

February 2016

### Environmental Conservation

With a varied landscape defined by scenic coastlines, majestic mountains, bucolic grasslands, and dazzling deserts carpeted with wildflowers, the San Diego region is a top biodiversity hotspot in North America and in the world. The region also is a leader in environmental conservation. Local, state, and federal agencies, along with nonprofit and private organizations, are working in concert to preserve half of the region (about 1.4 million acres) as permanent open space by 2050. SANDAG plays an important role in preserving open space and habitat through the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) funded by *TransNet*, the San Diego region's half-cent sales tax for transportation. The EMP funds habitat acquisition, land management, scientific research, and environmental restoration countywide.

#### EMP Accomplishments

**36 sites** preserved

**6,533 acres** preserved

**\$150 million** invested in open space acquisitions (including funding leveraged from conservation partners)

**81 land management grants** totaling \$12.8 million awarded to local organizations

### Most Biologically Rich County

Although relatively small, San Diego County is the most biologically rich county in the continental United States, and California is one of the top ten most biodiverse areas on earth.<sup>1</sup>



**515 species**  
of birds  
countywide

**662 species**  
statewide<sup>2</sup>

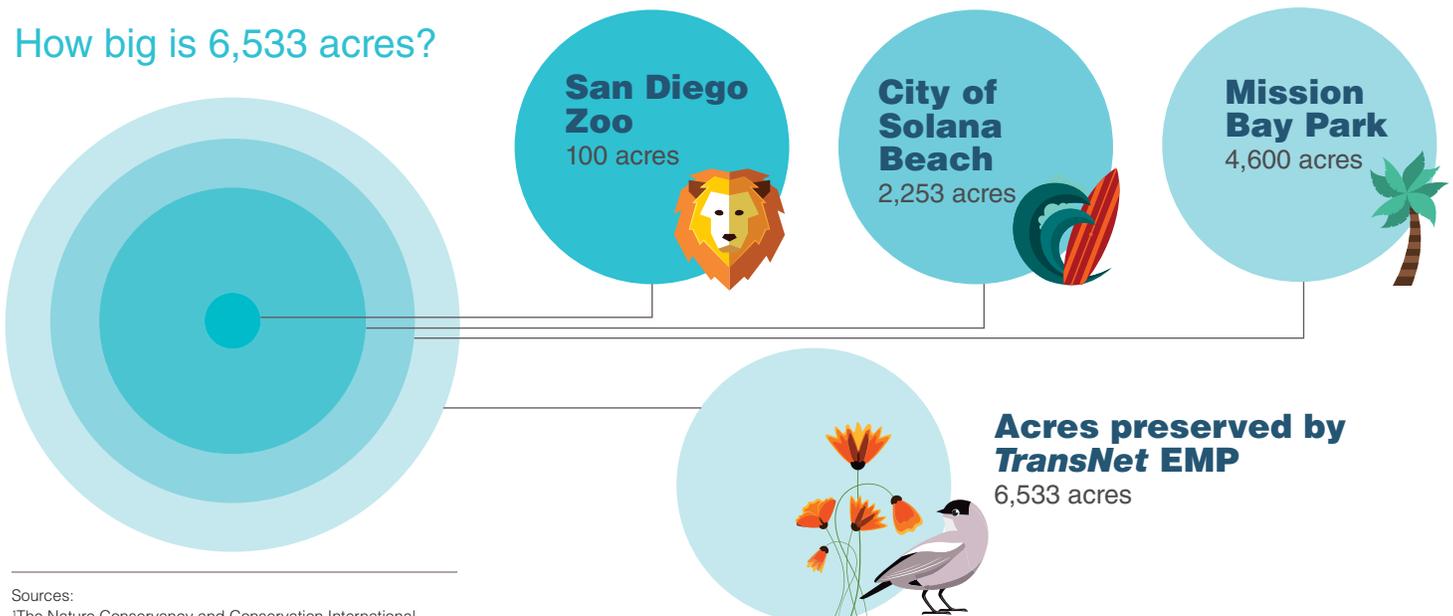
**2,672 species**  
of plants  
countywide

**7,600 species**  
statewide<sup>3</sup>

**115 species**  
of mammals  
countywide

**226 species**  
statewide<sup>4</sup>

### How big is 6,533 acres?



Sources:

<sup>1</sup>The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International

<sup>2</sup>San Diego Natural History Museum and California Bird Records Committee

<sup>3</sup>San Diego Natural History Museum and *The Jepson Manual:*

*Vascular Plants of California, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Counts include subspecies and varieties

<sup>4</sup>San Diego Natural History Museum and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

