San Diego Association of Governments
Dennery Canyon Restoration Project
City of San Diego
Quarterly Progress Report
Reporting Period: 10/01/2025 – 12/31/2025
Submission Date: 01/21/2026
SANDAG Contract Number: S1125503

Quarterly Status Report Overview

The City of San Diego received the Notice to Proceed (NTP) for the Dennery Canyon Rare Restoration Project on May 2, 2023. This quarterly progress report details work performed from October 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. Work performed during this period included contract coordination, qualitative site assessments, photo monitoring, weed maintenance and dispersal of bulked San Diego thornmint seed. Work anticipated in the next reporting period will consist of as-needed dethatching and weed management in Areas 1 – 4, qualitative and monitoring, and continued coordination with San Diego Wildlife Alliance Native Plant Gene Bank staff on the seed bulking effort for San Diego thornmint.

Work Performed this Period:

1. **Task 1- Area 1: SD thornmint restoration and vernal pool enhancement (1.55 acres)**
   Work start date: October 4, 2023.
   Percent complete: 60%

   Weed cover remained low through mid-November due to dry conditions. Two substantial rain events in November and December did trigger new weed growth; however, weeds remained very small during the reporting period. As a result, weed maintenance activities were not recommended for Area 1.

   On November 13, the City Biologist dispersed San Diego thornmint seed into three selected plots within Area 1. Prior to seeding, protective cages constructed of wire hardware cloth were installed to exclude herbivores from the seeded plots.

2. **Task 2-Area 2: SD thornmint buffer (1.54 acres)**
   Work start date: October 18, 2023.
   Percent complete: 60%

   Contracted crews performed weed maintenance in Area 2 - dethatching and removing Russian thistle which was found growing in the far east end of Area 2.

3. **Task 3-Area 3: Otay tarplant restoration (3.36 acres)**
   Work start date: October 25, 2023.
   Percent complete: 55%

   Weed cover remained low due to dry conditions through October to Mid-November. Two substantial rain events in November and December did trigger new weed growth but weeds were still very small during the reporting period; this weed maintenance activities were not recommended for Area 3.

4. **Area 4: San Diego ambrosia, Orcutt's bird'sbeak, and vernal pool restoration and enhancement (2.23 acres)**
   Work start date: November 1, 2023.
   Percent complete: 60%

   Weed cover remained low through mid-November due to dry conditions. Two substantial rain events in November and December did trigger new weed growth; however, weeds remained very small during the reporting period. As a result, weed maintenance activities were not recommended for Area 4.

5. **Monitoring and Reporting**
   Work start date: 05/08/2023
   Percent complete: 70%

City biologist staff completed qualitative monitoring visits to help determine the best timing for weed management and seeding efforts.

Submittal of IMG survey data to SDMMP was delayed due to the government shutdown in October, followed by technical issues with SDMMP's data server. City staff were able to submit IMG survey data, photos, and GIS layers in December 2025.

City staff also prepared the quarterly progress report covering work completed between July 1, 2025, and September 30, 2025, which was submitted to SANDAG on October 21, 2025.

6. **Administrative**
   Work start date: 07/01/2023
   Percent complete: 70%

   City staff administered purchase orders, coordinated work schedules with contracted crews, reviewed contractor invoices, and processed invoices for payment.

Work Anticipated Next Period

Work anticipated in the next reporting period will include:

1) City Biologist staff will continue to coordinate with contractors to perform dethatching and targeted herbicide applications as needed to control invasive weed species in Areas 1-4.
2) City Biologist staff will conduct qualitative monitoring of invasive plant cover and occurrences of rare plant species in Areas 1–4.

Issues to Note

1) The Notice to Proceed for this grant was issued on May 2, 2023. Due to the delay in the issuance of the NTP, the timeline for active restoration and weed management activities had to be adjusted accordingly. These activities are now anticipated to start in September 2023.

2) While conducting baseline monitoring surveys, biologists noted prickly goldenfleece (*Urospermum picroides*) was present in low numbers in Area 1 and abundant in the northern part of Area 2. This is a newly documented invasive plant species for San Diego County (see Photo 5). Weed management efforts will target this species in the project area and the City plans to seek additional funding sources to help control it outside of the project area.

3) In 2023, the Otay tarplant continued to flower into early September. This pushed back the start date for dethatching work because we wanted to give the tarplant time to senesce and set seed before weed whipping the area.

Photographs & Figures

Area 1: Photo Monitoring

Photo 1.1: Photo point 1 shows baseline conditions for Area 1. Nonnative species cover in Area 1 is estimated at 90%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle (*Centaurea melitensis*), Mediterranean stork's bill (*Erodium malacoides*), Annual yellow sweetclover (*Melilotus indicus*).

Photo 1.2: Photo point 1 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 1 is estimated at 90%. Most nonnative species have senesced.

Photo 1.3: Photo point 1 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 1 occurred on October 4th and 6th, 2023.

Photo 1.4: Photo point 1 on March 8, 2024.

Photo 1.5: Photo point 1 on June 20, 2024.

Photo 1.6: Photo point 1 on August 8, 2024

Photo 1.7: Photo point 1 on December 17, 2024.

Photo 1.8: Photo point 1 on March 10, 2025

Photo 1.9: Photo point 1 on June 24, 2025

Photo 1.10: Photo point 1 on September 4, 2025

Photo 1.11: Photo point 1 on November 13, 2025. San Diego thornmint seed was dispersed within the hardware cloth cage. Stepping stones were placed inside the caged area prior to seeding to provide biologists and weed maintenance crews with designated, safe places to step, helping to avoid accidental trampling.

Area 2: Photo Monitoring

Photo 2.1: Photo point 2 shows baseline conditions for Area 2. Nonnative species cover in Area 2 is estimated at 80%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle, Italian ryegrass (*Festuca perennis*), slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*), and Mediterranean stork's bill.

Photo 2.2: Photo point 2 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 2 is estimated at 80%. Most nonnative species have senesced.

Photo 2.3: Photo point 2 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 2 occurred on October 18th and 20th, 2023.

Photo 2.4: Photo point 2 on March 8, 2024.

Photo 2.5: Photo point 2 on June 20, 2024.

Photo 2.6: Photo point 2 on August 8, 2024.

Photo 2.7: Photo point 2 on December 17, 2024

Photo 2.8: Photo point 2 on March 10, 2025.

Photo 2.9: Photo point 2 on June 24, 2025.

Photo 2.11: Photo point 2 on September 4, 2025.

Photo 2.11: Photo point 2 on November 13, 2025.

Area 3: Photo Monitoring

Photo 3.1: Photo point 3 shows baseline conditions for Area 3. Nonnative species cover in Area 3 is estimated at 85%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle, crown daisy, Italian ryegrass, and slender wild oat. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 4.*

Photo 3.2: Photo point 3 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 3 is estimated at 85%. Most nonnative species have senesced. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 4.*

Photo 3.3: Photo point 3 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 3 occurred on November 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 2023.

Photo 3.4: Photo point 3 on March 8, 2024.

Photo 3.5: Photo point 3 on June 20, 2024.

Photo 3.6: Photo point 3 on August 8, 2024.

Photo 3.7: Photo point 3 on December 17, 2024.

Photo 3.8: Photo point 3 on March 10, 2025.

Photo 3.9: Photo point 3 on June 24, 2025

Photo 3.10: Photo point 3 on September 4, 2025

Photo 3.11: Photo point 3 on November 13, 2025

Area 4: Photo Monitoring

Photo 4.1: Photo point 4 shows baseline conditions for Area 4. Nonnative species cover in Area 4 is estimated at 90%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle, black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), crown daisy (*Glebionis coronaria*), and Mediterranean stork's bill. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 3.*

Photo 4.2: Photo point 4 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 4 is estimated at 90%. Most nonnative species have senesced. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 3.*

Photo 4.3: Photo point 4 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 4 occurred on October 25th, 26th and 20th, 2023. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 3.*

Photo 4.4: Photo point 4 on March 8, 2024.

Photo 4.5: Photo point 4 on June 20, 2024.

Photo 4.6: Photo point 4 on August 8, 2024.

Photo 4.7: Photo point 4 on December 17, 2024

Photo 4.8: Photo point 4 on March 10, 2025.

Photo 4.9: Photo point 4 on June 24, 2025.

Photo 4.10: Photo point 4 on September 4, 2025.

Photo 4.11: Photo point 4 on November 13, 2025.

Additional Photos:

Otay tarplant seedlings observed on December 5, 2025.

San Diego thornmint seedlings observed on December 5, 2025.

SDMMP Project Page

This quarterly report will be added to the Dennery Canyon Rare Plant Restoration Project Page on the SDMMP website on 01/21/2026.

Performance Measures

Project performance measures are included in the attached Excel workbook.