



MSCP Management Actions Report



January 1, 2011—December 31, 2011

*City of San Diego
Park and Recreation Department &
Public Utilities Department*



Introduction

MSCP Management

The Multiple Species Conservation Program can only be successful through informed management of conserved lands. The City of San Diego employs 67 staff who participate in open space management, including rangers, biologists, planners, reservoir managers, a code compliance investigator and pesticide applicator.

Summary

This report will provide a summary of the myriad management projects undertaken in 2011. Adaptive management projects include habitat improvement 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. Thousands of children visit our two nature centers, and hundreds more participate in environmental education through partnerships with nearby schools, nature programs, guided walks and kiosks. The Mission Trails Visitor Center recorded 9,354 visitors in May alone!

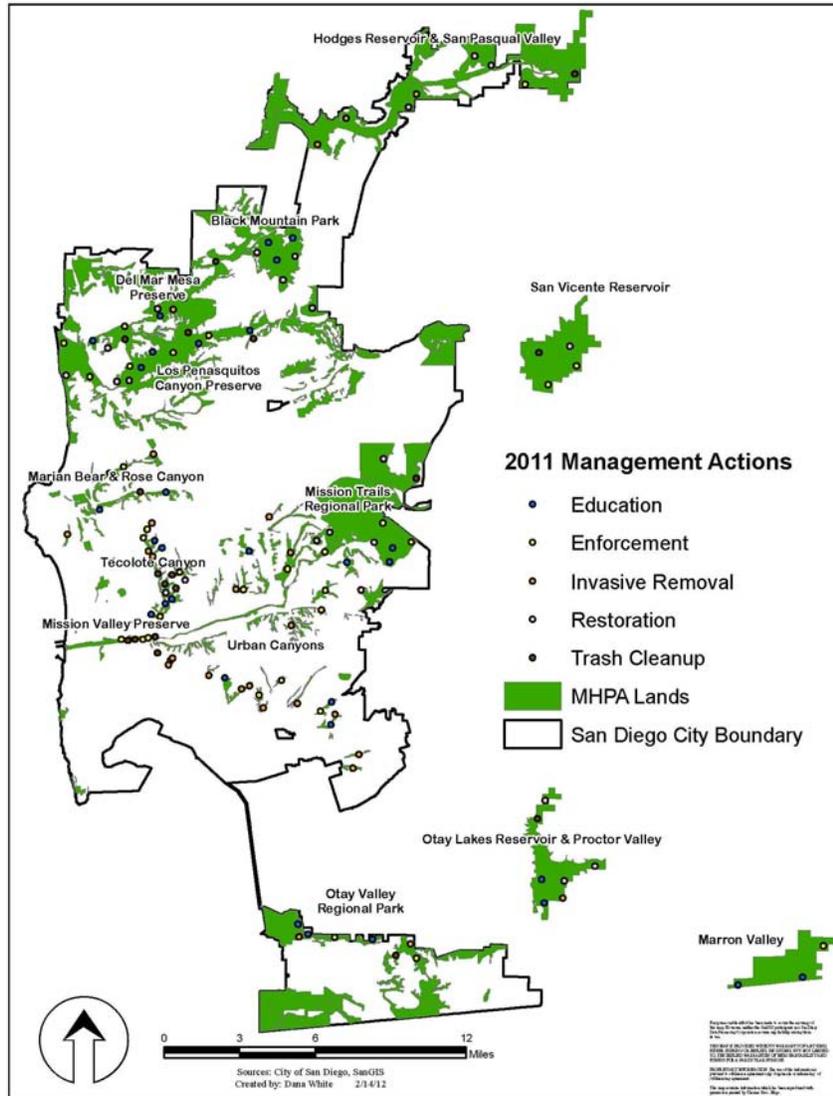


Many of our projects were com-

pleted in partnership with non-profit groups. Please take time to review our incredible list of partners on the last page.

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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 2011.





Hodges Reservoir & San Pasqual Valley

Located south of Escondido, Hodges Reservoir and San Pasqual Valley represent one of the largest continuous blocks of habitat in the MSCP. These MSCP Cornerstone Lands support valuable riparian habitat and wetlands along the San Dieguito River and its tributaries, and are an important east-west wildlife corridor. Core populations of California gnat-catcher, cactus wren and Encinitas baccharis occur at the site.

Management Actions

- Implementation of TransNet EMP grant to develop Integrated Weed Management Plan for San Pasqual Valley and invasive removal along Santa Maria Creek—on-going
- Coordinated with San Diego Zoo's Institute for Conservation Research for cactus wren restoration TransNet EMP grant implementation—on-going
- Continued ORV and illegal dumping enforcement and cleanup—on-going
- Revision of lease boundaries to compliment habitat conservation as leases are renewed—on-going
- Partner with County of San Diego and SDRP Conservancy to eradicate invasive flora—on-going
- Partner with SDRP JPA for cow bird and bullfrog control programs —on-going
- Closed illegal/volunteer trails at Hodges Reservoir—on-going
- Collaborated with SANDAG/CalTrans on wetlands restoration project in San Pasqual Valley—on-going
- Removal of dumped materials—December



Coast Prickly-Pear



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Black Mountain Park

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

Management Actions

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—monthly
- Created/printed park interpretive brochures—June
- Hosted volunteer party in conjunction with Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve events to improve Cactus Wren habitat through a \$76,000 grant received from the Natural Resources Conservation Service —March
- Ranger-led interpretive hikes—August, September
- Release of one rehabilitated bobcat with Project Wildlife with ongoing monitoring by park rangers—November
- Black Mountain Open Space Park Natural Resource Management Plan finalized; document currently undergoing CEQA review



San Diego Thornmint

Sabre Springs Open Space

- Posted and removed illegal encampment with Environmental Services Code Compliance staff—June
 - Completed fencing repairs (\$7,000)—July
 - Trail monitoring and repair—September - November
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Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve

Los Penasquitos 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 Penasquitos Preserve and the San Diego Tracking Team.

Management Actions

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—monthly
- Park-wide weeding efforts—monthly
- Hosted 16 volunteers on two days to close redundant trails in native habitat—March
- Posted illegal encampment—March
- Native habitat restoration near waterfall with Grand Del Mar volunteers—April
- Hosted Creek to Bay cleanup—April
- Hosted Qualcomm Cares volunteer event with 34 participants—May
- National Trails Day (co-hosted with County of San Diego) volunteers installed 200 feet of protective fencing—June
- Created/installed 4 trail systems signs to limit off-trail use—June
- Ranger-led interpretive program for La Jolla Learning Lab—June
- Public outreach via cover article in *92129 Magazine*—October



Volunteers planting native plants



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Del Mar Mesa and Carmel Mountain

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 a mule deer.

Del Mar Mesa

- Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—monthly
- Placed cobble rings around vernal pools within utility access road—February
- Final report of trail use study completed—March
- Installed protective measures for vernal pools near trails—April
- Removed invasive stinkwort from Cooper Canyon trailhead—June
- Finalized Area Specific Management Directives included in Carmel Mountain/Del Mar Mesa Natural Resource Management Plan; plan currently under review by elected decision-makers for City adoption.

Carmel Mountain

- Fenced trail section affected by utility truck access—January
 - Multiple ranger-led walks for 4th grade science students at Ocean Air Elementary—January
 - Removed graffiti and repaired vandalized fences—April
 - Replaced vandalized interpretive signs with A1 Fire volunteers—May
 - Coordinated with Chaparral Lands Conservancy on grant-funded restoration project for vernal pools and short-leaved dudleya—February, June - September, November
 - Coastal Clean-up Day volunteers (9) removed 100+ pounds of dumped material—September
 - Five ranger-led interpretive hikes for 4th graders from Ocean Air Elementary—September, November
 - Installed vernal pool depth measurement devices for grant-funded restoration project—November
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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.

Management Actions

- Park-wide enforcement—daily
 - Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—weekly
 - Protective fencing installation as necessary based on trail monitoring—monthly
 - Park-wide signage plan and installation—monthly
 - Removal of BMX site—February, March
 - Hand-weeding, herbicide and fencing of San Diego Thornmint and San Diego Ambrosia—winter and spring
 - Ranger-led presentations to Lake Murray Community Church and 30th & Adam—August
 - Removal of 2,000+ sq ft of invasive vegetation—August, September
 - Removal of four illegal dumps—August
 - Ranger-led orientation for six Eagle Scout candidates—August
 - Ranger-led presentation to Salk Lake Community College—September
 - Hosted four clean-up events with 584 total volunteer hours—September
 - Removal of two illegal dumps—September
 - Native cactus restoration—October
 - Contracted herbicide of invasive species at Deerfield, the San Diego River, Sycott Wash, and Sycamore Canyon—October
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Mission Trails Regional Park

Management Actions, Continued

- Removal of *Arundo*, tree tobacco, and other invasive plants along Jackson drainage and Deerfield Staging Area—November
- Replacement of vandalized interpretive sign on Cowles Mountain—November
- Redesign of kiosk interpretive display near Visitor Center—November, December
- Release of six rehabilitated raccoons with Project Wildlife near Kumeyaay Lake—November
- Development of natural resource management plan/area specific management directives for Mission Trails Regional Park — on-going

Mission Trails By the Numbers

Visitor Center Attendance = 85,047

Visitor Center Volunteer Hours = 3,797

Volunteer Patrol Hours = 392

Nature Adventure Program Attendance = 389 adults and 645 children

Trail Guide Walk Attendance = 3,716 adults and 2,788 children

K-2nd Grade Program Attendance = 543

3rd Grade Program Attendance = 1,551

4th Grade Program Attendance = 385

5th-6th Grade Program Attendance = 103

Kidz Watch Program Attendance = 169 adults and 211 children

Eagle Scout Volunteer Hours = 960

Community Volunteer Hours = 1,592

Community Outreach Programs = 61 for adults and 72 for children

Special Educational Programs = 68 for adults and 30 for children

Self-Guided School Program Attendance = 2,984

Mission Trails Park Foundation School Program Attendance = 2,139



Tri-Canyon Parks

The Tri-Canyon area includes Tecolote Canyon Natural Park, Marian Bear Open Space Park and Rose Canyon Open Space Park. All are large, urban canyons that function as wildlife movement corridors as well as habitat. The Mission Valley Preserve is within the San Diego River and provides habitat for the endangered Least Bell's Vireo.

Tecolote Canyon Natural Park

- Park-wide patrols and trash collection—weekly
 - Removed 20 homeless encampments and compiled homeless individual/encampment census—January
 - Removal of 150+ palms—February
 - Removed 50 cubic yards total of invasive plants during Weed Warriors event—January, September
 - Five community outreach talks in response to neighborhood concerns about coyotes—January, August
 - Removed a total of 500 pounds of invasive plant material at restoration site with Canyon Crusaders volunteers—February, September, October
 - Removed three homeless encampments—February
 - Removed a total of 10 illegal dumps—February, September
 - Supervised court-ordered volunteer for litter removal along park boundaries—February, September
 - Treated invasive castor bean and onion weed—February, March, September
 - Hosted Canyon Day clean-up with 150 volunteers removing 40 cubic yards of debris—March
 - Developed updated volunteer training program—April - December
 - Removed seven homeless encampments—May
 - Installation of new kiosk memorializing conservation of Tecolote Canyon by Eagle Scout—July
 - Removed five homeless encampments—September
 - Ranger-led interpretive hike for 36 Kearny High School students—October
 - Initiated updated kiosk information program—October
 - Removed four homeless encampments—November
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Tri-Canyon Parks

Marian Bear and Rose Canyon

- Six ranger-led interpretive hikes—January
- Removed eight garbage bags of invasive thistle with University City High School Roots and Shoots Club—February
- Removed homeless encampment—February
- Coordinated with location of Golden Spotted Oak Borer traps with UC Riverside research staff—June
- Installation of new kiosk with information on native plants by Eagle Scout—July
- Report, removal and prosecution relating to illegal dump—July

Mission Valley Preserve

- Surveyed for new and returned homeless encampments with SDPD—monthly
 - Contracted/supervised probation crew 1 day/week to remove 10 tons of trash and debris from homeless encampments—February, March
 - Rangers met with SDPD, SDFD, CalTrans, SDGE, MTS, Friends of Mission Valley Preserve and San Diego River Park Foundation to discuss coordination and protocol for response to illegal trespassing and homeless encampments and overall park safety—March, August, November
 - Hosted clean-ups with Tri-Canyon Volunteers and San Diego River Park Foundation—April
 - Hosted two volunteer clean-ups with removal of 10+ tons of trash following posting of homeless encampments—July, August
 - Removed 10 homeless encampments—September
 - Hosted San Diego River Park Foundation “Green Team” clean-up event—October
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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.

Management Actions

- Ranger patrols and stewardship management—monthly
 - Hosted San Diego Audubon event for two school groups planting native species in Ruffin Canyon—January
 - Hosted two Ocean Discovery Institute school programs in 32nd Street Canyon—January
 - Contracted/supervised invasive plant removal in Navajo Canyon by Alpha Project and Urban Corps—January - April
 - Removed homeless encampments and illegal dumps at Manzanita Canyon, 47th Street Canyon, and Swan Canyon—January
 - Installed regulatory signage at Radio Canyon and La Jolla Open Space—January
 - Invasive species treatments at restoration sites citywide—January, February
 - Supervised invasive removal and oak planting by King Chavez High School students at Switzer Canyon—January
 - Coordinated contractor and Ocean Discovery Institute volunteers to remove *Arundo* in Swan Canyon—February
 - Hosted two San Diego Audubon events for school groups planting native species in 32nd Street Canyon and Swan Canyon—February
 - Installation of signage at Goat Mesa/Spring Canyon in Otay Mesa—February
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Urban Canyons

Management Actions, Continued

- Supervised native species restoration by Kearny High School students—February
 - Removed homeless encampments and illegal dumps at Manzanita Canyon, Swan Canyon, and Mira Mesa Open Space—February
 - Installed regulatory signage at Radio Canyon and La Jolla Open Space—February
 - Hosted invasive removal event by Canyonlands and Francis Parker School student volunteers—March
 - Coordinated volunteer clean-up event with Ocean Discovery Institute and Canyonlands in Swan Canyon—March
 - Hosted *Arundo* removal event by REI volunteers in 47th Street Canyon—March
 - Removed homeless encampments and illegal dumps at Manzanita Canyon and Swan Canyon—March, June
 - Hosted volunteer clean-up event in Paradise Canyon—April
 - Contracted/supervised invasive plant removal by Urban Corps in Manzanita Canyon, Chollas Canyon, Ruffin Canyon, Radio Canyon, and Jacaranda Bowl—April
 - Hosted volunteer clean-up event in McGonigle Canyon—April
 - Hosted *Arundo* removal event in 47th Street Canyon—April
 - Removed homeless encampments and illegal dumps at Cervantes Canyon and Navajo Canyon—April
 - Installed regulatory signage at Pottery Canyon, Maple Canyon and Battle Mountain Open Space—April
 - Removed homeless encampments at Kensington Open Space and Navajo Canyon—May
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Urban Canyons

Management Actions, Continued

- Coordinated with San Diego Police Department for transient camp removal in Manzanita Canyon and Swan Canyon—June
 - Coordinated with Ocean Discovery Institute on grant applications—June, November
 - Hosted volunteer clean-up event in Swan Canyon—July
 - Removed homeless encampments at Cervantes Canyon and Encanto Expressway Open Space—August
 - Open Space planners, biologists and rangers finalized the Canyon Project Assessment form for non-profit canyon enhancement project review/approval—August
 - Rangers assisted City Heights Canyon Alliance in development of a four-canyon restoration prioritization plan—August
 - Contracted/supervised non-native tree removal by Alpha Project in Manzanita Canyon—September
 - Removed homeless encampments at Paradise Canyon and Chollas Radio Canyon—September
 - Rangers assisted City Heights Canyon Alliance with stakeholder planning meetings for Manzanita Canyon and Swan Canyon—September
 - Rangers assisted Friends of Switzer Canyon with updating canyon enhancement plan, volunteer organization and a native species planting event—November
 - Ranger-led interpretive hike for Ocean Discovery Institute staff in Manzanita Canyon—December
 - Rangers assisted Groundworks Chollas in development of canyon enhancement plan and ROE requirements—December
 - Hosted volunteer clean-up at Gonzalez Canyon—December
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Urban Canyons



Management Actions, Continued

Monthly coordination on invasive removal and native plant restoration projects with:

- Friends of Ruffin Canyon
 - Friends of University Heights Open Space
 - Friends of Gonzalez Canyon
 - Friends of Navajo Canyon
 - Friends of Chollas Creek
 - Friends of Juniper Canyon
 - Friends of 47th St Canyon
 - Friends of Switzer Canyon
-



Otay Valley Regional Park

Otay Valley Regional Park 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 *Cordylanthus orcuttianus*.

Management Actions

- Park-wide enforcement—daily
 - Park-wide trail monitoring and maintenance—weekly
 - Ranger-led interpretive hikes—monthly
 - Directed Donovan Prison work crews in removal of trash, invasive species (especially *Chrysanthemum*) and homeless encampments—monthly
 - Removed illegal encampments and coordinated with SDPD's Homeless Outreach Team to offer services to disadvantaged individuals—monthly
 - Teamed with WildCoast to provide environmental education to nearby community and schools—January, February
 - Partnered with WildCoast, REI, USFWS, and Girl Scouts for clean-up of National Wildlife Refuge and Otay Valley Regional Park attended by over 120 volunteers; a total of 8+ tons of trash, debris, and invasive plant material were removed—January, July, August
 - Contracted/supervised removal of 16+ tons of historic dumping by California Conservation Corps along Kaanapali Way and installed seven No Dumping and No Trespassing signs in the area—February
 - Hosted Habitat Heroes environmental education day for 100+ location students and teachers—February
 - Rangers attended outdoor recreation conference with focus on connecting children with nature—February
 - Rangers met with USFWS, Chula Vista PD and San Diego PD to discuss coordination and protocol for response to illegal activity reports and overall park safety—March - May, July
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Otay Valley Regional Park

Management Actions, Continued

- Hosted Habitat Heroes environmental education day for 80+ students and teachers—March
 - Awarded National Environmental Fund Grant for \$300,000 for interpretive panels and benches—April
 - Hosted 22 volunteers from I Love a Clean San Diego who removed over 1 ton of trash, debris and recyclables—May
 - Installed 9 updated kiosk maps with volunteer assistance—May
 - Hosted 1st Annual Otay Valley Regional Park Day with over 280 visitors and 14 NGOs/agencies in attendance; included two ranger-led nature walks, one bird-watching walk, and a Native American program—June
 - Hosted clean-up event for 10 Sprint volunteers—June
 - Partnered with WildCoast and USFWS for clean-up of Southbay National Wildlife Refuge and Otay Valley Regional Park attended by 15 volunteers; 2+ tons of trash was removed—July
 - Hosted clean-up event for 15 Sprint and WildCoast volunteers—August
 - Ranger-led safety sweep of OVRP with 11 SDPD, CVPD and State Probation officers—October
 - Hosted Habitat Heroes environmental education day for 45 students and 6 staff from Silver Wing Elementary School with WildCoast—November
 - Hosted 80 volunteers from Girl Scouts and Francis Park High School who removed 40 cubic yards of ice plant as part of on-going native habitat restoration project with WildCoast—December
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Proctor Valley and Otay Lakes Reservoirs

Located east of Chula Vista, Upper and Lower Otay Reservoirs and Proctor Valley comprise approximately 2,782 acres designated Cornerstone Land under the MSCP. The properties sustain valuable riparian habitat, vernal pools and high quality coastal sage scrub that supports over 40 pair of California gnatcatchers.

Management Actions

- Hosted volunteer clean-up event with Chaparral Lands Conservancy—October
- Continue working with Border Patrol to educate agents on the effects of off-road vehicle use—on-going
- Collaborated with Chaparral Lands Conservancy to develop vernal pool restoration and enhancement plan for Proctor Valley—on-going
- Removal of dumped materials—as needed



Navarretia fossalis at Otay Lakes



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Marron Valley

Marron Valley is located at the confluence of Cottonwood Creek and Tecate Creek along the Mexican border. The property is approximately 2,529 acres and is designated Cornerstone Land under the MSCP. Marron Valley supports riparian habitat, vernal pools and several populations of rare MSCP-covered plants.

Management Actions

- Continued native grassland restoration project—on-going
- Continued working with Border Patrol to educate agents on the effects of off-road vehicle use—on-going
- Clean-up of illegal dump sites and access control on Cornerstone Lands—on-going
- Development of Management Plan for Cornerstone Lands—on-going



California Goldfields at Marron Valley



Other Open Space Areas

Crest Canyon

- Trail maintenance and monitoring—December

San Vicente Reservoir

- Enforcement and access control—on-going
- Trash clean-up—monthly
- Mapped *Arundo* on West fork of San Vicente Creek

Tierrasanta Open Space

- Hosted Friend's of Tierrasanta Open Space work group—monthly
- Hosted 21 Boy Scout volunteers to remove invasive plants and litter from restoration site—April
- Hosted 17 Francis Parker Middle School student volunteers to remove invasive plants and litter from restoration site—April, May
- Installed birds houses, bat boxes, and owl boxes donated by Boy Scout project—May

City-wide Projects

- Improved stormwater drainage to minimize pollution and habitat damage through natural flow dissipaters such as swales planted with native—on-going
 - Open Space-funded Code Compliance Investigator workload included 67 cases identified, 15 cases opened, 26 cases closed — January-December
 - Developed short films for web distribution on topics such as wildlife corridors, vernal pools, native vegetation communities, Golden Spotted Oak Borer—view at <http://tinyurl.com/7b4cfxb>
 - Open Space Pesticide Applicator conducted invasive plant control in 32nd St Canyon, Adobe Falls Open Space, Albatross Canyon, Carmel Valley Open Space, Chollas Creek Open Space, Chollas Parkway Open Space, Chollas Radio Canyon, Encanto Expressway Open Space, Gonzalez Canyon, Guymon Arms Canyon, Juniper Canyon Open Space, Kensington/College Open Space, La Jolla Heights Open Space, La Zanja Canyon, Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Maple Canyon, McGonigle Canyon, Mission Trails Regional Park, Navajo Canyon, Paradise Canyon, Pottery Canyon, Rancho Mission Canyon, Ruffin Canyon, South Bay Terraces Open Space, Stadium Village Open Space, Tecolote Canyon Natural Park—yearlong
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Thanks to our Partners

- Allied Waste
 - Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts of America
 - Canyon Crusaders
 - Chaparral Lands Conservancy
 - City Heights Canyon Alliance
 - Grand del Mar
 - Groundworks Chollas
 - Francis Parker Schools
 - Friends of 32nd Street Canyon
 - Friends of 47th Street Canyon
 - Friends of Chollas Creek
 - Friends of Gonzalez Canyon
 - Friends of Juniper Canyon
 - Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon
 - Friends of Mission Valley Preserve
 - Friends of Navajo Canyon
 - Friends of Rose Canyon
 - Friends of Ruffin Canyon
 - Friends of Switzer Canyon
 - Friends of Tierrasanta Canyons
 - Friends of University Heights Open Space
 - Habitat Heroes
 - I Love a Clean San Diego
 - Kearny High School
 - King/Chavez High School
 - Mormon Helping Hands
 - Ocean Discovery Institute
 - Project Wildlife
 - REI
 - San Diego Audubon
 - San Diego Canyonlands
 - San Diego River Park Foundation
 - San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
 - Sprint
 - Tri-Canyon Volunteers
 - University High School Roots and Shoots Club
 - Weed Warriors
-



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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