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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This Land Management Plan (LMP) was prepared as a guide for the California Department of Fish and Game (herein referred to as the Department) in the management, maintenance, and restoration of the biological diversity and ecosystem components currently and historically present within the 5,189-acre Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area (HCWA). HCWA is located in south-central San Diego County between the communities of Jamul and Dulzura, approximately 26 miles east-southeast of downtown San Diego (Figure 1). It lies between the Jamul Mountains to the west, Otay Mountain to the south, and the Cleveland National Forest to the northeast (Figure 2).

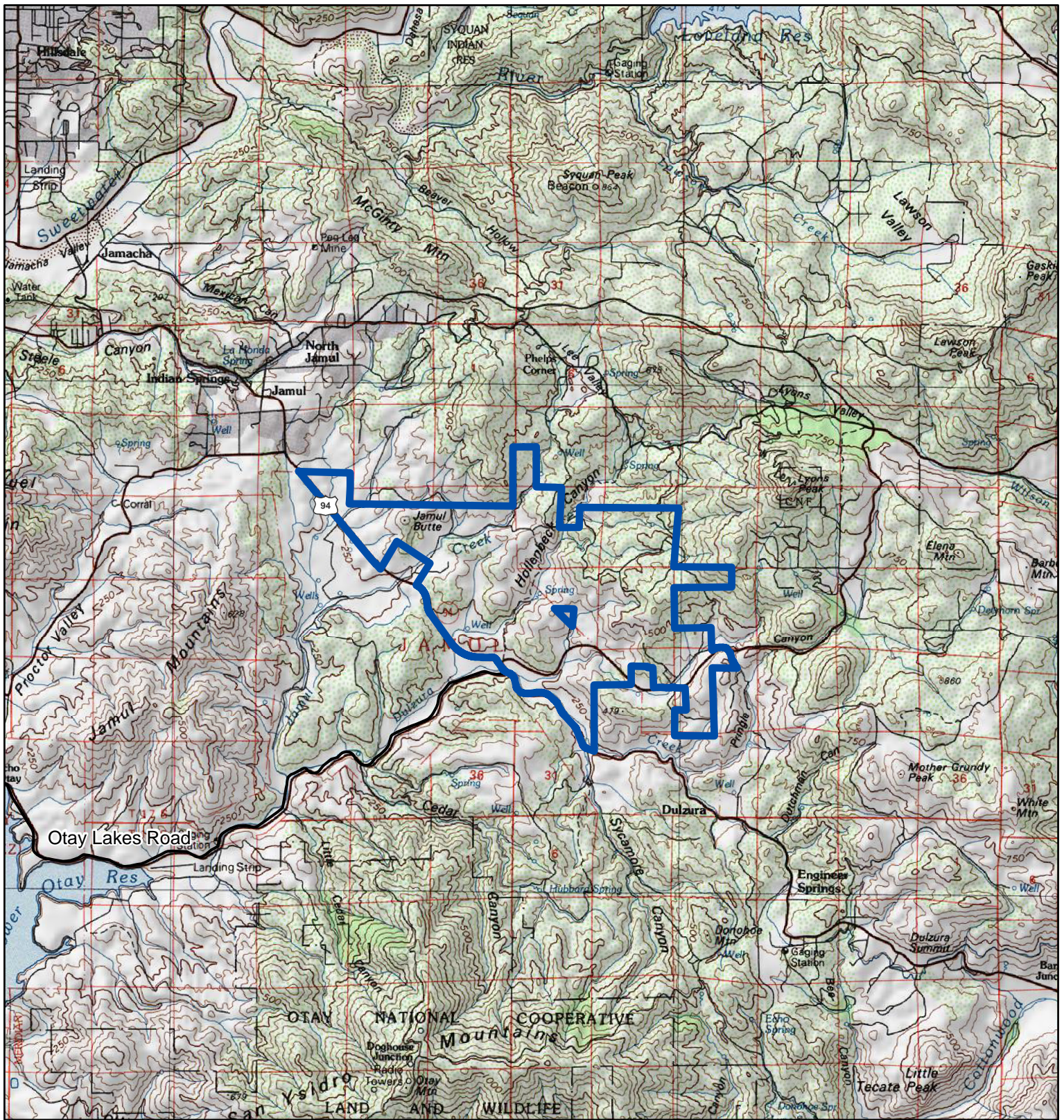
### **A. PURPOSE OF ACQUISITION**

Acquisition of the HCWA property was a unique opportunity to provide compatible wildlife-dependent recreation and to conserve, restore, and protect declining sensitive species and their associated habitats in one of the largest blocks of contiguous land available in San Diego County. The property is characterized by many natural communities (coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grasslands, wetlands, and woodlands) that function as valuable foraging and breeding habitat for numerous sensitive plant and animal species.

The primary objective for this land acquisition was to conserve areas of high- and very high-quality habitat, including several areas occupied by endangered species, while providing compatible wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities to the public. Acquisition of HCWA conserved a large portion of the southern end of Hollenbeck Canyon along with Jamul Creek and the associated ridgelines, peaks, and linked unnamed canyons. In addition, acquisition ensured preservation of a large portion of an established north-south wildlife corridor along the entirety of Hollenbeck Canyon into Lyons Valley. Completing the acquisitions that formed HCWA ensured a functional connection to the Department's existing open space reserve (Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve) immediately to the west, and the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Otay Mountain Wildlife Management Area and Wilderness Area immediately to the south. The contiguity provided by the acquisition of HCWA strengthens these core areas of largely undisturbed habitat and provides a source of plant and animal populations for maintaining healthy ecosystem functions throughout a large part of south-central San Diego County. On HCWA, the land acquisition provides compatible recreational opportunities to the public.







USGS 100,000 El Cajon Quadrangle

**Basemap Legend**  
 HCWA Boundary



Feet  
 0 8,600

**EDAW**

**USGS Topographic Quadrangle**

**Figure 2**



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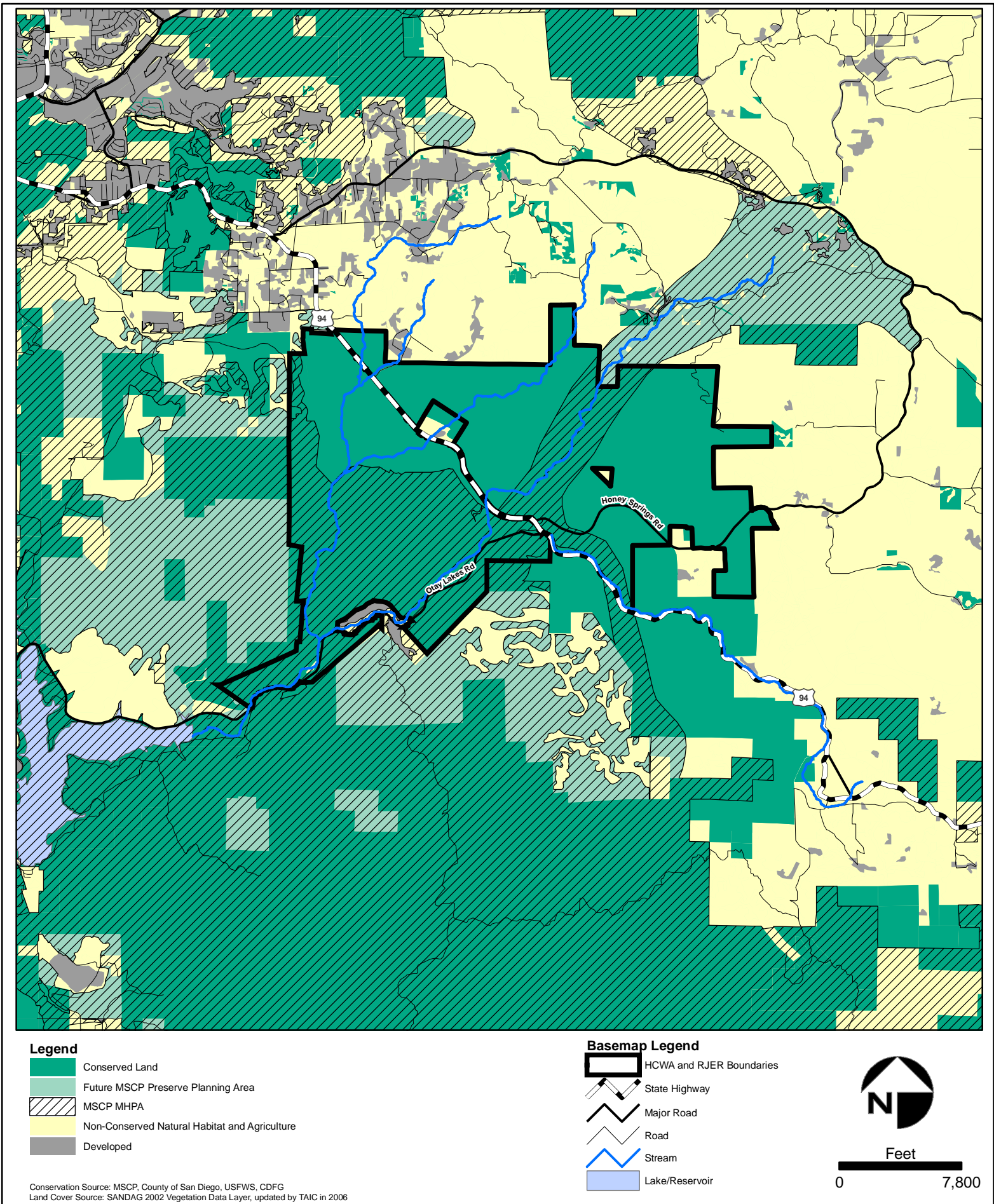
## **1. Regional Conservation Efforts**

The acquisition of HCWA has enhanced regional efforts to conserve southern California's natural heritage, the goal of which is to establish an open space network that will protect native habitat and associated species. For example, The Wildlife Conservation Board (State of California) is actively partnering with other agencies, such as the BLM, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the State Coastal Conservancy, to coordinate funding and conservation planning efforts in this region. This collaboration has enabled the acquisition and protection of contiguous parcels of public open space lands, thereby conserving important regional wildlife habitat, habitat linkages, and wildlife movement corridors in perpetuity (Figure 3). Consequently, HCWA fits into a larger, relatively intact habitat mosaic and was identified by the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) as a high-priority acquisition for linking and conserving contiguous habitat.

Other coordinated regional planning efforts in San Diego County include multiple species and habitat conservation plans and subarea plans under California's Natural Community Conservation Program (NCCP) Act of 1992, as amended, such as the City of San Diego MSCP, the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program in northwest San Diego County, the South County MSCP, and the East County MSCP. HCWA falls within the South County MSCP, which is a subarea of the MSCP Subregional Plan, a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program for southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP serves as (1) a multiple species habitat conservation plan pursuant to Section 10(a) of the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and (2) a plan under the NCCP Act.

The primary objective of the MSCP is to protect natural communities and biodiversity by preserving a network of natural habitat and open space. The MSCP preserve system is being assembled within an area identified in the MSCP Subregional Plan as the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), which will be managed for its biological resources. A swath of land traversing approximately 1,028 acres (20 percent) of HCWA was included within the MHPA (Figure 3), and was identified as part of an important biological linkage connecting Otay Mountain/Jamul Mountains to Sycuan Peak. The acquisition of HCWA has secured a part of this important linkage and demonstrates the Department's ongoing commitment towards NCCP planning efforts in San Diego County.





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MSCP/NCCP planning will become even more important as the population of San Diego County continues to accelerate. HCWA is characterized by gentle to moderately steep hills and open valleys. The property is located near the fringe of development and bordered by State Route (SR) 94, making it potentially desirable to developers (Figure 2). The Department's acquisition of HCWA, and the adjacent 4,702-acre Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve (RJER) located on the opposite side of SR 94, will protect this valuable biological resource.

## **B. ACQUISITION HISTORY AND FUNDING**

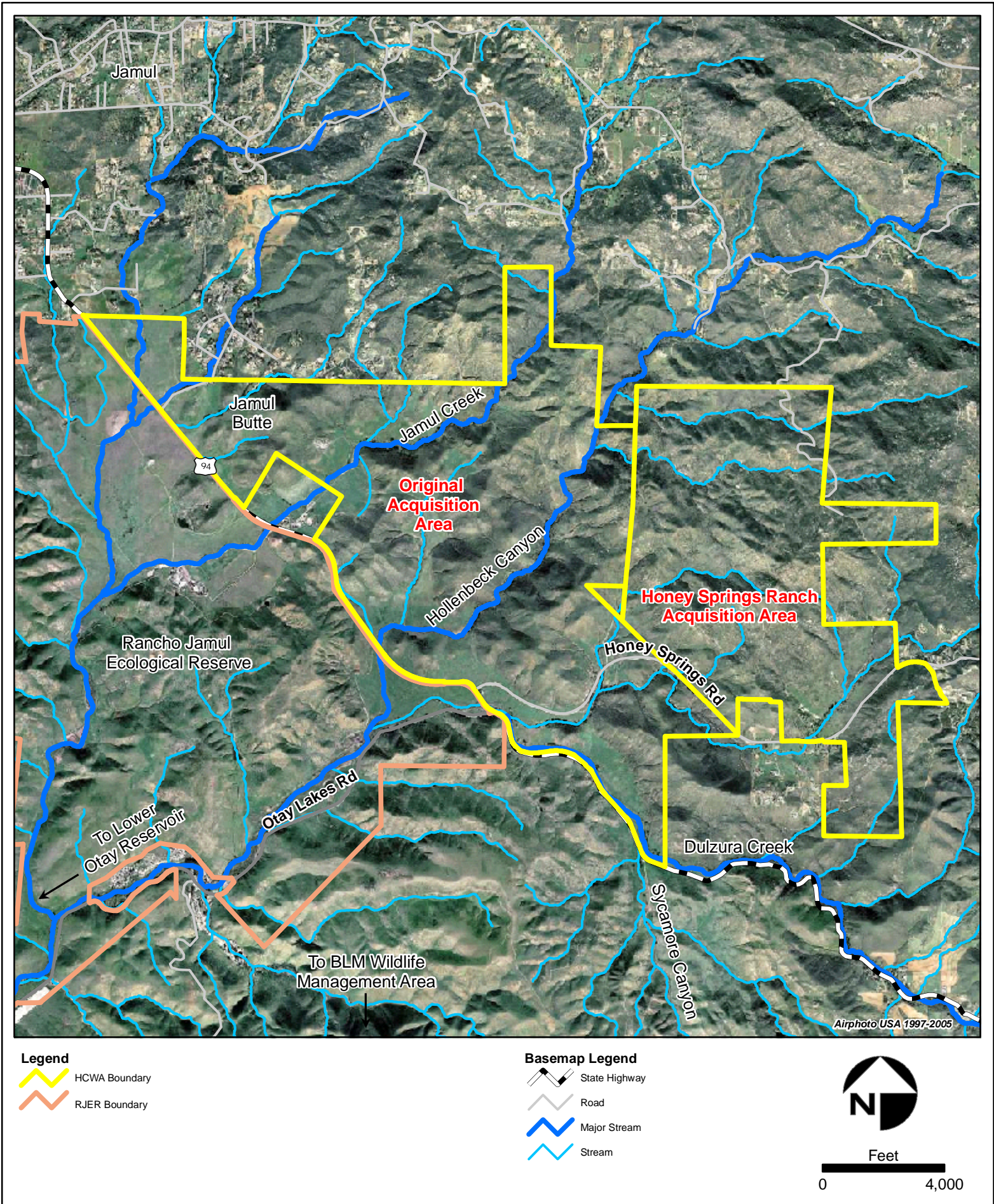
The 5,189-acre HCWA was acquired by the State of California (the Department) in two phases. The first phase was the original acquisition of the Lawrence Daley Ranch portion of the wildlife area and was approved by the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) on February 23, 2001. This acquisition secured 3,210 acres of land on the western end of the site (Figure 4). Original acquisition funding sources include the Sunroad Otay Partners, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and Coastal Protection Act (California Proposition 12, Section 5096.350 (a)(6)-NCCP), and the State General Fund, ensuring preservation of the original acquisition for conservation and public use purposes. The second phase conducted in 2003 secured the 1,979-acre Honey Springs Ranch eastern portion of the wildlife area (Figure 4). The funding source for the second phase was through a WCB grant to the State Coastal Conservancy.

The Fish and Game Commission designated the property as a wildlife area and identified area-specific regulations as recorded in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Division 1, Chapter 11, Sections 550 and 551. As previously stated, the establishment of wildlife areas conserves lands that provide important habitat for wildlife and provide wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities to the public. Public use and enjoyment of the wildlife area are encouraged by the Department but must remain consistent with the primary goal of the acquisition of the land, which is protection of natural resources.

## **C. PURPOSE OF THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This LMP represents the commitment of the Department to manage the resources of the wildlife area in accordance with the laws of the State of California, incorporating the best available scientific information and professional judgment. It also incorporates the desire of the Department to coordinate and cooperate with the HCWA neighbors, other local interests, and other conservation entities that are active throughout this region.







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The purpose of this LMP is to establish a set of management goals and objectives that are compatible with wildlife area management principles. By outlining appropriate natural and cultural resource management tasks and public uses on the property, the plan seeks to maximize the public's enjoyment of the wildlife area, while fulfilling all aspects of its mission. The following management guidelines are provided to clarify the purpose of this LMP.

1. The plan guides the adaptive management of habitats, species, and programs described herein to achieve the Department's mission to protect and enhance wildlife values.
2. The plan serves as a guide for appropriate public uses of the property.
3. The plan serves as a descriptive inventory of wildlife and native plant habitats that occur on or use the property.
4. The plan provides an overview of the property's operation and maintenance, and personnel requirements to implement management goals. It serves as a budget planning aid for annual regional budget preparation.
5. The plan provides a description of potential and actual environmental impacts and subsequent mitigation, which may occur during management, and contains environmental documentation to comply with state and federal statutes and regulations.

This LMP is intended to contribute to habitat management that utilizes natural processes to create a sustainable system over the long term. This ecosystem-based management approach is intended to benefit both common and sensitive species of wildlife and plants. It may also contribute to the recovery of state and federally listed species. The LMP has been developed in accordance with the Department's *Guide and Annotated Outline for Writing Land Management Plans* (CDFG 2003).