

Species and Habitat Recovery Grant Application

Applicant Name: The San Diego River Park Foundation

Address: 4891 Pacific Highway, Suite 114, San Diego, CA 92110

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Email: info@sandiegoriver.org

Name of Property: San Diego River Mouth, San Diego River Estuary, Smiley Lagoon

General Location: West end of Voltaire Street northeast of Dog Beach Parking Lot, Ocean Beach, CA

Jurisdiction: City of San Diego

Total Acres: 58.60 acres

Estimated Acres Requiring Management: 2.6 acres

Owner(s) of Property: City of San Diego

Land manager(s) of property (include name[s]): City of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation, Mark Berninger, Sara Allen, Sonja Nystuen

Brief project summary that includes your primary goal and objectives. (200-word maximum)

The San Diego River estuary contains biologically valuable salt marsh and coastal dune habitats, which are increasingly rare in our region. Hundreds of species rely on the natural resources at the River Mouth. SO and SL species that are known to occur in this project area include:

- salt marsh bird's-beak (*Chloropyron maritimum ssp. maritimum*) – SL
- Nuttall's acmispon (*Acmispon prostratus*) – SO
- western snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*) – SL
- light-footed Ridgway's rail (*Rallus longirostris levipes*) – SO
- California least tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*) – SO

The proximity to the adjacent popular public beach and off-leash dog beach creates challenges to maintaining and recovering these species and the habitats they rely on. This project includes management actions to leverage recent projects in this area to minimize threats and allow human recreational use to coexist with high-quality habitat through:

- Improving access control through physical barriers to reduce threats of trampling, trash and illegal use,
- Managing invasive weeds and planting native species to encourage pollinators
- Increasing community awareness through community engagement and investment with hands-on, meaningful volunteer projects, docent-led programs, and outreach.
- Growing a robust stewardship program to augment limited staff capacity for maintenance of habitat and improvements

Quantify expected results (add bullets as necessary)

- Improve habitat for Nuttall's acmispon and salt marsh bird's-beak by reducing coverage of invasive plants where co-occurring with rare species to less than 20%
- Maintain and improve over 3,800 feet of access control fencing, including 1,000+ feet of new fence
- Host at least 800 community members annually in over 2,400 hours in meaningful volunteer service
- Engage 10,000+ community members per year, in tours, presentations and outreach to raise awareness about project, clarify goals, and prevent opposition to any perceived loss of access to popular areas
- Host science-based field trips to mentor local school children from the surrounding community (which is identified as a disadvantaged community)
- Create docent program to share information about the biologically valuable park and set expectations for responsible pet use of the area
- Complete annual rare plant and bird surveys, and increase capacity by training expert volunteers

- Install large permanent interpretive sign at entrance to the project area from the Regional San Diego River Trail, small interpretive signs within the dunes and adjacent areas, and signs that clarify the conservation status, value and benefit of the park

Brief description of dedicated staff and consultants/contractors that would work on the Project. (200-word max)

This project includes 3 key partners with capability and experience to engage important community stakeholders:

1. The San Diego River Park Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that has been an active collaborator in the project area since 2004.
 - Community Engagement Manager: manage engagement strategy, relationships with stakeholders
 - Volunteer Coordinator: volunteer recruitment/training
 - Group Coordinator: volunteer events, tours/outings
 - Restoration Field Coordinator: design/ implementation of project monitoring plan
 - Engagement Associate: outreach events
 - Education Manager: education experiences with students
 - Chief Associate Director and Administrative Staff will oversee project administration, invoicing, reporting, permit compliance
2. The San Diego Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit with a long partnership with the City of San Diego working on Mission Bay habitat restoration.
 - Conservation Manager: lead community outreach, project engagement strategy, docent program
 - Conservation Coordinator: assist with volunteer docent engagement
 - Restoration Assistants: coordinate volunteer events and docent tours
 - Director of Conservation: design the docent program and oversee project administrations
3. The City of San Diego has been working to protect the natural resources at the River Mouth for decades and the Natural Resources Division and Shoreline Ranger staff are committed to this project and its management improvements.

Funding Needs Summary

Please indicate how much funding is being requested from SANDAG and any matching funding proposed.

Budget Item	Requested Funding Amount	Description
Personnel Expenses Staff	\$116,661.03	Includes staff time for non-administrative work on the project
Personnel Administrative Expenses	\$23,283.53	Includes all staff time to administer the contract
Consultant/Contractor Expenses	\$58,377.85	Includes all costs for consultant/contractor services
Other Direct Expenses	\$41,540.30	Includes all equipment, supplies, mileage, etc.
Totals	\$239,862.72	

Are there matching fund available? Yes No

If yes, how are the matching funds assured? (100-word maximum)

Matching funds sources include:

- City of San Diego: staff time (Rangers and Parks & Rec staff) and disposal of invasive plant materials
 - SD Audubon Society: in-kind fence maintenance materials, staff time for Nuttall’s acmispson surveys, and in-kind volunteer time for docent program coordinated by SDAS (letter attached)
 - In-kind volunteer time (2,244 hours x 3 years x \$33.61* = \$226,262) coordinated by SDRPF
- *Source: https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt_state_2021/

Project Application

Project Purpose

Address the following in the application:

1. Describe the proposed management activity(ies) and how it relates to the Management Strategic Plan (MSP) for Conserved Lands in Western San Diego County.

This project will advance the MSP Goals for the five targeted species by maintaining and enhancing the sustainability of existing occurrences.

Current management:

This project is located on lands owned by the City of San Diego (City) that are adjacent to the Southern Wildlife Preserve, on lands managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Management efforts by the City are limited by lack of resources. City Rangers partner with nonprofits and coordinate volunteers to abate invasive weeds and survey human-wildlife interactions on an infrequent, intermittent basis. Volunteers organized by project partner, San Diego Audubon Society (SDAS), conduct bird surveys that have resulted in documentation of several rare bird occurrences in the project area, which have been recently submitted to the SDMMP. SDAS and concerned citizens have also documented numerous instances of disturbances that flush resting and hunting birds, including attacking birds. Currently, City biologists conduct annual monitoring for salt marsh bird's-beak, while the Nuttall's acmispon occurrence has been monitored by AECOM. Existing access control is not enforced in a substantial way, and the post and rope fence design is in disrepair and easily bypassed. On the whole, few habitat management activities are currently occurring in the proposed project area.

The project area has been selected to ensure comprehensive management of these occurrences and will leverage a nearby City of San Diego habitat mitigation project and recently awarded funding received by San Diego Audubon Society for partial access control installation in the east of the project area (further discussed in Q6).

Mgmt Activity	How it relates to MSP
Implement three years of invasive removal	<p>The MSP Framework Rare Plant Management Plan (F-RPMP) identifies that for this occurrence of salt marsh bird's-beak, removal of nonnative forbs is a high priority (pg. 192). Also, removal of nonnative grasses is a medium priority for this occurrence of Nuttall's acmispon (pg. 150).</p> <p>This project will conduct removal using methods advised in the document, including hand-pulling of <i>Limonium spp.</i> in at least a 3-foot buffer around known salt marsh bird's-beak occurrences, as well as hand-pulling of other nonnative forbs and grasses such as ice plant and garland chrysanthemum in mid-winter through spring, depending on species.</p>
Improve, replace and install new access control	<p>Fencing is recommended by the MSP to create a physical barrier to prevent unauthorized access to habitat areas, while still permitting recreational access, such as pedestrian use of designated trails and wildlife observation. Fencing also helps to clarify authorized trails, helping to facilitate and increase efficacy of existing enforcement options by City Rangers.</p> <p><i>Benefits to plant community:</i> The F-RPMP identifies that for this occurrence of salt marsh bird's-beak, addressing unauthorized trails is a medium priority. Trampling has been identified as a low priority, but the threat has been observed to be increasing over time (pg. 177). Dumping/trash has also been identified as a low priority for salt marsh bird's-beak (pg. 177) and a medium priority for Nuttall's acmispon (pg. 150). Addressing damage resulting from uncontrolled dog use of the habitat is identified as a high priority. All the species of the coastal sage scrub, coastal dune, and salt marsh habitats at the River Mouth will similarly benefit from reducing these disturbances.</p> <p><i>Benefits to bird community:</i> The MSP management actions specifically identify fencing and signage as a BMP to protect occurrences of light-footed Ridgway's rail. For western snowy plover and California least tern, the MSP species profiles list human disturbance as a major threat and</p>

	recognize that loss of habitat and protection of existing habitat are critical management concerns. All of the project partners have witnessed and routinely receive reports of off-leash dogs flushing birds in the project area, which can be prevented or lessened by access control improvements and outreach efforts.
Conduct annual monitoring of five rare species found in the project area	<p>Biologists from project partner, City of San Diego, are already monitoring salt marsh bird's beak at the proposed project area consistent with MSP goals, but the proposed project will include training expert volunteers and SDRPF staff to increase capacity for monitoring. Annual, GIS-based, monitoring for Nuttall's acmispson will be conducted at this location to monitor impacts of management actions, consistent with the MSP objectives. Increasing monitoring and knowledge of monitoring protocols also allows for early detection of invasive species in areas where they do not currently occur to allow land managers to act, a benefit listed in the F-RPMP. Invasive plants detected during monitoring will be reviewed by partners and removed, as possible.</p> <p>Monitoring of light-footed Ridgway's rail has been ongoing in the San Diego River estuary, but this project will improve the annual surveys' geographic range, quantifying anecdotal reports the rails are using this salt marsh habitat. Similarly, MSP management goals for western snowy plover and California least terns include increased monitoring. In this project area, these species have been seen often, but are likely not using the habitat fully due to human disturbance at critical times of the year. SDAS will work with volunteers, the City, and the organizations currently overseeing monitoring to continue and increase monitoring to provide managers with accurate data.</p>
Community outreach, education, and signage	The F-RPMP identifies that community outreach, education, and signage should be considered to educate the community to prevent harm associated with people including trampling, unauthorized trails, vandalism and trash (page B5). As recommended by the MSP, the project will include signs featuring children's artwork to promoting compliance with trail regulations. This strategy also serves to increase long-term sustainability of the invasive removal, access control efforts and pet-owner behavior-setting, as a mobilized community of stewards can continue this work beyond the term of this project with less staff expense. The signs, information, volunteer activities, and docent-led tabling and tours will improve the public's understanding of these species needs and how we can interact and observe them without harming their populations.
Native planting to increase pollinators	The F-RPMP identifies that for Nuttall's acmispson and salt marsh bird's-beak, increasing pollinator activity can be an important part of managing a population (pg. 148 and pg. 171). Native bees are cited as pollinators for both species, with specific ground-dwelling species listed for salt-marsh bird's-beak. This project will also include planting of native bee- and pollinator-friendly native plants in the adjacent upland areas and the native demonstration garden near the project area.

2. Which MSP species and their habitats will benefit from the proposed management activity? Which specific MSP objective(s) and action(s) will be implemented? Name the specific MSP species occurrence(s) to benefit from the management activity, if applicable.

This project will benefit the following species known to occur in the project area:

Common name	Scientific Name	Status	Occurrence Description
Salt marsh bird's-beak	<i>Chloropyron maritimum ssp. maritimum</i>	SL	COMAM3_1DOBE007, Large (>10,000 plants)
Nuttall's acmispson	<i>Acmispson prostratus</i>	SO	ACPR_1NOBE015, Small (<1,000 plants)
Western snowy plover	<i>Charadrius nivosus nivosus</i>	SL	Documented in Flood Control Channel Southern Wildlife Preserve
Light-footed Ridgway's rail	<i>Rallus longirostris levipes</i>	SO	Numerous, since 1981
California least tern	<i>Sternula antillarum browni</i>	SO	Documented in Flood Control Channel Southern Wildlife Preserve

The MSP objectives and actions that will be implemented include (summarized for space):

Salt marsh bird's-beak:

- CHLMAR-1: Conduct IMG monitoring annually
- CHLMAR-2, IMP-1: Perform as needed routine management activities, such as protecting occurrences from disturbance through fencing and enforcement and controlling invasive non-native plant species =20% absolute cover
- CHLMAR-2, IMP-2: Submit project metadata and management data to the MSP Web Portal
- CHLMAR-9: In 2019, begin implementing highest priority management actions

Nuttall's acmispon:

- ACMPRO-1, IMP-1: Based upon occurrence status and threats, determine management needs including whether routine management or more intensive management is warranted
- ACMPRO-2, IMP-1: Perform routine management activities such as protecting occurrences from disturbance through fencing and enforcement and controlling invasive non-native plant species
- ACMPRO-7: In 2018, begin implementing highest priority management actions
- ACMPRO-8: In 2018, monitor effectiveness of implementing highest priority management actions

Western snowy plover:

- CHANIV-2: From 2017 to 2021, continue the existing survey efforts for western snowy plover implemented by the wildlife agencies and military
- CHANIV-3: Beginning in 2020, implement management actions on Conserved Lands as identified through monitoring and the coordination efforts with the land managers and wildlife agencies

Light-footed Ridgway's rail:

- RALOBS-2: From 2017 to 2021, annually inspect the existing occurrences of Ridgway's rail to identify necessary management actions in order to support the expansion to self-sustaining levels
- RALOBS-3, IMP-1: Perform management activities protecting occurrences from disturbance through fencing, signage, and enforcement
- RALOBS-3, IMP-2: Submit project metadata and management data to MSP web portal

California Least Tern:

- STEANT-3: From 2017 to 2021, continue the existing survey efforts for California least tern implemented by the wildlife agencies and military
- STEANT-4: From 2017 to 2021, annually inspect the existing nest sites for CA least tern, taking precautions to avoid disturbance during the nesting season, to identify necessary management actions in order to support the expansion of the occurrence to self-sustaining levels
- STEANT-5: From 2017-2021, perform routine management activities such as invasive species removal, sand replenishment, nest prep, and protecting occurrences from disturbance through fencing, signage, and enforcement

In addition to working to advance these specific objectives for these specific species occurrences, this proposed project will protect habitat for and provide benefit to other species known to occur in the project area like coastal wooly-heads (*Nemacaulis denudate*, CNPS Rare Plant Rank 1B.2), as well as long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*, covered by MSCP), tricolor heron (*Egretta tricolor*, rare in the region), and countless other resident and migratory birds that use this critical area along the Pacific flyway.

3. To be eligible for funding, the proposed project must be within the MSP area. In which Management Unit is the project located? (*Attach a map*)

The project is located in MU 1, map is attached.

4. Describe the stressors and/or threats to the MSP species and their habitats in the project area that will be addressed through implementation of this project application.

Project partners evaluated these plans to develop project elements to address threats to these rare species:

- Tables of Management Priorities in the F-RPMP (for flora)
- The MSP Roadmap Management Priorities and Objectives for 2022-2026
- City of San Diego MSCP Framework Management Plan

a. Trampling and Trails, Dogs, and Trash

All SO/SL species that occur in this area are threatened by unauthorized access to habitat areas, including creation of social trails, off-trail walking, off-trail unleashed dogs, and encampments. There is no access control limiting access at all in some areas, and what access control exists is in poor condition. The posts with hanging ropes are easily bypassed by dogs or people, both intentionally and because access rules may be unclear or misunderstood by some.

Threat to target plants:

Rare Plant Species	Threat Priority: Trails	Threat Priority: Trampling	Threat Priority: Dogs	Trash/Dumping and Encampments
Salt marsh bird's-beak	Medium	Low	High	Low
Nuttall's acmispon	Medium	Medium	High	Medium

Threat to target vertebrates: For the western snowy plover, light-footed Ridgway's rail, and the California least tern in urban habitat areas like the project area, the most significant threats cited in the MSP and MSCP:

- Intense land uses and activities adjacent to and in covered species habitat
- Dumping, litter, and vandalism
- Itinerant living quarters

Due to the proximity to the immediately adjacent off-leash dog beach, at this project site, trampling, flushing and disturbance by off-leash dogs is especially significant. Sand fencing consisting of more substantial 3-4 foot tall wooden slats and posts is being installed in a portion of this project area by the SDAS (see map). Project partners will review the efficacy of this fencing project (expected to be complete in 2022) and select an access control barrier to expand into the remaining habitat area, so that all areas are more effectively controlled.

Community events, new core volunteers, docent leaders, and project staff will increase presence to maintain and monitor condition of access control, identify weak spots and make recommendations. In addition, education and friendly, community designed-signage will increase awareness about the purpose of access control, and has been shown in other areas to increase compliance by visitors.

b. Nonnative forbs and grasses

Invasive species are a significant threat to both of the SO/SL plant species benefiting from this project. The F-RPMP suggests that managing invasive plants at the 3/4 threat level should be pursued before the threat becomes even greater. On a threat scale of 1-7, the plan identifies:

Species	MSP Threat Priority: Nonnative Forbs	MSP Threat Priority: Nonnative Grasses
Salt marsh bird's-beak	High (6)	Low (1)
Nuttall's acmispon	Low (3)	Medium (4)

c. Climate change

Because of the constraints on the project area, bounded by pavement and development, this project proposes to expand suitable habitat and the population of these species. This will increase the resiliency of this occurrence to sea level rise by restoring a buffer area with a slightly higher elevation within the same habitat area and by limiting erosion from trails to maximize sediment deposition.

5. Describe the management techniques proposed, including whether they have been previously used successfully and where. Are there any negative effects to MSP and other sensitive species and their habitats that could result from the proposed management action?

Invasive Removal

Invasive removal techniques used will focus on hand-pulling without use of herbicide. In this highly visible area, past herbicide use has been negatively received by community members, and this funding would permit program partners to engage community volunteers in the more labor-intensive effort of hand-pulling without being cost-prohibitive.

The City of San Diego produced a Biological Letter Report that determined: “The implementation of volunteer maintenance activities would not permanently impact sensitive plant species. Instead, an increase in the number of sensitive species individuals found on-site is expected to result due to the removal of competitive nonnative plant species. This would be considered a net benefit to sensitive plant species on-site, and an overall positive impact.” The potential negative impacts evaluated by the City Biologist include inadvertent trampling. This will be limited through careful training and supervision. All project volunteers will receive training from experienced staff or expert volunteers about how to identify target invasive, how to avoid disturbance of salt marsh bird’s-beak, Nuttall’s acmispon or other native plants.

SDRPF intends to consult the San Diego River Conservancy about use of their invasive removal permits, and the City of San Diego will also pursue Coastal Development Permit on the project’s behalf to cover environmental compliance. The San Diego River Park Foundation has overseen over \$1 million in invasive removal projects, including past grants from SANDAG, the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Program, and the San Diego River Conservancy, and is experienced in designing effective removal efforts. The effort will also benefit from the extensive experience of other project partners.

SDAS has worked with SDMMP and the City on Nuttall’s acmispon management, as well as many other species, at other locations in Mission Bay. SDAS has established draft translocation protocols and has a volunteer base already familiar with the beauty and value of this rare plant.

Access Control

SDRPF will engage a combination of conservation corpsmembers and community volunteers to remove damaged access control and install new access control. There will be temporary ground disturbance at the footings for replacement posts, but this will be limited to existing compacted trails, and not occur in the looser soils of habitat areas. The City of San Diego will pursue a Coastal Development Permit on behalf of the project to ensure environmental compliance.

The project team anticipates that access control may be received by some community members negatively, which is why we believe that the community and stakeholder engagement component is essential to the long-term success of the project. The docent program and community volunteer events that this project includes will emphasize the importance and value of these habitats and species, and has been shown to increase community support for protecting preserves in Mission Bay for sensitive species. Based on previous presentations and approvals of the project components by Ocean Beach community groups, we believe that a large majority of community members are amenable to the project when given information about the need and scope limited to high-value habitat areas.

Community Engagement and Education

Volunteer events can serve to do more than just get work done. In order to inspire behavioral change, increase public buy-in, leverage support of stakeholder groups, and engage the community in this highly visible restoration site, we will implement a series of engagement activities including: host and coordinate site tours with project partners, attend community events, host education activities, design and install signage, kickstart a docent program and engage children. SDRPF and SDAS will conduct targeted outreach to maintain relationships and share information with key neighborhood groups including the OB Town Council, the Friends of Dog Beach, the OB Planning Board, the San Diego River Coalition, neighborhood business associations and other community groups. The docent program will emphasize the importance and value of these habitats and species, and will be peer-to-peer based sharing via short tours, tabling, and brochures. Protection of California least terns in other preserves in Mission Bay is fostered and supported by community-based education and volunteering and has been critical in maintaining viable populations in the past decades, and has been previously supported by SANDAG.

Native Planting and Encouragement of Pollinators

Project will also include planting of native pollinator plants suitable for attractive and sustaining native pollinators. City staff have consulted a native bee expert willing to advise on appropriate plant selection. Plants will be installed in disturbed upland areas north of the San Diego River Trail, and in the native plant demonstration garden south of the trail on the south edge of the project area. This project is highly visible because of the adjacent popular amenities, including the River Trail, Dog Beach and Ocean Beach, so these plantings will not only provide an attractive buffer to the project, but will also serve to educate visitors about the importance of protecting

pollinators. Restoration of areas to native plants improve the habitat value to wildlife, including many bird species, with phoebes, larks, warblers and a variety of sparrows, including possibly Belding's Savannah sparrow, benefitting from the project. Plantings will occur in winter or early spring, and will receive temporary hand-watering by volunteers to get established. Some planting areas will require removal of nonnative chrysanthemum, mellilotus, sea rocket, bermuda grass, and other species to create room. These plantings will also be weeded throughout the project to increase success. We do not anticipate negative impacts as a result of these plantings.

6. What strategic approach will be used to ensure the successful, long-term outcome of the proposed project (e.g. upstream exotic removal prior to downstream, future on-going maintenance)? Which adjacent conserved lands will not be included and why?

Project partners collaborated to design the proposed project to ensure comprehensive management of the occurrence of these species, and to apply management actions in buffer areas to increase success and expansion of target species. Adjacent areas excluded from the project are part of other, complimentary management projects, described below.

This project proposes to leverage and expand recent investment in managing these resources:

- To the immediate east of the project area, there is a City Mitigation area related to the West Mission Bay Dr. bridge expansion. (See included map.) This effort has resulted in managing invasive Algerian (*Limonium ramosissimum*) and European (*L. duriusculum*) sea lavender and other threats immediately east of this proposed project area. The mitigation project is ongoing.
- Project partner, the San Diego Audubon Society, has been awarded funding to install sand fencing on the site, including within the easternmost portion of the project area. This is expected to be installed in 2022, prior to the start of Cycle 10 projects, but has not yet begun as of this proposal's submission. Currently funded sand fencing will focus on preventing access, trampling and bird disturbance in the area around Smiley Lagoon and the City's mitigation area (see included map.)

Together, these currently funded projects and the proposed project will provide more comprehensive management of the resources, and have been carefully planned to complement each other. In addition, the project includes investing in fostering community stewardship of the area, which can serve, over time, to increase sustainability of the proposed project.

7. What are the goals and objectives for the proposed project? What criteria/metrics will be used to measure success? If applicable, what quantitative monitoring data will be collected to evaluate success? Who will be collecting the monitoring data and what are their qualifications?

Goals and objectives are:

- Reduce trampling of habitat and rare species by people and dogs through improvements and repairs to access control barriers, and addition of new barriers where appropriate
- Reduce flushing and disturbance of endangered birds by controlling access by dogs to sensitive wetland and salt marsh areas, while allowing appropriate, responsible access to recreational wildlife viewing
- Further reduce disturbance of endangered birds through education about dogs' impacts to sensitive coastal dune and shoreline habitat areas, while encouraging appropriate access to recreational wildlife viewing areas
- Protect and promote expansion of rare species through removal of invasive plants, reduction of disturbances, and planting of pollinator plants
- Conduct annual rare plant monitoring to document response of populations to management efforts
- Conduct annual bird surveys in conjunction with the City and other agency staff, to identify bird use and population trends
- Improve community awareness and support of the project through outreach and education, interpretive signage, and service learning.

Success Criteria include:

- Reduce non-native plant species within designated project area to less than 20% coverage in areas where rare plants occur. This will be evaluated based on mapping of extent of targeted nonnative plants compared to the City's annual surveys of rare plant populations and extent.

- Maintain over 2,800 linear feet of sand fencing (installed 2022). This will be totaled in the number of work parties and repairs required. Damage from elements, vandalism or other causes will be documented to help establish proof of concept of this style of access control to inform design of new fencing.
- Install at least 1,000 linear feet of new access control, such as improved post and rope or sand fencing. Design selection will be informed by performance of sand fencing installed in 2022, to ensure long term management is economically feasible.
- Increase community engagement and investment in project. This will be evaluated by the number of volunteers engaged, the number of community members reached through outreach, and the number of youth served. Target metrics for success are 800 volunteers annually (2,400 total), 10,000 community members reached annually through in-person and digital outreach (30,000 total), and 150 students per school year (450 total). The project also seeks to attract at least one media story about the project.
- Increase capacity for annual rare plant surveys by engaging expert volunteers with City and agency biologists. This will be evaluated by the number of volunteers who complete training.
- Monitoring and data sharing for target plant and bird populations, and annually sharing that information with the City of San Diego and the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program.

These metrics may be modified to maximize impact while adhering to public health guidance and limitations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic or other unforeseen events. At least annually, following annual monitoring, project partners will consider adaptive management and modifications to restoration strategy.

8. How will the applicant manage the data collected? What software will be used to house the data? Who will be responsible for compiling and transferring the data to SANDAG? Who will be preparing the required quarterly, final, and all other reports?

SDRPF will manage project monitoring data using Excel, QGIS, and Google Earth, as well as Galaxy Digital for tracking volunteer engagement. SDRPF staff will combine this with relevant data contributions from San Diego Audubon Society using Microsoft Excel, Survey123 and ArcGIS Pro, and the City of San Diego. SDRPF will be responsible for compiling and submitting required quarterly, final and all other reports.

Annual rare plant monitoring data will be collected by City of San Diego biologists following the MSP IMG Rare Plant Monitoring Protocol. Rare plant monitoring data will be collected using ESRI Survey 123 and Field Maps digital data collection tools. The data will be managed in Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access and ESRI ArcGIS Pro. All rare plant data will be submitted to SDMMMP in the fall of each year.

9. Has the proposed project received *TransNet* Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) funds previously? If so, what was accomplished with the funds and why are additional funds being requested?

No, this project has not previously received TransNet EMP funds.

10. Is the proposed activity being done on land that was previously set aside as mitigation?

No.

11. Does the proposed project provide a co-benefit to CBO Network Communities and foster social equity?

Yes. The project is physically located in census tracts: 6073007600 and 6073007501. According to CalEnviroScreen 3.0, in these census tracts:

- The % of people living below twice the poverty level is higher than **59%** of the census tracts in CA
- The % housing burdened is higher than **75%** of the rest of the state (in tract 6073007501, and 70% higher in tract 6073007600)
- The PM2.5 percentile for this census tract is higher than **53%** of the census tracts in California
- The traffic density in tract 6073007600 is higher than **81%** of the census tracts in California (42% higher in tract 6073007501)

Broad volunteer recruitment, outreach, stakeholder engagement and community presentations will focus on these census tracts as well as adjacent tracts within 0.5 miles of the project area, including census tracts 6073007502 and 6073006801 (similar demographics).

In addition, education opportunities for children will engage kids from nearby Title 1 schools, a proxy for schools with significant student populations coming from socioeconomically disadvantaged households.

Scope of Work by Task

Exhibit A – Proposed Project Scope of Work

Task No.	Task Name	Task Description	Quantifiable Results/Deliverables
1.	Invasive Removal and Habitat Restoration	This task will include a 3-year effort to mobilize and train volunteers to remove invasive plants threatening salt marsh bird's-beak and Nuttall's acmispou. Volunteers will be organized at least monthly in large community events during the winter-spring, and smaller events on an ongoing basis. In addition, volunteers will plant native plants in the adjacent upland to encourage pollinators to benefit rare species. These events will serve as a service learning opportunity, and will include a tour and education from project partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce invasive plant coverage to less than 20% coverage, tracked through mapping • Planting lists • Photomonitoring report
2.	Access Control	This task is designed to improve the physical barriers between the biological resources in the project area and recreational trails. This includes several components: first, evaluation of the performance of 2,800 feet of recently installed sand fences to inform the design of additional fencing needed to complete the protections of this area, upgrading remaining poor condition fencing (1,000 feet), and then training volunteers to maintain over 3,800 feet of access control barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of new fencing • Photo documentation of installed fence • Access control fence maintenance record
3.	Community Engagement, Education and Outreach	This task includes development and implementation of an engagement strategy to inspire behavioral change, increase public buy-in, leverage support of stakeholder groups, and engage the community in this highly visible restoration site. Engagement will include at least monthly combination of presentations to community, on-site docent-led tours, virtual education and media, and attending community events throughout the project period. These events will allow us to reach 10,000+ people, especially neighbors. This task will also include quarterly education experiences for students from nearby disadvantaged schools, hosted collaboratively by partners. In addition, large permanent interpretive panels will be designed and installed, plus smaller interpretive signs within the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log of volunteers numbers and hours • Log of students engaged and schools served • Report on community engagements • Photos and digital proof of interpretive materials
4.	Monitoring	This task includes working with City biologists to complete annual monitoring of rare plants and birds. We will also coordinate to collect and share data with other agencies. These protocols will be used to strengthen community science monitoring methods to further document reliable data of bird use of the project area, and changes in rare plant occurrence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMG Monitoring Reports from City staff, annually • Community Monitoring Reports, annually
5.	Admin	This task will include budgeting, expense tracking, creation of invoices and progress reports, permitting, and administrative coordination with project partners and SANDAG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoices • Progress Reports • Deliverables update

Budget by Task

Please include a specific budget for each task described in the Scope of Work (Section B above). This should include both requested SANDAG funds and any matching funds proposed for each project year. *If matching funds are proposed, please distribute the match commitment proportionately.*¹ Applicants are encouraged to identify phasing in their application in case full funding for the project is not available. You may add or subtract rows and columns as needed. *This funding category is intended to fund restoration and enhancement projects taking place over a three- to five-year period and will not cover on-going annual costs within applicant's organization.*

Exhibit B – Proposed Project Budget

Task No.	Task Name	Year 1 Grant Request	Year 1 Matching Funds ¹	Year 2 Grant Request	Year 2 Matching Funds ¹	Year 3 Grant Request	Year 3 Matching Funds ¹	Total Grant Request	Total Matching Funds	Total Projects Cost
1	Invasive Removal and Habitat Restoration	\$22,448.54	\$67,132.30	\$22,213.46	\$67,137.29	\$22,865.01	\$67,142.43	\$67,527.02	\$201,412.02	\$268,939.04
2	Access Control	\$5,691.67	\$8,226.56	\$10,045.04	\$15,326.16	\$4,579.88	\$3,226.56	\$20,316.58	\$26,779.28	\$47,095.86
3	Community Engagement, Education and Outreach	\$32,338.86	\$10,165.10	\$35,150.63	\$10,971.74	\$26,633.24	\$10,165.10	\$94,122.73	\$31,301.94	\$125,424.67
4	Monitoring	\$10,088.56	\$6,272.20	\$9,755.74	\$6,272.20	\$10,031.01	\$6,272.20	\$29,875.32	\$18,816.60	\$48,691.92
5	Administrative	\$8,930.24	\$975.75	\$9,333.86	\$1,005.02	\$9,756.97	\$1,035.17	\$28,021.07	\$3,015.94	\$31,037.01
	Subtotal	\$79,497.87	\$92,771.91	\$86,498.74	\$100,712.41	\$73,866.11	\$87,841.46	\$239,862.72	\$281,325.78	\$521,188.50
	Total	\$79,497.87	\$92,771.91	\$86,498.74	\$100,712.41	\$73,866.11	\$87,841.46	\$239,862.72	\$281,325.78	\$521,188.50
	Percentage	15%	18%	17%	19%	14%	17%	46%	54%	100%

¹ Throughout the Project, Matching Funds must be proportionate to Total Project Costs (Grant Request and Matching Funds combined). For example, if a proposed project Year 1 Grant Request is \$80,000 and proposed Year 1 Matching Funds are \$20,000, the Total Year 1 Project Costs are \$100,000. Therefore, the required proportionate matching funds to provide per invoice during Year 1 of the project are 20% (e.g. invoice submitted for \$8,000 grant amount reimbursement and \$2,000 matching funds submitted). However, if the Year 2 Grant Request is \$70,000 and proposed Year 2 Matching Funds are \$30,000, while the Total Year 2 Project Costs also are \$100,000, the required proportionate matching funds increases per invoice during Year 2 of the project to 30% (e.g. invoice submitted for \$7,000 grant amount reimbursement and \$3,000 matching funds submitted). Retention will be withheld beyond the 10% retention for each invoice submittal that does not meet the proportionate matching funds requirement. These additional matching funds retained will not be released until the proportionate matching funds are reached for the project to-date.

Project Schedule

Please include start and end dates relative to the anticipated Notice to Proceed (assumes fall 2022) for each task described in the Scope of Work (Section B above). Please list tasks for quarterly reporting on the status of the grant project and a final report on the outcome of the grant project. You may add or subtract rows as needed.

Exhibit C – Proposed Project Schedule (Assumes fall 2022 Notice to Proceed [NTP])

Task No.	Task Name	Proposed Start Date	Months Needed to Complete Task	Task End Date
1.	Invasive Removal and Habitat Restoration	36 Months from NTP	36 Months	10/31/25
2.	Access Control	36 Months from NTP	36 Months	10/31/25
3.	Community Engagement, Education and Outreach	36 Months from NTP	36 Months	10/31/25
4.	Monitoring	36 Months from NTP	36 Months	10/31/25
5.	Administrative	36 Months from NTP	36 Months	10/31/25

Please explain why and how much additional time would be needed in the event of any delays due to NTP being provided beyond fall 2022 and/or unexpected weather conditions such as drought that could occur during the proposed project implementation.

Based on the proposed timeline of this project, if the Notice To Proceed was delayed beyond Fall 2022 or if weather becomes an insurmountable issue, the project would need to be extended by 3- 6 months depending on the length of delay or weather hold. This would allow for the project to complete the last growing season and allow for full weed control activities to be completed during the prime growing season. With a multi-year effort, initial start-up delays will be less impactful over the life of the project, and we can adjust the schedule accordingly without disrupting the goals and objectives of the project. Weather, is a larger factor, particularly extremely low or extremely heavy precipitation in a given year. Extreme weather trends that last over multiple growing seasons may result in a shift of focus either expanding or contracting the restoration areas in response the extreme weather to ensure the long-term viability of the restored habitats/species.

Notice Regarding Prevailing Wages

California law requires that public works projects pay prevailing wages for workers.

Applicant acknowledges that any work that qualifies as a "public work" within the meaning of California Labor Code Section 1720 shall cause Applicant and its subcontractors to comply with the provisions of California Labor Code Sections 1775 et seq, which includes the payment of prevailing wages to all workers performing prevailing wage work.

Yes No

Applicant acknowledges that if Applicant or its subcontractors will engage in the performance of a public work as defined by California Labor Code Sections 1720 et seq. and will utilize persons who are not employees of a public entity, registration and payment of an annual registration fee to the California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) shall be required of each entity performing the work. This requirement applies to anyone affected by the public works statutes found in the California Labor Code, including but not limited to landscapers, fencers, surveyors, soil testers, dredgers, heavy equipment operators, and inspectors.

Yes No

Applicant acknowledges that if Applicant will award any subcontracts for the performance of a public work:

- Applicant shall notify SANDAG 30 calendar days prior to the award of each subcontract so SANDAG can create a Project Registration Form (aka PWC-100 form) for each subcontract using the DIR online database. Applicant will provide to SANDAG the name, DIR registration number, and contractor's license numbers of each subcontractor so SANDAG can verify, prior to Applicant's award of the subcontract for a public work, that the selected subcontractor is currently licensed and registered with the DIR. If SANDAG finds that the selected subcontractor is not licensed and registered with the DIR, SANDAG will promptly notify Applicant and Applicant will not be permitted to award the subcontract to the selected subcontractor.

Yes No

- Applicant shall notify SANDAG ten business days prior to the subcontractor performing the prevailing wage work so SANDAG can prepare for labor compliance monitoring.

Yes No

- If there are any changes to a subcontractor or lower-tier subcontractor, Applicant will advise SANDAG of these changes as soon as those changes are known to the Applicant.

Yes No

Required Statements from Applicant

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant has read and understands the Sample Grant Agreement (Agreement) and Invoice Template (Attachment 4). |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | If the Board of Directors approves the proposed project application, the applicant agrees to sign and return the Agreement to SANDAG, without exceptions or amendments, within 45 days of receipt. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant agrees to comply with SANDAG's Board Policy No. 035, Competitive Grant Program Procedures, which outlines "Use-it-or-lose-it" project milestone and completion deadlines. Board Policy No. 035 is included in the Agreement, and also is on SANDAG's website at: sandag.org/organization/about/pubs/policy_035.pdf |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that 10% of all invoiced amounts will be retained until the completion of the proposed project. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that for proposed projects with matching funds, retention will be withheld beyond the 10% retention for each invoice submittal that does not meet the proportionate matching funds requirement. These additional matching funds will not be released until proportionate matching funds are reached for the project to-date. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that all invoices must be accompanied by written, documented support of the charges for requested reimbursement of grant funds and payment will not be made by SANDAG until all documents are satisfactorily submitted. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that invoices and reports must be submitted on a quarterly basis within three weeks after each period close covering January 1 to March 31; April 1 to June 30; July 1 to September 30; and October 1 to December 31. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that the EMP quarterly report template (to be sent to the grantee after NTP is issued and can be found at sandag.org/index.asp?classid=17&projectid=447&fuseaction=projects.detail) must be used to document quarterly progress and that invoices with errors will be returned to the grantee for correction prior to being processed by SANDAG staff. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that the final invoice must be accompanied by written, documented support of the charges for requested reimbursement of grant funds; a final report (prepared in accordance with the final report template to be sent to grantee after NTP is issued and can be found at sandag.org/index.asp?classid=17&projectid=447&fuseaction=projects.detail); and all outstanding deliverables in order to receive final payment and have retained funds released. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant understands that to be considered eligible for funding, a resolution complying with the requirements of Board Policy No. 035, Section 4.1, must be submitted to SANDAG at least <i>two weeks</i> prior to the recommendation by the Regional Planning Committee of the list of prioritized project applications. SANDAG will provide applicants with advance notice of the Regional Planning Committee's anticipated meeting date. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The applicant agrees to submit all project data/information to SANDAG and to upload data and reports to a project page created by the applicant on the SDMMP web portal in a format consistent with regional management databases. |

I have the authorization to submit this application (Grant Application and required supplementary materials) on behalf of my organization.

ROB HUTSEL, PRESIDENT AND CEO

Applicant Name and Title (print or type)

Rob Hutsel

1/31/2022

Applicant Signature

Date

PROJECT AREA MAP



Proposed work

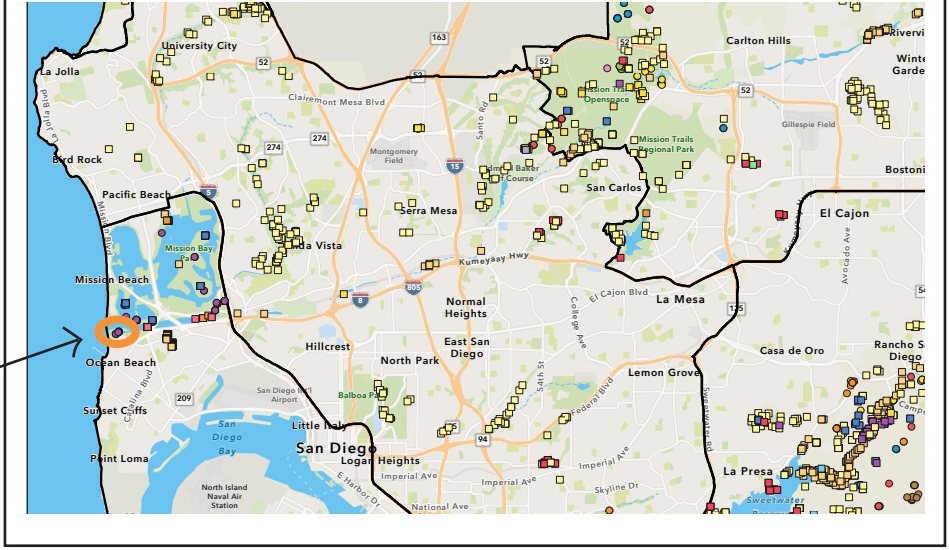
- = Proposed TransNet project area (habitat restoration), 2.3 acres
- = Proposed TransNet project area (interpretation and pollinator garden), 0.3 acres
- = Proposed replacement kiosk with large interpretative sign
- = Proposed access control project seeking funding from TransNet EMP

Existing condition, adjacent areas

- = Mid-Southern Coastal Salt Marsh
- = boundary of City of San Diego West Mission Bay Drive Mitigation project
- = existing sand fence project (SD Audubon Society secured funding, expected completion in 2022)



Surrounding parcel (above) and regional area (below)



SAN DIEGO RIVER MOUTH RESTORATION SANDAG TransNet EMP Cycle 10 Proposal

Submitted by: The San Diego River Park Foundation

