

PROCTOR VALLEY OFF ROAD VEHICLE BARRIER *TRANSNET* GRANT FINAL REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPARTMENT
WATERSHED AND RESOURCE PROTECTION
Final Report 4/29/2011



In 2008 the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department applied for and received a *TransNet* grant from SANDAG to install a steel barrier to prevent off road vehicle access in Proctor Valley. This final report summarizes the outcome of the barrier installation and current conditions.

Proctor Valley Off Road Vehicle Barrier

The goal of the Proctor Valley Off Road Vehicle (ORV) barrier project was to prevent further degradation to land in Proctor Valley by installing steel vehicle barriers to prevent ORVs from illegally entering the watershed. Owned and managed by the City of San Diego Public Utilities, Water Fund, the land provides important source water protection and has high habitat value, including dozens of vernal pools. Proctor Valley is a component of the City's Cornerstone Lands and is part of the larger U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's San Diego National Wildlife Refuge.

The project took eleven months to complete from March – November, 2010, slightly longer than the projected schedule. California Department of Forestry (Cal Fire) issued a mandatory stop-order during the high-danger fire season of June, July, & August, as a wildfire prevention measure. In addition to the CalFire delay, the County of San Diego requested design augmentation to accommodate road maintenance grading equipment. Midway through the project, vandals pulled apart and damaged a 70 foot section of barrier that was temporarily spot-welded prior to final welding. Despite delays, over one mile of barrier is complete along both sides of Proctor Valley Road and the ramifications of limited access are encouraging.

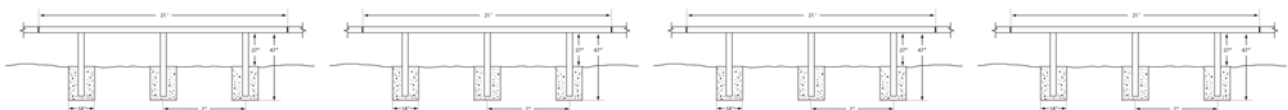


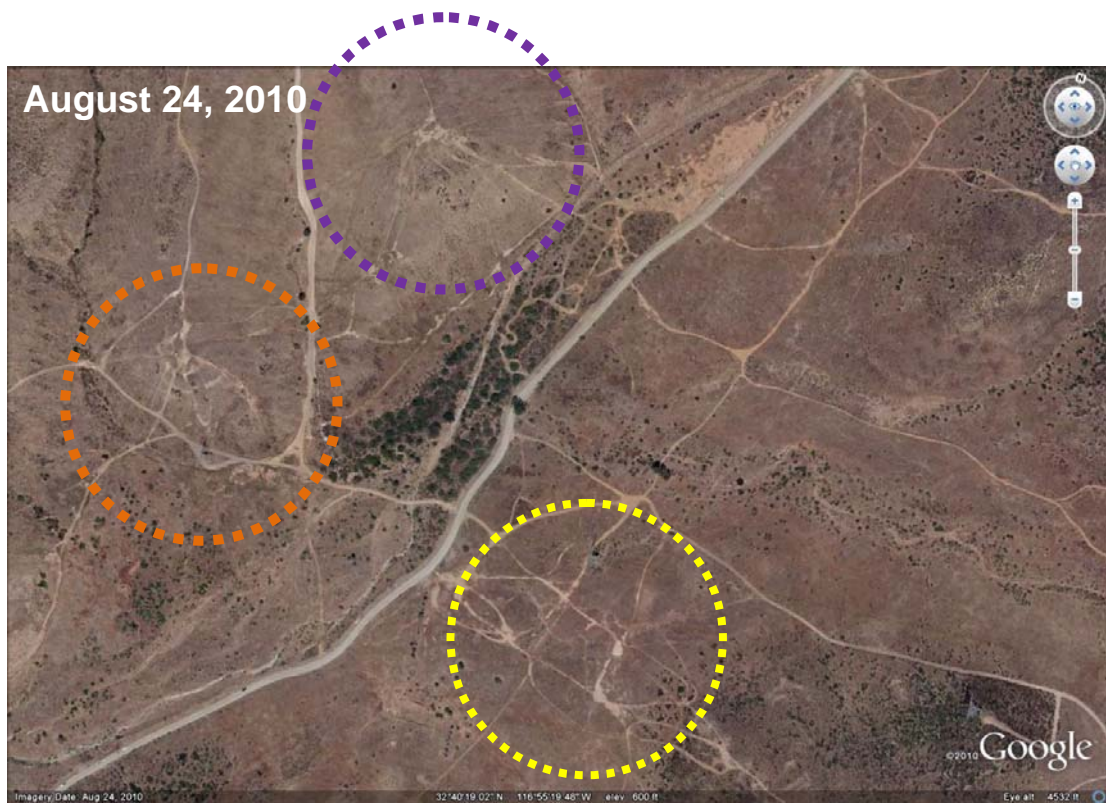
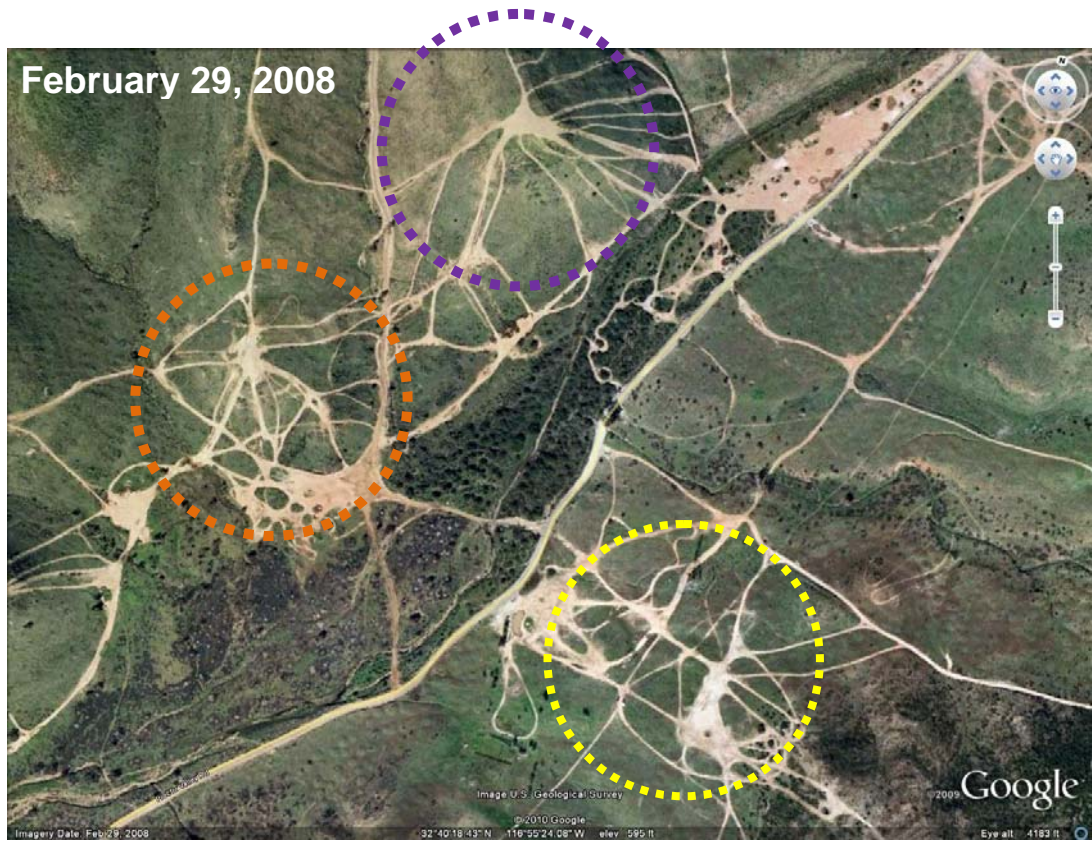
The *TransNet* grant the City received was instrumental in the fabrication and installation of over 2.5 miles of rigid steel barrier along the east and west sides of Proctor Valley Road. The design, based on US Forest Service barriers, will remain unpainted to blend in with the native landscape. Completed in November 2010, the barrier is a first step in concerted effort to re-vitalize the sensitive habitat and protect water resources.

Regeneration

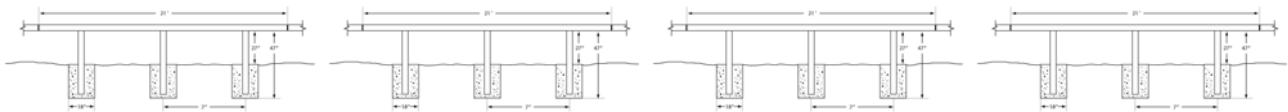
The TransNet sponsored grant has provided an opportunity for rejuvenation of the native landscape in Proctor Valley. In addition to the elevated vitality of the vernal pools, the scars imposed by years of off road vehicle activity are slowly healing. The following aerial images show the dramatic regeneration of the area through natural processes. Watershed and Resource Protection staff will continue to document the process and work with stakeholders.

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Stakeholder Response

The TransNet sponsored grant not only provided an opportunity for the landscape to regenerate on Public Utilities' land, it afforded an opportunity for a variety of stakeholders to collaborate on enhancing the native habitats at a larger scale. The California Department of Fish and Game in concert with California Wildlife Foundation applied for an additional TransNet grant to continue the barrier along Proctor Valley Road to further exclude vehicles from the San Diego National Wildlife.

New vernal pool restoration and enhancement projects are underway. The Chaparral Lands Conservancy is preparing a detailed plan for the Proctor Valley Vernal Pool Restoration Project with funding provided by the San Diego Foundation's Environmental Endowment Fund, the Land & Watershed Conservation Fund, and the Center for Biological Diversity. The Conservancy will use the plan to secure additional funding for the restoration and enhancement activities laid out in the plan. Forecast for completion of the Proctor Valley Vernal Pool Restoration Project is 2013.

Other stakeholders have been working in the valley as well. California Trout and The Chaparral Lands Conservancy have teamed to lead nature walks and enhancement efforts that teach local residents how to de-thatch and enhance vernal pools.

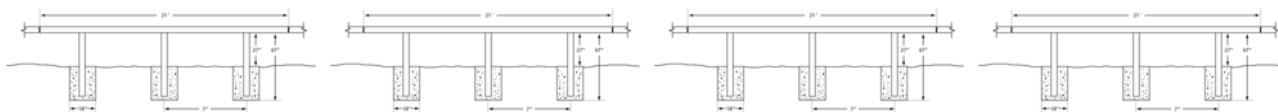


The valley is recovering from years of indiscriminate off road vehicle use. With the abundant rainfall of the current season, vernal pools are regenerating naturally and with the help of various stakeholders. A concerted effort was undertaken to map all vernal pools in the valley and an extensive rehabilitation and restoration project is underway, leveraging the protection afforded by the off road vehicle barrier.

Community Outreach

City of San Diego has posted signs in the valley to inform citizens of the restoration and enhancement efforts undertaken. Although ORV use has not been eliminated on the National Wildlife Refuge the barrier appears to be quite effective. The following images represent signage

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installed in Proctor Valley and the revised Proctor Valley brochure distributed to local Off Road vehicle establishments in San Diego County.



This 3' x 4' foot sign informs the public of the valuable natural resources in Proctor Valley and the Federal, State, and local partnership to protect those resources.



By restricting access, the landscape is able to regenerate: naturally and via anthropogenic efforts

OHV Recreation Areas

STATE PARK LAND

Ocotillo Wells SVRA
<http://ohv.parks.ca.gov>

Heber Dunes SVRA
www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=408

BLM LAND

Lark Canyon OHV Area
www.ca.blm.gov/larkcany.html

Imperial Sand Dunes, Glamis,
Buttercup Sand Dunes, Gordons Well
www.ca.blm.gov/elcentro/imperialandsandunes

Plaster City Open Area
www.ca.blm.gov/elcentro/plaster_city.html

Superstition Mountains
www.ca.blm.gov/elcentro/superstition.html

For More Information:

www.treadlightly.org
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www.sandiegooffroad.com
www.sd4wheeler.com
www.trails.com
www.offroaders.com
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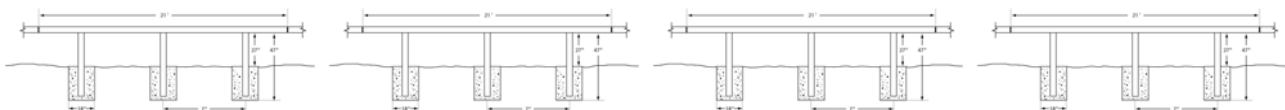
Proctor Valley



Open Space & Off-Highway Recreation

Watershed and Resource Protection staff updated the Proctor Valley brochure to include information about the barrier, funding by TransNet, and authorized State and Federal Recreation areas for Off Highway Vehicle enthusiasts.

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Approved / Actual Budget

Although the Proctor Valley barrier project took slightly longer than anticipated, the project was completed under-budget. Calculated at \$425,754, the original installation and fabrication budget included 89% of funds from TransNet and 21% from the City. With the final invoice, grant expenditures total \$234,728.01. Additional in-kind services in the form of contract management, work inspections and enforcement were provided by City staff.

Conclusion

The barrier in Proctor Valley is an important accomplishment for protecting water quality and native habitat in the region. Natural regeneration of the landscape in the valley is accelerating as the spider-web of tracts left by off road vehicle use begin to disappear. Natural recruitment is slowing erosion and reducing sedimentation. Community groups are participating in workshops aimed at education and enhancement of vernal pools. Additional grant funding of stakeholders' projects afforded a full scale GPS mapping of vernal pools and potential vernal pools. Neighboring jurisdictions are continuing the barrier along Proctor Valley Road and the City is actively partnering with other organizations and other agencies to procure funding for further restoration and enhancement of existing vernal pools in Proctor Valley.

The TransNet funding awarded for this project has added to a larger effort to revive the habitat in Proctor Valley. Anthropogenic disturbance to natural resources in the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge is lower from this effort and community education on the importance of ecosystem value and diversity enhanced.

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