered, San Diego County Group 1*

The Park is within the USFWS Quino checkerspot Survey Area 2. This species has a high potential to occur within the Park based on the presence of the Quino checkerspot's primary host plant, dwarf plantain (*Plantago erecta*).

#### Hermes Copper (*Lycaena hermes*)

##### *San Diego County Group I*

This species has a high potential to occur within the Park based on the presence of the Hermes copper's primary host plant, spiny redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*).

#### Harbison Dun Skipper (*Euphyes vestris harbisoni*)

##### *San Diego County Group I*

This species has a high potential to occur within the Park based on the presence of the Dun skipper's primary host plant, San Diego sedge (*Carex spissa*).

#### Western Spadefoot (*Scaphiopus [=Spea] hammondi*)

##### *State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

This species has high potential to occur in pooled areas of Wildcat Canyon Creek.

#### Coronado Skink (*Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis*)

##### *State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

This species has high potential to occur in the coastal sage-chaparral scrub and native woodlands found at the Park.

#### Coastal Rosy Boa (*Charina trivirgata roseofusca*)

##### *San Diego County Group II*

This species was not detected during the 2008 surveys; however park rangers have observed this species within the Park.

Two-Striped Garter Snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*)

*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group I*

This species has high potential to occur in Wildcat Canyon Creek.

Red Diamond Rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber ruber*)

*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

This species was not detected during the 2008 surveys; however park rangers have observed this species within the Park.

White-Tailed Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*)

*State Fully Protected Species (nesting), San Diego County Group I*

There is high potential for white-tailed kite to occur within the Park as there is suitable foraging and nesting habitat within and immediately adjacent to the boundaries of the Park.

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)

*MSCP Covered Species, San Diego County Group I*

Cooper's hawk has high potential to occur as there is suitable foraging and nesting habitat on site.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

*State Fully Protected Species, San Diego County Group I, MSCP Covered Species*

Golden eagles are known to occur at El Cajon Mountain in the nearby El Capitan Preserve. The Park may be used for foraging, but does not provide suitable nesting habitat for the species. Due to the known proximity of a pair, there is high potential for this species to sporadically occur at the Park.

Sharp-Shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)

*San Diego County Group II*

This species has high potential to occur as a migrant within the Park.

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)*San Diego County Group II*

This species has high potential to occur as a migrant within the Park.

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group I*

This species has high potential to occur as there is appropriate foraging and nesting habitat at the Park.

California Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*)*San Diego County Group II*

This species has been documented in the general vicinity of the Park (Unitt 2004) and has a high potential to occur on site due to the presence of suitable habitat.

Bell's Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*)*San Diego County Group I*

Bell's sage sparrow has high potential to occur as there is suitable nesting habitat for the species within the Park.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*)*Federally Threatened, San Diego County Group I, MSCP Covered Species*

While coastal sage-chaparral scrub habitat is present within the Park, this habitat was burned in the 2003 Cedar Fire and is currently not appropriate for this species and no individuals of this species were observed during general field surveys. Coastal California gnatcatchers have historically been documented in the general vicinity with known occurrences within five miles of the Park, and this species has a high potential to occur as the coastal sage-chaparral scrub habitat in the Park recovers.

Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax fallax*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

This species has high potential to occur at the Park as it was captured in adjacent parks/preserves during 2008 (Jones & Stokes 2008a-c).

San Diego Desert Woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

This species has high potential to occur at the Park as it was captured in adjacent parks/preserves during 2008 (Jones & Stokes 2008a-c).

San Diego Black-Tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group I*

Suitable habitat for this species occurs within the Park.

Mountain Lion (*Puma concolor*)*San Diego County Group II, MSCP Covered Species*

This Park and the surrounding open space provide habitat for mountain lions to use for foraging and cover. As there is a large amount of open space surrounding the Park, potential for this species to move through the Park is high.

Western Red Bat (*Lasiurus blossevillei*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

Both suitable roosting and foraging habitat for the western red bat occurs in the Park.

Pallid Bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

Both suitable roosting and foraging habitat for the Pallid Bat occurs in the Park.

California Legless Lizard (*Anniella pulchra*)*State Species of Special Concern, San Diego County Group II*

This species has a high potential to occur along Wildcat Canyon Creek.

**3.3.4 Non-native and/or Invasive Wildlife Species**

Non-native species detected at the Park include cabbage white butterfly (*Pieris rapae*) and domestic horse. Cabbage white is an extremely common butterfly occurring throughout the year. The larvae of this species feed primarily on garden vegetables, such as cabbage and cauliflower, and are typically only considered a threat to agriculture growing these crops (Orsak 1977). Due to the equestrian nature of the

surrounding community, it's not surprising that sign of domestic horse was detected; however, as a rule horses are not allowed within the Park.

### **3.4 Overall Biological and Conservation Value**

The Park lies within the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon-El Cajon Mountain MSCP designated Core Biological Resource Area. Sixteen core biological resource areas and associated habitat linkages were identified in the MSCP study area. According to the MSCP Plan, core biological resource areas are defined as generally supporting a high concentration of sensitive biological resources which, if lost or fragmented, could not be replaced or mitigated elsewhere.

The Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon-El Cajon Mountain Core Biological Resource Area is adjacent to two habitat linkages: Interstate 8 at Lakeside which provides a connection to habitat south of Interstate 8; and Dehesa to El Capitan Reservoir which provides a connection to areas outside the South County MSCP boundary, and is an important corridor for species that occupy habitats other than coastal sage scrub.

To define the core and linkage areas, an extensive geographic information system database of vegetation communities, species locations, elevation, slope, soils, drainages, and other physical parameters were used to develop a habitat evaluation map for the study area. The habitat evaluation map ranks habitat areas as Very High, High, Moderate, or Low based on their potential to support priority gnatcatcher habitat, and wildlife corridors. According to the MSCP Habitat Evaluation Model, the habitat within the Park ranges from low to very high in value.

The native vegetation communities within the Park have a high ecological value. The most extensive habitat within the Park is coastal sage-chaparral scrub, which is considered MSCP Tier II habitat and supports a variety of sensitive plant and wildlife species. However, due to habitat loss that resulted from the 2003 Cedar Fire, coastal sage-chaparral scrub habitat within the Park is currently considered low quality and has a low potential to support gnatcatchers. The other smaller habitat types within the Park are considered either MSCP Tier I habitat (oak and riparian woodlands) or MSCP Tier III habitat (non-native grasslands). In addition, the habitat features within the Park are highly supportive of a variety of rare and sensitive bat species.

A moderate number of bat species appear to be supported by the Park. The Park is fairly diverse and contains habitat features important to bats in the southern California landscape such as riparian vegetation, oak woodland, scrub vegetation, and a fairly extensive amount of exposed rocky outcrops (Kruttsch 1948, Stokes et al. 2005). The high levels of activity of rock crevice roosting species such as the canyon bat and free-tailed bats are likely attributed to the large amount of rocky habitats present in and adjacent to the Park.

### **3.4.1 Wildlife Linkages and Corridors**

The Park is located in a relatively undeveloped area of San Diego County and abuts large areas of vacant undeveloped land owned by the Helix Water District to the east, and an open space easement area associated with the High Meadow Ranch subdivision (not yet developed with single family residences) to the north. The Park occurs just north of the east–west trending upper San Diego River valley which is a wildlife corridor and provides local movement for a wide range of wildlife including mule deer, coyote, bobcat, and potentially mountain lion. Consequently, though the Park is located adjacent to some areas of developed land, it is considered to be within a core biological resource area and is adjacent to a regional biological linkage (Figure 3).

Movement of larger animals appeared to be concentrated along easily traveled routes with good visibility such as roads and ridges. Most signs of smaller animals were within natural communities with cover. No clear evidence of regular or important, larger-scale dispersal across the site was found, though such movement may well occur. Certainly it can be assumed that larger mammals regularly move on, off of, and across the Park, to and from adjacent open space.

## 4.0 CULTURAL RESOURCES

San Diego County is characterized by a rich and varied historical past. Cultural resources which reflect this history consist of archaeological remains, historic buildings, artifacts, photographs, oral histories, Native American memories and public documents. This RMP identifies the known cultural resources within Louis A. Stelzer County Park and describes areas of potential resources.

In 2008, an archaeological study was completed for four County properties located near Lakeside, including Louis A. Stelzer County Park, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and County environmental guidelines to assist in continued and future land use and resource protection planning. The results of this study can be found in the report entitled, *Cultural Resources Phase I Survey and Inventory of County of San Diego El Capitan and Oakes Preserves and El Monte and Louis A. Stelzer Regional Parks, San Diego County, California*, dated October 2008, and is attached as Appendix B (Jordan and Eckhardt 2008). A Phase I Cultural Resources Survey was not conducted for the Park as sufficient surveys were previously conducted following the 2003 Cedar Fire; however, the report does provide a review of previously recorded resources. The results of the study were used in the preparation of this RMP.

### 4.1 Site History

“A very special Park” is how the book *Legends of Lakeside* refers to Louis A. Stelzer County Park, noting that it was the first County park “designed to accommodate the disabled” (Lakeside Historical Society 1985). Louis A. Stelzer was a German immigrant who became a successful real estate investor in Lakeside. During the 1940s he purchased the 314-acre property as a vacation retreat for his family. It remained in the family until his death in 1971.

In his will, Mr. Stelzer bequeathed the property to the County for public use providing that the County accept two conditions. First and foremost, the public use must emphasize accessibility for the handicapped, and secondly, the development of the Park must be completed and operational by 1990. Whether Mr. Stelzer’s interest in the challenges faced by disabled persons stemmed from personal experience or altruism, it was his dream to create a place where they could have an outdoor experience. And he backed up his dream with money. If the County accepted his conditions, his will provided \$335,000 in trust for construction costs, nearly \$100,000 was set aside to help fund transporting disabled and needy persons to the Park, and another \$20,000 provided for advertising, brochures, maps, and related marketing materials (Lakeside Historical Society 1985).

In May of 1973, the County formally accepted the conditions stipulated in Mr. Stelzer’s will and began designing the Park. By June of 1982, the design was finalized and a construction contract for \$500,000 was awarded. Mr. Stelzer’s dream became a reality on June 17, 1983 when the Park was formally dedicated and opened to the public.

## **4.2 Native American Consultation**

The Park falls within the traditional tribal territory of the Kumeyaay Nation and specifically the Barona and Viejas bands. Native American participation and consultation in the 2008 study was initiated at the onset of background research and continued through the documentation and review process. Correspondence with the California Native American Heritage Commission did not indicate the presence of any Sacred Lands for the affected area, and recommended continuing consultation with Native American contacts. Letters were sent to all Native Americans on the list, plus several others identified as interested parties. No responses were received. Red Tail Monitoring and Research, Inc. provided Native American monitoring and archaeology services for this study.

## **4.3 Cultural Resource Descriptions**

Eleven cultural resources are present within the Park, all of which are prehistoric resources. There are five bedrock milling sites and six temporary camps or multi-use sites.

### **4.3.1 Prehistoric Archaeological Resources**

#### **4.3.1.1 *Bedrock Milling Sites***

##### **CA-SDI-6844 (P-37-006844)**

This site is located east of Wildcat Canyon and approximately a quarter mile south of the northern boundary of the Park. This is a late prehistoric milling station adjacent to a stream. Surveys undertaken in January of 1979 establish this as a Kumeyaay milling station.

##### **CA-SDI-6845 (P-37-006845)**

This site is located west of Wildcat Canyon, on a small knoll overlooking Wildcat Canyon Creek. Like site SDI-6844, this is a late prehistoric Kumeyaay milling station, surveyed in January of 1979. However, instead of multiple milling elements being present, this is a single feature with a single milling slick.

##### **CA-SDI-6846 (P-37-006846)**

This site is located east of Wildcat Canyon Creek, adjacent to a picnic area. This prehistoric site consists of four deep mortar elements; two each on two separate rocks by the picnic area. Site condition is recorded as poor, due to the proximity to picnic areas and modern foot traffic. The construction of the picnic area and a nearby playground likely disturbed the site as well, making it unlikely that any artifacts would be uncovered in context by surface collection or perhaps even by excavation.

CA-SDI-17,089 (P-37-025694)

This site is located on the northwest bank of Wildcat Canyon Creek, just below Wildcat Canyon Road. A previous site report from 2004 indicates the presence of more than twenty-five milling elements (ovals) on a cluster of boulders.

CA-SDI-17,091 (P-37-025696)

This site is located east of Wildcat Canyon Creek, on the edge of a picnic area. There are three features present with 15 elements present on the varying features. The proximity of the picnic area and playground unfortunately lends itself to a poor site condition; children were observed playing on the rocks nearby, and similar modern contamination of the site is suspected in relation to SDI-6846. The Sweets, volunteers for San Diego County Parks, hypothesize that perhaps this site and SDI-6846 are part of a single larger site that has been “destroyed by Park development”.

**4.3.1.2 Temporary Camps or Multi-Use Sites**CA-SDI-4901 (P-37-004901)

This site is situated on the San Diego River Plain, at the mouth of Wildcat Canyon, within the unsectioned boundaries of Rancho El Cajon. This is a prehistoric camp site located in a cultivated field. Artifacts observed included Tizon brownware sherds, ground stone, precision lithics, and percussion lithics. The site condition is noted as poor, having been impacted by historic cultivation previous to its acquirement by San Diego County.

CA-SDI-4902 (P-37-004902)

This site is located on the southern border of the Park, south of Willow Road. This site contains a prehistoric semi-circular rock wall feature. Observation of location of the site led to conclusion of each survey that this was a hunting blind due to its situation with a view of the valley below.

CA-SDI-6847 (P-37-006847)

This site is located between the riparian trail of the Park and Wildcat Canyon Road. This is a prehistoric site consisting of a collection of boulders, at least three of which have milling elements. Artifact presence includes at least four potsherds, but no photographs or other descriptions of these sherds are present in previous site reports.

CA-SDI-13,652 (P-37-013652)

This site is a re-evaluation of three separate sites previously catalogued in 1979 as CA-SDI-4517, CA-SDI-4900, and CA-SDI-4913, and re-classified as a single site, CA-SDI-

13652 in 1993. This site is located on both the north and south sides of Willow Road, and north of the San Diego River and river floodplain.

This is a late prehistoric occupation site, consisting of numerous milling features (over 10 features), a rock shelter, pottery, organics (shell, bone, midden), debitage, fire cracked rock, and a single projectile point.

CA-SDI-17,088 (P-37-025693)

This site is located southeast of Wildcat Canyon creek. There is a nearby Park trail that likely follows the route of a previously existing road, thus accounting for the contamination of trash accumulation. This site appears to be a milling station, with milling elements present on five bedrock features. Also observed was a small broken bowl within the boundaries of the features. No other sherds or lithics were found at the site. This single bowl was collected for curation at the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation, County Historian Office.

CA-SDI-17,090 (P-37-025695)

This site is located on the southwest bank of Wildcat Canyon Creek, within sight of Wildcat Canyon Road, near the southern boundary of the Park. The site consists of a rock shelter with milling elements on the front and top of the shelter. Also present was a single potsherd above the shelter and a pictograph recorded by Ken Hedges of the San Diego Museum of Man. There is also indication that the October 2003 Cedar Fire did affect this site and feature, decreasing the site condition to a rating of "fair".

#### **4.4 Resource Significance**

Site types and periods within the Park appear to be a combination of the heavily occupied locales at the south base of El Capitan Preserve and the dispersed special-task and small food processing sites present in Oakoasis Preserve. Resources recorded in the Park, based on previous notes, all appear to represent Late Prehistoric period sites. Dense long-term occupation with evidence of intensive resource procurement is exemplified at site CA-SDI-13,652, a habitation site located down river. Pottery, mortars, quartz debitage, and a Desert Side-Notch projectile point are evidence for a Late Prehistoric age. CA-SDI-4901 also located along the San Diego River also contains pottery and a heavy midden deposit representative of long-term occupation.

All other sites recorded within the Park are located along Wildcat Canyon Creek with the exception of one, CA-SDI-4902, a possible hunting blind overlooking the San Diego River. CA-SDI-6844, CA-SDI-6845, CA-SDI-6846, CA-SDI-17,089, and CA-SDI-17,091 are all small food processing sites consisting of less than five features, many of which contain mortars or oval type basins. CA-SDI-17,088 has both pottery and bedrock milling features with mortars representative of Late Prehistoric age. Two sites, CA-SDI-6847 and CA-SDI-17,090, include pottery, bedrock milling with mortars, and rock art.

The prehistoric sites at the Park seem to show a pattern of intense occupation along the river with outlying smaller camps up the creek. Wildcat Canyon Creek may represent a travel route north into the area of Barona or possibly another passage to San Vicente Creek through Oakoasis Preserve.

No site evaluations were conducted for the 2008 inventory. Indications from surface examinations and record documentation are that a number of the sites included in this inventory possess important scientific and cultural qualities. Many of these resources may well qualify for local and state registers; some may qualify for national listing. Under County guidelines cultural resources are considered significant until recommendations based on evaluation testing suggest otherwise (County of San Diego 2007).

## **5.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### **5.1 Management Goals and Objectives**

Management of the natural and cultural resources within the Park will be guided by the general goals and objectives of both the County and the MSCP.

#### **5.1.1 County-Specific**

County-specific goals and objectives used to guide the management of resources within the Park can be found in the County Strategic Plan, the DPR Strategic Plan, as well as the Lakeside Community Plan. The County's overall goal or mission, as indicated in the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, is to provide the residents of San Diego County with superior County services in terms of quality, timeliness and value in order to improve the region's quality of life. The Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation is closely aligned with the County's strategic initiatives.

The DPR Strategic Plan 2008-2013, outlines the department's priorities for accomplishing its mission over a five-year period. The overall goal or mission of the DPR is to provide opportunities for high quality parks and recreation experiences and to preserve regionally significant natural and cultural resources. The DPR makes this mission a reality through programs that create healthy communities, protect valuable natural and cultural resources, provide recreation opportunities, reduce crime and vandalism, and foster economic development.

In addition, the Lakeside Community Plan provides goals and policies which are designed to fit the specific or unique circumstances existing within this community. Goals provided in this plan seek to preserve Lakeside's rural atmosphere and unique resources, and provide a wide variety of recreational activities and facilities which will meet the needs and enrich the lives of all residents of Lakeside. To this end, the plan provides policies and recommendations which are meant to guide the allocation of County resources towards prescribed outcomes consistent with the goals.

#### **5.1.2 MSCP-Related**

The MSCP Plan and the County's Subarea Plan provide both general and segment-specific goals and objectives. The Park is located within the Metro-Lakeside-Jamul Segment of the MSCP Subarea Plan and, as discussed in Section 3.4, lies between two habitat linkages within the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon-El Cajon Mountain Core Biological Resource Area. The overall MSCP goal is to maintain and enhance biological diversity in the region and conserve viable populations of endangered, threatened, and key sensitive species and their habitat, thereby preventing local extirpation and ultimate extinction. This is intended to minimize the need for future listings, while enabling economic growth in the region.

In order to assure that the goal of the MSCP preserve is attained and fulfilled, management objectives for the County of San Diego MSCP Subarea are as follows:

1. To ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of native ecosystem function and natural processes throughout the MSCP preserve.
2. To protect the existing and restored biological resources from disturbance-causing or incompatible activities within and adjacent to the MSCP preserve while accommodating compatible public recreational uses.
3. To enhance and restore, where feasible, the full range of native plant associations in strategic locations and functional wildlife connections to adjoining habitat in order to provide viable wildlife and sensitive species habitat.
4. To facilitate monitoring of selected target species, habitats, and linkages in order to ensure long-term persistence of viable populations of priority plant and animal species and to ensure functional habitats and linkages.
5. To provide for flexible management of the MSCP preserve that can adapt to changing circumstances to achieve the above objectives.

### **5.1.3 Management Directives and Implementation Measures**

Based on the above management goals and objectives, recommended management directives have been identified. In accordance with the Framework Management Plan, the ASMDs have been designated as Priority 1 or Priority 2. This designation recognizes the fact that many of the directives cannot be immediately implemented, but instead will occur over the life of the MSCP. The ability to implement and the timing of many of the management directives will be directly related to the availability of funding in any fiscal year and on the priority. The priorities are, therefore, intended to assist in decisions on where and how to spend limited funds. Priority designations are as follows:

**Priority 1:** Directives that protect the resources in the Park and the MSCP preserve, including management actions that are necessary to ensure that sensitive species are adequately protected.

**Priority 2:** Directives other than those required for sensitive species status and other long-term items that may be implemented during the life of the MSCP as funding becomes available.

The management directives provided in this RMP have been divided into five elements: A) Biological Resources, B) Vegetation Management, C) Public Use, Trails, and Recreation, D) Operations and Facility Maintenance, and E) Cultural Resources.

## **5.2 Biological Resources Element (A)**

### **5.2.1 Biological Monitoring**

Biological monitoring will be performed onsite to gather information that will assist DPR in making land management decisions to conform to MSCP goals and objectives, as well as DPR objectives. The biological monitoring that will occur will be designed to guide decisions at the individual preserve level. The first year of monitoring has been conducted (baseline surveys) and the results are included as Appendix A. Additional monitoring results will be incorporated into stand alone monitoring reports. These reports may recommend revisions to the management directives contained within this RMP.

It is recognized that subregional monitoring has been designed to answer concerns and objectives on a larger scale. No subregional monitoring is occurring at Louis A. Stelzer County Park. While objectives of individual preserve and subregional monitoring may be different, subregional monitoring methods that have been developed or are under development may assist monitoring methods and decisions at the preserve level for particular species and habitats.

The key to successful monitoring at the individual preserve level, such that data gathered is not duplicative and meets individual preserve level objectives, is close coordination with stakeholder groups that are performing subregional monitoring, sharing of data, future plans and schedules and keeping abreast of monitoring methods as they are developed. To ensure uniformity in the gathering and treatment of data, a (SANDAG) land management working group has been formed and will designate a land manager who will assist jurisdictions in coordinating monitoring programs, analyzing data, and providing other information and technical assistance. The DPR will work closely with this group.

MSCP covered species have been prioritized for monitoring in the 2006 report prepared by San Diego State University (SDSU) entitled *San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program Covered Species Prioritization* (Regan et al. 2006). Subregional monitoring methods have been developed for rare plants (McEachern et al. 2007) and animals (USFWS 2008). These references will assist DPR in developing monitoring methods at the preserve level, as well as the management directives that are identified for specific species in this document.

#### **Management Directive A.1 – Conduct habitat monitoring to ensure MSCP goals and DPR objective are met (*Priority 1*)**

***Implementation Measure A.1.1:*** DPR will conduct habitat monitoring at five-year intervals. Habitat monitoring will address both temporary and permanent habitat changes as well as habitat value. The main product of this monitoring will be a report which will include a discussion of monitoring objectives, monitoring methods to meet those objectives and an updated vegetation community map.

**Implementation Measure A.1.2:** DPR will conduct general wildlife and rare plant surveys at five-year intervals utilizing and refining baseline monitoring methods to facilitate trend and distribution status analysis. This information will be included in the habitat monitoring report.

**Implementation Measure A.1.3:** DPR will conduct monitoring for invasive plant species at five-year intervals to assess invasion or re-invasion by exotic plant species within the Park. These surveys will focus on areas where invasive, non-native plants have been detected in the past, but also look for new occurrences in the Park. This information will be included in the habitat monitoring report.

### **Management Directive A.2 – Conduct corridor monitoring to ensure MSCP goals are met (*Priority 2*)**

As discussed in Section 3.4, even though the Park does not lie within a primary linkage, it is located within the Lake Jennings/Wildcat Canyon-El Cajon Mountain Core Biological Resource Area, which is adjacent to two biological linkages. Additionally, the Park is located just north of the San Diego River Valley which is a wildlife corridor for local wildlife movement. While corridor monitoring within the Park will take place at the preserve level, it anticipated that it will provide data for better understanding movement on a regional scale.

**Implementation Measure A.2.1:** DPR will conduct corridor monitoring at five-year intervals in conjunction with habitat monitoring and general wildlife and rare plant surveys (as described in implementation measures A.1.1 and A.1.2). The main product of this monitoring will be a report documenting the results of the current assessment of habitat linkage function including a list of species detected.

### **5.2.2 MSCP Covered Species-Specific Monitoring and Management Conditions**

Not all species occurring within the Park are expected to require species-specific management. It is expected, rather, that other management directives and implementation measures outlined under the Biological Resources and Vegetation Management elements should be sufficient to protect and manage optimal habitat conditions for most, if not all, species to maintain and/or thrive within the Park. However, there are some species listed as MSCP Covered Species in the MSCP Subarea Plan which require additional management measures, particularly if monitoring indicates that the general guidelines are not sufficient to maintain acceptable population levels.

Table 3-5 of the Final MSCP Plan (City of San Diego 1998) provides management and/or monitoring measures for specific MSCP Covered Species. In addition, the SDSU Prioritization Report (Regan et al. 2006) classifies MSCP Covered Species as Risk Group 1 (most endangered), Risk Group 2 (moderately endangered), and Risk Group 3 (less endangered). The SDSU report also identifies the threats/risk factors facing these species and ranks these factors as high, moderate, or low degree of threat.

This RMP will only discuss management conditions addressing high and moderate threats for Risk Group 1 species, none of which currently occur within the Park.

**Management Directive A.3 - Comply with applicable conditions of coverage for MSCP Covered Species (*Priority 1*)**

***Implementation Measure A.3.1:*** Implement the species-specific monitoring and management conditions as listed in Table 3-5 of the MSCP (City of San Diego 1998) and the SDSU Prioritization Report (Regan et al. 2006) for all MSCP Covered Species detected within the Park.

The conditions of coverage for those species currently known to occur in the Park are listed below followed by an explanation of how management activities in the Park will comply.

Lakeside Ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*)

*Monitoring:* Table 3-5 - Habitat Based and Management Plan/Directives; SDSU – Risk Group 2

*Management Conditions:* Area-specific management directives must include specific management measures to address the autecology and natural history of the species and to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire. Management measures to accomplish this may include prescribed fire.

Suitable habitat will be maintained, as needed, through multiple implementation measures under management directives B.1 and B.2. Management measures to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire are addressed through vegetation management implementation measure B.4.3.

San Diego Goldenstar (*Bloomeria [Muilla] clevelandii*)

*Monitoring:* Table 3-5 – Site Specific Monitoring Plan; SDSU - Risk Group 2

*Management Conditions:* Area-specific management directives must include monitoring of the transplanted population(s) and specific measures to protect against detrimental edge effects to this species.

Populations of San Diego goldenstar will be monitored through implementation of MSCP habitat monitoring and rare plant surveys (as described in implementation measures A.1.1 and A.1.2). Edge effects are addressed through multiple implementation measures under management directives D.7 and D.8, and implementation measure B.4.1.

San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*)

*Monitoring:* Table 3-5 - Site Specific Monitoring Plan; SDSU – Risk Group 3

*Management Conditions:* Area-specific management directives must include specific measures to maintain native ant species, discourage the Argentine ant, and to protect against detrimental edge effects to this species.

No Argentine ants were observed within the Park in 2008; however, future detection will be addressed by general wildlife surveys (as described in implementation measure A.1.2). Edge effects are addressed through multiple implementation measures under management directives D.7 and D.8, and implementation measure B.4.1.

Orange-Throated Whiptail (*Cnemidophorus hyperythrus beldingi*)

*Monitoring:* Table 3-5 - Site Specific Monitoring Plan; SDSU – Risk Group 3

*Management Conditions:* Area-specific management directives must address edge effects.

Edge effects are addressed through multiple implementation measures under management directives D.7 and D.8, and implementation measure B.4.1.

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

*Monitoring:* Table 3-5 - Habitat Based and Management Plans/Directives (nest sites); SDSU – Risk Group 3

*Management Conditions:* Area-specific management directives must: (1) manage agricultural and disturbed lands (which become part of the preserve) within 4 miles of nesting habitat to provide foraging habitat; (2) include an impact avoidance area (900 feet or maximum possible within the preserve) around active nests; and (3) include measures for maintaining winter foraging habitat in preserve areas in Proctor Valley, around Sweetwater Reservoir, San Miguel Ranch, Otay Ranch east of Wueste Road, Lake Hodges, and San Pasqual Valley. The preserve management coordination group shall coordinate efforts to manage for wintering northern harriers' foraging habitat within the MSCP preserve.

No nesting territories were observed within the Park during the 2008 surveys; however, future detection will be addressed through general wildlife surveys (as described in implementation measure A.1.2). Foraging habitat will be assessed through implementation of MSCP habitat monitoring (as described in implementation measure A.1.1) and maintained, as needed, through multiple implementation measures under management directives B.1 and B.2. Any potential impacts from future projects will be analyzed and mitigation proposed, as necessary, through

environmental review pursuant to CEQA and will be subject to approval by the Wildlife Agencies.

Southern California Rufous-Crowned Sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*)

*Monitoring:* Table 3-5 - Habitat Based; SDSU – Risk Group 3

*Management Conditions:* Area-specific management directives must include maintenance of dynamic processes, such as fire, to perpetuate some open phases of coastal sage scrub with herbaceous components.

The coastal sage-chaparral scrub habitat within the Park is continuing to recover from the 2003 Cedar Fire and currently contains open phases with herbaceous components. The need for future vegetation management will be assessed through MSCP habitat monitoring (as described in implementation measure A.1.1). Dynamic processes, such as fire, will be maintained through vegetation management implementation measure B.4.3.

### **5.2.3 Non-Native Invasive Wildlife Species Control**

#### **Management Directive A.4 – Reduce, control, or where feasible eradicate invasive, non-native fauna known to be detrimental to native species and/or the local ecosystem (*Priority 2*)**

No invasive, non-native wildlife species were detected within the Park during the 2008 surveys. However, if future survey/monitoring efforts detect any such species within the Park, the County will implement the following measures.

***Implementation Measure A.4.1:*** Conduct surveys for the presence of invasive, non-native wildlife species of management concern at five-year intervals in conjunction with habitat monitoring and general wildlife surveys (as described in implementation measures A.1.1 and A.1.2).

***Implementation Measure A.4.2:*** If invasive, non-native species are detected within the Park and detrimental effects of these species are noted, preparation and implementation of a trapping and removal program, or other means of humane control, will be initiated.

***Implementation Measure A.4.3:*** On a case-by-case basis, some limited trapping of non-native predators may be necessary at strategic locations, and where determined feasible to protect ground- and shrub-nesting birds, lizards, and other sensitive species from excessive predation. If implemented, the program would only be on a temporary basis and where significant problem has been identified and therefore needed to maintain balance of wildlife in the Park and the MSCP preserve. The program would be operated in a humane manner, providing adequate shade and water, and checking all traps twice daily. Signage at access points and noticing of

adjacent residents will inform people that trapping occurs, and how to retrieve and contain their pets.

#### **5.2.4 Future Research**

The MSCP preserve presents a rich array of research opportunities for the academic and professional communities, primarily in disciplines related to biology, ecology, and natural resources management, but also ranging to environmental design, sociology, and park use and administration. The County of San Diego encourages research within the MSCP preserve in order to gain valuable information unavailable through other means.

There are a multitude of unanswered questions posed by the development of a multiple species and habitat system where little literature or previous research exists on the majority of species inhabiting the region. In addition, research on vegetation associations and habitats, natural regeneration, restoration, fragmentation, edge effects, genetics, viability, predation, wildlife movement, and much more, would be useful to provide information on the health and dynamics of an urbanized open space system as well as how to improve conditions.

#### **Management Directive A.5 – Allow for future research opportunities for the Academic and Professional Scientific and Biologic Activities within the Park (Priority 2)**

**Implementation Measure A.5.1:** DPR will accept and review proposals for scientific research, monitoring, and habitat restoration and enhancement activities which are permitted within the MSCP preserve. Proposed research activities will be subject to approval by DPR. All such activities must obtain any necessary permits and shall be consistent with this RMP. Additionally, any person conducting research of any kind within the Park shall obtain a Right-of-Entry Permit from DPR, which will outline the precautions to be taken to preserve and protect sensitive biological and cultural resources within the Park and require results of any research to be made available to DPR.

### **5.3 Vegetation Management Element (B)**

#### **5.3.1 Habitat Restoration**

#### **Management Directive B.1 – Restore degraded habitats to protect and enhance populations of rare and sensitive species through stabilization of eroded lands and strategic revegetation (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure B.1.1:** DPR will assess and determine the need for restoration activities within the Park. The need for restoration activities will be determined based on the results of habitat monitoring (as described in implementation measure A.1.1) and trail maintenance activities (as described in

implementation measure C.5.3). Any proposed restoration activities should utilize current, accepted techniques and avoid/minimize impacts to sensitive species or native habitats. Any proposed revegetation activities should use only local native species. No active restoration is currently needed. Passive restoration (recovery from fire) is ongoing.

### **5.3.2 Non-Native Plant Species Removal and Control**

#### **Management Directive B.2 – Reduce, control, or where feasible eradicate invasive, non-native flora known to be detrimental to native species and/or the local ecosystem (*Priority 1*)**

As described in Section 3.2.4 above, native and naturalized plant species primarily dominate the vegetation communities within the Park. However, several patches of invasive plants listed by Cal-IPC occur within the westernmost portion of Wildcat Canyon Creek.

***Implementation Measure B.2.1:*** DPR park rangers will routinely pull weeds or remove any non-native plant species in early stages of growth found along trails. DPR will also coordinate with volunteer groups to do non-native plant species removal days at locations identified during invasive plant surveys and monitoring (as described in implementation measure A.1.3).

***Implementation Measure B.2.2:*** DPR will coordinate with other agencies, non-profit organizations, and/or volunteer groups in order to seek funding and implement larger invasive, non-native plant removal projects within the Park, as necessary.

#### **Management Directive B.3 – Manage and minimize the expansion of invasive, non-native flora within the Park (*Priority 2*)**

***Implementation Measure B.3.1:*** DPR will implement an educational program for Park visitors and adjacent residents in order to discourage introduction of invasive, non-native plants into the Park. Information provided will include identification of invasive plants harmful to the Park, and prevention methods. The program may also encourage residents to voluntarily remove invasive exotics from their landscaping. See also implementation measure D.8.1.

### **5.3.3 Fire prevention, control, and management**

Current fire management activities in the Park include six fuel modification zones along the northern and western boundaries of the Park where the Park abuts private residences (Figure 7). In the event of a fire, adequate access to the Park is provided by the existing SDG&E dirt access roads. There are no fire breaks within the Park.

#### **Management Directive B.4 – Provide for necessary fire management activities that are sensitive to natural and cultural resources protection (*Priority 1*)**

**Implementation Measure B.4.1:** The County will maintain the established fuel modification zones on Park property adjacent to the existing residential structures that are within 100 feet of the Park property boundary. The intent of a fuel modification zone is to protect habitable structures adjacent to the Park from wildfires. It may further protect the resources within the Park by absorbing some of the “edge effects” that might otherwise occur within the Park.

Management of the fuel modification zones will adhere to CAL FIRE and/or Lakeside Fire Protection District requirements.

**Implementation Measure B.4.2:** The existing SDG&E dirt access roads within the Park will be maintained annually to keep the roads fuel free. In addition, DPR will continue to coordinate with SDG&E, CAL FIRE and/or the Lakeside Fire Protection District to determine what improvements need to be made to make fire response feasible throughout the Park.

**Implementation Measure B.4.3:** Vegetation management is not a current need within the Park to address wildfire issues as vegetation is continuing to recover after the 2003 Cedar Fire and is anticipated to be fire-resistant for the next 10 to 15 years. The need for vegetation management will be assessed through habitat monitoring (as described in implementation measure A.1.1). DPR will coordinate with CAL FIRE and/or the Lakeside Fire Protection District to assess the need to develop an integrated Vegetation Management Plan that will allow environmental documentation for strategic fuels management to be conducted if, and when, needed. A Vegetation Management Plan will also identify likely locations for equipment staging areas and fire breaks, assisting fire fighting activities to avoid known cultural sites, if feasible.

## **5.4 Public Use, Trails, and Recreation Element (C)**

### **5.4.1 Public Access**

**Management Directive C.1 – Limit types of public uses to those that are appropriate for the site (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure C.1.1:** The following public uses are prohibited in the Park. Park rangers are responsible for enforcing these restrictions and may call the sheriff for legal enforcement, as appropriate.

- a. Off-road or cross-country vehicle and public off-highway recreational vehicle activity are considered incompatible uses in the MSCP preserve, and are therefore prohibited in the Park, except for law enforcement, Park management, and/or emergency purposes.
- b. Hunting or discharge of firearms is an incompatible use in the MSCP preserve, and is therefore prohibited in the Park, except for law enforcement, and/or emergency purposes.

- c. Poaching or collecting plant or animal species, archaeological or historical artifacts or fossils from the Park is generally prohibited; however, the County may authorize collecting upon approval for scientific research, revegetation or restoration purposes, or species recovery programs. In addition, impacts to historic features are prohibited except upon approval by the County.
- d. Fishing, swimming, and wading in Wildcat Canyon Creek
- e. Camping (including homeless and itinerant worker camps)
- f. Feeding wildlife
- g. Domestic animals, except horses and leashed dogs
- h. Smoking
- i. Campfires/Open Flames
- j. Off-trail biking, hiking or equestrian use
- k. Littering

**Implementation Measure C.1.2:** Prohibited uses will be clearly specified on kiosks, signage and/or trail maps.

### **Management Directive C.2 – Manage public access in sensitive biological and cultural resource areas within the Park (*Priority 1*)**

**Implementation Measure C.2.1:** DPR has identified and mapped narrow endemics and critical populations, and all covered species populations in the Park so that these areas can be avoided and/or monitored. Updated information on sensitive species in relation to public access points will be obtained during general wildlife and rare plant surveys in conjunction with habitat monitoring (as described in implementation measures A.1.1 and A.1.2).

**Implementation Measure C.2.2:** DPR will provide sufficient signage to clearly identify public access to the Park. Barriers such as vegetation, rocks/boulders or fencing may be necessary to protect highly sensitive areas. The appropriate types of barriers to be used will be determined based on location, setting and use.

**Implementation Measure C.2.3:** Park rangers will ensure park users picnic within the developed portion of the Park in order to minimize littering, feeding of wildlife, and attracting or increasing populations of exotic or nuisance wildlife (e.g., opossums, raccoons, skunks).

### **Management Directive C.3 – Provide appropriate interpretive and educational materials (*Priority 2*)**

**Implementation Measure C.3.1:** DPR will share outreach and educational information and notify the public of volunteer opportunities that advance the

management, monitoring, and stewardship resources available, and objectives of this RMP. This information will be provided on the DPR website, [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org).

**Implementation Measure C.3.2:** Opportunities for educational trail-side signage and educational kiosks will be identified within the Park. In addition, signage provided at access points and on trails maps provides a form of education. See also implementation measures E.2.4 and E.3.1.

**Implementation Measure C.3.3:** When possible, park rangers assigned to this Park will organize and conduct interpretative walks or programs within the Park. During these interpretative walks or programs the ranger should distribute the “Living Close to Nature” brochure. This brochure discusses how to live in harmony with wildlife. The interpretative walks and programs should be conducted in accordance with park ranger availability.

#### **5.4.2 Fencing and Gates**

Currently, two vehicle access gates are located at the entrance/exit to the parking area of the Park.

#### **Management Directive C.4 – Install and maintain fencing and gates within the Park (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure C.4.1:** Ranger staff will install fencing and/or gates at points of unauthorized public access as appropriate. Points of unauthorized access will be identified in conjunction with trail monitoring activities (as described in implementation measure C.5.1).

**Implementation Measure C.4.2:** Ranger staff will regularly inspect and maintain all fencing and gates within the Park. Fencing segments and gates will be repaired or replaced as necessary.

#### **5.4.3 Trail and Access Road Maintenance**

The entrance to the Park and associated parking area is accessible directly from Wildcat Canyon Road and no public access roads are found within the Park. The Park includes approximately 1.1 miles of trails that include both single track footpaths and SDG&E access roads.

#### **Management Directive C.5 – Properly maintain public access roads, staging areas and trails for user safety, to protect natural and cultural resources, and to provide high-quality user experiences (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure C.5.1:** Ranger staff will monitor public access roads, staging areas, and trails for degradation and off-trail access and use, and provide necessary repair/maintenance as needed. See also implementation measure B.4.2.

**Implementation Measure C.5.2:** Where rerouting of a trail is deemed necessary for maintenance or remediation, rerouting actions will be accompanied by educational support and public notification through signs and public meeting announcements. An implementation schedule should be written by DPR Operations staff when maintenance or remediation is deemed necessary.

The trail will be posted with signage that indicates rerouting and the primary reason for the reroute (e.g., erosion issues, and sensitive biological resource impacts). Finally, signs should provide contact information for anyone wishing to provide input on trail use or gain additional information regarding rerouting of trails.

Once posted, the trails in need of maintenance should be blocked with split rail fencing or rock borders. These blocks should be constructed in a manner that helps to prevent circumvention. Enforcement of trail rerouting would require increased ranger patrols of these areas and investigations to determine if the barriers are effective.

**Implementation Measure C.5.3:** DPR will restore degraded habitats and reduce detrimental edge effects through maintenance and stabilization of trails and strategic revegetation as needed. Measures to counter the effects of trail erosion may include the use of stone or wood cross-joints, edge plantings of native grasses, and mulching of the trail per the Community Trails Master Plan (County of San Diego 2005). See also implementation measure B.1.1.

**Implementation Measure C.5.4:** If unauthorized trail formation is observed by ranger staff, those specific areas will be posted with clear signage reminding the public to remain on authorized trails.

#### **5.4.4 Signage and Lighting**

##### **5.4.4.1 Signs**

#### **Management Directive C.6 – Develop, install, and maintain appropriate signage to effectively communicate important information to Park visitors (*Priority 1*)**

Signs educate, provide direction, and promote sensitive resources and enjoyment of natural areas. Types of signs within the Park may include those necessary to: protect sensitive biological and cultural resources (see E.2.4); provide educational and interpretive information (see C.3.2 and E.3.1); explain rules of the Park (see C.1.2 and D.2.1); direct public access (see C.2.2 and C.5.4); and, provide Parks operations information (see A.4.3 and C.5.2).

**Implementation Measure C.6.1:** Park ranger staff will regularly inspect and maintain all posted signs within the Park in good condition. Signs shall be kept free from vandalism and will be repaired or replaced as necessary.

#### **5.4.4.2 Lighting**

Artificial lighting adversely impacts habitat value of the Park and MSCP preserve, particularly for nocturnal species. Therefore, lighting should not be permitted in the Park except where essential for roadways, facility, use, and safety.

#### **Management Directive C.7 – Provide appropriate lighting within the Park (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure C.7.1:** Low pressure sodium illumination sources or low energy alternatives should be used within the Park, while avoiding low voltage outdoor or trail lights, spot lights, or bug lights. All existing lighting sources within the Park should be retrofitted with low pressure sodium illumination sources or low energy alternatives, as appropriate. These lighting sources should be directed away from the MSCP preserve areas within the Park.

### **5.5 Operations and Facility Maintenance Element (D)**

#### **5.5.1 Litter/Trash and Materials Storage**

#### **Management Directive D.1 – Maintain a safe and healthy environment for Park users (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure D.1.1:** Trash receptacles will be provided and maintained at the main trail access. Trash receptacles should be designed to be secure from intrusion by wildlife species. Ranger staff will regularly empty trash receptacles at least once a week or more/less as deemed necessary.

**Implementation Measure D.1.2:** The permanent storage of hazardous and toxic materials within the Park will be prohibited. Any temporary storage must be in accordance with applicable regulations, and otherwise designed to minimize any potential impacts.

#### **Management Directive D.2 – Publicize and enforce regulations regarding littering/dumping (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure D.2.1:** Lists of regulations will be provided to Park users (e.g., posted on kiosks or at the ranger station) clearly stating that littering within the Park is illegal, and will provide appropriate DPR contacts to report any littering observed.

**Implementation Measure D.2.2:** Regulations regarding littering/dumping will be enforced by park rangers (County Code of Regulatory Ordinance Section 41.116). Penalties for littering and dumping will be imposed by law enforcement officers sufficient to prevent recurrence and reimburse costs to remove and dispose of debris, restore the area if needed, and pay for additional DPR staff time. Areas

where dumping recurs will be evaluated for potential barrier placement. Additional monitoring and enforcement will be provided as needed.

### **5.5.2 Hydrological Management**

Native habitats in the MSCP preserve have evolved, in part, on the distribution and flow characteristics of water. MSCP preserve property should be managed to maintain existing natural drainages and watershed and to restore or minimize changes to natural hydrological processes. Proposed structures and activities should be evaluated for effects on hydraulics, and remedial actions should be taken as needed. Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be used both within and outside the preserve system to maintain water quality.

#### **Management Directive D.3 – Retain Wildcat Canyon Creek in its natural condition (Priority 1)**

The existing riparian hiking trail follows alongside Wildcat Canyon Creek.

**Implementation Measure D.3.1:** No additional activities will be proposed adjacent to Wildcat Canyon Creek located in the central portion of the Park. Potential threats to jurisdictional waters from any activities including trail use shall be identified and impacts avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

### **5.5.3 Emergency, Safety and Police Services**

The Framework Management Plan explains that the interface between current and future urban development and MSCP preserve areas requires increased coordination between the preserve managers and agencies responsible for public safety. The MSCP preserve system, including Louis A. Stelzer County Park, must accommodate access for emergency response and fire control and management. In the event that entry into the Park by law enforcement agencies is needed in the routine performance of their duties, use of existing roads and trails should be encouraged. In emergencies where there is a direct threat to public safety, the law enforcement agency should contact DPR whenever feasible.

Law enforcement and fire control agencies, the National Guard, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), the Border Patrol, and organizations and agencies that respond to natural disasters shall be permitted to perform their activities within any preserve system subject to all applicable requirements of state and federal law.

#### **Management Directive D.4 – Maintain or increase the ability of emergency response personnel to deal with emergencies within the Park or vicinity (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure D.4.1:** Law enforcement officials will be invited to access Park property as necessary to enforce the law. If it becomes apparent that

extensive enforcement activities are necessary, DPR will coordinate with the applicable agencies to inform field personnel of how to minimize damage to particularly sensitive resources.

**Implementation Measure D.4.2:** All medical, rescue, and other emergency agencies will be allowed to access Park property to carry out operations necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Access issues are further discussed in implementation measure B.4.2.

**Management Directive D.5 – Provide for a safe recreational experience for Park visitors (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure D.5.1:** In the event of a natural disaster, such as a fire or flood, park ranger staff shall evacuate the Park and coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center. In addition, staff will coordinate with the local agency in charge of responding to the emergency and, if possible, assist where necessary.

**Implementation Measure D.5.2:** DPR will implement the Site Emergency Response Plan (SERP) prepared for the Park. The SERP is on file with the DPR.

**5.5.4 Adjacency Management Issues**

As described in Section 2.4.2, there is currently only limited development immediately contiguous to the Park. The establishment of the MSCP preserve system does not include regulatory authority on properties adjacent to the Park; however, the County will require adjacent property owners to follow guidelines when planning and implementing uses and activities that can be regulated when located immediately adjacent to the site.

**Management Directive D.6 – Coordinate with adjacent open space land managers (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure D.6.1:** DPR will coordinate with High Meadow Ranch Limited Partnership (in association with contiguous open space preserved as part of the High Meadow Ranch subdivision) on an annual basis, or more regularly as needed, to ensure contiguous preserved land is managed consistently and in accordance with MSCP.

**Management Directive D.7 - Enforce Park and MSCP preserve boundaries (Priority 1)**

**Implementation Measure D.7.1:** DPR will enforce, prevent, and remove illegal intrusions into the Park and MSCP preserve (e.g., orchards, decks) on an annual basis, in addition to a complaint basis.

**Management Directive D.8 – Educate residents of surrounding areas regarding adjacency issues (Priority 2)**

**Implementation Measure D.8.1:** DPR will provide information on this RMP to residents adjacent to the Park to heighten environmental awareness, and inform residents of access, appropriate landscaping, construction or disturbance within the Park boundaries, pet intrusion, fire management, and other adjacency issues. This RMP will also be accessible on the DPR website and will thus be available to adjacent residents and to the general public.

## **5.6 Cultural Resources Element (E)**

The goal of this section of the RMP is long-term preservation, public interpretation of the cultural resources, and interaction with the bands in whose traditional tribal territory this Park exists.

### **Management Directive E.1 – Identify, record, and assess the significance of all cultural resources within the Park (Priority 2)**

**Implementation Measure E.1.1:** Assess each known cultural site within the Park for eligibility as a Historical Landmark, and to the California Resources Historic Register/National Register of Historic Places.

### **Management Directive E.2 – Preserve and protect significant cultural resources to ensure that sites are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations (Priority 2)**

**Implementation Measure E.2.1:** Threats to the cultural resources from natural (e.g., fire, erosion, floods) or human-caused events shall be identified, and impacts prevented, reduced, eliminated, or adverse effects mitigated. Threats could include movement of resources after a heavy rain/flood or due to erosion after a fire event. Fire suppression activities could also threaten resources. Avoidance or mitigation measures will be identified if impacts are caused by future projects within the Park.

**Implementation Measure E.2.2:** The condition and status of cultural resources shall be noted as part of routine monitoring activities conducted once a year and remedial measures shall be taken if damage is noted. Monitoring activities should also photo-document site conditions so that comparisons can be made over time. Any monitoring of the sites in the Park should follow the guidelines used by the Department of Public Works, which are found in the County of San Diego *Report Format and Content Requirements, Cultural Resources: Archaeological and Historical Resources* (2007).

All site location information will be kept strictly confidential, and will be available only for qualified cultural resource staff and land managers. Site locations will not be shown on maps or divulged to the public.

**Implementation Measure E.2.3:** All management activities within the Park including, but not limited to, trail construction and maintenance, placement of fencing and gates, and restoration of habitat will take into consideration potential impacts to cultural resources and shall avoid adverse impacts to any cultural resources to the maximum extent possible. No ground disturbing activities will be allowed on or in any cultural resource site within the Park until the impacts have been assessed. For those sites already evaluated and determined not significant, no further action is required.

If avoidance of significant sites is not feasible, appropriate mitigation measures will be established. Removal or disturbance of cultural resources shall not occur prior to completion of an approved mitigation program, such as data recovery or recordation. Preservation in place is the preferred mitigation measure.

**Implementation Measure E.2.4:** Signs shall be posted at kiosks, trail heads and/or throughout the Park to notify users that sensitive cultural resources within the Park cannot be damaged and that removal of any archaeological material is prohibited by law. Protection and preservation of cultural resources will comply with County of San Diego ordinances (Title 4; Public Property, Division 1; Parks and Beaches, Article 2, Section 41.113), and applicable state and federal laws, which will be enforced by the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

The County will ensure that Park ranger staff has sufficient training through the DPR Ranger Academy to actively protect archaeological sites from vandalism and other forms of human impact. If a Park user is suspected of vandalism to cultural resources, the appropriate law enforcement authorities shall be notified. More aggressive measures may be needed if vandalism and damage continue or increase.

**Implementation Measure E.2.5:** Develop a treatment plan, including proactive protection and preservation procedures, for all cultural resources within the Park. This plan should also provide specific protocols to address at least five sites: CA-SDI-4902 (stacked rock feature), CA-SDI-6844 (prehistoric bedrock milling), CA-SDI-6845 (prehistoric bedrock milling), CA-SDI-6846 (prehistoric bedrock milling), and CA-SDI-17,091 (prehistoric bedrock milling). These sites, because of their proximity to existing trail systems and other Park facilities, are at risk for indirect impacts to cultural resources due to site vandalism or unintentional damage brought upon by unknowing patrons' activities.

### **Management Directive E.3 – Promote the beneficial uses of cultural resources through interpretation and educational programs (*Priority 2*)**

**Implementation Measure E.3.1:** Off-site, and when possible, on-site interpretive programs for Native American heritage, local and regional history, and prehistory will be developed for the Park. These may include lectures, walks, kiosks, signs, historic brochures, and displays, but will not include excavations, collecting of artifacts, or

disclosure of confidential site locations unless an interpretive plan is developed and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. The plan will include supervision by a qualified archaeologist approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. See also implementation measures C.3.1-3.

**Management Directive E.4 – Honor Native American Heritage and promote Native American ceremonies, gathering, and cultural practices (*Priority 2*)**

***Implementation Measure E.4.1:*** Consultation with the Barona and Viejas Band of Mission Indians shall be conducted frequently in order to identify appropriate management of pre-contact and ethnographic cultural resources. The tribes will be encouraged to participate in evaluation, recordation, protection and preservation of cultural resources.

***Implementation Measure E.4.2:*** The County will open the Park to traditional uses by the Barona and Viejas Band of Mission Indians. All activities by Native Americans in the Park shall be conducted with a Right-of-Entry permit specifically designed for the Park.

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