

## **2.4 Biological Resources**

This section of the SEIR analyzes the existing biological resources relative to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, including vegetation communities, sensitive plants and wildlife, and wildlife corridors, and the potential effects that implementation of the proposed Project may have on such resources.

### **2.4.1 Existing Conditions**

The adequacy of the existing conditions information for this environmental topic as provided in the General Plan Update Program EIR has been confirmed through re-checking of the references pertaining to this section in Chapter 5.0 of the General Plan Update Program EIR, including all relevant listed persons, plans, policies, and websites. In addition, this information has been confirmed through consultation/interviews with appropriate County or other agency staff, as available, that were involved in the preparation/review of this section of the General Plan Update Program EIR and/or supporting technical studies; all of these sources are listed in Chapter 6.0 of the General Plan Update Program EIR. The existing conditions information for this environmental topic as provided in the General Plan Update Program EIR applies equally to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, and is therefore not repeated here.

### **2.4.2 Regulatory Framework**

With the exception of an update on the status of the North County and East County Multiple Species Conservation Programs (MSCPs) as described below, the regulatory framework discussion in the General Plan Update Program EIR as pertains to biological resources has not changed since adoption of the General Plan Update in August 2011. Therefore, the remaining information in the General Plan Update Program EIR relative to this section applies equally to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, and is not repeated here.

#### **2.4.2.1 *Local***

##### **Multiple Species Conservation Program**

The County is currently developing additional MSCP Plans for the North County and East County areas. The Draft North County Plan is a stand-alone habitat conservation program for unincorporated lands under the County's jurisdiction in the northwestern part of the County, from the coast eastward to Ramona and the western flanks of Palomar Mountain. It is intended to create a 107,000-acre regional preserve system in northern San Diego County. Included are general measures and recommendations for managing plant communities and specific habitats for over 60 species. Public review of the Draft Plan and associated environmental analyses are scheduled for the fall of 2013. Development of the Draft East County Plan is currently on hold due to staffing and budget constraints. No projected schedule for the East County Plan is available at this time.

### **2.4.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Cumulative Impacts**

For the cumulative impact analyses, the geographic scope for each of the issues below would be the same as described and evaluated in the General Plan Update Program EIR, and as updated in Section 1.9 of this SEIR (Cumulative Project Assessment Overview).

#### **2.4.3.1 *Special Status Plant and Wildlife Species***

This section describes potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on special status plant and wildlife species as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

##### Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project would result in a significant impact if it would have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.

##### Impact Analysis

The General Plan Update Program EIR determined that buildout under the General Plan Update would result in potentially significant direct, indirect and cumulative impacts related to special status species. These impacts would be reduced through the implementation of a combination of federal, State and local regulations; existing County regulatory processes; the adopted General Plan goals and policies; and, specific mitigation measures/implementation programs identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR; however, the impacts would not be reduced to below a level of significance because the County is still developing the North County and East County MSCP Plans and until they are adopted, any contribution to the cumulative loss of habitat supporting special status plant and wildlife species in the southern California region would be cumulatively considerable, even after mitigation has been implemented for individual projects.

Similar direct, indirect and cumulative effects would occur with future development of the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, which could result in substantial adverse effects on habitats supporting special status plant and wildlife species from ground disturbing activities (such as grading and excavation) in previously undeveloped lands and urban effects. Table 2.4-1, Habitat Impacts by Vegetation Community, identifies the vegetation communities that would be impacted by future development under the proposed Project, which includes habitats that could support special status species. In addition to the permanent loss of these habitats (i.e., direct impacts to potentially-occurring special status species), future development under the proposed Project would result in indirect impacts to sensitive species where such development occurs adjacent to CNF lands or MSCP Preserves. Such indirect effects include, but are not limited to, intensive nighttime lighting, noise, and domestic pets which can adversely affect wildlife species. Such impacts would also be cumulative in nature as they would contribute to the permanent loss of the County's biological resources on a regional level (i.e., through the physical

demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of these resources and/or immediate surroundings), when combined with other development allowed under the General Plan Update.

The Project's direct, indirect and cumulative impacts would be reduced by the same regulations, implementation programs (General Plan Update goals/policies) and mitigation measures from the General Plan Update Program EIR and repeated in Section 2.4.4.1 below. However, implementation of the mitigation measures listed in Section 2.4.4.1 would not reduce these impacts to below a level of significance. While the direct and cumulative impacts within the South County MSCP will be mitigated below a level of significance through implementation of the Subarea Plan and the Biological Mitigation Ordinance, for the same reasons stated above; specifically the North County and East County MSCP Plans are not yet adopted, and As such, any contribution to the cumulative loss of habitat supporting special status plant and wildlife species in the ~~southern California region~~ draft North and East County Plan areas would be cumulatively considerable, even after mitigation has been implemented for individual projects. It should be noted, however, that an interim North and East County MSCP Planning Agreement (dated October 29, 2008) is in place between the County, the CDFW, and the USFWS. Among other things, this agreement establishes a process to review interim development within the Planning Areas that will help achieve the preliminary conservation objectives and preserve options for establishing a viable reserve system or equivalent long-term conservation measures ~~Therefore~~ But until those MSCP Plans are completed and approved, implementation of the proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on special status plant and wildlife species.

### **2.4.3.2 Riparian Habitat and Other Sensitive Natural Communities**

This section describes potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

#### Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would result in a significant impact if it would have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS.

#### Impact Analysis

The General Plan Update Program EIR determined that buildout under the General Plan Update would result in potentially significant direct, indirect and cumulative impacts related to sensitive vegetation communities (including riparian habitat). These impacts would be reduced through the implementation of a combination of federal, State and local regulations; existing County regulatory processes; the adopted General Plan goals and policies; and, specific mitigation measures/implementation programs identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR; however, the impacts would not be reduced to below a level of significance because the County

is still developing the North County and East County MSCP Plans and until they are adopted, any contribution to the cumulative loss of habitat in ~~the southern California region~~ those Planning Areas would be cumulatively considerable, even after mitigation has been implemented for individual projects.

Similar direct, indirect and cumulative effects would occur with future development of the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, which could result in substantial adverse effects on sensitive vegetation communities (including riparian habitat) from ground disturbing activities (such as grading and excavation) in previously undeveloped lands. Table 2.4-1 identifies and quantifies the vegetation communities that would be directly impacted by future development under the proposed Project. Of these amounts, it is estimated that approximately 331 acres of habitat may be impacted within South County MSCP Pre-approved Mitigation Area (PAMA) and approximately 2,103 acres of habitat may be impacted within draft North County MSCP PAMA prior to mitigation. This SEIR utilizes the following methodology, similar to that used in the General Plan Update Program EIR, for estimating the Project's habitat impacts, which is also graphically illustrated in Figure 2.4-1:

1. Some proposed land use designations that promote more extensive development on a property such as large areas of paved parking (e.g., rural commercial, village core mixed use, village residential) would result in greater impacts than lower density land uses (e.g., rural residential) because the latter are not expected to require large expanses of grading and paving.
2. The applicable proposed land use designations for village residential, the higher-density semi-rural residential (SR-1 and SR-2), commercial, village core mixed use, public/semi-public facilities, and recreational open space are estimated to have 100% impact because these land uses would potentially require the removal of all existing vegetation during land development.
3. Lower density semi-rural residential land uses (SR-4 and SR-10) are estimated to have 50% - 75% impact because these uses would consist of larger parcels resulting in the removal of some vegetation while also avoiding other areas of natural habitat onsite.
4. Rural lands (RL-20, RL-40, and RL-80) are estimated to have five acres of impact per potential dwelling unit.
5. Tribal lands, National Forests and State Parks, conserved open space, and military installations would have no impacts because either the County does not have jurisdiction over these areas or the Project does not propose impactful uses for these areas. Existing open space easements or MSCP preserves have also been excluded from the impact totals.

In addition to the permanent loss of these habitats, future development under the proposed Project would result in indirect impacts where such development occurs adjacent to CNF lands or MSCP Preserves. Such indirect effects include, but are not limited to, edge effects, urban

encroachment, invasive plants, fugitive dust, erosion/siltation and water quality degradation from urban runoff, and habitat fragmentation. Such impacts would also be cumulative in nature as they would contribute to the permanent loss of the County's biological resources on a regional level (i.e., through the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of these resources and/or immediate surroundings), when combined with other development allowed under the General Plan Update.

The Project's direct, indirect and cumulative impacts would be reduced by the same regulations, implementation programs (General Plan Update goals/policies) and mitigation measures from the General Plan Update Program EIR and repeated in Section 2.4.4.2 below. ~~h~~ However, implementation of the mitigation measures listed in Section 2.4.4.1 would not reduce these impacts to below a level of significance. While the direct and cumulative impacts within the South County MSCP will be mitigated below a level of significance through implementation of the Subarea Plan and the Biological Mitigation Ordinance, for the same reasons stated above; specifically the North County and East County MSCP Plans are not yet adopted, ~~and~~ As such, any contribution to the cumulative loss of habitat supporting special status plant and wildlife species in the ~~southern California region~~ draft North and East County Plan areas would be cumulatively considerable, even after mitigation has been implemented for individual projects. It should be noted, however, that an interim North and East County MSCP Planning Agreement (dated October 29, 2008) is in place between the County, the CDFW, and the USFWS. Among other things, this agreement establishes a process to review interim development within the Planning Areas that will help achieve the preliminary conservation objectives and preserve options for establishing a viable reserve system or equivalent long-term conservation measures ~~Therefore~~ But until those MSCP Plans are completed and approved, implementation of the proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on sensitive vegetation communities (including riparian habitat).

### **2.4.3.3 Federally Protected Wetlands**

This section describes potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to federally protected wetlands as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

#### **Guidelines for the Determination of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project would result in a significant impact if it would have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

#### **Impact Analysis**

The General Plan Update Program EIR determined that buildout under the General Plan Update would result in potentially significant direct/indirect and less than significant cumulative impacts related to federally protected wetlands. The direct and indirect impacts would be reduced to

below a level of significance through the implementation of a combination of federal, State and local regulations; existing County regulatory processes; the adopted General Plan Update goals and policies; and, specific mitigation measures/ implementation programs identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR.

Similar direct and indirect effects would occur with future development of the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, which could result in substantial adverse effects on wetlands (i.e., removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other disturbances) from ground disturbing activities (such as grading and excavation) in previously undeveloped lands. The potentially significant direct and indirect effects would be reduced to below a level of significance by the same regulations, implementation programs (General Plan Update goals/policies) and mitigation measures from the General Plan Update Program EIR and repeated in Section 2.4.4.3 below. In addition, as existing regulations would ensure that cumulative projects would meet the no-net-loss standard, the proposed Project would not contribute to significant cumulative impacts to federally protected wetlands, and no additional mitigation measures would be required.

#### **2.4.3.4 *Wildlife Movement Corridors and Nursery Sites***

This section describes potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

##### **Guidelines for the Determination of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project would result in a significant impact if it would interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

##### **Analysis**

The General Plan Update Program EIR determined that buildout under the General Plan Update would result in potentially significant direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts related to wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites. These impacts would be reduced through the implementation of a combination of federal, State and local regulations; existing County regulatory processes; the adopted General Plan Update goals and policies; and, specific mitigation measures/ implementation programs identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR; however, the impacts would not be reduced to below a level of significance because the County is still developing the North County and East County MSCP Plans and until they are adopted, any contribution to the cumulative loss of wildlife corridors in the southern California region would be cumulatively considerable, even after mitigation has been implemented for individual projects.

Similar direct, indirect and cumulative effects would occur with future development of the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, which could result in substantial adverse effects on wildlife

corridors and nursery sites from ground disturbing activities (such as grading and excavation) in previously undeveloped lands. In addition to the permanent loss of habitats that could result in direct impacts to wildlife corridors, future development under the proposed Project would result in indirect impacts where such development occurs adjacent to CNF lands or MSCP Preserves. Such indirect effects include, but are not limited to, intensive nighttime lighting, noise, and domestic pets which can adversely affect wildlife species movements. Such impacts would also be cumulative in nature as they would contribute to the permanent loss of the County's wildlife corridors and nursery sites on a regional level (i.e., through the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of these resources and/or immediate surroundings), when combined with other development allowed under the General Plan Update.

The Project's direct, indirect and cumulative impacts would be reduced by the same regulations, implementation programs (General Plan Update goals/policies) and mitigation measures from the General Plan Update Program EIR and repeated in Section 2.4.4.4 below. However, implementation of the mitigation measures listed in Section 2.4.4.4 would not reduce these impacts to below a level of significance. While the direct and cumulative impacts within the South County MSCP will be mitigated below a level of significance through implementation of the Subarea Plan and the Biological Mitigation Ordinance, for the same reasons stated above; specifically the North County and East County MSCP Plans are not yet adopted, and As such, any contribution to the cumulative loss of wildlife corridors in the ~~southern California region~~ draft North and East County Plan areas would be cumulatively considerable, even after mitigation has been implemented for individual projects. It should be noted, however, that an interim North and East County MSCP Planning Agreement (dated October 29, 2008) is in place between the County, the CDFW, and the USFWS. Among other things, this agreement establishes a process to review interim development within the Planning Areas that will help achieve the preliminary conservation objectives and preserve options for establishing a viable reserve system or equivalent long-term conservation measures ~~Therefore~~ But until those MSCP Plans are completed and approved, the proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on wildlife corridors and nursery sites.

### **2.4.3.5 Local Policies and Ordinances**

This section describes potential direct and cumulative impacts associated with compliance with local policies and ordinances as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

#### **Guidelines for the Determination of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed County General Plan Update would result in a significant impact if it would conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

## Analysis

The General Plan Update Program EIR determined that buildout under the General Plan Update would result in less than significant direct and cumulative impacts related to compliance with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources. These impacts were determined to be less than significant based on the implementation of existing regulations, policies, plans and guidelines. For these same reasons, the proposed Project would not result in significant direct and cumulative impacts associated with consistency with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources.

### **2.4.3.6 *Habitat Conservation Plans and NCCPs***

This section describes potential direct and cumulative impacts associated with compliance with adopted habitat conservation plans (HCPs) and Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

### Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed County General Plan Update would result in a significant impact if it would conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

## Analysis

The General Plan Update Program EIR determined that buildout under the General Plan Update would result in less than significant direct and cumulative impacts related to compliance with an approved local, regional, or State adopted HCP or NCCP. These impacts were determined to be less than significant based on the implementation of existing regulations, policies, plans and guidelines. For these same reasons, the proposed Project would not result in significant direct and cumulative impacts associated with consistency with an approved local, regional, or State adopted HCP or NCCP.

## **2.4.4 Mitigation**

### **2.4.4.1 *Special Status Plant and Wildlife Species***

Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts associated with special status species resulting from the proposed Project would be reduced to below a level of significance with implementation of the same applicable General Plan Update policies and mitigation measures as identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR, and repeated below; however, the County determined that implementation of the following measures would be infeasible because the County cannot guarantee the timing of adoption of the North County and East County MSCP Plans by federal and State agencies, which will eventually provide coverage for special status species in the southern California region. Therefore, these measures cannot be considered feasible mitigation for the proposed Project, and impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.



### Adopted General Plan Update Policies

**Policy COS-1.3: Management.** Monitor, manage and maintain the regional preserve system facilitating the survival of native species and the preservation of healthy populations of rare, threatened, or endangered species.

**Policy COS-1.6: Assemblage of Preserve Systems.** Support the proactive assemblage of a biological preserve system to protect biological resources and to facilitate development through mitigation banking opportunities.

**Policy COS-1.7: Preserve System Funding.** Provide adequate funding for assemblage, management, maintenance, and monitoring through coordination with other jurisdictions and agencies.

**Policy COS-1.8: Preserve Assemblage.** Support the acquisition of large tracts of land that have multiple resource preservation benefits, such as biology, hydrology, cultural, aesthetics, and community character. Establish funding mechanisms to serve as an alternative when mitigation requirements would not result in the acquisition of large tracts of land.

**Policy COS-1.9: Invasive Species.** Require new development adjacent to biological preserves to use non-invasive plants in landscaping. Encourage the removal of invasive plants within preserves.

**Policy COS-1.10: Public Involvement.** Ensure an open, transparent, and inclusive decision-making process by involving the public throughout the course of planning and implementation of habitat conservation plans and resource management plans.

**Policy COS-1.11: Volunteer Preserve Monitor.** Encourage the formation of volunteer preserve managers that are incorporated into each community planning group to supplement professional enforcement staff.

**Policy COS-2.1: Protection, Restoration and Enhancement.** Protect and enhance natural wildlife habitat outside of preserves as development occurs according to the underlying land use designation. Limit the degradation of regionally important natural habitats within the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands regional categories, as well as within Village lands where appropriate.

**Policy COS-2.2: Habitat Protection through Site Design.** Require development to be sited in the least biologically sensitive areas and minimize the loss of natural habitat through site design.

**Policy LU-6.1: Environmental Sustainability.** Require the protection of intact or sensitive natural resources in support of the long-term sustainability of the natural environment.

**Policy LU-6.2: Reducing Development Pressures.** Assign lowest-density or lowest-intensity land use designations to areas with sensitive natural resources.

**Policy LU-6.3: Conservation-Oriented Project Design.** Support conservation-oriented project design. This can be achieved with mechanisms such as, but not limited to, Specific Plans, lot area averaging, and reductions in lot size with corresponding requirements for

preserved open space (Planned Residential Developments). Projects that rely on lot size reductions should incorporate specific design techniques, perimeter lot sizes, or buffers, to achieve compatibility with community character. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

**Policy LU-6.4: Sustainable Subdivision Design.** Require that residential subdivisions be planned to conserve open space and natural resources, protect agricultural operations including grazing, increase fire safety and defensibility, reduce impervious footprints, use sustainable development practices, and, when appropriate, provide public amenities. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

**Policy LU-6.6: Integration of Natural Features into Project Design.** Require incorporation of natural features (including mature oaks, indigenous trees, and rock formations) into proposed development and require avoidance of sensitive environmental resources.

**Policy LU-6.7: Open Space Network.** Require projects with open space to design contiguous open space areas that protect wildlife habitat and corridors; preserve scenic vistas and areas; and connect with existing or planned recreational opportunities.

**Policy LU-10.2: Development-Environmental Resource Relationship.** Require development in Semi-Rural and Rural areas to respect and conserve the unique natural features and rural character, and avoid sensitive or intact environmental resources and hazard areas.

### Mitigation Measures

**Bio-1.1** Create a Conservation Subdivision Program that facilitates conservation-oriented project design through changes to the Subdivision Ordinance, Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO), Zoning Ordinance, Groundwater Ordinance, and other regulations as necessary. It is intended that these changes will promote conservation of natural resources and open space while improving mechanisms for flexibility in project design so that production of housing stock is not negatively impacted. Additionally, any such allowances of flexibility must be done with consideration of community character through planning group coordination and/or findings required for project approval.

**Bio-1.2** Implement and revise existing HCP policies to preserve sensitive resources within a cohesive system of open space. In addition, continue preparation of MSCP Plans for North County and East County.

**Bio-1.3** Implement conservation agreements through Board Policy I-123, as this will facilitate preservation of high-value habitat in the County's MSCP Subarea Plan.

**Bio-1.4** Coordinate with nonprofit groups and other agencies to acquire preserve lands.

**Bio-1.5** Utilize "County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Biological Resources" to identify adverse impacts to biological resources. Also utilize the

County's Geographic Information System (GIS) records and the Comprehensive Matrix of Sensitive Species to locate special status species populations on or near project sites. This information will be used to avoid or mitigate impacts as appropriate.

**Bio-1.6** Implement the RPO, Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO), and Habitat Loss Permit (HLP) Ordinance to protect wetlands, wetland buffers, sensitive habitat lands, biological resource core areas, linkages, corridors, high-value habitat areas, subregional coastal sage scrub focus areas, and populations of rare, or endangered plant or animal species.

**Bio-1.7** Minimize edge effects from development projects located near sensitive resources by implementing the County Noise Ordinance, the County Groundwater Ordinance, the County's Landscaping Regulations (currently part of the Zoning Ordinance), and the County Watershed Protection, Storm Water Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance.

#### **2.4.4.2 *Riparian Habitat and Other Sensitive Natural Communities***

Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts associated with sensitive vegetation communities (including riparian habitats) resulting from the proposed Project would be reduced to below a level of significance with implementation of the same applicable General Plan Update policies and mitigation measures as identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR, and repeated below; however, the County determined that implementation of the following measures would be infeasible because the County cannot guarantee the timing of adoption of the North County and East County MSCP Plans by federal and State agencies, which will eventually provide protections for core habitat areas in the southern California region. Therefore, these measures cannot be considered feasible mitigation for the proposed Project, and impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

#### **General Plan Update Policies**

In addition to the policies listed in Section 2.4.4.1 above, the following policy would further reduce impacts associated with sensitive vegetation communities (including riparian habitats), although not to below a level of significance for the reasons stated above.

**Policy COS-3.1: Wetland Protection.** Require development to preserve existing natural wetland areas and associated transitional riparian and upland buffers and retain opportunities for enhancement.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

In addition to Mitigation Measures Bio-1.1 through Bio-1.7 listed above, implementation of the following mitigation measures would further reduce Project impacts associated with special status species, although not to below a level of significance for the reasons stated above.

- Bio-2.1** Revise the Ordinance Relating to Water Conservation for Landscaping to incorporate appropriate plant types and regulations requiring planting of native or compatible non-native, non-invasive plant species in new development.
- Bio-2.2** Require that development projects obtain CWA Section 401/404 permits issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for all project-related disturbances of waters of the U.S. and/or associated wetlands. Also continue to require that projects obtain California Fish and Wildlife Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreements from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for all project-related disturbances of streambeds.
- Bio-2.3** Ensure that wetlands and wetland buffer areas are adequately preserved whenever feasible to maintain biological functions and values.
- Bio-2.4** Implement the Watershed Protection, Storm Water Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance to protect wetlands.

#### **2.6.4.3 *Federally Protected Wetlands***

Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts relative to federally protected wetlands associated with the proposed Project would be reduced to below a level of significance with implementation of the same applicable General Plan Update policies and mitigation measures as identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR, and repeated below.

#### **General Plan Update Policies**

In addition to Policy COS-3.1 listed in Section 2.4.4.2 above, the following policy would further reduce Project impacts to federally protected wetlands to below a level of significance.

**Policy COS-3.2: Minimize Impacts of Development.** Require development projects to:

- Mitigate any unavoidable losses of wetlands, including its habitat functions and values; and
- Protect wetlands, including vernal pools, from a variety of discharges and activities, such as dredging or adding fill material, exposure to pollutants such as nutrients, hydromodification, land and vegetation clearing, and the introduction of invasive species.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

Implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-1.1, Bio-1.5, Bio-1.6, Bio-1.7, Bio-2.2, Bio-2.3, and Bio-2.4 listed above would reduce Project impacts to federally protected wetlands to below a level of significance.

#### **2.4.4.4 *Wildlife Movement Corridors and Nursery Sites***

Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts associated with wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites resulting from the proposed Project would be reduced to below a level of significance with implementation of the same applicable General Plan Update policies and mitigation measures as identified in the General Plan Update Program EIR, and repeated below; however, the County determined that implementation of the following measures would be infeasible because the County cannot guarantee the timing of adoption of the North County and East County MSCP Plans by federal and State agencies, which will eventually provide protections for wildlife corridors in the southern California region. Therefore, these measures cannot be considered feasible mitigation for the proposed Project, and impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

##### **General Plan Update Policies**

In addition to Policies COS-1.3, LU-6.1, and LU-6.7 listed in Section 2.6.4.1 above, the following policies would further reduce impacts associated with wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites, although not to below a level of significance for the reasons stated above.

**Policy COS-1.1: Coordinated Preserve System.** Identify and develop a coordinated biological preserve system that includes Pre Approved Mitigation Areas, Biological Resource Core Areas, wildlife corridors, and linkages to allow wildlife to travel throughout their habitat ranges.

**Policy COS-1.2: Minimize Impacts.** Prohibit private development within established preserves. Minimize impacts within established preserves when the construction of public infrastructure is unavoidable.

**Policy COS-1.4: Collaboration with Other Jurisdictions.** Collaborate with other jurisdictions and trustee agencies to achieve well-defined common resource preservation and management goals.

**Policy COS-1.5: Regional Funding.** Collaborate with other jurisdictions and federal, state, and local agencies to identify regional, long-term funding mechanisms that achieve common resource management goals.

##### **Mitigation Measures**

Implementation of Mitigation Measures Bio-1.1 through Bio-1.7 and Bio-2.3 listed above would reduce impacts to wildlife corridors and nursery sites, although not to below a level of significance for the reasons stated above.

**2.4.4.5 *Local Policies and Ordinances***

The proposed Project would not result in significant impacts associated with consistency with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources; therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

**2.4.4.6 *Habitat Conservation Plans and NCCPs***

The proposed Project would not result in significant direct and cumulative impacts associated with consistency with an approved local, regional, or State adopted HCP or NCCP; therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

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**SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

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**TABLE 2.4-1. HABITAT IMPACTS BY VEGETATION COMMUNITY**

<b>Habitat Impacted</b>	<b>Acres Impacted</b>
Granitic Northern Mixed Chaparral	577
Granitic Southern Mixed Chaparral	377
Northern Mixed Chaparral	365
Mixed Oak/coniferous/Bigcone/Coulter	355
Dense Coast Live Oak Woodland	329
Mixed Evergreen Forest	300
Open Engelmann Oak Woodland	235
Mixed Oak Woodland	233
Foothill/Mountain Perennial Grassland	214
Sierran Mixed Coniferous Forest	204
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub	180
Bigcone Spruce (Bigcone Douglas Fir) - Canyon Oak Forest	154
Chamise Chaparral	151
Southern Mixed Chaparral	130
Black Oak Woodland	112
Dense Engelmann Oak Woodland	110
Granitic Chamise Chaparral	107
Wet Montane Meadow	82
Jeffrey Pine Forest	80
Valley and Foothill Grassland	74
Scrub Oak Chaparral	68
Chaparral	66
Mafic Northern Mixed Chaparral	66
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	61
Coastal Sage-Chaparral Scrub	48
Sagebrush Scrub	42
Open Coast Live Oak Woodland	41
Red Shank Chaparral	36
Freshwater Seep	35
Field/Pasture	32
Non-Native Grassland	31
Valley Sacaton Grassland	27

**SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

**TABLE 2.4-1, CONTINUED**

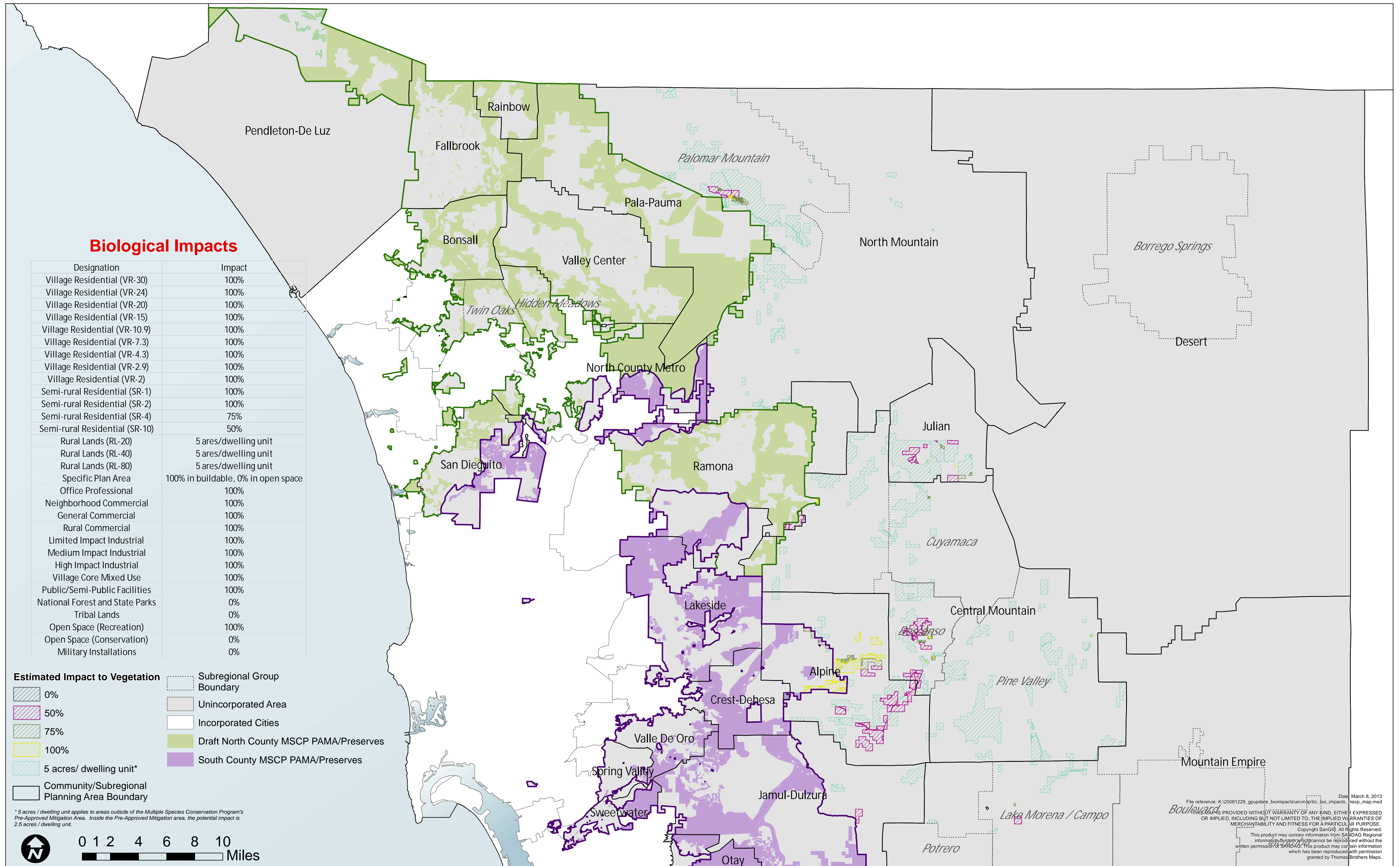
<b>Habitat Impacted</b>	<b>Acres Impacted</b>
Black Oak Forest	23
Flat-topped Buckwheat	18
Montane Chaparral	18
Coast Live Oak Woodland	17
Freshwater	16
Undifferentiated Open Woodland	15
Coulter Pine Forest	13
Southern Riparian Scrub	13
Southern Riparian Forest	11
Southern Cottonwood-willow Riparian Forest	9
Montane Scrub Oak Chaparral	8
Southern Willow Scrub	7
Orchards and Vineyards	6
White Alder Riparian Forest	6
Mafic Southern Mixed Chaparral	5
Undifferentiated Dense Woodland	4
Montane Meadow	4
Semi-Desert Chaparral	4
Valley Needlegrass Grassland	3
Oak Forest	3
Non-Vegetated Channel, Floodway, Lakeshore Fringe	3
Coast Live Oak Forest	2
Woodland	2
Interior Live Oak Chaparral	2
Montane Ceanothus Chaparral	2
Riparian Woodlands	2
Southern Sycamore-alder Riparian Woodland	2
Canyon Live Oak Forest	1
Montane Manzanita Chaparral	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,142</b>

Note: Data has been rounded to nearest whole number.

Source: LUEG GIS 2013



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Estimated Vegetation Impact

Figure 2-4-1

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