

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.¹

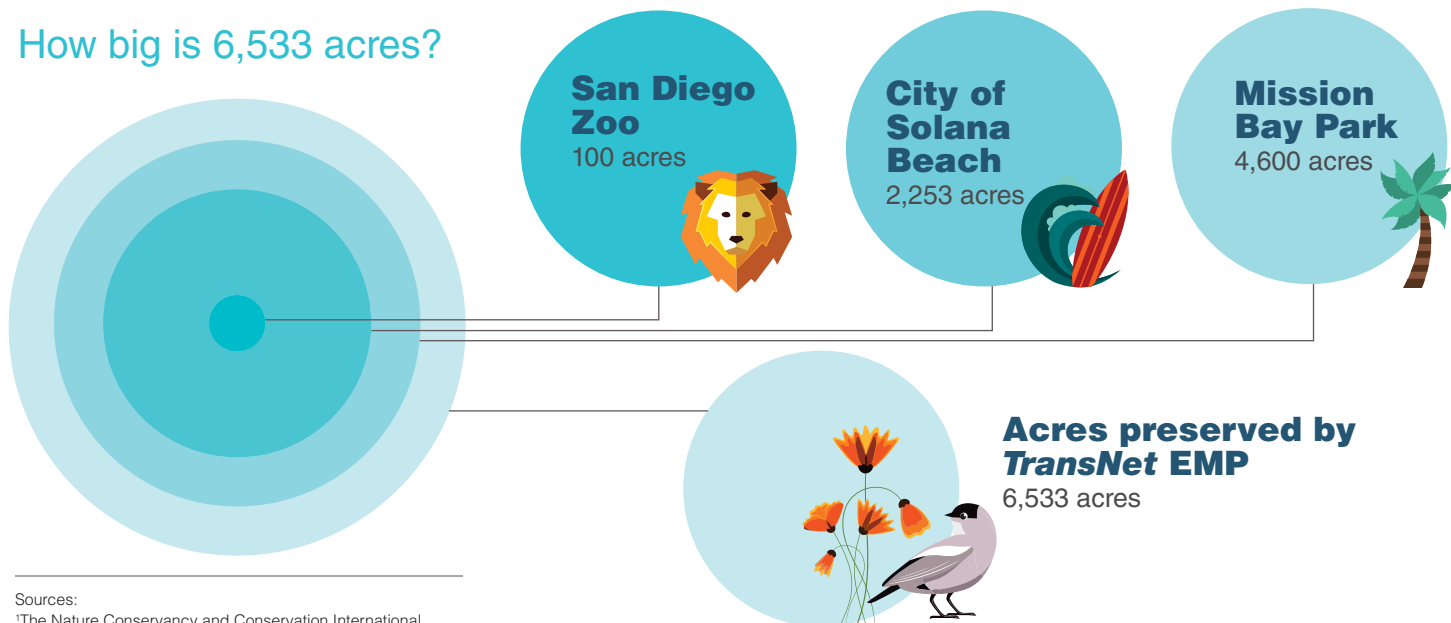


515 species
of birds
countywide
662 species
statewide²

2,672 species
of plants
countywide
7,600 species
statewide³

115 species
of mammals
countywide
226 species
statewide⁴

How big is 6,533 acres?



Sources:

¹The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International

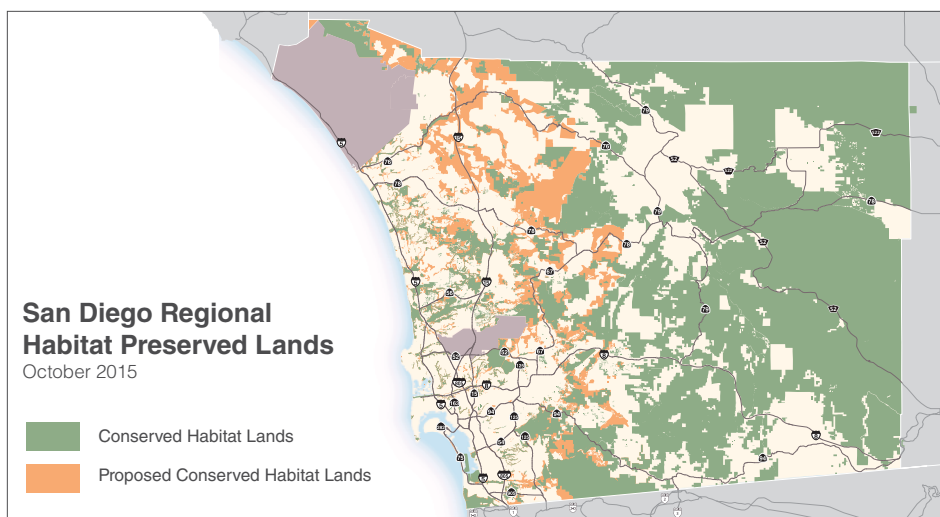
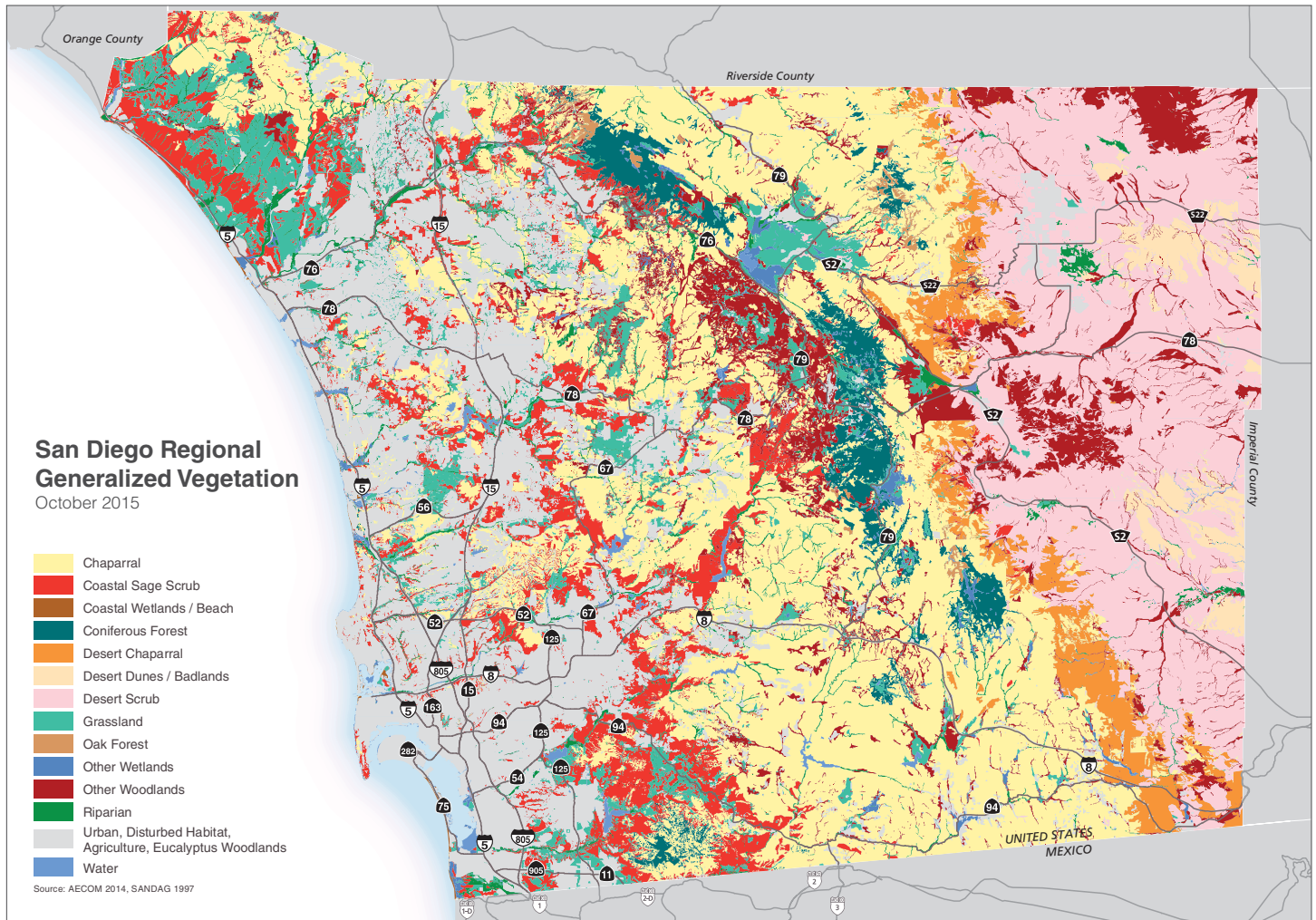
²San Diego Natural History Museum and California Bird Records Committee

³San Diego Natural History Museum and *The Jepson Manual*:

Vascular Plants of California, 2nd Edition. Counts include subspecies and varieties

⁴San Diego Natural History Museum and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

The larger map below illustrates the extraordinary diversity of vegetation communities found in San Diego County. The smaller map shows habitat conserved to date and habitat proposed for conservation. Current land use plans adopted by the region's 18 city councils and the County Board of Supervisors envision 55 percent of the land countywide, or 1,418,227 acres, as preserved open space in the future. Open space is defined as habitat, farmland, parks, beaches, and undevelopable natural areas.



About infobits

SANDAG serves as the region's clearinghouse for information and data. InfoBits publish timely, relevant information informing the public while providing context on complex issues facing the region.

sandag.org