

## **B. MULTIPLE SPECIES CONSERVATION PROGRAM (MSCP)/OPEN SPACE**

Since the adoption of the Framework Plan (and the Environmental Tier) in 1992, the City's adopted resource planning efforts largely involved the development of the MSCP. As a regional habitat conservation plan, the MSCP was designed to address habitat needs for multiple species and includes a preserve designed to address the preservation of natural communities for an 885-square-mile area in the jurisdictions of 11 cities and a sizeable portion of the unincorporated County of San Diego.

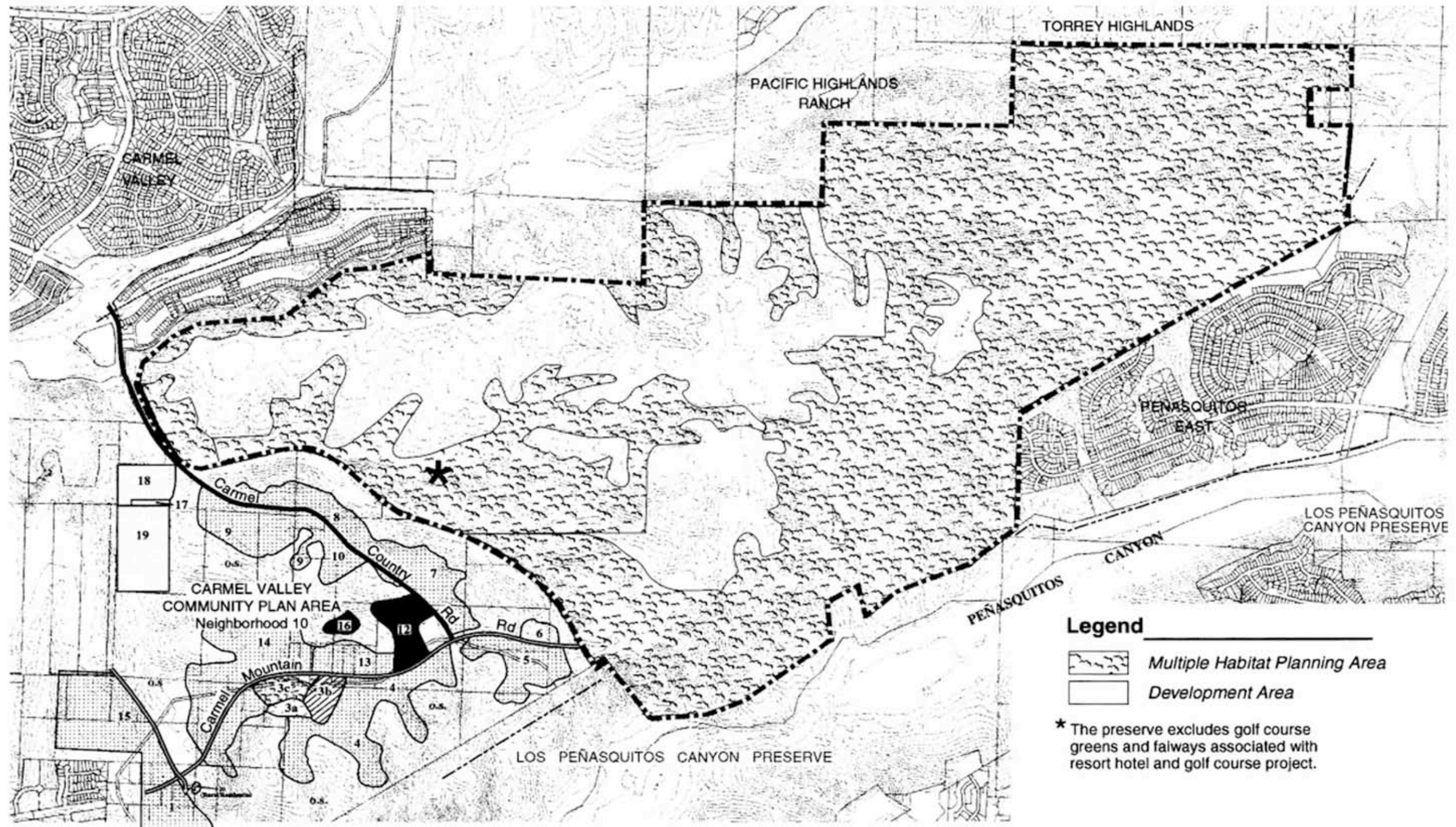
The ecosystem of southwestern San Diego County consists of a diverse assemblage of vegetation communities/habitat that supports a wide array of plant animal species. These native vegetation communities are considered sensitive by federal, state and local jurisdictions because they have been severely reduced in distribution as a result of urbanization. Some of these vegetation communities occur only within San Diego as well as the U.S. distribution of component sensitive plant and animal species. Implementation of the MSCP is expected to maintain biodiversity throughout the San Diego area, minimize or avoid species extinction and create a new, streamlined process for the issuance of federal and state permits.

Del Mar Mesa is included in the Northern Area of the City's MSCP Subarea Plan. It is part of the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and Canyon/Del Mar Mesa core biological area. This core biological resource area encompasses one of the few intact natural open space areas in coastal San Diego County that is still linked to larger expanses of habitat to the east, hence, its tremendous significance. Del Mar Mesa contains core habitat area on the Del Mar Mesa north of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve in addition to linkages containing disturbed lands and habitat leading toward Carmel Valley and Carmel Creek.

The Plan is consistent with the MSCP Plan and incorporates the MHPA (see **Figure 6**). The Del Mar Mesa open space system is shown on **Figure 7** and on **Exhibit A**, which was adopted concurrently with the specific plan.

The Plan designates the core biological resource areas and sufficient wildlife linkages for preservation within the MHPA of the MSCP (**Figure 6**). Additionally, the Plan identifies four categories of open space based on conservation potential and planned use (**Figure 7**). The open space area categories are described below:





Multiple Habitat Boundaries  
Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan

**6**  
FIGURE



## 1. Publicly-Owned Open Space

At the time that the Plan was adopted in 1997, approximately 551 acres were owned by the City, county, federal or California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) within Del Mar Mesa. This property is designated as Resource Based Open Space in the Plan.

Since the original adoption of the Plan in 1997, additional land or land rights have been purchased for the purposes of conservation and mitigation. Approximately 95 acres have either been purchased or conserved with easements for conservation and mitigation. This includes approximately 52 acres purchased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, approximately 18 acres acquired by the City of San Diego and approximately 20 acres conserved by private entities to mitigate for off-site impacts.

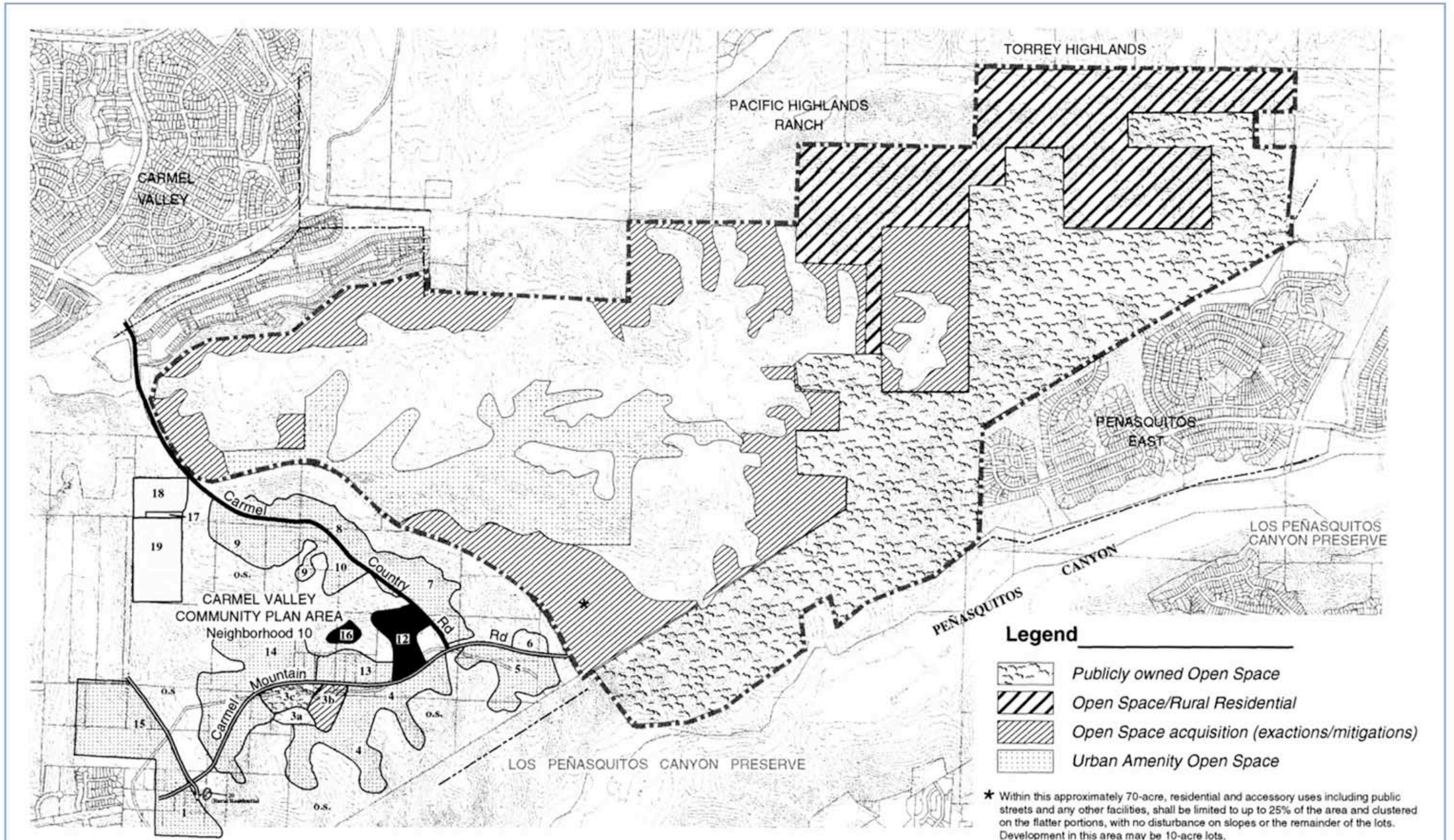
The majority of this land is comprised of several large contiguous parcels which form the entire southeastern border of the subarea. Because this area is adjacent to the Los Peñasquitos Canyon preserve, it serves visually and biologically as an extension of this preserve and adds substantially to this regionally significant open space system.

A portion of the open space in Del Mar Mesa also lies within the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge and contains highly sensitive vernal pool habitat. The purpose of the National Wildlife Refuge is to protect and manage key native habitats for several endangered, threatened and rare vernal pool species. A portion of the Refuge is concurrently in public ownership and additional lands may be purchased from willing sellers.

## 2. Open Space/Rural Residential Area

A total of 388 acres are designated in the easternmost portion of Del Mar Mesa as Open Space/Rural Residential (see **Figure 7**). This area is contiguous to the previously acquired open space lands and is proposed for acquisition, thereby further extending the major open space block which encompasses the entire eastern half of the Del Mar Mesa. When all lands are acquired, this area will represent the largest undisturbed native environment in the entire 12,000-acre NCFUA. These parcels are proposed for acquisition in the Framework Plan and, because of their combined size and undisturbed quality, may be the single most important component within the entire open space system within the NCFUA. More detail regarding the open space acquisition program is contained in the **Implementation** section of this Plan.





Open Space  
Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan **7**  
FIGURE



**TABLE 4**  
**OPEN SPACE SUMMARY**

<b>Open Space Areas</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Publicly Owned Land <sup>1</sup>	551.4 ac. <sup>1</sup>
Open Space/Rural Residential	388.5 ac.
Open Space Acquisition (Exactions/Mitigations)	330.5 ac.
Urban Amenity Open Space	208.6 ac.
<b>Total</b>	<b>1479.0 ac.</b>

1. Since the adoption of the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan, additional land has been purchased for the purposes of conservation and mitigation. Approximately 95 acres have either been purchased or conserved with easements for the purposes of conservation and mitigation, including approximately 52 acres purchased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, approximately 18 acres acquired by the City of San Diego and approximately 20 acres conserved by private entities to mitigate for off-site impacts.

### **3. Open Space Acquisition Area - Exactions/Mitigation**

As shown on **Figure 7**, there are some areas designated for open space on the western half of Del Mar Mesa which are also designated for proposed acquisition through the subdivision process. These areas are located on parcels that also have areas designated for development. It is intended that this open space be acquired, or set aside by dedication or easement, with approval of a tentative map for the property subject to the supplemental regulations for resource management in this Plan.

### **4. Urban Amenity Open Space Areas**

The designated Urban Amenity Open Space area through the resort hotel and golf course property and the Shaw property east of Shaw Valley provides a secondary, alternative east-west linkage intended for small wildlife and birds, as well as providing visual relief from adjacent development. A golf course, other recreational and visitor-serving amenities, a pond and remaining and restored native vegetation areas proposed on the resort hotel and golf course site are expected to provide for limited wildlife movement and some habitat for native species. Pedestrian paths may be located in the Urban Amenity Open Space on the Shaw property which extends through an under crossing which will be developed below Carmel Mountain Road. This Urban Amenity and under crossing is meant to preserve a secondary link between the areas to the west and those located east of the roadway. Such paths could serve to introduce and educate people to and about the significant native plant and animal species in the area.

**TABLE 5  
PUBLICLY-OWNED OPEN SPACE SUMMARY**

Publicly-Owned Open Space	Acreage		Total
	AR-1-1	AR-1-2	
Other Public Agencies/Jurisdictions	29.2 ac.	0 ac.	29.2 ac.
County of San Diego	89.4 ac.	0 ac.	89.4 ac.
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>118.6 ac.</b>	<b>0 ac.</b>	<b>118.6 ac.<sup>1</sup></b>
City of San Diego	311.3 ac.	0 ac.	311.3 ac.
Acquired for Mitigation	101.6 ac.	20 ac.	121.5 ac.
Acquired with open space bonds			
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>412.9 ac.</b>	<b>20 ac.</b>	<b>432.8 ac.<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>531.5 ac.</b>	<b>20 ac.</b>	<b>551.4 ac.</b>

1. Since the adoption of the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan, additional land has been purchased for the purposes of conservation and mitigation. Approximately 93 acres have either been purchased or conserved with easements for the purposes of conservation and mitigation, including approximately 52 acres purchased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, approximately 18 acres acquired by the City of San Diego and approximately 20 acres conserved by private entities to mitigate for off-site impacts.

**5. Multi-Habitat Planning Area Boundary and Criteria for Adjustment**

For more specific definition of the Del Mar Mesa open space boundary and MHPA, refer to the 400-scale map adopted as **Exhibit A**. The MSCP Subarea Plan allows the City to make minor adjustments to the MHPA in limited circumstances with subsequent tentative map approvals or other discretionary permit approvals. Minor boundary adjustments will not require amendments to the Plan. Within the Coastal Zone, boundary adjustments which are determined to be consistent with the MSCP implementing agreement between the City of San Diego, the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, do not require an amendment to the Local Coastal Program (LCP). The criteria for making these adjustments, is based on whether the resulting change maintains a preserve area that is of equivalent or higher biological value to the original configuration. Within the Coastal Zone, boundary adjustments which require an amendment to the Plan due to modification of **Figure 6** of the Plan will require an amendment to the certified LCP.

Adjustments to the MHPA boundaries may be desirable under some circumstances. For example:

- New biological information is obtained through site-specific studies;

- Unforeseen engineering design opportunities or constraints may be identified during the siting or design of projects that require modification of the MHPA; and/or
- A landowner may request that a portion or all of his property be included within the MHPA.

As provided for in the City's MSCP Subarea Plan, adjustments to the MHPA can be made without the need to amend the MSCP Subarea Plan and the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan if the adjustment will result in the same or higher biological value of the MHPA. The determination of biological value of the proposed change is made by the City and must have the concurrence of the wildlife agencies. No amendment of the MSCP Subarea Plan is needed for an approved equivalent exchange. The comparison of biological value will be based on the following biological factors:

- Effects on significantly and sufficiently conserved habitats (i.e., the exchange maintains or improves the conservation, configuration, or status of significantly or sufficiently conserved habitats, as defined in the MSCP Plan, Section 4.2.4);
- Effects to covered species (i.e., the exchange maintains or increases the conservation of covered species);
- Effects on habitat linkages and function of preserve areas (i.e., the exchange maintains or improves a habitat linkage or wildlife corridor);
- Effects on preserve configuration and management (i.e., the exchange results in similar or improved management efficiency and/or protection for biological resources);
- Effects on preserve configuration and management (i.e., the exchange results in similar or improved management efficiency and/or protection for biological resources);
- Effects on ecotones or other conditions affecting species diversity (i.e., the exchange maintains topographic and structural diversity and habitat interfaces of the preserve); and/or
- Effects to species of concern not on the covered species list (i.e., the exchange does not significantly increase the likelihood that an uncovered species will meet the criteria for listing under either the federal or state Endangered Species Acts).

## **6. Guidelines for Development Areas in and Adjacent to the MHPA**

The following are specific guidelines for development within the development areas in and/or adjacent to the MHPA in Del Mar Mesa:

- a. The preserve excludes golf course greens and fairways, although these areas may provide for some wildlife movement. The precise layout and

configuration of the golf course greens and fairways shall be established when the proposed project is approved by the City of San Diego. Minor adjustments to the preserve in this location, which result in an equivalent or higher biological value, may be accommodated without an amendment of the Plan.

- b. Within the approximately 70-acre area located within the southwest portion of the Shaw property, residential and accessory uses, including public streets and any other facilities, shall be limited to up to 25 percent of the area and clustered on the flatter portions.
- c. For the Shaw Texas property (Area No. 61 on **Figure 30**) and Areas 70, 59 and 44 abutting the MHPA to the east, and extending to the border of the AR-1-2 zoned areas to the north, all brush management shall occur within the defined development area for lots contiguous to the MHPA. This requirement also applies to Area Nos. 9, 32, 23 and 33, abutting the AR-1-2 zoned areas to the east and the MHPA to the north. Deviations from brush management standards shall be considered if they are consistent with the Alternative Compliance provision of the Landscape Technical Manual.
- d. Fencing or other barriers will be used where it is determined to be the best method to achieve conservation goals and adjacent to land uses incompatible with the preserve.
- e. Where grading is necessary, daylight grading at the edges of the preserve is preferred. All grading proposed adjacent to the preserve, including all cut and fill slopes, must occur wholly within the development area, except as specified in the Plan. Graded areas adjacent to open space shall be re-vegetated with native plant species.
- f. A 12 to 14-foot diameter culvert to facilitate wildlife movement shall be provided where Carmel Mountain Road crosses the Urban Amenity Open Space on the Shaw Texas property (Area No. 61 on **Figure 30**). This culvert is a Development Impact Fee funded improvement in the Public Facilities Financing Plan.
- g. The designated Urban Amenity Open Space area through the resort hotel and golf course property provides an alternative east-west corridor for wildlife movement. If fencing is proposed within the golf course on the property, it should not inhibit wildlife movement through this area. In areas where fencing is appropriate, split-rail type not to exceed four feet in height is recommended.

## **7. Guidelines for Resource Based Open Space Areas and Adjacent Areas**

The City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan applies to the Resource Based Open Space areas within Del Mar Mesa which are included in the adopted MSCP (see **Figure 7**). This document should be used in evaluating appropriate uses and development in these areas.



a. Compatible Land Uses

The following land uses are considered conditionally compatible with the biological objectives of the MSCP and thus will be allowed within the City's MHPA/Resource Based Open Space areas:

- Passive recreation
- Utility lines and roads in compliance with the MSCP Subarea Plan
- Limited water facilities and other essential public facilities
- Limited low-density residential uses
- Limited agriculture

Development on private property designated Open Space/Rural Residential shall not exceed 25 percent of the parcel, consistent with the supplemental regulations for resource management contained in the Plan. Development within these areas that is consistent with the existing zoning, such as single-family residences on lots zoned AR-1-1, is consistent with the Plan.

Expansion of existing uses would need to be in compliance with the Plan and should provide measures to minimize impacts on the preserve including lighting, noise or uncontrolled access.

b. Roads and Utilities

- All proposed utility lines (e.g., sewer, water, etc.) should be designed to avoid or minimize intrusion into the MHPA. These facilities should be routed through developed or developing areas rather than the MHPA, where possible. If no other routing is feasible, then the lines should follow previously existing roads, easements, rights-of-way, and disturbed areas, minimizing habitat fragmentation.
- All new development for utilities and facilities within or crossing preserve areas shall be planned, designed, located and constructed to minimize environmental impacts. All such activities must avoid disturbing the habitat of MSCP covered species and wetlands. If avoidance is infeasible, mitigation will be required.
- Temporary construction areas and roads, staging areas, or permanent access roads must not disturb existing habitat unless determined to be unavoidable. All such activities must occur on existing agricultural lands or in other disturbed areas rather than in habitat. If temporary habitat disturbance is unavoidable, then restoration of, and/or mitigation for, the disturbed area after project completion will be required.
- Construction and maintenance activities in wildlife corridors must avoid significant disruption of corridor usage. Environmental documents and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs pertaining to such

development must clearly specify how this will be achieved, and construction plans must contain all the pertinent information and be readily available to crews in the field. Training of construction crews and field workers must be conducted to ensure that all conditions are met. A responsible party must be specified.

- Roads in the preserve will be limited to those identified in the Plan, roads necessary for maintenance and emergency access and local streets needed to access isolated development areas.
- Development of roads in canyon bottoms should be avoided whenever feasible. If an alternative location outside the preserve is not feasible, then the road must be designed to cross the shortest length possible of the preserve in order to minimize impacts and fragmentation of sensitive species and habitat. If roads cross the preserve, they should provide for fully functional wildlife movement capability. Bridges are the preferred method of providing for movement, although culverts in selected locations may be acceptable. Fencing, grading and plant cover should be provided where needed to protect and shield animals, and guide them away from roads to appropriate crossings.
- Where possible, roads within the preserve should be narrowed from existing design standards to minimize habitat fragmentation and disruption of wildlife movement and breeding areas. Roads must be located in lower quality habitat or disturbed areas to the extent possible.

c. Fencing and Lighting

- Fencing or other barriers will be used where it is determined to be the best method to achieve conservation goals and in areas adjacent to land uses incompatible with the MHPA. For example, chain link or other appropriate fencing material may be used to direct wildlife to appropriate corridor crossings, and natural rock/barrier or split-rail fencing to direct public access to appropriate locations and away from sensitive species or habitats (e.g., vernal pools). For a description of the appropriate fencing designs and materials in Del Mar Mesa, refer to the **Community Design Element** of this Plan.
- In order to preserve the rural character and the dark night skies characteristic in Del Mar Mesa, standard street lighting will not be provided in the community. Those lights that are required for safety as determined by the City Engineer shall be designed to avoid intrusion into the MHPA, and to reduce negative effects on wildlife. Lighting in areas of wildlife crossings should be of low-sodium or similar lighting. Lighting of all developed areas adjacent to the MHPA should be directed away from the preserve. Where necessary, development should provide adequate shielding with non-invasive plant materials (preferably native), berming, and/or other methods to protect the MHPA and sensitive species from night lighting.