

12 Next Steps

Based on the information collected as part of this Existing Conditions report and the scope of work developed for this Assessment, several additional steps need to be undertaken or completed before recommendations can be formulated. These additional steps include filling identified data gaps, and conducting analyses to determine issues and opportunities related to: erosion and sedimentation; restoration potential; recreational usage potential; educational and interpretive potential; and fire risk characteristics.

While public safety is not part of the Coastal Conservancy's mission, no project of this type would be complete without considering public safety and hazard reduction – especially pertaining to fire prevention, crime reduction and landslide prevention. The Assessment will include recommendations for further review in those areas as well.

12.1 Data Gaps

Several data gaps were identified early on and are in the process of being resolved through field investigation efforts. Topic areas include: cultural resources; vegetation mapping; exotic species mapping; recreational trails mapping; areas subject to erosion or sedimentation; and the extent and characteristics of hydromodifications that include, channelized areas, bridges and culverts, drainage ditches, and various components of the storm drain system.

Dr. Susan Hector has already collected the cultural resources information for the areas within the City of San Diego, and was augmented with information from MCAS Miramar for the areas on the air station. This information will be used to determine resources with interpretive opportunities, as well as those that should be protected and avoided.

Merkel & Associates is completing their field investigations and detailed mapping of vegetation communities within the City of San Diego to enhance the regional vegetation information obtained from SANDAG. At the same time, both KTU+A and M&A staff are collecting detailed mapping information regarding the location and extent of various invasive exotic species as part of their field mapping

efforts. Both sets of data will be digitized and incorporated into the project GIS database by KTUA and used within the future analyses described below.

KTUA is conducting field investigations and mapping related to: recreational trails, both authorized and unauthorized; areas subject to erosion or sedimentation; and hydromodifications. This information will be digitized and incorporated into the project GIS database for use in the future analyses described below.

12.2 Future Analyses

A variety of analyses will be utilized to inform and guide the development of recommendations pertaining to: wetland restoration, enhancement or construction; best management practices to alleviate erosion and sedimentation issues; recreational trails that should be maintained and/or improved, as well as those that should be closed and/or restored; resources that have interpretive value; and the identification of areas subject to elevated fire risk and potential actions to help mitigate and alleviate the risk. Analytical procedures and results will be developed by the project team in collaboration with representatives from the City of San Diego Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program and the Open Space Division, San Diego Earthworks, and other key stakeholder groups such as the Marian Bear Natural Park Recreation Council and the Rose Creek Recreation Council. All analyses, and their results, will be presented to local community stakeholders and government agencies for review and comment via a public workshop.

12.2.1 Erosion & Sediment Management

The field mapping information regarding areas currently subject to erosion or sedimentation will be used in conjunction with GIS analyses to identify areas with elevated erosion or sedimentation potential. Recommendations will be made to address the current erosion and sedimentation issues, as well as determine management actions to help prevent future erosion or sedimentation issues from occurring.

12.2.2 Restoration Potential & Opportunities

The detailed vegetation mapping, invasive exotics species mapping, areas subject to erosion or sedimentation, and areas affected by current hydromodifications will be combined and evaluated through various GIS analyses to help identify which portions of the RCW have the greatest restoration potential for wetland or upland communities.

12.2.3 Trail Linkages

The recreational trails mapped in the field and augmented with other digital data sources will be reviewed and evaluated to determine which, if any, can serve as regional linkages for pedestrian or bicycle facilities, act as community or neighborhood connectors, provide access to natural resources for passive recreational opportunities, or act as active recreational opportunities for pedestrian or bicycle users. Those trails identified as redundant, unsafe or improperly designed or located will be recommended for re-design or closure and restoration as appropriate to the City Master Trails Plan.

12.2.4 Interpretive Opportunities

Natural and cultural resource-based interpretive and educational opportunities will be identified and incorporated into the recreation trail system. These opportunities will be determined by reviewing the resources identified during the data collection portion of this assessment to determine which resources are appropriate for direct access and interpretation versus those that should be indirectly interpreted via signage only. Resources occurring on MCAS Miramar are an example of those likely to be interpreted via signage only, which may also provide an opportunity to create a terminus of the trail system as it reaches the boundary of the base. This terminus will inform trail users of the mission of base, the resources being managed, and security issues preventing public access.

12.2.5 Fire Risk Characteristics

A preliminary assessment of physical fire risks including: slope, aspect, vegetative fuels, and fire history will be undertaken to determine those portions of the RCW with the highest fire risk. This information will be evaluated against the City of San Diego's Brush Management Policy to determine which portions of the RCW should be given priority for fuel reduction projects in both Zones 1 and 2, as well as determining if these projects fall within private lands or those owned and managed by the City of San Diego or some other public agency.

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