MSCP
Management Actions Report

January 1, 2014 — December 31, 2014

City of San Diego
Park and Recreation Department
Public Utilities Department
Environmental Services Department
MSCP Management
The Multiple Species Conservation Program can only be successful through informed management of conserved lands. The City often partners with other public agencies, schools, environmental consultants, and non-profit groups to complete management tasks.

Summary
This report will provide a summary of the management projects undertaken on conserved City-owned lands in 2014 including mitigation, enhancement and restoration, invasive species removal, access control, trash and debris removal, enforcement, abatement of homeless encampments, and volunteer training. Environmental education is a vital part of our natural resource stewardship. The report contains projects by City of San Diego’s Park and Recreation Department, Public Utilities Department, and Environmental Services Department.

Six new Park Ranger positions were added to the Park and Recreation Open Space Division in 2014, bringing the total to 27 staff dedicated to management of the City’s Open Space. Those staff not only protect the native species and habitats that occur within each Park, but also provide educational opportunities for Park Visitors. Thousands of people visit our two nature centers each year; hundreds of children participate in environmental education through partnerships with local schools, nature programs, guided walks, and interpretive signs and kiosks.

We thank you for your interest in San Diego’s conserved lands, and invite you to take a look at the projects that we worked on in 2014. Please review our incredible list of partners on the last page.
Black Mountain Park

Black Mountain Park is west of I-15 and harbors habitat for California gnatcatcher as well as several other sensitive species. Black Mountain also provides a natural experience for nearby residents.

**Stewardship Management Actions**
- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Removed non-native plants (e.g. Arundo and Tamarisk) from San Dieguito Creek up to Lusardi Creek—November
- Performed herbicide treatment of fountain grass along Sundevil Way—December
- Implemented trail plan from Natural Resources Management Plan; began by closing and restoring trails, and constructing new trail segment from Miner’s Ridge Trailhead. Partnered with San Diego Mountain Biking Association and Alpha Project for trail work—December

**Management Actions Related to MSCP-Covered Species**
- Mapped burned areas near sensitive plant species (e.g. including San Diego thorn mint and variegated dudleya) following Bernardo Fire; conducted monitoring for illegal access and habitat recovery—May
- Held cactus wren restoration volunteer work parties—January and February
- Conducted hand weeding around thread-leaved brodiaea monitoring site—April

Lusardi Canyon following the Bernardo Fire in May

Alpha Project restoring a closed trail as part of Implementation of the NRMP
Crest Canyon and Gonzales Canyon are located in north coastal county and are home to numerous sensitive species. Crest Canyon connects to the San Dieguito Lagoon and offers trails through native scrub habitat dotted with the rare Torrey pine.

**Stewardship Management Actions**
- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Held several canyon cleanup events in Gonzales Canyon to remove old fencing, close illegal trails, and remove trash—Monthly
- Mapped small burn area in Gonzales Canyon, and hosted three work events to plant native species for recovery of burn area—March
- Partnered with San Diego Canyonlands on management ideas for the Park—June

**Management Actions Related to MSCP-Covered Species**
- Installed multifunnel trap in Crest Canyon to identify species of bark beetle on a Torrey pine; sent samples to County of San Diego and received confirmation of infestation by the California fivespined ips; tree planned to be removed in 2015 before flying season to protect adjacent trees—October
- Installed fence in Crest Canyon to delineate trails and protect populations of short-leaved dudleya—November

Fencing installed in Crest Canyon

City Biologists, Rangers, and Arborist inspect Torrey pine in Crest Canyon
Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is an urban resource-based park that functions as an east-west corridor through the heart of San Diego. This area is visited frequently by recreationalists and makes nature accessible to local residents. Citizen interest in the preserve led to the development of the well-known Friends of Los Peñasquitos Preserve and the San Diego Tracking Team.

Stewardship Management Actions

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Continued maintenance and monitoring of Public Utilities Department’s Canyon View Upland Restoration Project; currently in year 2 of 5, this project restores 0.9 acres of native grassland and 6.79 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub—Year-long
- Maintenance of Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Sedimentation Basin—January
- Performed habitat restoration, replaced bike rack, and repaired hitching posts as part of the South Waterfall Beautification Project—January
- Hosted a waterfall restoration volunteer event to plant natives—January
- Treated non-native palms by contractor to reduce population in Los Peñasquitos Creek—June
- Installed mulch provided by Miramar Greenery and plants propagated by a volunteer at the South Waterfall Beautification Project—November
- Worked with SDGE on main trail restoration on the south side of Los Peñasquitos Creek—December
- Hosted I Love A Clean San Diego Creek to Bay Cleanup at Lopez Canyon—December
- Restored a social use trail on the north side of Los Peñasquitos Creek—December
- Cleaned trash and debris following rain event from Los Peñasquitos Creek—December

Management Actions Related to MSCP-Covered Species

- Volunteers pulled weeds near willowy monardella populations in Lopez Canyon—April

Bobcat captured on Public Utilities Department’s wildlife cameras at Canyon View Upland Restoration Mitigation Site in Los Peñasquitos Canyon
Del Mar Mesa and Carmel Mountain are core biological areas north of Los Penasquitos Preserve. Known for their vernal pool habitat, the areas also supports migratory birds and large mammals such as a mule deer.

**Stewardship Management Actions**
- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Supervised Alpha Project on removal of 1/3 of an acre of Arundo from the west side of Carmel Mountain Preserve—January
- Removed non-native plants near vernal pool restoration sites at Carmel Mountain—June
- Replaced “Trail Off Limits” signs on the west side of Del Mar Mesa Preserve—June
- Completed enforcement and removal of structures and debris from “party” areas from Carmel Mountain Preserve—December
- Partnered with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to remove structures and debris from “party” area on Del Mar Mesa—December

**Management Actions Related to MSCP-Covered Species**
- Chaparral Lands Conservancy continued grant-funded vernal pool restoration; fencing installed, pools recontoured, and native species planted—December
Mission Trails Regional Park

Mission Trails Regional Park is the largest and most well-known open space park in San Diego. The park provides ample space for wildlife, including large mammals, and also harbors a diverse cultural history. A fire burned the west and south sides of Kwaay Paay peak in July scorching approximately 92 acres of rough terrain.

**Stewardship Management Actions**

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Maintained signs and performed trail brushing to close illegal trails in East Elliott—Monthly
- Planted 364 native plants along the northeast end of Grasslands Crossing Trail; various work days involving Ranger staff and the volunteer Habitat Restoration Crew for planting, weeding and spreading mulch—April, June, October
- Removed thistle and mustard from various locations in the Park—April
- Worked with a probation crew to maintain facilities at the East Fortuna Staging Area—April
- Worked with a probation crew to remove asphalt debris from West Fortuna—June
- Facilitated Patrol Volunteers for Dilard Elementary School—June
- Worked with contractor to treat African fountain grass in West Sycamore Canyon—June
- Ranger staff and City Biologists monitored the Kwaay Paay Peak area during and following the July fire for illegal trail use, unstable boulders, and impacts to sensitive species. San Diego Fire-Rescue Department offered an aerial view of the fire perimeter on their Copter 1. Geological expertise provided by Pat Abbott—July
- Maintained trails and installed erosion control in the Kwaay Paay area that burned in July—November
- Worked with volunteers from the US Navy to close and rehabilitate social trails in the Grasslands Loop Area—November
- Treated and removed castor bean near trailhead at Mesa Road—December
- Removed African fountain grass from along Navajo Road—December
- Conducted habitat restoration with a ROTC volunteer group—December
- Completed trail maintenance, installation of fencing, closure of unauthorized trails, and planting 265 native plants on Kwaay Paay peak—December

Illegal trails closed in East Elliott with signs and trail brushing
Mission Trails Regional Park

**Stewardship Management Actions, Continued**
- Removed trash and debris from Kumeyaay Lake—December

**Management Actions Related to MSCP-Covered Species**
- Sprayed weeds in San Diego ambrosia site east of Kumeyaay Lake Campground; 2014 is the 4th year of the treatment program at this site—April

Aerial view of Kwaay Paay Peak during July fire provided by San Diego Fire-Rescue Department, Copter 1

Ranger Axtmann surveys burned slope assessing the stability of boulders
The Visitor Center at Mission Trails Regional Park attracted more than 60,000 visitors in 2014. Park Rangers lead an average of 383 adults and children on Guided Interpretive Walks per month. Education programs are available for multiple grades and focus on the history and biology of the Park.

Education Programs
- K-2nd Grade: Introduction to Animals and Habitats
- 3rd Grade: Kumeyaay Culture
- 4th Grade: Mission History
- 5th Grade: Ecology and Biodiversity

Aerial view of the Visitor Center courtesy of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
The Tri-Canyon area includes Tecolote Canyon Natural Park, Marian Bear Open Space Park and Rose Canyon Open Space Park. Though located in an urban setting, these canyons provide opportunities for residents to enjoy nature, and host many native habitats and species. The Mission Valley Preserve is within the San Diego River and provides habitat for the endangered least Bell’s vireo.

The Tecolote Nature Center received 18,000 visitors in 2014.

**Stewardship Management Actions**

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Continued the effort to map all of the oak trees in Marian Bear Canyon in order to document to number of trees currently and potentially at risk of infestation by the gold-spotted oak borer (GSOB). 2,737 trees were mapped in 2014 bringing the total mapped in the canyon to 3,876 trees. Analysis of GSOB damage has begun to inform management—Monthly
- Continued maintenance and monitoring of Public Utilities Department’s Central Tecolote Enhancement Mitigation Project; the project is in year 3 of 5 and consists of riparian enhancement and native upland restoration in addition to a weed management area around Tecolote Creek—Year-long
- Coordinated volunteer group from the US Navy and high school students for clean up of trash from Marian Bear Canyon—January
- Treated invasive palms and removed pepper trees from Tecolote Canyon with volunteer Weed Warriors—January
- Sprayed and treated large population of Canary Island St. Johnswort in Tecolote Canyon with City contractor—May and June
- Restored an illegally created BMX jump area in Tecolote Canyon—June
- Supervised Alpha Project for weed management in Tecolote and Marian Bear Canyons—June
- Completed the 5-year maintenance and monitoring period for Public Utilities Department’s Rose Canyon Mitigation Project, which created 4.36 acres of oak riparian forest, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, and mule fat scrub—July
- Posted and removed 3 homeless camps in Tecolote Canyon and 2 camps in Marian Bear—August
- Performed weed removal and trail maintenance in Tecolote Canyon near the Nature Center—August
- Treated about an acre of fennel in Tecolote Canyon with volunteer Weed Warriors—August
- Partnered with San Diego County Urban Corps to remove previously treated Canary Island St. Johnswort in Tecolote Canyon—September
Stewardship Management Actions, continued

- Worked with Friends of Rose Canyon and the Boy Scouts of America to trap and remove 152 invasive crawfish from Rose Creek—August
- Coordinated with Eagle Scouts on installation of 4 owl nesting boxes in Tecolote Canyon, restoration of the Kumeyaay ramada, and installation of 2 benches in the native plant garden at the Nature Center—August
- Worked with Outdoor Outreach on volunteer event in Tecolote Canyon to remove castor bean and concrete/asphalt from near the Nature Center—August
- Provided location for San Diego City College Biology Class to learn about native plants—October
- Hosted the third grade class from Holy Trinity School for an educational field trip—October
- Provided location for San Diego Sustainable Living Institute to hold a bee keeping class—October
- Led a Girl Scout Troup for an educational walk in Tecolote Canyon—November
- Removed trash from Tecolote Creek following rain event—December
- Sprayed resprouting Canary Island St. Johnswort in Tecolote Canyon—December
- Removed homeless encampments in Tecolote Canyon—December
- Led a nature hike focusing on mushrooms in Tecolote Canyon—December
- Hosted children from Cabrillo Recreation Center and Allied Gardens Recreation Center—December
- Provided education programs to 5th graders from Cadman Elementary School—December
- Hosted a Mesa College Biology Class for a plant walk and quiz—December
- Hosted High Tech High’s Senior Exhibition at the Nature Center—December
- Partnered with Project Wildlife for presentations and animal ambassadors—December

Urban Corps of San Diego removed dead stands of Canary Island St. Johnswort that had been treated with herbicide by contractor
The Mission Valley Preserve is located in the San Diego River Floodplain within the Tri-Canyon Parks. The Preserve contains primarily riparian scrub and forest habitat and provides habitat for the federally endangered least Bell’s vireo.

**Stewardship Management Actions**

- Preserve-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Supervised and worked with Alpha Project on removal of trash and other homeless camp debris from the Mission Valley Preserve—June
- Partnered with San Diego River Park Foundation to remove weeds and spread mulch at Cottonwood Grove area of Mission Valley Preserve—June
- Worked with San Diego Police Department to conduct homeless camp sweeps—June, August
- Worked with Friends of Mission Valley Preserve to organize a clean-up of a portion of the preserve—September
- Worked with a probation crew to remove 12 bags of trash and several shopping carts from the bike path adjacent to the Preserve—September
- Participated in an outreach event for High Tech High students—September
- Coordinated with Alpha Project to clean up the bike path near the Mission Valley Preserve—October
- Hosted a clean-up event with San Diego River Park Foundation; over 100 volunteers worked on removing trash from both the north and south sides of the San Diego River—October
- Coordinated with Alpha Project crew on several transient camp cleanups in the Mission Valley Preserve—December
- Partnered with the San Diego Police Department on a sweep and removal of trash and debris from chronic homeless encampments on an island within the San Diego River near the Southern Wildlife Refuge; 5,000 pounds of trash were removed from this location—December
Urban Canyons

The urban canyons of the MHPA are scattered throughout the City of San Diego. Although small and subject to intense pressures, many continue to support native plants and wildlife. In fact, many of the large canyons are habitat for the sensitive California gnatcatcher and cactus wren. Management actions can counteract the effects of isolation and edge effects to maintain the habitat provided by these canyons.

**Stewardship Management Actions**

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Partnered with San Diego Canyonlands, Friends of Ruffin Canyon, Friends of University Heights Open Space, Friends of Navajo Canyon, Friends of Chollas Creek, Friends of Juniper Canyon, Friends of Arroyo Canyon, and Friends of 47th Street Canyon on numerous invasive removal, trash pick-up, and trail maintenance projects—Monthly
- Ranger staff and Alpha Project performed maintenance and removed invasive plants in Maple Canyon—January
- Ranger staff and volunteers from the Mormon Church watered plants in a restoration area in Manzanita Canyon—January
- Installed fencing to protect Otay Mesa Open Space from illegal off-road activity—January
- Coordinated homeless encampment clean-up and illegal dump removal with the City’s Environmental Services Department at Manzanita, Swan, and Radio Canyons—January
- Supervised and worked with Alpha Project and Urban Corps to do maintenance, plant 50 native plants, and perform invasive plant removal in Juniper Canyon, Pottery Canyon, Rancho Mission Canyon, and Ruffin Canyon—April
- Worked with volunteers to plant 250 native plants in Juniper Canyon and 50 plants in 47th Street Canyon—April
- Removed invasive trees from Navajo Canyon—August
- Hosted two Coastal Cleanup locations at Juniper and Ruffin Canyons—September
- Partnered with St. Columba Church and Friends of Ruffin Canyon to host 57 volunteers on an invasive plant removal project; efforts filled a 40-yard dumpster—September
- Worked with probation crew to remove invasive plants at Ruffin Canyon—October
- Installed 100 native plants in Juniper Canyon and 100 native plants at Cholas Creek—November
- Worked with 100 volunteers on installing native plants and picking up trash from Chollas Creek—November
- Supervised Alpha Project and Urban Corps removal of invasive plants in Navajo Canyon—November
- Performed a clean-up of Juniper Canyon assisted by volunteers from the Mormon Church—November
- Supervised Alpha Project herbicide treatment and removal of palms from Navajo Canyon—November
- Hosted three work events to plant native species near Sword Way, remove old fencing, close social use trails, and remove trash—November
Urban Canyons

Stewardship Management Actions, Continued

- Performed a clean-up of Juniper Canyon assisted by volunteers from the Mormon Church—November
- Supervised Alpha Project herbicide treatment and removal of palms from Navajo Canyon—November
- Coordinated installation of 100 native plants in Open Space in University Heights—December
- Coordinated installation of 120 native plants in Juniper Canyon—December
- Supervised removal of trash and invasive plants by probation crew in Manzanita Canyon—December
Otay Valley Regional Park (OVRP) is an east-west corridor surrounding the Otay River in southern San Diego. The park supports least Bell’s vireo and rare native plants, such as Orcutt's bird's-beak.

Stewardship Management Actions

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—Monthly
- Led an interpretive hike for 60 students from High Tech High—January
- Coordinated with San Diego Police Department and US Fish and Wildlife Service on removal of chronic law-breaking homeless individuals in the Park and areas adjacent to the Park—January-August
- Worked with Donovan Crew on removal of homeless camps and trash—January-September
- Coordinated with WildCoast to lead 80 volunteers in the I Love A Clean San Diego clean-up at the Rios Staging Area; 2,000 pounds of trash and 500 pounds of recyclables were removed—April
- Worked with the Center for Employment Opportunities removing old homeless encampments, trash, and debris—April-November
- Partnered with WildCoast to hold the 4th Annual OVRP Day; 130 people visited the park and listened to speakers and viewed displays such as live reptiles from the Bureau of Land Management, a Mexican free-tailed bat from Project Wildlife, and a burrowing owl from the Living Coast Discovery Center—June
- Coordinated with WildCoast and the YMCA on a clean-up event where volunteers from the Navy removed over 250 pounds of trash and recyclables from the Park—August
- Partnered with WildCoast to host 27 9th graders from Pilgrim Middle School (from Los Angeles) and Camp Counselors from Camp Surf on a clean-up event in the Park; over 200 pounds of trash and 25 pounds of recyclables were removed from the Park—October
- Led youth and parents from the International Tutoring Program on an interpretive walk around Fenton Pond—November
- Collaborated with the YMCA to host 15 volunteers from the US Navy for a clean-up of trash and debris; 300 pounds of trash and recyclables were removed from the Park—November
- Held a community clean-up event hosted by Councilman David Alvarez with 30 volunteers—November

Senior ranger Barone with a group of volunteers
Cornerstone Lands

- San Pasqual Valley
  - Performed trash removal at Clevenger Canyon trailheads—Monthly
  - Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve performed weed eradication in Santa Maria Creek as part of grant-funded work—Quarterly
  - San Diego River Valley Conservancy performed Arundo eradication along Highland Valley Road—October and November

- Lake Hodges Reservoir
  - Partnered with I Love a Clean San Diego for two large volunteer cleanup events; over 1,000 pounds of trash were removed—May, September
  - Partnered with Del Dios Habitat Protection League & Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve on eucalyptus tree removal and planting of oak trees—June
  - San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy and Mission Resource Conservation League performed Arundo eradication treatments along the southeast and north shores—October, November
  - San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research performed habitat restoration for coastal cactus wren—Monthly

- Otay Reservoirs
  - Dudek and Associates performed habitat maintenance and monitoring at the artificial burrowing owl locations—January
  - Held Creek to Bay cleanup where volunteers assisted with trash pick-up—May
  - River Partners continued monitoring and maintenance of large Upper Otay Riparian Restoration (100 acres)—Monthly
  - Performed clean-up of trail with Bonita Bikers—November

- Proctor Valley
  - Chaparral Lands Conservancy continued vernal pool habitat restoration project—Monthly
  - Repaired fencing and ORV barrier—As Needed

- Marron Valley
  - Worked with a contractor for Army Corps of Engineers on habitat restoration of 7 acres—Monthly

Marron Valley in May looking very dry due to low rainfall
Other City Open Space

- Mt. Woodson—Informational kiosk built on service road at the City property boundary—April
- Otay Mesa—Installed over 3,200 feet of fencing to reduce unauthorized off-road vehicle activity at the Otay Mesa Upland Mitigation Bank—February
- Lake Murray—Hosted various volunteer cleanup programs—Year-long
- Shepherd Canyon, Tierrasanta—Partnered with San Diego Canyonlands to remove 60 palm trees by helicopter from Shepherd Canyon as part of a grant-funded project for the area—December

Invasive palms were removed by helicopter from Shepherd Canyon in Tierrasanta
Citywide Projects

- Public Utilities Department managed 20 small habitat restoration and erosion control sites in 2014—Monthly
- Park and Recreation biologists completed MSCP Compliance Monitoring for 19 rare plants species at 77 sites—March-July
- Park and Recreation Brush Management completed 241.35 of brush management along urban-wildland interface—January-December
- Open Space Pesticide Applicators performed non-native weed control in 32nd Street Canyon, 47th St. Canyon, Albratross, Battle Mountain, Black Mountain, Carmel Valley, Chollas Creek, Del Mar Mesa Preserve, Emerald Hills Open Space, Encanto Expressway, Gonzales Canyon, Guyman St, Jupiter Canyon, La Jolla Heights, La Zanja Canyon, Los Penasquitos Canyon, Preserve Manzanita Canyon, Maple Canyon, Marian Bear Memorial Park, Mira Mesa, Mission Trails Regional Park Mission Valley Preserve, Navajo, North City West, Otay Mesa, Otay Valley Regional Park, Radio Canyon, Rose Canyon, Rancho Mission Canyon, Tecolote Canyon, Ruffin Canyon, Sandrock Canyon, Serra Mesa, Soledad, Stevenson Canyon, Switzer Canyon, and Valencia Canyon
- Environmental Services Department conducted site visits to Boden Canyon, Brown Parcel, and Copp Parcel; trash and litter were collected and disposed of during each visit and notes include recommendations for installation of gates and signs at Boden Canyon to reduce illegal use.
- Public Utilities Department performed weekly inspections and visits to City Reservoirs for trash removal, fence repair, sign posting, and other as-needed work.

Thread-leaved brodiaea at Black Mountain, April
Thanks to our Partners!

- Allied Gardens Recreation Center
- Alpha Project
- AmeriCorps
- Back County Land Trust
- Blackhawk Helicopters
- Boy Scouts
- Bureau of Land Management
- Cabrillo Recreation Center
- Cadman Elementary School
- CalFire
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Camp Surf
- CEO - Center for Employment Opportunities
- Chaparral Lands Conservancy
- Chula Vista Police
- City College
- City of San Diego - Environmental Services Miramar Greenery
- City of San Diego - Engineering and Capital Projects Department
- City of San Diego - Fire Rescue Department
- City of San Diego - Park Planning
- City of San Diego - Police Department
- County of San Diego
- Cox Conserves Heroes
- Dilard Elementary School
- Donovan Crew
- Dudek and Associates
- Eagle Scouts
- Francis Parker Middle School
- Friends of 47th Street
- Friends of Chollas Creek
- Friends of Juniper Canyon
- Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
- Friends of Navajo Canyon
- Friends of Rose Canyon
- Friends of Ruffin Canyon
- Friends of Tecolote Canyon
- Friends of University Heights Open Space
- Girl Scouts
- GSOB Steering Committee
- High Tech High
- Holy Trinity High School
- I Love a Clean San Diego
- Kelly & Associates
- Living Coast Discovery Center
- Mormon Missionaries
- NCCD
- Outdoor Outreach
- Pat Abbott
- Pilgrim Middle School
- Project Wildlife
- River Partners
- Rocks Biological
- San Diego City College
- San Diego Canyonlands
- San Diego Management and Monitoring Program
- San Diego Mountain Biking Association
- San Diego River Park Foundation
- San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
- San Diego Sustainable Living Institute
- San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research
- SDGE
- South Bay Fence
- St. Columba Church
- Treebeard
- Urban Corps of San Diego County
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- US Navy
- West Coast Arborists
- WildCoast
- YMCA
Thank you for your support
of natural open space within the City of San Diego!

For questions or to volunteer, please contact:
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