

Otay Mesa

Community Plan Update



~~Planning, Neighborhoods & Economic Development Department~~
~~March 11, 2014~~

Planning Department
Adopted March 11, 2014
Amended XX XX



City of San Diego



OTAY MESA COMMUNITY PLAN

Amendment	Date Approved by Planning Commission	Resolution Number	Date Adopted by City Council	Resolution Number
Otay Mesa Community Plan Adopted.	February 13, 2014		March 11, 2014	R-308810
Corrections to the Land Use Map and Text of the Otay Mesa Community Plan and rezoning certain parcels in the Otay Mesa Community	April 30, 2015	R-4685	June 2, 2015	R-309773
Added current vernal pool mapping and reference to the Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan (VPHCP)	<u>XXXX</u>	<u>XXXX</u>	<u>XXXX</u>	<u>XXXX</u>

1 to provide further guidance to determine consistency with City policies.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1-1 Require Specific Plans and any required rezoning for the Southwest and Central Village Areas to be consistent with the policies of this plan.

2.1-2 Achieve sustainable and efficient land use patterns with comprehensive neighborhood and community village development through Specific Plans that:

- a. Respect the natural topography and sensitive habitat areas with growth patterns that balance development with preservation of natural resources.
- b. Provide a land use map that illustrates the detailed land use designations, including any lands set aside for resource conservation, consistent with the MSCP Subarea Plan and ~~any~~ future Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan (VPHCP). The specific plan land use map will refine the Otay Mesa Community Plan Land Use Map (Figure 2-1) as part of the specific plan approval process.
- c. Illustrate the complete circulation system that, where possible, follows a grid pattern, and indicate how the system will relate to the overall Otay Mesa circulation system.

- d. Strive for block sizes along local and collector streets to have a maximum perimeter of 1,800 feet.
- e. Illustrate a separate system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and pathways linking the activity centers with the residential areas, public facilities, and open space systems.
- f. Distribute parks comprehensively throughout the village area. Refer to Policy 7.1-7 of the Recreation Element for further recommendations.
 1. Link parks to one another with pathways to increase connectivity and enhance sense of community.



Separate Pedestrian System

2. Locate neighborhood parks at the end of streets and adjacent to canyons, when



Conservation Element

Multiple Species Conservation Program

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a long-term habitat conservation planning program for southwestern San Diego County. The Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) is the planned habitat preserve. The MHPA was incorporated into the Otay Mesa Community Plan through a 1997 plan amendment which identified approximately 2,500 acres in the community as MHPA open space (see Figure 8-3). The Otay Mesa areas of the MHPA consists primarily of slopes, mesas with vernal pool resources and/or restorable habitat, and wide, deep canyons draining the vast mesas into the Otay River Valley or towards Mexico, with one linkage connecting south to north across Otay Mesa Road.

Within Otay Mesa, the MSCP envisions “a network of open and relatively undisturbed canyons containing a full ensemble of native species which provide functional wildlife habitat and movement capability.” The MSCP includes Specific Management Directives for the Otay Mesa Area. These directives, along with the General and Community Plan policies and recommendations, are aimed at carrying out this vision and include measures to protect sensitive species, limit access into the canyons, and to provide restoration. Species protected in the Otay Mesa MSCP area are identified in Table 8-1.

Vernal Pools Habitat Conservation Plan (VPHCP)

Vernal pools are highly specialized habitats that support biologically sensitive species (Figure 8-4). They are important environmental resources that occur on mesas located in Otay Mesa. Management of these resources is governed by City, State and Federal policies and regulations. The Otay Mesa Community Plan is consistent with these policies, guidelines and regulations.

Table 8-1
Otay Mesa Protected Species

Plants	Animals
California orcutt grass	Burrowing owl
Coast barrel cactus	California gnatcatcher
Otay Mesa mint	Cactus wren
Otay tarplant	Cooper's hawk
Orcutt's bird's beak	Golden eagle
Orcutt's brodiaea	Northern harrier
Spreading navarretia	Orange-throated whiptail
San Diego goldenstar	Peregrine falcon
San Diego thorn-mint	Riverside fairy shrimp
Small-leaved rose	San Diego fairy shrimp
Snake cholla	San Diego horned lizard
Variegated dudleya	
San Diego button-celery	



Conservation Element

~~As of 2011, the City of San Diego is engaged in the process of preparing a Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The HCP is a comprehensive planning approach to preserve vernal pool species and their habitat within Otay Mesa and the City as a whole. The HCP will create a new vernal pool boundary and updated conditions of coverage for several protected species. The OMCP may require an amendment following adoption of the vernal pool HCP in order to provide consistency between the land use plan and habitat conservation plan.~~

The City of San Diego has prepared a Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan (VPHCP). The purpose of the VPHCP is to provide an effective framework to protect, enhance, and restore vernal pool resources within the City's jurisdiction, while improving and streamlining the environmental and permitting process for impacts to threatened and endangered species associated with vernal pools. The VPHCP is a comprehensive planning approach to preserve vernal pool species and their habitat within Otay Mesa and the City as a whole and covers the following species which occur in Otay Mesa: Otay mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudisculai*), Spreading navaretia (*Navarretia fossalis*), San Diego button celery (*Eryngium aristulatum* var. *parishii*), California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californiaca*). Riverside fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*). The VPHCP expanded the MHPA to include mesa top areas with vernal pool resources and/or restorable vernal pool lands (see Figure 8-3).

Burrowing Owl

Burrowing Owls (***Athene cuniculari***) are long-legged, ground-dwelling birds that inhabit Otay Mesa. Otay Mesa is one of the few areas in San Diego County where a population of breeding burrowing owl remain. Anecdotal information and limited surveys suggest that burrowing owls are declining in San Diego County, with the highest remaining density of birds in Otay Mesa. This population may include at most 20 to 30 pairs of owls.

Typical burrowing owl habitat is flat, open terrain with soft soil, short grass, sparsely distributed vegetation, or exposed ground. The owls will occupy burrows created by other rodents, but can also inhabit artificial burrows, such as cement culverts, cement, asphalt, or wood debris piles; or openings beneath cement or asphalt pavement.



Conservation Element

Education

While the community plan, implementing zoning, MSCP, and other regulations provide the legal framework for open space protections, the residents of Otay Mesa will also play an important role in determining the ultimate success of preservation and restoration programs. Many of the protected canyon areas form the boundaries of residential neighborhoods.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Environmentally Sensitive Lands

- 8.1-1 Implement the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations related to biological resources and steep hillsides for all new development.
- 8.1-2 Preserve a network of open and relatively undisturbed canyons and adjacent mesa tops containing a full ensemble of native species and providing functional wildlife habitat and movement capability.
- 8.1-3 Plan development to minimize grading and relate to the topography and natural features of Otay Mesa.

MSCP Implementation

- 8.1-4 Implement the VPHCP and MSCP Management Policies and Directives for Otay Mesa through the project review process.
- 8.1-5 Implement City regulations and Biology Guidelines for preservation, acquisition, restoration, management and monitoring of biological resources.
- 8.1-6 Implement the VPHCP and Area Specific Management Directives and Conditions of Coverage as stated in Appendix A Table 3-5 of the MSCP Subarea Plan for Species protected in Otay Mesa and identified in Table 8-1.



Conservation Element

Vernal Pools

- 8.1-7 Require preservation, restoration, management, and monitoring within identified vernal pool preservation areas in accordance with the VPHCP and City, state, and federal policies and regulations. The VPCHP identifies mesa top areas within the MHPA for vernal pool conservation (see Figure 8-3). If conservation and/or vernal pool mitigation occurs outside the MHPA, the boundaries of vernal pool preserve areas should be of sufficient size and shape to protect the vernal pool basins, watersheds, functional buffers, and areas necessary to maintain vernal pool ecosystem function and species viability.
- a. Design, as feasible, the preserve areas to provide connectivity between vernal pools, surrounding open space, and nearby vernal pool complexes.
 - b. Conduct management and monitoring of preserved and restored vernal pool sites in accordance with the VPHCP and citywide regulations and Biology Guidelines.

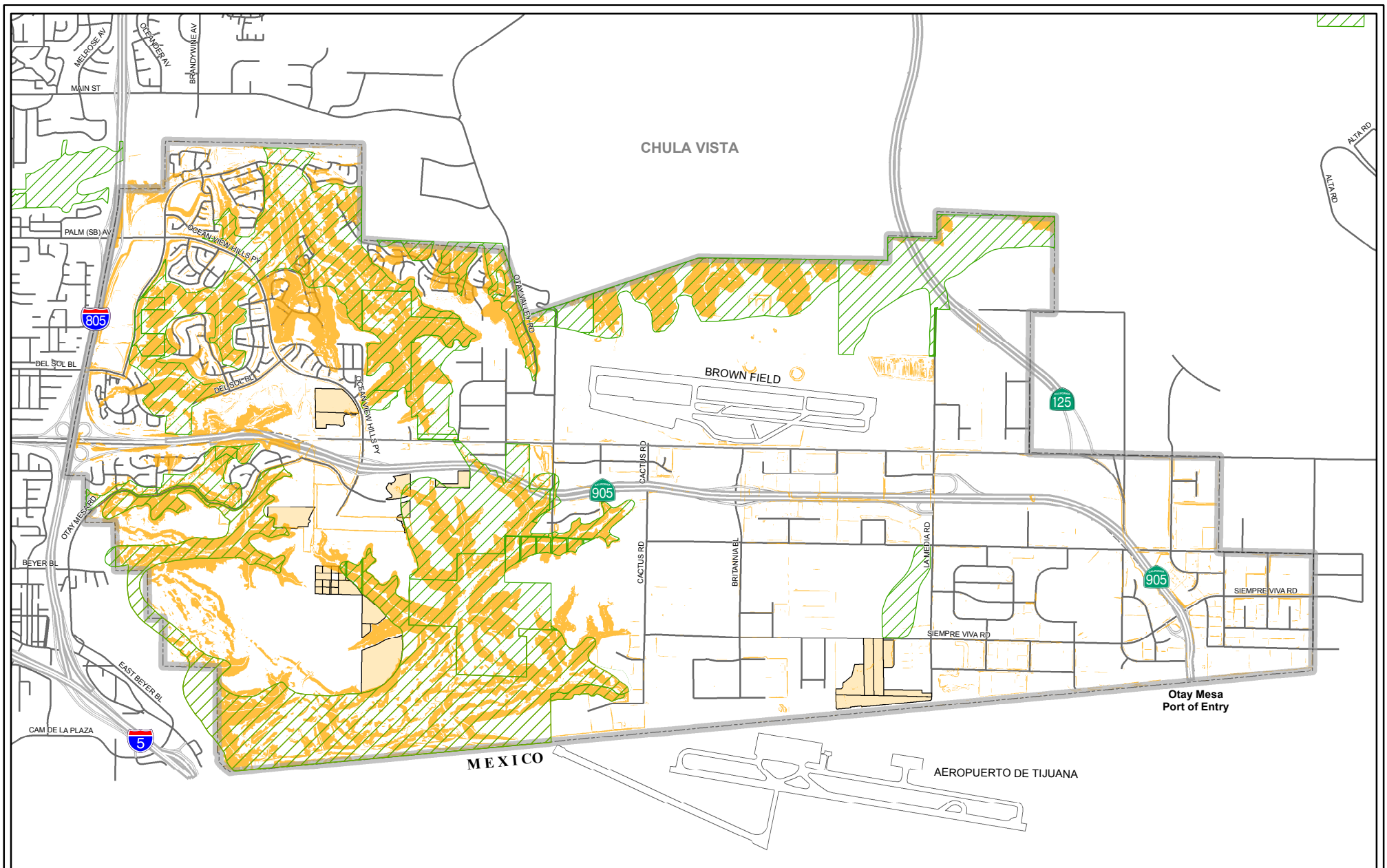
~~8.1-8 Amend the Otay Mesa Community Plan as needed for consistency with an adopted Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).~~

Education

- 8.1-9 Foster local stewardship and develop positive

neighborhood awareness of the open space preserve areas with environmental education programs through local schools, Homeowner's Associations (HOAs), community groups, and









OTAY MESA ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS - Figure 8-2


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Legend


-  Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA)
-  Steep Slopes (25% or steeper)
-  Expanded MHPA Areas
-  Planning Area



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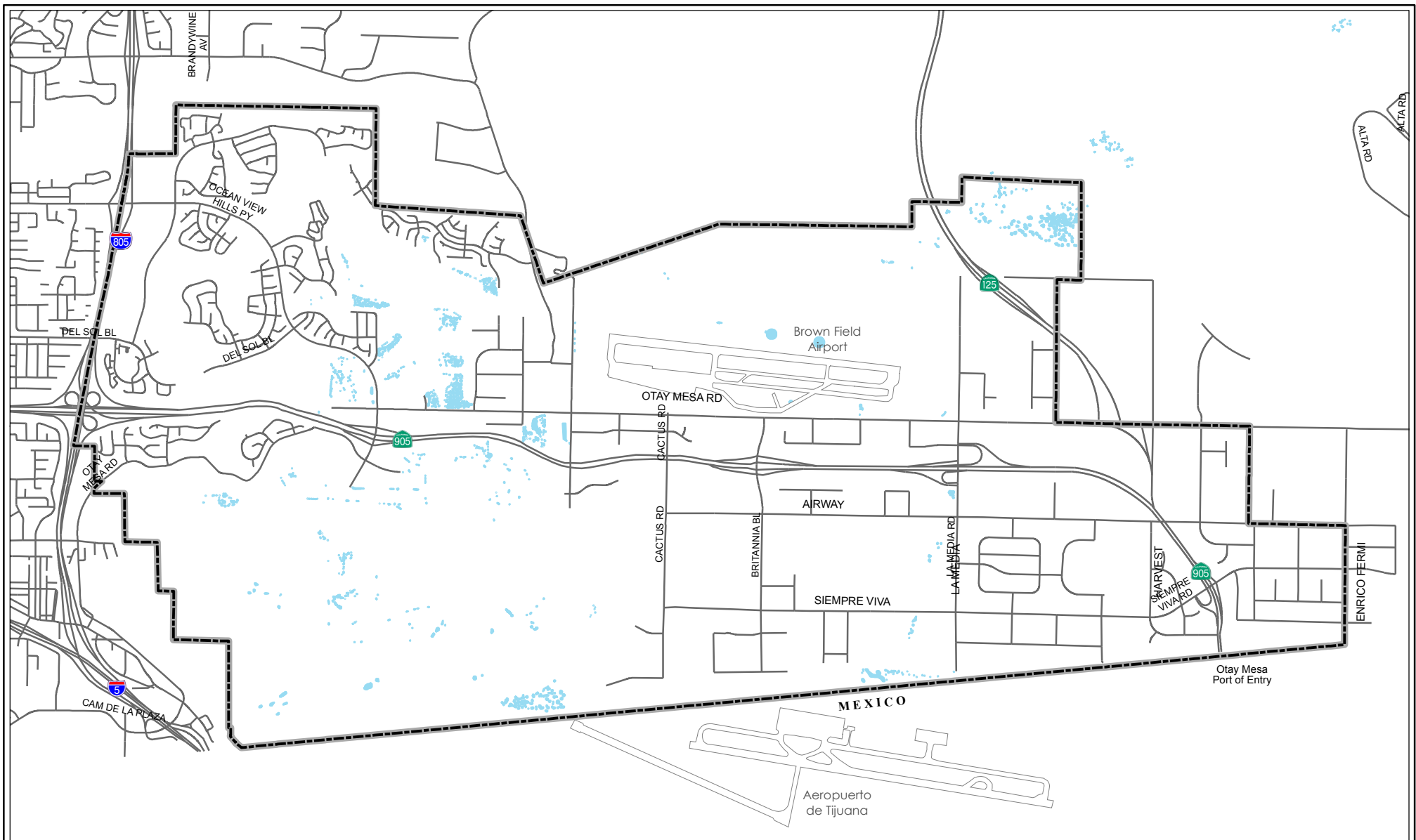


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Otay Mesa Community Plan Vernal Pool Resources - Figure 8-4

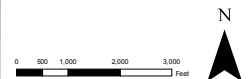
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Legend

 Vernal Pools  Community Plan Boundary



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