

2004 MSCP Annual Public Workshop Summary Report June 18, 2005

I. Background and Summary

MSCP Annual Report Background

On March 18, 1997, the San Diego City Council unanimously adopted the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), collectively referred to as the wildlife agencies, entered into an Implementing Agreement (IA) with the City of San Diego (City) in July 1997. The IA requires the City to prepare a report containing an annual accounting of the habitat acreage lost and conserved within the City's MSCP subarea. In addition, the City and the wildlife agencies are required to jointly conduct a public workshop to disseminate and discuss the annual report.

The City's eighth MSCP Annual Report was submitted to the wildlife agencies on February 9, 2005. The report identifies, by project, the habitat loss and conservation from January 1, 2004 through the end of the 2004 calendar year.

In 2004, habitat conservation efforts within the City's MSCP preserve area, and referred to as the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), were focused on acquiring critical areas of sensitive habitat and securing wildlife corridors within the MHPA, as well as initiating monitoring efforts. Acquisitions have been accomplished through public purchase and by directing private mitigation to parcels within the MHPA. The City and wildlife agencies have also acquired habitat within the MHPA with local, state and federal funding. The City is continuing to increase its efforts for the acquisition, monitoring and management of habitat within the MHPA as described below.

Annual Report Summary

Within the reporting period (January 1, 2004 - December 31, 2004), 784.1 acres were conserved in the MHPA and 148.2 acres were conserved outside the MHPA, compared to the loss of 82.3 acres of habitat inside the MHPA. Outside the MHPA, 826.8 acres of habitat loss occurred (91 percent of the total habitat lost). Habitat loss represents the acreage impacted by projects approved for construction within the reporting period.

As of the end of the 2004 reporting period (December 31, 2004), a total of 34,474 acres have been conserved in (32,527.6 acres) or adjacent to (1,946.4 acres) the MHPA. This includes pre-MSCP (baseline) conserved lands totaling 22,141 acres.

Table 1. City of San Diego Habitat Loss and Conservation (January 1, 2004 - December 31, 2004).

Habitat Type & Examples of Habitats	Habitat Loss (acres)		Habitat Conserved (acres)	
	2004	Cumulative	2004	Cumulative
Wetlands: Coastal Wetlands(Salt Pan/Salt Marsh) Riparian Habitats Freshwater Marsh Natural Flood Channel Disturbed Wetland Vernal Pools Marine Habitats(Pacific Ocean/Deep Bay) Eelgrass Beds (Shallow Bays) Open Water	12.1	81.3	11.9	5,040.4
TIER I (rare uplands): Southern Fore dunes Torrey Pines Forest Southern Coastal Bluff Scrub Maritime Succulent Scrub Southern Maritime Chaparral Native Grassland Oak Woodlands	3.7	355.9	11	2,158.4
TIER II (uncommon uplands): Coastal Sage Scrub CSS/Chaparral	40.6	1,269.9	307	11,911.2
TIER III A (common uplands): Mixed Chaparral Chamise Chaparral	54.2	1,162.8	351.3	7,520.6
TIER III B (common uplands): Nonnative Grasslands	758.2	3,575.2	249.8	3,519.2
TIER IV (other uplands) Disturbed Agriculture Eucalyptus	4.9	1,627.8	0	3,301.2
Others: Beach Urban/Developed	35.4	1,038.7	1.4	1,023.1
Total	909.1	9,111.8	932.4	34,474.0

Note: Includes land inside and outside of MHPA.

The acreages in the table were generated by a Geographic Information System (GIS), which tracks habitat loss and gain. This system, Habitrak, uses the regional GIS and the San Diego GIS land base in its area calculations. This is the sixth year that the Habitrak system has been used to compile the habitat loss/gain information and maps for the annual report. Habitrak was developed to facilitate and standardize the annual reports for each jurisdiction that participates in the MSCP. Funding for the software development was provided by a grant from the CDFG and was administered by San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG).

II. Public Land Acquisitions

On April 17, 2000, the City Council Rules Committee approved four priority target areas for land acquisitions under the MSCP. Table 2 identifies the status of acquisitions as of June 2005. Lands in this table have been conserved by public (local, state and federal), and private acquisitions. Additional lands have been conserved outside target areas by private developers.

Table 2. Status of MSCP Priority Target Acquisition Areas.

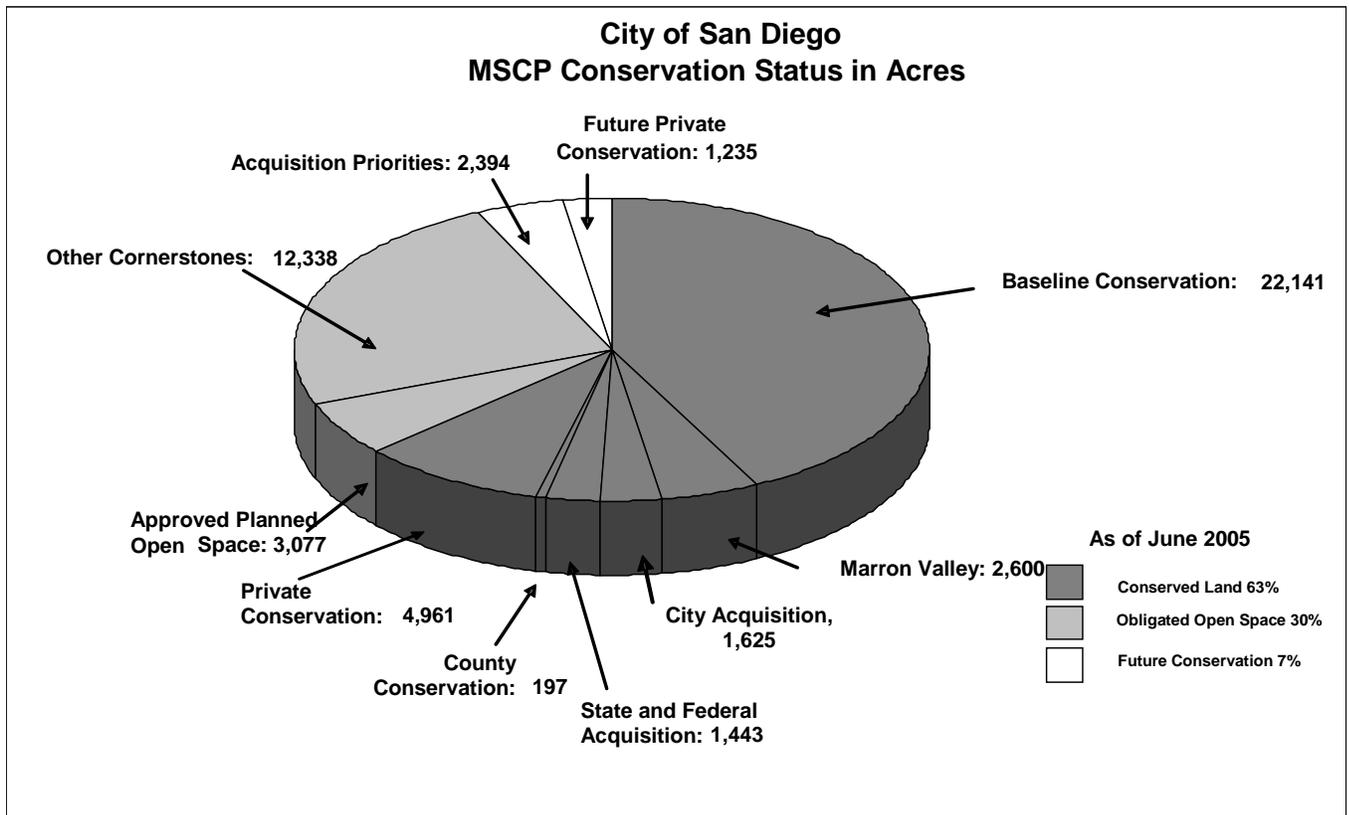
Target Area	Target Acreage	Adoption of MSCP 3/28/1997	1/1/2001	1/1/2003	1/1/2004	6/1/05
Montana Mirador	535	0 acres (0%)	0 acres (0%)	535 acres (100%)	535 acres (100%)	535 acres (100%)
Del Mar Mesa	865	346 acres (40%)	449 acres (52%)	548 acres (63.3%)	581 acres (66.7%)	668 acres (77%)
East Elliott	2,120	8.8 acres (1%)	8.8 acres (1%)	285 acres (12.6%)	294 acres (13%)	645 acres (30%)
Otay Mesa	1,171	200 acres (17%)	200 acres (17%)	328 acres (28%)	328 acres (28%)	408 acres (35%)
TOTAL	4,691	554.8 acres (11.8%)	657.8 acres (14.0%)	1,696 acres (36.2 %)	1,738 acres (37.1%)	2,256 acres (48.1 %)

Since January 2004, significant acquisitions have been made in Del Mar Mesa and East Elliott. With the conservation of the 80-acre Clews property and the pending establishment of the 60-acre Deer Canyon Mitigation Bank (not reflected in Table 2), acquisition of property from willing sellers on Del Mar Mesa has been completed. Additional conservation will come as part of the normal discretionary permitting process over the next few years.

Also during this time period, several large properties have been acquired in East Elliott. These acquisitions were done in partnership with the State Wildlife Conservation Board with additional funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional acquisitions of properties from willing sellers, at fair-market value, are expected to continue over the next year as funding permits.

The acreage conserved since January 2004 has moved the City closer to meeting its conservation target of 52,012 acres under the MSCP (see Table 3).

Table 3. Breakdown of Conserved Acreage within the MHPA



III. Project Reviews

In 2004, 97 new development projects were reviewed by the MSCP staff for consistency with the adopted MSCP Subarea Plan and implementing regulations. Since January 2005, an additional 49 new development projects have been reviewed. City staff continues to ensure that the MHPA preserve design, land use adjacency guidelines, mitigation requirements and specific area management directives have been evaluated and, as appropriate, incorporated into project designs. Projects that comply with the policies of the MSCP are afforded “Third Party Beneficiary” status as provided for in the City’s MSCP (Section 17.1).

Adjustments to the boundary of the MHPA are allowed on a project-by-project basis if the boundary adjustment is deemed functionally equivalent to the land that is proposed to be removed from the MHPA (see Section 5.4.2 MSCP Plan, August 1998). The wildlife agencies must concur with the adjustment. In 2004, seven new boundary line adjustments and three boundary line corrections were processed. This year, MSCP staff has continued to have bimonthly meetings with wildlife agency staff to discuss proposed MHPA boundary line adjustments, and to obtain concurrence from the wildlife agencies during the preparation of the environmental documents for the boundary line adjustment. After each meeting, MSCP staff confirm in writing the determinations made by wildlife agency staff.

IV. Grants

Grant funding is a key component to MSCP success for the City of San Diego. Table 4 provides a summary of grant projects funded in 2004, during which time the City secured over \$2.6 million in grant funding for acquisition, management and monitoring of lands within its MSCP subarea.

Table 4. Grants awarded to the City of San Diego MSCP in 2004.

Grant Type	Grantor	Grant Description
Land Acquisition Grant through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund.	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/State of California Wildlife Conservation Board.	\$2.5 million awarded for acquisition of lands in Otay Mesa.
Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP).	California Department of Fish and Game.	\$116,567 was awarded for independent scientific review and revision of the regional MSCP rare plant monitoring plan.
Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP).	California Department of Fish and Game.	\$41, 841 was awarded for preparation of a Marron Valley fire management plan. The plan will include priority habitat areas for avoidance during firefighting activities.

V. Management and Monitoring

Framework Management Plan and Area Specific Management Plans

In accordance with the City's IA, Section 10.6B, the City was required to prepare a Framework Management Plan within six months after the adoption of the MSCP Subarea Plan. The City's MSCP Subarea Plan was adopted by the City Council in March 1997. A Framework Management Plan was included as Section 1.5 of the Subarea Plan; therefore, the City has fulfilled their obligations pursuant to Section 10.6B of the IA. Pursuant to the IA and Section 1.5 of the Subarea Plan, area specific management directives must also be prepared and implemented by the City. Table 5 lists the status of area specific management plans for the City of San Diego preserve lands.

Table 5. Status of City of San Diego Area Specific Management Plans.

PLAN	STATUS
Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa.	A draft document has been completed and reviewed by the wildlife agencies and community advisory boards. The trails plan is nearly complete for the plan. Final planning will be incorporated into the document and a second draft will be submitted to the wildlife agencies during Summer 2005. Estimated completion: Winter 2005.
City of San Diego Vernal Pool Management Plan.	Vernal pool inventory was completed in 2004 and development of a vernal pool management plan is underway. Estimated completion: Spring 2006.
Tecolote Canyon Natural Resources Management Plan.	A draft management plan has been prepared and is being reviewed and revised by City staff. The plan will also be reviewed by wildlife agency staff, then sent to the Citizen's Advisory Committee, and finally to City Council for hearing. Estimated completion: 2006.
Western Otay River Valley Management Plan.	A draft management plan was completed in April 2001 and is currently under review by participating jurisdictions and subject to City Council approval. Estimated completion: 2005.
San Diego River (West of Mission Trails).	Surveys for invasive species and an invasives removal plan were developed for the San Diego River, funded by the Metropolitan Wastewater Department. Additional surveys will be conducted prior to development of the management plan. Estimated completion: 2005.
San Diego River Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP).	Comments on the final draft management plan are being addressed and the final NRMP will be subject to City Council approval. Estimated completion: 2005.
Boden Canyon.	The final draft management plan was completed in September 2001. Currently, wildlife agencies are working on completing the plan. This plan is subject to City Council approval.
Black Mountain Open Space Park Natural Resources Management Plan.	A draft management plan has been completed and reviewed by the wildlife agencies, the Black Mountain Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), and the City's trails planner. The document was revised based on wildlife agency comments. CAC and trails comments have not been addressed due to staffing shortages. Once staffing allows, CAC comments will be addressed and the plan will go back to CAC for an advisory vote, then to the City's Park and Recreation Advisory Board, and finally to City Council for hearing.
San Pasqual/Lake Hodges Cornerstone Management Plan.	The plan was completed in July 2003.
Marron Valley Management Plan.	The management plan was completed in June 2001.

PLAN	STATUS
First San Diego River Improvement Project.	The plan was completed in 2002.
Rancho Encantada, a 1,500-acre parcel located adjacent to Sycamore County Park.	The development project plans, including final habitat management plan, was adopted by the City Council in 2001.
Pacific Highlands Ranch.	Master Revegetation Plan for the Pacific Highlands Ranch Subarea was adopted by City Council along with the Pacific Highlands Ranch project in October 2000.
Mission Trails Regional Park San Diego Ambrosia Management Plan.	Adopted by the Mission Trails Taskforce in 2000.
Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Management Plan.	Completed in 1998.
Marian Bear Memorial Park Management Plan.	Completed in 1994.
Famosa Slough Management Plan.	Completed in 1993.
Mission Bay Management Plan.	Completed in 1990.

2004 Habitat Management Activities

In 2003, the City Council established the Open Space Division within the Park and Recreation department. This division is responsible for managing the City's existing open space system, including lands acquired under the MSCP. Management for biological resources has been primarily focused on maintaining the existing biological values of habitat under City control. Once a regional funding source is established, opportunities for more extensive biological management activities could be pursued. More specific management actions have been pursued by MSCP and Park and Recreation staff, when local or grant funding could be obtained. Table 6 describes specific management activities undertaken in 2004.

Table 6. Specific Habitat Management Activities Completed or Underway in 2004.

Location	Status
Mission Bay Park.	City staff coordinated a Nuttall's Lotus (<i>Lotus nuttallianus</i>) habitat restoration day in December 2004. Nearly 30 volunteers removed over 3.5 tons of iceplant from Nuttall's Lotus habitat in Mission Bay Park. MSCP staff are now working with Caltrans to identify potential funding sources for control of the remaining iceplant onsite.
Mission Trails Regional Park – Post-Fire Rehabilitation.	Post-fire rehabilitation of the park is ongoing along with maintenance of volunteer trail closures and exotic weed removal.
Otay Valley Regional Park – Invasive Plant Removal.	A draft invasives removal plan has been prepared.

Monitoring

Pursuant to Section 14.5 of the City's MSCP IA with the wildlife agencies, the City is responsible for monitoring preserve lands under its purview. Monitoring requirements and protocols are set forth in the *Biological Monitoring Plan for the MSCP* (Ogden Environmental, 1996).

Reconnaissance surveys were performed in 2001 under the monitoring plan, and City MSCP staff has initiated those elements of the MSCP Biological Monitoring Plan that can be accomplished with currently available funding. The following summarizes the status of current and proposed monitoring activities:

Vernal Pool Inventory and Management Plan: The City received funding from the USFWS in the form of a Section 6 Planning Grant to complete a citywide inventory of vernal pools. Surveys were completed in 2003 and the *City of San Diego Vernal Pool Inventory*, which is available online at <http://www.sandiego.gov/mscp/vpi.shtml>, was released in Fall 2004. City staff is currently performing a follow up study to compare changes in vernal pool areas from 2003 to 2005 data. Subsamples of the pools, inventoried in 2003, were selected, re-visited and mapped using sub-meter GPS units. Sites have been surveyed for coverage estimates of five rare vernal pool plant species.

Priority Plant Monitoring: In 2004, City MSCP staff and volunteers performed rare plant monitoring for seven species at eighteen sites as outlined in Table 7 below.

Table 7. City of San Diego Rare Plant Monitoring Performed in 2004.

Species	Site	Date	Staff
<i>Acanthomintha ilicifolia</i> (San Diego Thornmint)	Black Mountain Ranch	April 14, 2004	M. Kelly, M. Howe (volunteers)
	Mission Trails Regional Park	April 18, 2004	M. Kelly, M. Howe (volunteers)
	Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve	April 18, 2004	M. Kelly, M. Howe (volunteers)
	Sabre Springs	April 17, 2004	M. Kelly, M. Howe (volunteers)
<i>Cordylanthus orcuttianus</i> (Orcutt's Bird's Beak)	Otay River	May 26, 2004	K. Martinez, B. Miller
<i>Deinandra conjugens</i> (Otay Tarplant)	Proctor Valley	June 16, 2004	H. Cheong, C. Kane, B. Miller, K. Martinez
<i>Dudleya brevifolia</i> (Short-Leaf Dudleya)	Crest Canyon and Skeleton Canyon	May 7, 2004	H. Cheong
	Carmel Mountain	May 13, 2004	H. Cheong, K. Greer, B. Frohn, K. Martinez
<i>Dudleya variegata</i> (Variegated Dudleya)	Mission Trails Regional Park	May 19, 2004	H. Cheong, B. Miller, K. Martinez, P. Seiley
	Otay Lakes	May 21, 2004	M. Johnson, K. Martinez, B. Miller
	Spring Canyon	May 26, 2004	K. Martinez, B. Miller
	Mercy Road	May 26, 2004	K. Martinez, B. Miller

Species	Site	Date	Staff
	East Elliott	May 28, 2004	H. Cheong, K. Martinez, K. Greer, R. Rodriguez, C. Smith, P. Seiley
<i>Dudleya variegata</i> (Variegated Dudleya)	East Elliott	June 3 and 4, 2004	M. Johnson, K. Martinez
	Margerum Avenue	May 19, 2004	H. Cheong, B. Miller, K. Martinez
<i>Lotus nuttallianus</i> (Nuttall's Lotus)	Mission Bay	June 2, 2004	K. Greer, M., Johnson, K. Martinez, J. Atha, B. Frohn
<i>Monardella linoidea</i> (Willow Monardella)	Lopez Canyon	June 2, 2004	R. Rodriguez
	Marron Valley	June 9, 2004	H. Cheong, B. Miller, K. Martinez
	Sycamore Canyon	June 10, 2004	H. Cheong, B. Miller, K. Martinez, C. Kane
	Otay Lakes	June 16, 2004	H. Cheong, C. Kane, B. Miller, K. Martinez
<i>Muilla clevelandii</i> (San Diego Goldenstar)	Marron Valley	April 16, 2004	H. Cheong, B. Miller, J. Atha
	Otay Lakes	April 16, 2004	H. Cheong, B. Miller, J. Atha, K. Greer

Coastal California Gnatcatcher: An MSCP-wide California gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila californica*) monitoring effort was completed in Spring 2004. The effort was coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and implemented on City lands by City staff, consultants to the City, and USFWS staff. Detailed protocol is available upon request. USFWS is currently compiling and analyzing the region-wide data.

Development of Monitoring Database: The City has developed an integrated Management and Monitoring Database (MMDB) that will track the City's MSCP biological monitoring and management activities. The MMDB development included the following aspects: 1) a comprehensive database development; 2) integration with GIS; 3) field data collection using a pocket P.C.; and 4) field and office demonstration to other agencies (USFWS, County, US Geological Society and CDFG). Future phases may include a web-based internet application made available to the public for education and information purposes. The MMDB database/GIS integration coupling phases have been developed and are currently being field tested. The MMDB demonstrations were provided in early Spring 2005.

VI. Conclusion

Since the adoption of the City's MSCP Subarea Plan in July 1997, significant achievements have occurred which continue to contribute to the successful implementation of the City's MSCP Subarea Plan. During the 2004 reporting period, 784.1 acres of habitat were conserved in the MHPA and 148.2 acres were conserved adjacent to the MHPA. Of the 909.1 acres of habitat that was impacted due to project approvals within this same time period, 91 percent of the loss

occurred outside of the MHPA. In 2004, 97 new projects were reviewed for consistency with the City's MSCP Subarea Plan.

The City continues to be successful in securing state and federal grants, many of which have been instrumental in providing for MHPA acquisitions and ongoing management and monitoring activities as described in this report. All key acquisitions from willing sellers in Del Mar Mesa have been completed since the last reporting period. Additionally, significant acquisitions of private land in East Elliott have occurred in 2004. Additional information on the status of the MSCP is available through the City's website at www.sandiego.gov/mscp. The City's MSCP Subarea Plan program objectives for the first eight years have been achieved.

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