

## 6. CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The purpose of the Conservation Element is to identify the community's natural and man-made resources and to encourage their wise management in order to assure their continued availability for use, appreciation and enjoyment. The Conservation Element includes policies and implementation measures to encourage the conservation and proper management of natural resources and open space areas in the City.

### 1.0 Statutory Requirements

Section 65302 (d) of the California Planning and Zoning Laws requires each City's General Plan to contain a Conservation Element which is intended to address the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources. These resources may include water, forests, rivers, soils, minerals, fisheries and wildlife.

The State Guidelines also require each City to include an open space element to address the preservation and management of natural resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety, particularly in those areas which require special management because of hazards or protection of water or air quality. This element also provides an inventory of privately and publicly owned open space lands as well as policies and programs that strive to achieve the community's open space goals.

The State Guidelines allow consolidation of required elements. To reduce repetition and improve readability, the City has consolidated the requirements of both the Conservation and Open Space Elements into the Conservation Element.

### 2.0 Accomplishments Since Adoption of the General Plan

Since the adoption of the City's first General Plan in August of 1984, the City has accomplished many of the goals and policies that were found in the Conservation (and previous Open Space) Elements at that time. Major accomplishments include:

- ◆ With the adoption in 1984 of the Development Review Ordinance and in 1985 of the Zoning Ordinance, procedures were established to review projects for compliance with specific criteria including the preservation of native vegetation, minimization of grading and landform alternation and establishment of a Park/Open Space district to protect valuable open space and biological resources in the San Diego River, Sycamore Creek and Forester Creek.





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- ◆ In 1985, the City adopted a Hillside Overlay District, which covers hillside properties in the City. The purpose of this district is to minimize grading and landform alteration, protect significant biological resources, protect watersheds and drainages, and to ensure development blends with the environment to the maximum extent feasible.
- ◆ In 1988, the City Council approved a reclamation plan for the RCP mining operation in the San Diego River. The plan calls for a habitat restoration and creation plan for the mined lands that is being implemented in phases as mining is completed.
- ◆ In 1991, the City, together with the California Department of Fish and Game, the County of San Diego and the City of Poway purchased the 321-acre Goodan Ranch property for recreational and habitat preservation purposes. This property was formally designated the Goodan Ranch Regional Park in 1995.
- ◆ In 1995, the City Council approved a Conditional Use Permit to allow the expansion and upgrade of the Padre Dam Municipal Water District's Water Recycling Facility located at the northern end of the Santee Lakes Regional Park.
- ◆ In February of 2002, the City completed the Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plan (JURMP) to address local water quality issues. The purpose of this program is to minimize or eliminate the impact of human activities on receiving water bodies, which will be accomplished through reducing pollutants in urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable
- ◆ Ongoing implementation of General Municipal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit requirements including dry weather storm drain field screening, public outreach and enforcement activities to improve water quality in the City's waterbodies.
- ◆ Four new public parks have been completed, including Mast Park, Santee Mini-Park, West Hills Park and Shadow Hill Park and construction begun on the 55-acre Town Center Community Park. The City has also implemented the Park Lands Dedication Ordinance which generates funds from new development to fund acquisition of new parks and renovation of existing parks.
- ◆ The City has adopted and implemented local environmental review procedures to protect and preserve significant plant and animal species and ensure mitigation is provided for significant impacts associated with both public and private development.
- ◆ The City has prepared a Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan that, once approved, will cover over 2,600 acres of the City to balance development and species protection and create a City-wide open space network.



- ◆ The City is designing a flood improvement project for Forester Creek that will feature a natural, fully vegetated channel with a recreational bikepath which will achieve necessary flood control and public safety objectives.

### 3.0 Introduction

The City of Santee, which formerly had a semi-rural character, is now in the final stages of its transition to a fully functional suburban community with balanced land uses. The community continues to have an abundance of open space land and valuable natural resources. Santee's unique environment affords the City the opportunity to encourage development while at the same time promoting the wise management of both its natural resources and open space areas for the benefit of the citizens of Santee.

**Relationship to other Elements** - The distribution of open space and natural resources throughout the City is directly related to the distribution of land uses; therefore, the Conservation Element is most closely correlated with the Land Use Element. In addition, the Conservation Element discusses open space and recreational facilities which are also addressed in the Recreation and Trails Elements. The open space areas, waterways and hillsides in the City are also significant design elements and visual resources, which are primary considerations in the Community Enhancement Element. As required by State Law, the Conservation Element is consistent with the other elements in the General Plan.

### 4.0 Existing Conditions

#### 4.1 **Water Resources**

Watersheds and Hydrology -The water in Santee's waterways comes primarily from four sources: rainfall, surface runoff, groundwater from aquifers, and recycled water from Padre Dam Municipal Water District's water recycling facility at Santee Lakes.



The City of Santee has six major drainage courses, which are shown on Figure 6-1, including: the San Diego River and its tributaries - Forester Creek, Sycamore Creek, Woodglen Vista Creek, Fanita Creek and Big Rock Creek, which parallels Big Rock Road. All of the creeks have their own watersheds in addition to lying within the larger San Diego River watershed. Forester Creek drains the runoff from the north facing slopes of hills within the City of El Cajon. Sycamore Creek drains the runoff from Sycamore Canyon and from Carlton Hills, and the creeks running





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parallel to Fanita Drive and Big Rock Road drain the runoff from Cowles Mountain and Fanita Hills located within the City of El Cajon. All of these watersheds empty into the San Diego River, which flows westward into the Pacific Ocean.

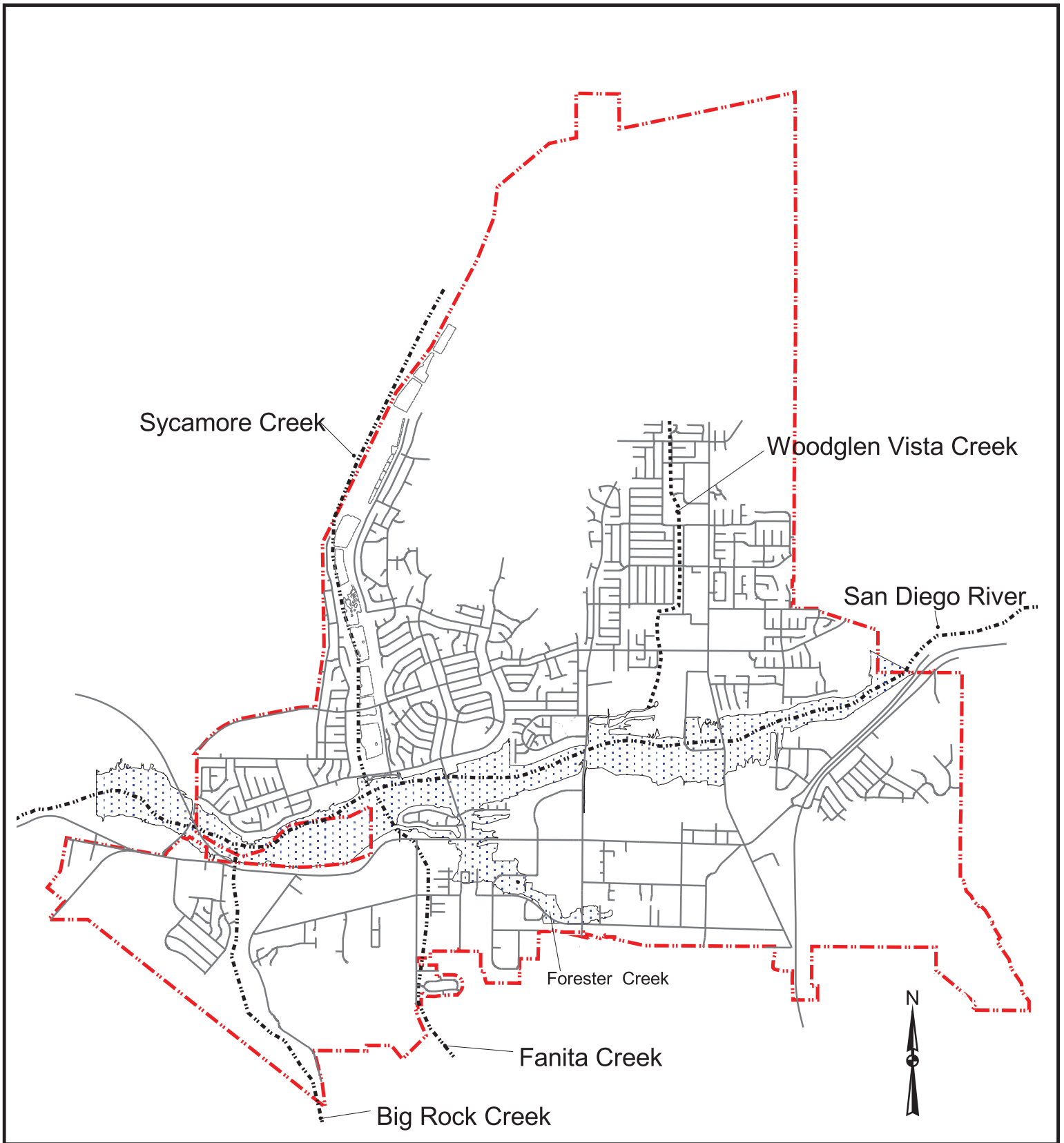
Although none of these waterways have been fully improved, portions of the San Diego River and Forester Creek have been partially improved to mitigate potential flood hazards or prevent localized erosion. Even with these flood control measures, portions of Santee would be inundated by a 100-year flood event as shown on the Figure 6-1.


Water Quality - There has been an increased level of regulatory activity in recent years focused on the effects of urban runoff on water quality. In 1987, amendments were made to the Federal Clean Water Act which established a regulatory framework for regulating storm water discharges from municipal, industrial and construction sources. In California, these permits are issued through the State Water Resources Control Board and the nine statewide Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB). In February of 2001, the San Diego RWQCB issued a countywide permit for storm water discharges requiring all the jurisdictions in the county to develop plans on a watershed (Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plan) and jurisdictional (Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plan) basis. The intent of these plans is to develop methods and standards to control pollutant discharges into the receiving water to the maximum extent feasible.

In 1994, the San Diego RWQCB adopted a Water Quality Control Plan, or Basin Plan, which recognizes and reflects regional differences in existing water quality, the beneficial uses of the Region's ground surface waters, and local water quality problems.

The San Diego Regional Board's Basin Plan is designed to preserve and enhance water quality and protect the beneficial uses of all regional waters. Specifically, the Basin Plan: (1) designates beneficial uses for surface and ground waters; (2) sets narrative and numerical objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's anti-degradation policy; (3) describes implementation programs to protect the designated beneficial uses of all waters in the Region; and (4) describes surveillance and monitoring activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the Basin Plan.

The City of Santee is part of the San Diego River watershed and is working cooperatively with other jurisdictions on a plan for the overall watershed. In addition, the City completed a Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plan in 2002 to address local water quality issues. The local plan addresses water quality issues in the primary water basins in the City. The goal of the plan is to reduce or eliminate the contaminants that are transported in stormwater and ultimately delivered to the rivers and creeks in the City and downstream. The program focuses on reducing pollution in the three major areas of development: planning, construction, and existing development. Other components of the program include storm drain monitoring to detect pollution, public reporting of illegal dumping, and providing education information to a variety of audiences describing water quality issues.

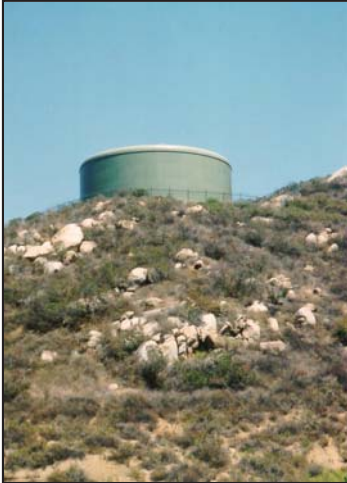


 100 yr Floodplain  
 Waterways

**CITY OF SANTEE  
GENERAL PLAN**



*HYDROLOGY  
FIGURE 6-1*



**Domestic Water Supply** - The vast majority of Santee residents receive their water from the Padre Dam Municipal Water District. The district's serves a population of over 125,000 with an average daily water use of approximately 17 million gallons. The district currently has over 330 miles of potable water mains, 148 miles of sewer mains and 25 miles of recycled waterlines.

The Padre Dam Municipal Water District contracts with the San Diego County Water Authority for its potable water. The San Diego County Water Authority is one of 27 member agencies in the Metropolitan Water District (MWD), which is responsible for importing and distributing water from the Colorado River and northern California to its member agencies

The California Water Code requires larger urban water suppliers to prepare Urban Water Management Plans and to update these plans every five years. According to the Padre Dam District's December 2000 Urban Water Management Plan, the supply of water from the District is adequate to meet the demands within the City of Santee through the year 2020.

A number of factors including a growing population, limited storage capacity and uncertainties of the imported water supplies from both the Colorado River and northern California are causing the County Water Authority to review long-range plans for a secure water supply. Measures to address these concerns include construction of new reservoirs (Diamondback Reservoir, Olivenhain Reservoir and the expansion of the San Vicente Dam / Reservoir) to boost emergency supplies locally, increased emphasis on water conservation and recycling, and protecting and enhancing imported water supplies.

The District also promotes water conservation through a number of mechanisms including distribution of conservation literature, providing water audit kits, participating in the ultra-low flush toilet rebate program, and providing rebates or financial assistance for low-water use appliances.



**Water Recycling** - The Padre Dam Municipal Water District has been operating a world-renowned, wastewater reclamation facility at the Santee Lakes Recreation Area since 1961. This facility includes a plant which processes and treats approximately two million gallons of sewage per day. The District upgraded the plant in 1996 to allow tertiary treatment and has plans to upgrade the plant in the future to its ultimate treatment capacity of four million gallons per day.





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The two million gallons of recycled water which is generated per day is currently utilized within the seven recreational lakes and for irrigation at the Santee Recreational Lakes Regional Park, freeway rights-of-way, City medians and parks, schools and other applications City-wide. The District's plans to expand the use of recycled water and recycled water markets are detailed in their 1991 Water Reclamation Master Plan. The plan for expanding the use of recycled water is to first maximize recycled water service to existing and potential customers already within reach of the existing recycled water system and then to expand the system to reach new customers. The District currently requires developers within the service area of the existing system to provide dual-piping systems to allow the use of recycled water for landscape irrigation.

### 4.2 Land Resources

Landforms - Two main topographic features exist within the City of Santee - the coastal plain of the Coastal Province, and the foothills of the Peninsular Range Province. The narrow coastal plain, which is dominated by terraces or mesas and dissected by the San Diego River, occupies the majority of the City. This area, which is found in the center of the City, is characterized by relatively flat topography. Within the north and southeastern portions of the City are the foothills of the Peninsular Range. Topography is generally steeper in the far northern areas of the City, including the Carlton Hills and Fanita Ranch areas, and in the south including the Rattlesnake Mountain, Mission Trails and Grossmont Mesa areas.

Geology - The geology and subsurface formations of Santee include Eocene Age sediments of the Friars Formation and Stadium Conglomerate, which comprise the marine terraces of the coastal plain landform. These sediments are generally underlain by granitic rock, which comprises the primary subsurface formation of the Peninsular Range. The rock strata underlying Santee was created as a result of the compaction of various rock sediments over thousands of years, thus its sedimentary designation. Alluvium and colluvium surficial deposits occur in the drainage bottoms and lower slopes within the City. The City's geologic and soils conditions (discussed below) are discussed in greater detail in the Safety Element.

Soils - The geologic stratigraphy of Santee consists of several surficial soil types including undocumented or previously placed fill, topsoil, colluvium, alluvium / debris flows, landslide deposits and terrace deposits. In general, surficial soils consisting of alluvium and colluvium are found in drainage areas, such as the San Diego River channel and near the bases of slopes. As discussed within the Safety Element, those soils associated with the Friars Formation and those soils located within valley and drainage bottoms are susceptible to erosion or other more significant forms of earth movement (landslides).

Mineral Resources - Valuable sand, gravel and crushed rock resources, extremely important to the construction industry, are found in the City. Known collectively as aggregate, these commodities provide bulk and strength to concrete, cement, oil-based road mix, and plaster or stucco products. They are also used in road bases, sub-bases, and as fill for construction of homes and businesses. River sand and gravel is preferred to crushed stone for aggregate



because the naturally fragmented and rounded material is less expensive to quarry, and a wet mix made with rounded particles of alluvial sand and gravel has better workability.

The portion of the upper San Diego River, which flows through Santee and Lakeside, contains a significant share of the available construction sand reserves of the metropolitan San Diego market area. San Diego River sand is of high enough quality to be competitive with other sources in the County. The depth of the best deposits vary from 10 feet to 60 feet, although industry sources report pockets of deeper deposits.



Location of Mineral Resources - The State's 1996 study: Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego County Production – Consumption Region (DMG Open-File Report 96-04) updated their 1982 report on aggregate materials availability in western San Diego County. The report uses the term "Mineral Resource Zone" (MRZ) to describe the potential for mineral resources in an area. Santee has land designated in two categories: MRZ-2 and MRZ-3. MRZ-2 designates areas where adequate information exists to indicate that significant

mineral deposits are present or where it was judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists. MRZ-3 areas are those containing mineral deposits whose significance cannot be evaluated from available data. This classification also includes areas where both acceptable and unacceptable quality material are intermixed, usually in layers. No new Mineral Resource Zones were identified in Santee as part of the 1996 update.

In Santee, the areas designated in the MRZ-2 zone are primarily along the floodplain of the San Diego River and on hills underlain by granitic rocks. These hills are located north of the existing development in Carlton Hills, south of Prospect Avenue between Mesa Road and Fanita Drive, and the north end of Magnolia Avenue. The remainder of Santee is designated MRZ-3. Obviously, in spite of the potential for mineral recovery from any MRZ area, consideration of economics, land use compatibility and environmental protection, including regional habitat protection efforts, must be considered when deciding on the appropriateness of mining in a particular area.

Existing Aggregate Mining Operations - Santee is one of the jurisdictions in San Diego County having mines with in-stream sand deposits that meet the quality specifications for concrete aggregate. Santee has three aggregate mining operations: (RCP - Pit #1, RCP - Pit #2, and RCP - Pit #3) located in the San Diego River east of Magnolia Avenue. These three mining operations have been active since the 1970's and are approaching completion.

In 1991, a reclamation plan for these mines was approved by the City. The reclamation plan calls for the mined areas to be reclaimed in phases as mining is completed in the various stretches of the river. As of 2002, approximately 50% of the mining operation has been reclaimed. As mining







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is completed in an area, the area is reclaimed in accordance with the approved reclamation plan, which will result in significant revegetation and habitat enhancement in this stretch of the San Diego River.

Existing as well as proposed new mining operations are subject to regulations for health, safety, water quality, land use and environmental compatibility by local, regional, state and federal agencies. These regulations are described within the Implementation Section later in this Element.

### **4.3 Archaeological and Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources are defined as those environmental components which are fragile and non-renewable evidences of human activity as reflected in districts, sites, structures, artifacts, works of art, and natural features that were of importance in human events. As contained within the Santee City limits, these primarily consist of archaeological sites, features, and structures ranging from early prehistoric to recent historic age.

Prehistoric Resources - The San Diego River Valley has been a prime focus for human occupation since Native American hunter-gatherers first arrived in the San Diego County region. While climatic conditions are known to have fluctuated during the prehistoric period, the valley would have remained an important environment, providing both a reliable water supply and abundant fauna and floral resources. Settlement of this rich environment was extensive in its range from the coast to the mountains and intensive in its relative density of sites. Archaeologically, the settlements are evidenced today in numerous prehistoric resources that dot the river valley area in and around Santee.

At present, 65 cultural sites are known to occur within the Santee city limits, based on a review of official records. The great majority of cultural resources in the Santee area are prehistoric sites (60) with one that has both a prehistoric and an historic component. Prehistoric sites in the area tend to be characterized by diversity in the archaeological assemblage including bedrock milling stations, artifact scatters, and midden soils varying in size from small, temporary encampments to large, complex habitation areas. This is evidenced by the fact that only 20 sites are defined by only a lithic artifact scatter.

Most are late prehistoric in age though a few may relate to the Early Archaic and Paleo-Indian cultural traditions. The late prehistoric sites may be affiliated with the Kumeyaay people that inhabited the area at the time of Euro-American contact. Fifteen prehistoric sites have been evaluated for eligibility to the state or national register. Six of these were determined eligible for listing and nine were ineligible. Human remains are known to occur at only one site. That site was evaluated and determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Resources - Whereas those cultural resources related to Native American occupation are classified as prehistoric, those related to Euro-American presence in the region are defined as historic resources. In San Diego, the historic period begins with establishment of the first



mission in Alta, California by Father Junipero Serra in 1769. Lasting until about 1824, this first phase of historic occupation has been designated the Spanish missionization and early agricultural development period. Following this, other phases are delineated: the Mexican land grant distribution (1824-1920); and finally the Modern Period (1920-present) (Wirth Associates, 1983).

Five historic sites have been recorded within Santee, representing less than 10 percent of the total cultural resource inventory. One of these, SDI-5535/H, is an historic trash scatter that also contains a prehistoric component. Two of the sites date to the early 1930's and were recorded during a survey for proposed State Route 52. They include an historic trash site near Cuyamaca Street and Mission Gorge Road, and a Depression-era agricultural complex located in the eastern part of the City near Woodside Avenue. Another site is the Edgemoor Farm Polo Barn within the vicinity of Mission Gorge Road and Magnolia Avenue, an area that may contain numerous historic archaeological remains. The fifth site is an historic trash scatter that has not been assessed. Only SDI-5535/H has been evaluated for NRHP listing and it was subsequently determined to be ineligible.

Historic Structures - The City has one structure which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Edgemoor Farm Dairy Barn, or Polo Barn. Located on the Edgemoor Hospital Grounds on Magnolia Avenue, the barn was built in 1913 by Walter H. Dupee to house his prize cattle and champion polo ponies. The barn was added to the National Register in 1985. The City also has one officially registered Local Historic Landmark, the James Love House, or Granite House. The Granite House is located on the City's maintenance yard property on Hazeldon Drive, just south of Forester Creek. The Granite House was built in 1934 of granite quarried from the Coyote Hill quarry, now the site of the Cameron's Mobile Estates Mobilehome Park. The house was officially recognized by the City as a local historical landmark in May, 1995. The structure does not however, qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Granite House will be relocated due to the impending construction of the State Route 52 freeway.

Resource Evaluation - Currently most of the City is either urbanized and therefore of low probability for significant cultural resources, or has been subjected to surveys within the last decade resulting in complete resource inventories. As such, the potential for unexamined areas with significant and California Register of Historic Resources eligible historic properties (sites) is fairly low. The cultural resource sensitivity map (Figure 6-2) delineates areas within the City of moderate potential for yet unidentified sites; the remaining unshaded area is considered to be of lower potential, though not completely devoid of cultural resources. The low category consists of the developed areas and sloping terrain, while the moderate includes two pockets of land in the northern area of the city and the river plain itself, where there is the potential for buried archaeological sites.

Since a few areas remain that have not been surveyed, additional sites can be anticipated, especially buried sites located along the San Diego River. This area is delineated as being of moderate potential for significant and register-eligible archaeological deposits which may be encountered during construction-related excavations exceeding a meter in depth. The three





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general subareas of Santee are discussed below. These may be either regions of known significant resources or lands of projected resource potential.

**San Diego River** - This corridor bisects the City from east to west, and consists of the prehistoric floodplain of the river. Numerous studies have been conducted in this subarea resulting in the discovery of major villages, several temporary camps, lithic scatters and milling stations. Also, most of the historic resources are located in this area, or are predicted to exist subsurface. Because of periodic flooding of the corridor, alluvial deposits may have buried many significant sites (thus necessitating different detection methods than would be used for surveys on high ground).

**Sycamore Canyon** - This subarea consists of a portion of the eastern slope of the north-south trending Sycamore Canyon. Extensive development in the southern half of the canyon has obliterated most of the previously identified sites. However, a grouping of prehistoric loci in the northern portion of the canyon have been identified by recent surveys and are considered important. Included are village/temporary campsites with midden, rock art, rock features and other archaeological debris of both scientific and heritage value. These sites appear to be affiliated with the Late Prehistoric occupation of the region and, given their close proximity to the Mission, may yield important data on the period succeeding Spanish contact.

**North Magnolia Avenue** - This area consists of the undeveloped land bounded by Fanita Ranch on the west and north, the city limits on the east, and residential subdivisions centered around Magnolia Avenue on the south. Although only prehistoric sites are known to occur within the area, the majority of acreage in this small interior valley has not been systematically inventoried; thus, the potential for additional resources is considered moderate.

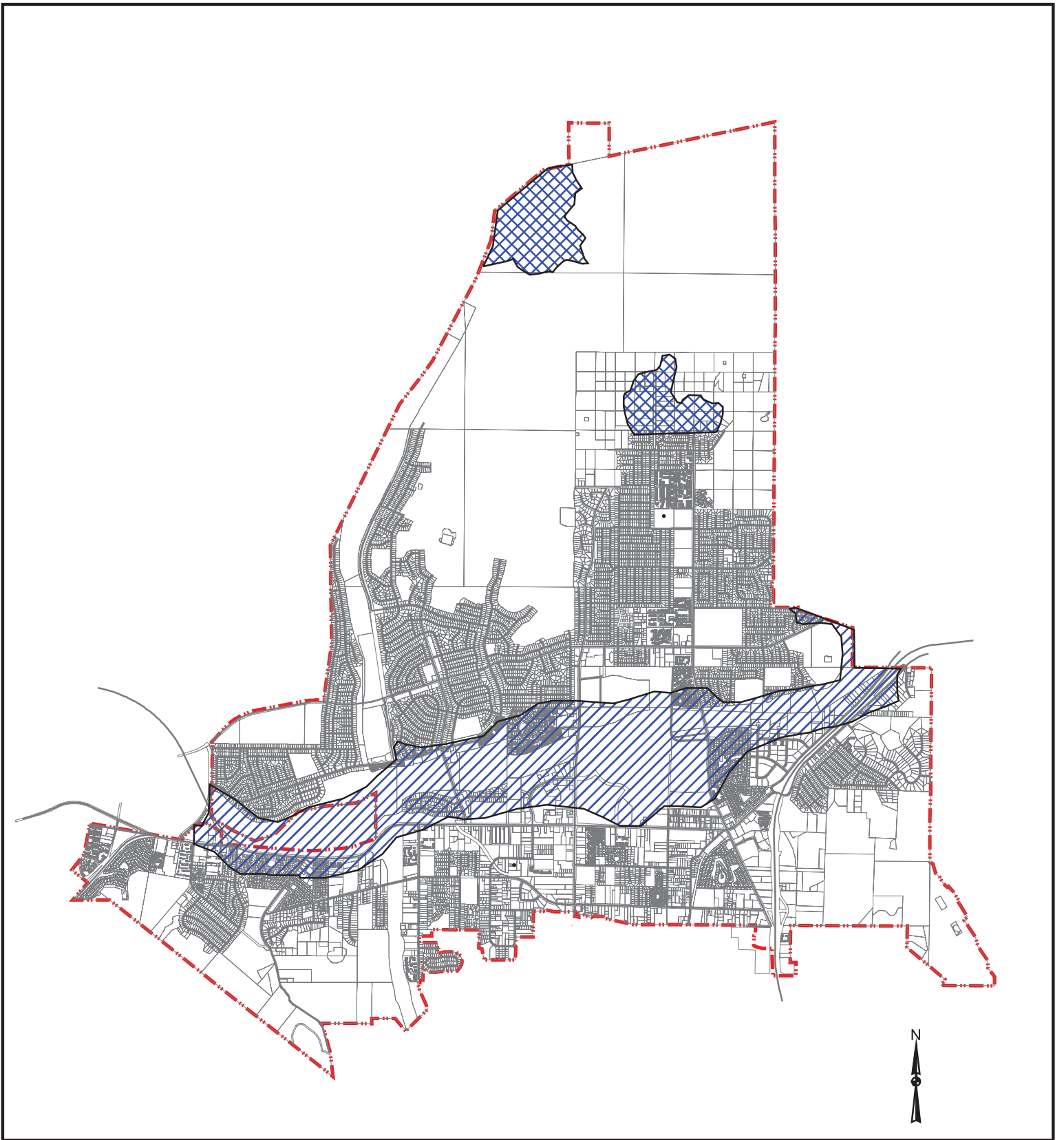
### **4.4 Biological Resources**



The regionally important biological resources that occur within the City include the coastal sage scrub and chaparral-covered hills in the north and south of the City and the riparian corridor along the San Diego River.

Chaparral and Coastal Sage Scrub communities occur throughout the City on undeveloped hillside areas in the North Magnolia Area, Fanita Ranch, Rattlesnake Mountain and in the southwest quadrant of the City, south of Prospect Avenue and Rancho Fanita Drive. These communities also provide valuable wildlife habitat for a diverse group of species, including protected species like the California Gnatcatcher.




The San Diego River corridor through Santee is a generally uninterrupted band of natural floodplain, open water and discontinuous



-  Moderate Potential for Register Eligible Archaeological Sites
-  Moderate Potential for Register Eligible Buried Archaeological Sites

**CITY OF SANTEE  
GENERAL PLAN**



*CULTURAL RESOURCE SENSITIVITY MAP*  
**FIGURE 6-2**



riparian vegetation. The channel has been improved as a fully naturalized earthen channel between Mast Park and Cuyamaca Street and ongoing sand mining occurs in the stretch east of Magnolia Avenue.

Riparian/wetland communities are considered to be significant wildlife habitat, particularly for bird species including the Least Bell's Vireo. This resource is declining rapidly in San Diego County and should be protected and enhanced in order to preserve the diverse native wildlife that it supports. There are over 300 acres of wetland vegetation communities in the City, concentrated primarily along the San Diego River and Sycamore Creek. Very little riparian vegetation remains along Forester Creek, although restoration and habitat enhancement are planned as part of the City's Forester Creek Improvement Project. Freshwater aquatic vegetation is found around man-made ponds in Sycamore Canyon (Santee Lakes) and the San Diego River bed. This freshwater habitat is considered valuable to wildlife particularly in combination with streamside woodlands.

There are several areas within the City of Santee that remain relatively undisturbed by urban development and contain adequate resources to support "high interest" floral or fauna species. These areas are depicted in Figure 6-3, and described below.



San Diego River - This corridor bisects the City from east to west, containing approximately 1,000 acres of natural and disturbed habitat. This corridor also functions as an important continuous wildlife corridor through the City. Tributaries to the San Diego River (e.g., Sycamore and Forester Creek) are important complements to this habitat, although habitat value in Forester Creek is somewhat degraded. Sand extraction in the central and eastern portion of the San Diego River has both disturbed (through mining) and enhanced (through ponding) valuable aquatic habitats.

Sycamore Canyon - This drainage is the most biologically significant tributary to the San Diego River within the City of Santee. The man-made Santee Lakes and water treatment ponds along Sycamore Creek, which parallel the northwestern City boundary, provide important aquatic and woodland habitat for a variety of wildlife similar to the San Diego River. Santee Recreational Lakes are considered one of the more popular areas for bird watching in San Diego County. The adjacent woodland drainages and brush cover slopes also are identified as excellent wildlife habitat.

Fanita Ranch - This area occupies 2,589 acres of the northern quadrant of the City, including portions of Sycamore Canyon. The property contains a diverse mix of vegetation communities including coastal sage scrub, chaparral, vernal pools, freshwater marsh, riparian woodland, and native and non-native grasslands. Sensitive species known to occur on the site include the California gnatcatcher, Cooper's hawk, San Diego horned lizard,





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cactus wren and the Hermes copper butterfly as well as several plant species such as the willowy monardella, variegated dudleya, San Diego barrel cactus, San Diego County viguiera and San Diego goldenstar.

Southwest Quadrant - This primarily undeveloped area of the City contains portions of the steep north-facing slopes of Cowles Mountain, terraces and canyons north of Grossmont College and Big Rock Creek, a small tributary drainage to the San Diego River. This area is comprised primarily of

coastal sage scrub and chaparral communities. Grassland habitats are located in the foothill areas and a narrow band of riparian vegetation exists along Big Rock Creek and in small drainages south of Prospect Avenue. While surveys in these areas have been limited, known sensitive species include California gnatcatchers, San Diego horned lizard, San Diego barrel cactus and the San Diego goldenstar. Unoccupied vernal pools have been identified on the mesa top just north of Grossmont College.

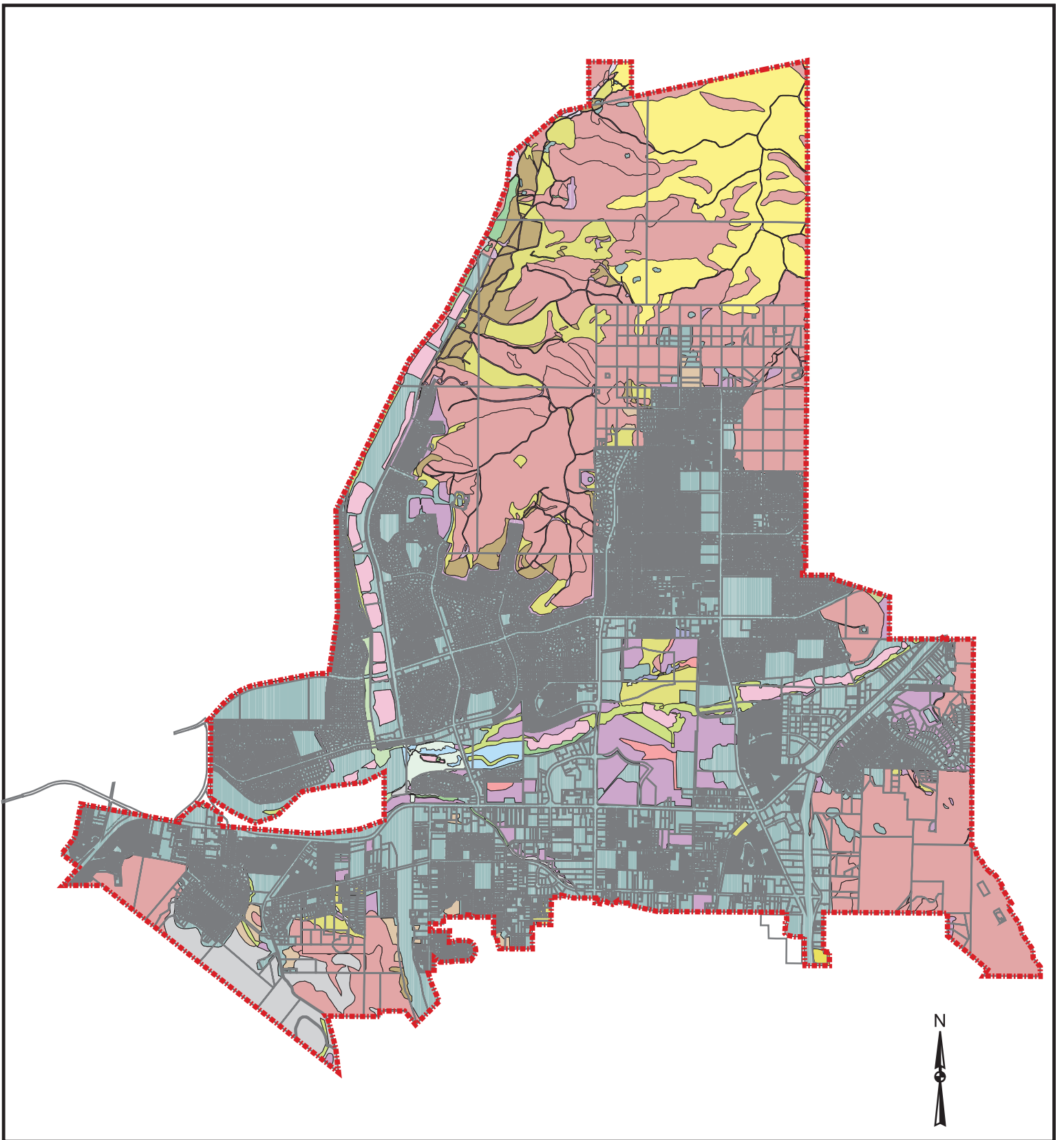


























Rattlesnake Mountain – Rattlesnake Mountain is located in the southeast corner of the City, east of State Route (SR) 67, and encompasses over 400 acres. The steep ridgeline is almost entirely covered

by coastal sage scrub vegetation. Sensitive plant species identified on the site during surveys conducted in 2002 include the San Diego barrel cactus and the San Diego sunflower. Sensitive animal species identified during those surveys include more than a dozen California gnatcatchers along with Cooper's hawk, San Diego horned lizards, red diamondback rattlesnakes, Loggerhead shrike, orange throated whiptail lizards and California Rufous crowned sparrows. While it is a somewhat isolated area biologically, previous surveys have demonstrated the ability of the site to support a relatively stable population of gnatcatchers.


### 4.5 Open Space

Within the City of Santee there exists a diversity of open space resources, which are shown on Figure 6-4, Existing Open Space. They include designated open space lands (parks and floodways), large privately-owned vacant parcels of land, numerous small privately-held open space easements, school facilities, and other publicly-owned land. These open space resources provide numerous beneficial functions within the City; the primary ones being the provision of scenic relief and vistas, habitat preservation, watershed protection and recreation.

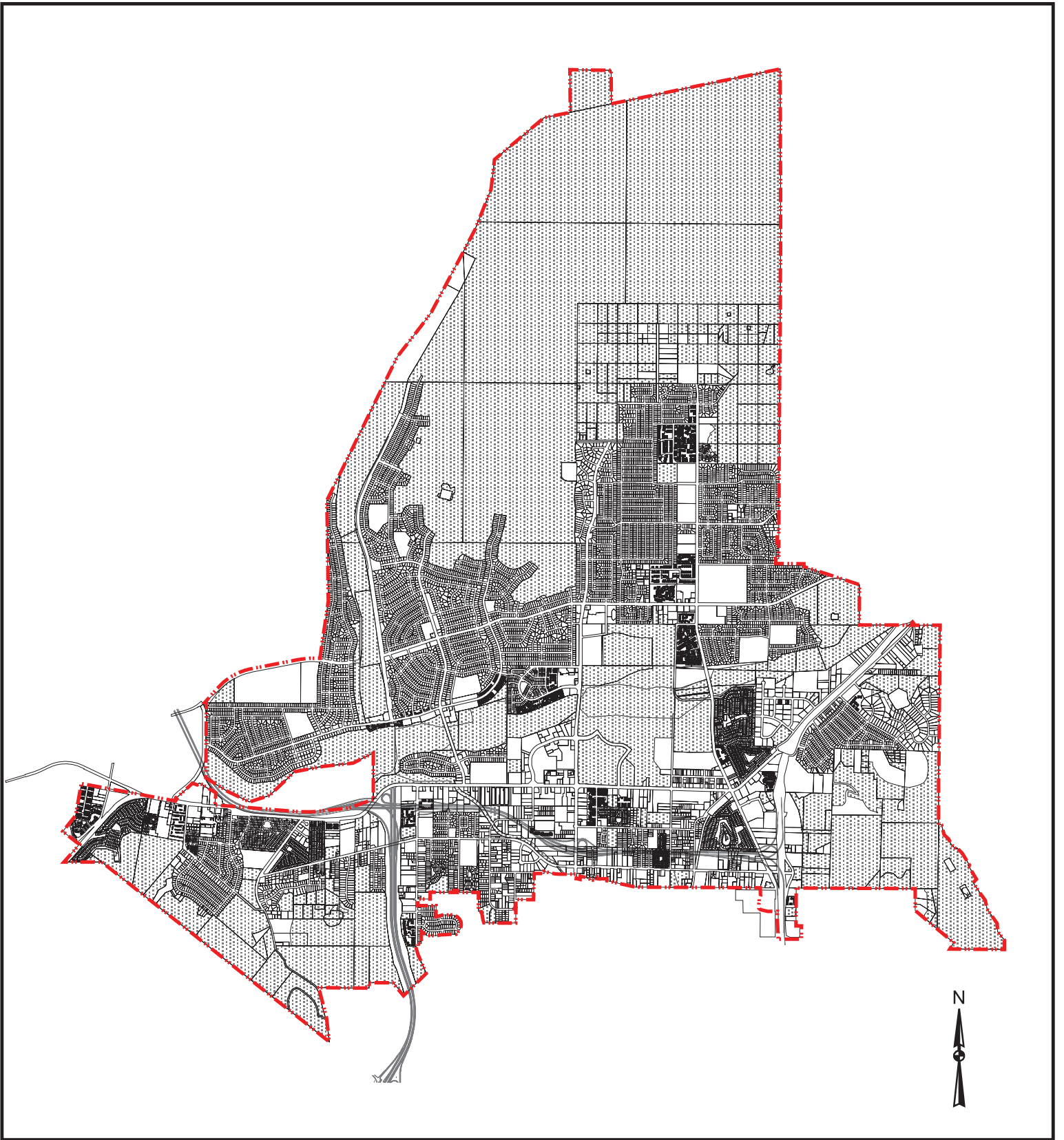


- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Chaparral                           |  Native Grassland                                |
|  Coast Live Oak Woodland             |  Non-Native Grassland                            |
|  Coastal Sage-Chaparral Scrub        |  Non-Vegetated Channel, Floodway, Lakeshore Frin |
|  Coastal and Valley Freshwater Marsh |  Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest         |
|  Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub           |  Southern Cottonwood-willow Riparian Forest      |
|  Disturbed Habitat                   |  Southern Mixed Chaparral                        |
|  Disturbed Wetland                   |  Southern Riparian Forest                        |
|  Eucalyptus Woodland                 |  Southern Riparian Scrub                         |
|  Extensive Agriculture               |  Southern Sycamore-alder Riparian Woodland       |
|  Freshwater                          |  Southern Willow Scrub                           |
|  Intensive Agriculture               |  Urban/Developed                                 |
|  Mule Fat Scrub                      |  Valley and Foothill Grassland                   |

**CITY OF SANTEE**  
**GENERAL PLAN**



**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**  
**FIGURE 6-3**



**CITY OF SANTEE  
GENERAL PLAN**



*EXISTING OPEN SPACE*  
**FIGURE 6-4**





Santee has almost 3,000 acres of currently designated or planned open space lands in the City. This acreage includes six City parks, the Santee Lakes Regional Park and Campground, the portion of Mission Trails Regional Park within Santee, land within the floodways of the San Diego River and Sycamore and Forester Creeks, open space easements and future Multiple Species Conservation Program Preserve lands (Table 6-1). The parks are discussed in more detail in the Recreation Element and the floodways are addressed in the Safety Element.

Parkland - Public parkland is land currently used for various recreational purposes and owned or operated by public agencies. Mast Park, Woodglen Vista Park, Santee Mini-Park, West Hills Park (discussed below), Shadow Hill Park, Big Rock Park, Town Center Community Park and the San Diego River Park are City of Santee parks. The portions of Mission Trails Regional Park within Santee are owned by the City and County of San Diego. The Santee Lakes Regional Park and Campground is owned and operated by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District.

In 1991 the City, together with the State, County of San Diego and the City of Poway, purchased the 321-acre Goodan Ranch property which is located approximately one mile north of Santee at Poway’s southern border. Now known as the Goodan Ranch Regional Park, the park provides recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking and equestrian uses, as well as preserving important habitat and open space.

Santee residents also have access to many acres of recreational open space that are not under the direct control of the City. This includes the Padre Dam Municipal Water District's Santee Lakes Regional Park (discussed above), the Carlton Oaks Golf Course, and school playgrounds, ballfields and pool facilities. These facilities are discussed in more detail in the Recreation Element.



San Diego River Park Plan – This plan is the culmination of over 20 years of planning and implementation by the City. When completed, the park will stretch along both sides of the San Diego River across the entire length of the City, covering over 300 acres. The park is also a major component of the City’s draft Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan. This park involves multiple ownerships and is being implemented in phases. So far, approximately one-half of the park has been

completed or secured. The park will include restored habitat, public recreation areas (i.e. Mast Park and Mission Creek) and over six miles of public trails. A more complete discussion of the Santee River Park appears in the Recreation Element.

Floodways - Santee also has six waterways, including the San Diego River, Forester Creek, Sycamore Creek, Woodglen Vista Creek, and intermittent creeks paralleling Big Rock Road and





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Fanita Drive. Floodways are considered for open space designation for reasons related to their natural and human functions. Natural functions include carrying waters (normal and storm

flows), pollutant filtration (water quality), groundwater replenishment, habitat and wildlife dispersal corridors. Human functions include providing visual relief, water storage, recreation, and sources of sand and gravel.

Multiple Species Conservation Program Preserve Areas – The City is in the process of obtaining approval of its Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan, which identifies those areas of the City which will be conserved as permanent open space for preservation of habitats and species. As per the established goals of the regional MSCP Plan, Santee's Subarea plan will balance economic development with species conservation. The Plan will specify where future development, as well as habitat preservation, is expected to occur and what mitigation which will be required of future development. Through this plan, the City intends to preserve a minimum of 2,600 acres of open space.



The majority of the preserve lands are in private ownership. These portions of the preserve will be assembled over time by either development exactions or through purchase by either public or private entities. Once the preserve is assembled, these lands will provide protection for sensitive plant and animal species, visual and aesthetic benefits, and recreational opportunities such as biking, hiking and nature appreciation.

Open Space Easements - Numerous open space easements have either been granted or assigned to the City, or to private land management entities. The majority of these easements have been granted as conditions of approval for residential subdivisions, generally preserving open areas of high biological value or steep slopes. While these easements are not generally available for public access or recreational purposes, they do provide important functions, including habitat and species preservation and visual relief from adjacent developed areas.

Land Outside/Adjacent to Santee - Santee's location on the fringe of the San Diego metropolitan area gives it visual access to much additional open space beyond its borders. On a clear day, El Capitan Reservoir Recreation Area is well within view and the peaks of the Laguna Mountains are visible in the distance. In addition, Santee is almost completely surrounded by undeveloped land. Mission Trails Regional Park abuts the City on the west and southwest as well as being partially within Santee, providing recreational opportunities as well as a scenic backdrop to the west. Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, which includes thousands of acres of vacant land, borders the City to the west and northwest. The County's



Sycamore Open Space Preserve and the Goodan Ranch, comprising more than 2,000 acres of natural land, are immediately north of Santee.

A low-density portion of the Lakeside community is to the east, with El Capitan Reservoir and the Peninsular Ranges farther in the distance. Gillespie Field, immediately to the south of the City and within El Cajon, constitutes a large open space area necessary for aviation and public safety. The airfield provides a buffer between Santee and industrial areas within El Cajon. The Conservation Element recognizes the value of these adjacent open space lands to Santee's visual setting. Their use will remain a matter of importance to the City although most of the above land is located outside the City limits.

Santee Recreation, Open Space and Conservation System (SANTÉE ROCS!) – The Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea lands and designated open space areas discussed within this element are two of the components of the City’s *SANTÉE ROCS!* Plan. This plan brings together several independent but related efforts, to create a comprehensive, City-wide system of open space, parks and trails. The plan is discussed in detail in the Land Use Element.

**Table 6-1  
Designated Open Space Lands**

| Location                                    | Acres |
|---|-------|
| <b>City Park Lands</b>                      |       |
| Mast Park                                   | 26.0  |
| Big Rock Park                               | 5.0   |
| Woodglen Vista Park                         | 9.96  |
| West Hills Park                             | 13.6  |
| Shadow Hill Park                            | 5.96  |
| Santee Mini-Park                            | 0.25  |
| Town Center Community Park                  | 55.0  |
| Mission Trails Regional Park                | 191   |
| Santee Lakes Regional Park                  | 171   |
| Santee’s San Diego River Park*              | 300   |
| Goodan Ranch Regional Park **               | 321   |
| <b>Floodways</b>                            |       |
| San Diego River                             | 596   |
| Sycamore Creek                              | 42.5  |
| Forester Creek                              | 31    |
| <b>Other Open Space</b>                     |       |
| Draft Multiple Species Conservation Program | 2,600 |





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|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Subarea Plan ***     |     |
| Open Space Easements | 241 |

\* Includes acreage included in the San Diego River Floodway, Mast Park and Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan lands categories

\*\* Located outside City limits - jointly owned and managed by the State, County and Cities of Santee and Poway

\*\*\* Based on draft plan. Acreage includes areas within park, floodway and open space easement categories

### 5.0 Needs

#### 5.1 Water Resources

Hydrology - The natural watercourses within the City provide unique riparian habitat for various flora and fauna, filtration of urban pollutants, aesthetically appealing open space and passive recreational opportunities for the citizens of Santee. As such, the City needs to encourage the maintenance of appropriate open space uses adjacent to these waterways. This would reduce flood damage hazards, improve water quality, protect visual quality, promote recreational uses, and maintain use of these areas as wildlife habitats.

Flooding of the various watercourses within the City is regarded as a significant public safety hazard as described within the Safety Element. One means for reducing this potential hazard would involve either the designation of low intensity land uses (open space) adjacent to these waterways or flood control improvements to the various waterways where flooding already exists as a problem. Flood control solutions must emphasize the consideration of wildlife habitat, water quality, and visual resource values. Priority should be given to natural stream channel designs for all flood protection projects.

The mining of sand and gravel resources from water corridors has also contributed to increasing flood hazards in some areas and has threatened bridges, utility lines and other public facilities. To assure that these flood impacts are reduced, the City needs to carefully review all existing and proposed mining operations within water corridors, and require the mitigation of all identified impacts (i.e., flooding, bridge abutment scouring) where significant problems are identified or anticipated.

Domestic Water - The rate of population growth projected within the City, in conjunction with anticipated regional growth, will result in an increased demand for water, thus placing an increasing burden on the common supplies of water for Santee and surrounding cities.

To assure that adequate water supplies are made available in the future, the City should continue close coordination with the Padre Dam Municipal Water District on proposed development projects to assure that sufficient water supplies are available before development is approved. In addition, the City needs to continue to encourage water conservation measures



such as drought tolerant landscaping and water conserving irrigation technologies on both private developments as well as on public projects and in public facilities.



Water Recycling - The Padre Dam Municipal Water District operates a state-of-the-art water reclamation facility at the north end of the Santee Lakes Regional Park. The recycled water produced here is used for recreational and irrigation purposes. The City should continue to work with the District in implementing the District's Water Reclamation Master Plan as new development is proposed and, as development occurs, to support the district's planned expansion of the treatment facility to its ultimate capacity.

Water Quality - The City of Santee needs to preserve and enhance water quality and protect designated beneficial uses of all local waters, while accomplishing economic growth and land use objectives. Water quality issues to be addressed by the City include urban runoff and stormwater discharge pollution from residential, commercial, industrial, construction and municipal non-point sources. Water quality objectives need to be addressed through the implementation of urban runoff management programs and enforcement of regulatory requirements.

The City recognizes that water pollution control measures are important on a local level as well as a regional watershed level. In response to regional water quality objectives, the City needs to collaborate with surrounding jurisdictions in order to reduce impacts on receiving water bodies. Collective efforts will address common issues, promote consistency, and coordinate activities to reduce and prevent urban runoff pollution.

### **5.2 Land Resources**

Landforms, Geology and Soils - The landforms, geology and soils are important considerations for development in the City, primarily with respect to the potential for landslides, soil liquefaction and slope instability as discussed within the Safety Element. These potential problems create engineering constraints, which affect foundation stability and general building safety. Those areas within the City susceptible to potential hazards include the properties north of Carlton Hills Boulevard, on both sides of Fanita Drive south of Prospect Avenue, along the south-central City boundary, along the San Diego River and in the Sycamore Canyon drainage sub-basin.

Mineral Resources - The City of Santee includes a number of areas containing valuable mineral (primarily sand and gravel) resources. These include areas along the San Diego River, within hilly areas north of Carlton Hills, south of Prospect Avenue between Mesa Road and Fanita Drive, and at the north end of Magnolia Avenue. In view of the potential environmental and flooding problems associated with the mining of these resources, the City needs to carefully review and regulate all sand mining and mineral recovery proposals. This will ensure that flood hazards and risks to public infrastructure are reduced, and environmental protection is provided for.





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Biological and Cultural Resources - Within the City of Santee, there are a number of identified significant and potentially significant biological and cultural resources as shown on Figures 6-2 and 6-3. In order to ensure their consideration and preservation where appropriate, biological and cultural resources surveys need to be required as development is proposed. Mitigation for cultural resources should be required consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act and mitigation measures proposed in accordance with the significance of the identified impact. All development proposals impacting biological resources should be consistent with the provisions of the City's future Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan and Implementing Agreement, and applicable State and Federal Regulations.

Open Space – There are currently thousands of acres of undeveloped land throughout the City. Although some will remain as permanent open space and is designated as such, much of it may be developed in the future, mostly for residential uses. As land is developed, developers will be required to dedicate land for recreational purposes (or pay "in-lieu" park fees, per the Park Lands Dedication Ordinance), and for biological mitigation purposes. This land will provide biological, recreational and visual open space functions.

The San Diego River should continue to be recognized as a significant central open space corridor, emphasizing its visual integrity, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. These goals should continue to guide the City's efforts in assembling Santee's San Diego River Park.

In regard to open space distribution, many of the designated open space lands are in the form of hillsides along the City's perimeter, surrounding the developed portions of the community. This circumstance is important to the character and identity of Santee. As such, retaining viewsheds to these surrounding slopes is an important goal.

### **6.0 GOAL**

**The goal of the Conservation Element is to conserve open space, natural and cultural resources.**

### **7.0 Objectives and Policies**

**Objective 1.0 Protect areas of unique topography or environmental significance to the greatest extent possible.**

Policy 1.1 The City shall encourage significant natural landforms to be maintained during development whenever possible.



Policy 1.2 The City should encourage, through the environmental review process, the preservation of hillsides with steep slopes as appropriate to minimize danger from landslides and mudslides, as well as to protect key visual resources.

Policy 1.3 To protect and wisely manage hillsides and topographic resources, the City shall use the following hillside development guidelines:

| Percent Natural Slope | Guideline  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Less than 10%         | This is not a hillside condition. Conventional grading techniques are acceptable.  |
| 10% - 19.9%           | Development with grading will occur in this zone, but existing landforms should retain their natural character. Padded building sites are permitted on these slopes, but contour grading, split level architectural prototypes, with stacking and clustering are expected. |
| 20% and over          | Special hillside grading, architectural and site design techniques are expected, and architectural prototypes should conform to the natural landform. Compact development plans should be used to minimize grading footprints.   |

**Objective 2.0 Protect floodways to reduce flood hazards, protect biological resources and preserve the aesthetic quality along water corridors.**

Policy 2.1 The City shall encourage the protection of the San Diego River Corridor and all other City water corridors to reduce flood hazards, protect significant biological resources and scenic values, and to provide for appropriate recreational uses.

Policy 2.2 The City should promote open space in conjunction with other appropriate land uses along the San Diego River corridor and other water corridors found in the City.

Policy 2.3 The City should participate in regional planning efforts aimed at habitat protection and recreational enjoyment of the San Diego River.

Policy 2.4 The City should promote the design and use of floodways and adjacent land for recreation whenever appropriate as part of flood control and habitat improvements.

Policy 2.5 The City should avoid concrete channelization of waterways whenever possible and promote alternative flood control designs which have open space value.

Policy 2.6 The City encourages the development of appropriate flood control measures to assure public safety, which also prioritize maintenance of natural habitats and vegetation, and provision of community recreational opportunities as feasible and appropriate.





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Policy 2.7 The City shall ensure that all development proposals are located outside of designated floodways and all development in the 100-year floodplain is consistent with the City's Flood Damage Protection Ordinance.

**Objective 3.0 Maintain adequate domestic water supplies for all residents and uses within the City.**

Policy 3.1 The City should encourage the use of drought-resistant vegetation and encourage the use of recycled water for irrigation for both private development as well as public projects and facilities.

Policy 3.2 The City shall encourage the development and utilization of innovative water conservation measures in all proposed developments.

Policy 3.3 The City should continue to support the Padre Dam Municipal Water District in expanding the water reclamation facility to its ultimate capacity and support the expansion of recycled water infrastructure.

Policy 3.4 The City should encourage the Padre Dam Municipal Water District to satisfy both existing and planned potable water and recycled water demands within the City and District service area prior to considering out-of-district contracts and agreements.

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**Objective 4.0 Reduce the amount of erosion of soil in the City.**

Policy 4.1 The City shall require that appropriate soils and geologic surveys be completed for all proposed development, consistent with the policies and implementation measures found in the Safety Element.

Policy 4.2 The City shall require appropriate grading, erosion control measures and replanting to minimize erosion and prevent slippage of man-made slopes.

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**Objective 5.0 Conduct extraction of mineral deposits with a minimum amount of disturbance to adjacent properties.**

Policy 5.1 The City shall require that all proposed mining operations are adequately reviewed during the project and environmental review processes to minimize to the greatest degree possible, all identified environmental impacts, especially water quality, habitat preservation and bridge undermining.

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**Objective 6.0 Reclaim all mined lands to usable conditions that are adaptable for alternative land uses.**

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Policy 6.1 The City shall require the planned reclamation of mined lands following extraction of mineral resources with consideration of the land's potential for recreational, wildlife habitat, and scenic uses as well as for residential, industrial or commercial development.

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### **Objective 7.0 Preserve significant biological resources.**

Policy 7.1 The City shall encourage the preservation and enhancement of significant biological resources in areas designated as permanent open space.

Policy 7.2 The City shall require that all development proposals provide appropriate mitigation for identified significant biological resources including selective preservation, sensitive site planning techniques and in-kind mitigation for identified impacts.

Policy 7.3 The City shall require that, for all development proposals involving the setting aside of land for permanent open space either on-site or off-site, provisions are in place to ensure the long term management of the open space and biological resources.

Policy 7.4 The City shall complete an Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea plan that conserves a minimum of 2,600 acres in the City as permanent open space for preservation of habitats and species.

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### **Objective 8.0 Preserve significant cultural resources.**

Policy 8.1 The City shall require either the preservation of significant historic or prehistoric sites, or the professional retrieval of artifacts prior to the development of a site, consistent with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. Preservation may include various measures including avoidance, preservation in place, incorporation into open space, or covering or capping. The type of preservation would depend upon the nature and significance of the archaeological resource and the practical requirements of the proposed land use.

Policy 8.2 The City should require curation of any recovered artifacts as a condition of any cultural resources mitigation program.

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### **Objective 9.0 Reduce pollutants in urban runoff and stormwater discharges.**

Policy 9.1 The City shall use careful planning and review to identify and eliminate urban runoff problems before development is approved.

Policy 9.2 The City shall enforce the implementation of appropriate best management practices (BMPs) during construction projects.

Policy 9.3: Reduce the discharge of pollutants into the storm drain system from existing municipal, industrial, and commercial facilities and residential areas to the maximum extent practicable.





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~~Policy 9.4 Actively seek and eliminate illicit discharges and connections to the storm water conveyance system.~~

Policy 9.5 The City shall continue to coordinate water quality planning and implementation efforts with other cities.

**Objective 10.0 Preserve significant natural resources, such as mineral deposits, biological resources, watercourses, groundwater, hills, canyons, and major rock outcroppings, as part of a Citywide open space system.**

Policy 10.1 The City should encourage the conservation of rare or unique plants and wildlife by identifying such resources through the environmental review process and by using open space preservation, where appropriate, to preserve the resources as a condition of a project approval, consistent with the City's future Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan.

Policy 10.2 The City should encourage the preservation of significant natural features, such as watercourses, ridgelines, steep canyons, and major rock outcroppings through the Development Review process.

Policy 10.3 The City should encourage the preservation of appropriate open space in the Town Center area for recreational and open space purposes as part of the overall Specific Plan.

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**Objective 11.0 Promote a balanced mix of open space uses with development throughout the City to enhance visual resources, avoid hazards and conserve resources.**

Policy 11.1 The City should promote the dedication of open space or parklands and the designation of private open space within all proposed residential developments.

Policy 11.2 The City should encourage, where feasible, the development of an interconnected system of open spaces throughout the City.

Policy 11.3 The City should support State and Federal legislation which would provide funds for local parkland acquisition.

Policy 11.4 The City should ensure that adequate passive and active open space uses are incorporated into the development of the Town Center, Fanita Ranch, Rattlesnake Mountain and other large, existing vacant areas.

Policy 11.5 The City shall encourage compact development plans when appropriate to maximize the preservation of open spaces.

### **8.0 Implementation**

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Natural resources within the City are protected by existing federal, state, regional and local regulations and review procedures as discussed below. Following the description of these various regulations and review procedures are a number of implementation measures, which can be utilized within the City to respond to the various needs described within this Element.

### **8.1 Federal Regulations**

(1) The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that any proposed project within the City of Santee receiving any federal funds or approvals must prepare an environmental assessment or analysis to determine whether the project could significantly impact the environment. If it is determined that there is a potential for significant adverse impact, an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared which discusses the existing environment, potential impacts, and possible mitigation measures.

(2) Federal laws and guidelines that protect cultural resources within the City include the Antiquities Act, the U. S. Historical Sites Act, and the U. S. Act for the Preservation of Historical and Archaeological Data.

(3) The Federal Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 give the United States Fish and Wildlife Service the legal authority to regulate the taking of protected species as well as the authority to issue permits and enter into Subarea Plans and Implementing Agreements with local agencies.

(4) The Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (Clean Water Act) gave the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to set and enforce effluent limitations and performance standards for industries and publicly-owned waste treatment plants. It provides a comprehensive framework to address many causes of water pollution including municipal and industrial wastewater discharges, polluted runoff from urban and rural areas, and habitat destruction. The Santee Lakes Wastewater Reclamation Facility is regulated by this Agency.

### **8.2 State Regulations**

(1) The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an Initial Study must be prepared for all proposed projects within the City requiring a discretionary approval to determine whether the project could have a significant environmental impact. If it is determined that there is a possibility of a significant adverse impact, more extensive environmental documentation must be prepared which analyzes the existing environment, the potential impacts, and identifies potential mitigation measures. This process leads to early identification of natural and cultural resources and to the identification of measures that may reduce the severity of, or avoid the potential impact.

(2) California's primary statute governing water quality and water pollution issues is the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1970 (Porter-Cologne Act). The Porter-Cologne Act grants the State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards broad powers to protect water quality and beneficial uses of water, and is the primary





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vehicle for the implementation of California's responsibilities under the Clean Water Act. The State Water

Resources Control Board is responsible for creating state policies on water quality control. These policies are administered by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board and ultimately provide water quality control regulations for local jurisdictions. The City of Santee is required by law to abide by these water quality regulations.

(3) The California Department of Fish and Game is responsible for reviewing all development proposals within the City which would affect State-listed plant or animal species (California Endangered Species Act) or would require a major modification of any stream bed (Section 1600 of the Fish and Game Code).

It also publishes a list of High Interest Faunal species, which although only advisory in nature, does, however, recommend the preservation of any species on this list. The California Native Plant Society, a private, non-profit organization, also publishes such a list. These lists can be utilized to identify, and subsequently protect significant faunal species within the City.

(4) The State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) governs nearly all surface mining and land reclamation, and requires that the California State Mining and Geology Board adopt regulations which establish State policy for the reclamation of mined lands in accordance with the State SMARA. The Board has adopted the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Policies and Procedures and has also conducted a study of available mineral deposits in western San Diego County in accordance with the requirements of the SMARA.

The State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act requires that the City: 1) submit proposed mineral resource management policies to the California State Mining and Geology Board for review before adoption; 2) ensure that these proposed policies recognize mineral information classified by the State; 3) ensure that these policies emphasize the conservation and development of identified mineral deposits; 4) notify the State Geologist of the filing of any application for a permit to conduct surface mining operations; and 5) establish procedures for the review and approval of reclamation plans, and the issuance of permits to conduct surface mining operations.

### **8.3 Regional Regulations**

The County Health Department issues permits for all wells to be drilled and for all septic tanks to be installed within the County. The issuance of a septic tank permit requires: 1) that there be no sewer service within 200 feet of the project area, 2) that a percolation test be undertaken by a registered civil engineer, and 3) that adequate setbacks from waterways, drainages and aquifers as stipulated.



The issuance of a water well permit requires: 1) that adequate setbacks from sewer mains and septic systems as stipulated, 2) that a licensed well driller be utilized, and 3) that a bacteriological analysis be undertaken by the County.

### 8.4 Local Regulations

(1) The City is currently preparing its Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan which will identify those areas of the City which will be conserved as permanent open space for preservation of habitats and species. This plan will balance development with species conservation, will specify where future development is expected to occur, and will identify mitigation ratios for replacement of habitat areas impacted through the development process. This plan is being prepared in close consultation with the State Department of Fish and Game and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and will require their approval. Implementation of the approved plan will be carried out by the City in accordance with the Subarea Plan Implementing Agreement.

(2) Resource extraction is regulated by the City primarily through the Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance which is part of the City's Grading Ordinance. This ordinance specifies application requirements for establishing new mining operations and scope and content of the required reclamation plan. All new mining operations in the City require approval of a Conditional Use Permit. This allows application of certain conditions of approval and can provide for the periodic review of the permit.

(3) The Zoning Ordinance designates which types of uses are considered appropriate in which areas and under what conditions certain uses may be considered appropriate. The City's project review and environmental review processes are designed to allow for early recognition of potential problems and to provide for potential solutions or mitigating measures so that resources may be conserved to the maximum extent feasible. The City encourages development to be clustered on project sites to maximize conserved open space. The Zoning Ordinance also requires specific open space requirements for all multiple family developments.

(4) The City's local Environmental Review Procedures, mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, provides a vehicle for the early recognition of impacts to existing resources and identification of mitigation measures.

(5) The City's Municipal Code includes chapters on the accepted usage of all drainages and watercourses (Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance), surface mining operations, water and water supplies, storm water management and discharge control, and sewage and refuse disposal.

(6) The City has adopted a Park Lands Dedication Ordinance, which requires the dedication of park lands or the payment of fees-in-lieu of dedication for all new residential subdivisions.





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### 8.5 Other Implementation Measures

(1) The City shall conserve the quality of existing water resources through careful management of lands that are adjacent or tributary to water resource areas.

(2) The City shall review projects to ensure that storm water runoff is controlled in a manner

that will minimize water degradation, safeguard biological resources, protect human and environmental health, and reduce the impacts of erosion and sedimentation into local water bodies.

(3) The City shall use the environmental review process to identify, conserve and enhance unique natural, biological and cultural resources, to ensure the preservation of significant natural resources and features, to regulate and condition development within areas susceptible to natural hazards and to ensure the preservation of significant biological resources, historical resources or archaeological sites.

(4) The City shall continue the existing program for acquiring and developing park land as provided for in the City's Park Lands Dedication Ordinance.

(5) When appropriate, the City shall encourage the granting of perpetual Open Space Easements in order to preserve cultural, archaeological, or natural resources.

(6) The City shall utilize the environmental and Development Review process to ensure that grading practices used within the City minimize potential safety hazards while maintaining aesthetic qualities and natural landforms.

(7) The City shall utilize the mapped information on Figure 6-1., Hydrology, Figure 6-2., Cultural Resources and Figure 6-3., Biological Resources, during the Development Review process in order to identify significant resource areas that the proposed development may affect, and to determine the appropriate mitigation measures required.

(8) The City shall coordinate water supply planning with the San Diego County Water Authority and with the Metropolitan Water District.

(9) The City shall actively support programs that promote water conservation throughout the City.

(10) The City shall continue to evaluate the City's water system facilities periodically to accommodate changes in water demand resulting from technological developments, population trends and new land use patterns.

### 8.6 Park and Open Space Funding and Acquisition



In addition to identifying areas of planned open space, it is important to identify possible funding sources and opportunities which can be used to assemble the City's open space network. Possible sources of funding and acquisition include:

### Local Funding Sources / Mechanisms

- (1) Development Impact Fees – The City collects park-in-lieu fees for new development when the development is in lieu of actual public park construction. These fees can only be used for providing public park facilities.
- (2) Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act – this act provides a tax-based method for financing community facilities including park and open space acquisition. These districts require a two-thirds approval of the affected electorate.
- (3) General Obligation Bonds – In June of 1986, California voters approved Proposition 46 which allows cities to issue general obligation bonds for the acquisition and improvement of real property, including open space. These bonds are secured by the City's property taxes. As with Mello Roos Districts, a two-thirds voter approval requirement applies to the issuance of these bonds.
- (4) Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972 – this Act enables City's to, among other things, acquire land for park, recreation or open space purposes. These monies can also be used for maintenance of open space or landscaped areas. The City currently has several Landscape Maintenance Districts that were created through this act to maintain public landscape areas along major City streets.
- (5) Regional Open Space Districts – An Open Space District is an independent special districts that is created through the cooperative effort of a region's cities, county and voters, and governed by a legislative body consisting of a board of directors. Districts can operate and maintain a system of public parks and open space preserves for public recreation, use, and enjoyment, and may select, designate, and acquire land by grant, purchase, or condemnation.
- (6) Conservation Groups or Land Trusts – These are typically private organizations devoted to protecting open space and resource lands. They rely on private funds, grants and property gifts to carry out their acquisition and management activities. There are at least two separate sites in the City currently owned by land trusts and managed for permanent open space purposes. The City has authorized land trusts or private conservation groups to manage mitigation lands dedicated by developers to satisfy mitigation requirements of development projects.
- (7) Open Space or Conservation Easements – this mechanism allows land to be protected for open space or conservation purposes without requiring outright purchase. In this instance the property owner grants to the City, or other land management entity an easement limiting the use of the property as open space. These easements are often required on development





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projects when open space areas are set aside as conditions of a project development. Numerous open space easements exist throughout the City.

### State Funds

(1) Park Bond Acts (PBA) - Subset programs contained within the bond acts include:

Per Capita Allocations – based on population, these are allocations received automatically received through passage of the bond act.

Roberti-Z’Berg-Harris – similar to per capita, but with a “low income communities” component. Santee does not qualify for the low-income component, but does receive per-capita funding.

Historical and Cultural Resources – this component of the PBA has legislatively allocated funding for the “acquisition, development, preservation and interpretation of buildings, sites, places and artifacts that preserve and demonstrate culturally significant aspects of California’s history.”

Land, Air and Water Conservation Program – The current PBA has substantial funding which has been legislatively allocated to various conservancies throughout the State, most notably the Coastal Conservancy. This portion of funding will not be available to municipalities, but does fund the activities of private conservancy groups for open space preservation activities.

(2) Wildlife Conservation Board - funds will be continuously appropriated for “the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, and protection of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species, that provides corridors linking separate habitat areas to prevent fragmentation, and that protects significant natural landscapes and ecosystems such as old growth redwoods and oak woodlands and other significant habitat areas.” Some funds will be appropriated for specific projects while other aspects will be competitive.

(3) Protection of Water Resources program - provides funding for the acquisition and development of river parkways and the protection of urban streams. The State Water Board will apportion these funds at a rate of at least \$5 Million per year. Prior programs have been competitive.

(4) State Annual Programs – the State Department of Parks and Recreation or the Department of Water Resources administers these programs.

Urban Streams – funds are available for “projects that prevent property damage through stream protection and restoration.”





Habitat Conservation – these are annual competitive grants funded at about \$2 million per year among four categories (\$500,000 each). The category most likely to apply to the City of Santee is the “Trails and Urban Access Program.”

Specified Grants – these are annual specified allocations made by the legislature for specific projects. Lobbying efforts are critical to obtaining funding through this program.

### Federal Funding

- (1) Land and Water Conservation Fund – this is a federal program administered by the State that dates back to 1965, and was reenacted with 1999 legislation. Funds are available on a competitive basis, with a Southern California preference (60%/40%). It is for the “acquisition of land and facilities that support outdoor recreation.”
- (2) Recreational Trails Program – another federal program administered at the State level. It is for the “acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.” There are motorized and non-motorized components, with the majority of the funding available on a competitive basis.
- (3) Urban Park & Recreation Recovery (UPARR) - provides matching grants to local governments to rehabilitate recreation areas and facilities, provides for the development of improved recreation programs, sites and facilities. It is a component of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).
- (4) Conservation Easements & Species Recovery - provides annual, dedicated funding for conservation easements/landowner incentives for the recovery of endangered/threatened species. Up to \$150 Million/year is available nationwide under this component of the LWCF program.
- (5) Specified Grants – like the State programs, there are annual legislative allocations made. Lobbying efforts are key to getting these funds. Most of the grant funding in recent years has gone to low income areas and tribal reservations; however, there are other grants to higher income areas as well.

