MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Management of natural resources within FSDRIP must consider the following issues: adjacent development; public use; utility maintenance and installation; light rail transit; maintaining habitat permit goals; and flood and sedimentation damage.

ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT

A number of private developments exist or are planned adjacent to FSDRIP, as outlined by the amended FSDRIP Specific Plan. These developments must take special precautions to prevent adverse effects on the vegetation and wildlife during development and operation. Specific problems include: graffiti; illegal access; volunteer trails resulting in destruction of habitat; trash; lighting; noise; and pollutant runoff (pesticides, etc.). Planned future construction of developments can also impact FSDRIP's natural resources if proper habitat protection measures are not implemented. Additionally, adjacent developments provide opportunities for connections, both physically and visually, to the FSDRIP improvements, resulting in overall benefits to users and visitors to Mission Valley.

PUBLIC USE

FSDRIP is used year-round for walking, jogging, bicycling, roller blading, picnicking, and nature appreciation. Impacts from human use can have a negative effect on the project's natural resources. Such impacts will increase as development in Mission Valley increases, bringing more people into the area. Intense human use creates the problem of litter, graffiti, vegetation damage, and illegal activities. The trampling of vegetation to reach the water's edge to feed ducks and to fish has become particularly destructive to the riparian habitat in several parts of FSDRIP. In addition, domestic pets such as dogs, if not kept on a leash, can kill project wildlife and disturb wildlife nesting and roosting. This damage has a negative effect on vegetation and wildlife. Since FSDRIP is designed as a natural area first, and recreation is considered secondary, human and domestic pet effects on the vegetation and wildlife have to be managed.

UTILITY MAINTENANCE AND INSTALLATION

Phase I of the North Mission Valley Interceptor Sewer (NMVIS) runs the length of FSDRIP under the north bank sidewalk. Phase II of NMVIS connects with Phase I at the northwest end of FSDRIP. General maintenance and construction of the sewer will need to take specific measures to avoid impacts, such as destruction of habitat, to natural resources whenever possible. Special precautions may be needed to assure natural resource protection.

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT)

The recently constructed Mission Valley Light Rail Transit (MVLRT), a trolley line, runs the length of FSDRIP and crosses it in two places: over Mission Center Road and at Camino del Este. The pilings which were necessary to support the MVLRT were not accounted for in the original FSDRIP design prepared years before the MVLRT was proposed. Adding the pilings may change the river flow pattern with resulting scour and sedimentation within FSDRIP.

MAINTAINING PERMIT HABITAT GOALS

Maintenance will be needed to maintain the original 404 permit goals established by the City and CORPS. Some areas of FSDRIP ended up drier than planned, and will need close monitoring and perhaps irrigation or other attention to maintain vegetation. Occasional irrigation and weed control are some of the maintenance activities which may be required to insure the vegetation remains healthy and the required acreages of habitat types are maintained at the site (see Biological Resources, Page 14). More specific composition standards for these habitats are given in the original 404 permit for FSDRIP (Appendix C).

RESTORATION OF FLOOD AND SEDIMENTATION DAMAGE

The river is a dynamic system carrying and depositing sediment. Monitoring of channel depth will be needed to assure sediment deposits have not reduced the flood containment capacity of the

channel. Dredging may be needed to remove excess sediment. Special precautions would be required to insure that dredging the channel does not impact areas of freshwater marsh and riparian woodland habitat. Also, winters rains bring large quantities of water through the river corridor frequently flooding the channel. Damages to natural resources may occur from this flooding and require restoration.