

**San Diego Association of Governments
Dennery Canyon Restoration Project
City of San Diego
Quarterly Progress Report
Reporting Period: 01/01/2025 – 03/31/2025
Submission Date: 04/21/2025
SANDAG Contract Number: S1125503**

Quarterly Status Report Overview

The City of San Diego received the Notice to Proceed (NTP) for the Dennergy Canyon Rare Restoration Project on May 2, 2023. This quarterly progress report details work performed from January 1, 2025, through March 31, 2025. Work performed during this period included dethatching and as-needed weed management in Areas 1 – 4, contracting coordination, qualitative site assessments, photo monitoring, quantitative data QA/QC, and data submission to SDMMP. Work anticipated in the next reporting period will include continued weed management in Areas 1 – 4, qualitative and quantitative monitoring, and coordination with San Diego Wildlife Alliance Native Plant Gene Bank staff on the seed bulking effort for San Diego thornmint.

Work Performed this Period:

1. Task 1- Area 1: SD thornmint restoration and vernal pool enhancement (1.55 acres)

Work start date: October 4, 2023.

Percent complete: 30%

A contracted crew from AECOM performed targeted herbicide applications and hand-weeding around natives to reduce non-native annual grasses and broadleaf herbs. City Biologist Sara Allen provided crew oversight to avoid sensitive plant species. Sara also installed wire mesh cages around San Diego thorn mint seedlings to prevent herbivory.

2. Task 2-Area 2: SD thornmint buffer (1.54 acres)

Work start date: October 18, 2023.

Percent complete: 30%

A contracted Alpha Project crew dethatched the site and removed dry biomass to reduce nonnative seed sources. City Biologist Sara Allen provided crew oversight to avoid sensitive plant species.

3. Task 3-Area 3: Otay tarplant restoration (3.36 acres)

Work start date: October 25, 2023.

Percent complete: 25%

A contracted crew from AECOM performed targeted herbicide applications and hand-weeding around natives to reduce non-native annual grasses and broadleaf herbs. City Biologist Sara Allen provided crew oversight to avoid sensitive plant species.

4. Area 4: San Diego ambrosia, Orcutt's bird'sbeak, and vernal pool restoration and enhancement (2.23 acres)

Work start date: November 1, 2023.

Percent complete: 30%

A contracted crew from AECOM performed targeted herbicide applications and hand-weeding around natives to reduce non-native annual grasses and broadleaf herbs. City Biologist Sara Allen provided crew oversight to avoid sensitive plant species.

Monitoring and Reporting

Work start date: 05/08/2023

Percent complete: 45%

City biologist, Sara Allen, performed qualitative monitoring visits to determine the appropriate timing for weed management efforts and directed crews in

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the field. Sara also conducted focused surveys for rare plant seedlings and placed pin flags to mark their locations ahead of crew work. Rare plant seedlings observed on site this quarter included San Diego thornmint, San Diego ambroisa, and Otay tarplant.

City staff also prepared the quarterly progress report for work performed from October 1, 2024, through January 31, 2024, submitted to SANDAG on July 22, 2024.

5. Administrative

Work start date: 07/01/2023

Percent complete: 45%

City staff administered purchase orders, coordinated work schedules with contracted crews, reviewed contractor invoices, and processed invoices for payment.

Work Anticipated Next Period

Work anticipated in the next reporting period will include:

- 1) City Biologist staff will continue coordinating with contractors to perform as-needed targeted herbicide applications to control invasive weed species in Areas 1-4.
- 2) City Biologist staff will continue coordinating with the San Diego Wildlife Alliance Native Plant Gene Bank on the San Diego thorn mint seed bulking effort.
- 3) City Biologist staff will perform qualitative and quantitative monitoring of invasive plant cover and rare plant species occurrences in Areas 1 – 4.

Issues to Note

- 1) The Notice to Proceed for this grant was issued on May 2, 2023. Due to the delay in the issuance of the NTP, the timeline for active restoration and weed management activities had to be adjusted accordingly. These activities are now anticipated to start in September 2023.
- 2) While conducting baseline monitoring surveys, biologists noted prickly goldenfleece (*Urospermum picroides*) was present in low numbers in Area 1 and abundant in the northern part of Area 2. This is a newly documented invasive plant species for San Diego County (see Photo 5). Weed management efforts will target this species in the project area and the City plans to seek additional funding sources to help control it outside of the project area.
- 3) In 2023, the Otay tarplant continued to flower into early September. This pushed back the start date for dethatching work because we wanted to give the tarplant time to senesce and set seed before weed whipping the area.

Photographs & Figures

Area 1: Photo Monitoring



Photo 1.1: Photo point 1 shows baseline conditions for Area 1. Nonnative species cover in Area 1 is estimated at 90%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle (*Centaurea melitensis*), Mediterranean stork's bill (*Erodium malacoides*), Annual yellow sweetclover (*Melilotus indicus*).



Photo 1.2: Photo point 1 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 1 is estimated at 90%. Most nonnative species have senesced.

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Photo 1.3: Photo point 1 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 1 occurred on October 4th and 6th, 2023.



Photo 1.4: Photo point 1 on March 8, 2024.

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Photo 1.5: Photo point 1 on June 20, 2024.



Photo 1.6: Photo point 1 on August 8, 2024

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Photo 1.7: Photo point 1 on December 17, 2024.



Photo 1.8: Photo point 1 on March 10, 2025

Area 2: Photo Monitoring



Photo 2.1: Photo point 2 shows baseline conditions for Area 2. Nonnative species cover in Area 2 is estimated at 80%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle, Italian ryegrass (*Festuca perennis*), slender wild oat (*Avena barbata*), and Mediterranean stork's bill.



Photo 2.2: Photo point 2 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 2 is estimated at 80%. Most nonnative species have senesced.

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Photo 2.3: Photo point 2 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 2 occurred on October 18th and 20th, 2023.



Photo 2.4: Photo point 2 on March 8, 2024.

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Photo 2.5: Photo point 2 on June 20, 2024.



Photo 2.6: Photo point 2 on August 8, 2024.

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Photo 2.7: Photo point 2 on December 17, 2024



Photo 2.8: Photo point 2 on March 10, 2025.

Area 3: Photo Monitoring



Photo 3.1: Photo point 3 shows baseline conditions for Area 3. Nonnative species cover in Area 3 is estimated at 85%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle, crown daisy, Italian ryegrass, and slender wild oat. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 4.*



Photo 3.2: Photo point 3 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 3 is estimated at 85%. Most nonnative species have senesced. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 4.*

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Photo 3.3: Photo point 3 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 3 occurred on November 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 2023.



Photo 3.4: Photo point 3 on March 8, 2024.

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Photo 3.5: Photo point 3 on June 20, 2024.



Photo 3.6: Photo point 3 on August 8, 2024.

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Photo 3.7: Photo point 3 on December 17, 2024.



Photo 3.8: Photo point 3 on March 10, 2025.

Area 4: Photo Monitoring



Photo 4.1: Photo point 4 shows baseline conditions for Area 4. Nonnative species cover in Area 4 is estimated at 90%. The most abundant nonnative species include Tocolote thistle, black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), crown daisy (*Glebionis coronaria*), and Mediterranean stork's bill. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 3.*



Photo 4.2: Photo point 4 on September 27, 2023. Nonnative species cover in Area 4 is estimated at 90%. Most nonnative species have senesced. *Note: previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 3.*

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Photo 4.3: Photo point 4 on November 14, 2023. Dethatching of Area 4 occurred on October 25th, 26th and 20th, 2023. Note: *previous reports incorrectly labeled this as photo point 3.*



Photo 4.4: Photo point 4 on March 8, 2024.

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Photo 4.5: Photo point 4 on June 20, 2024.



Photo 4.6: Photo point 4 on August 8, 2024.

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Photo 4.7: Photo point 4 on December 17, 2024



Photo 4.8: Photo point 4 on March 10, 2025.

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Additional Photos:



Photo 5.1: Flags marking young San Diego ambrosia plants on March 20, 2025.



Photos 5.2 & 5.3: Wire herbivore exclusion cages were placed around San Diego thorn mint seedlings to prevent rabbit herbivory.

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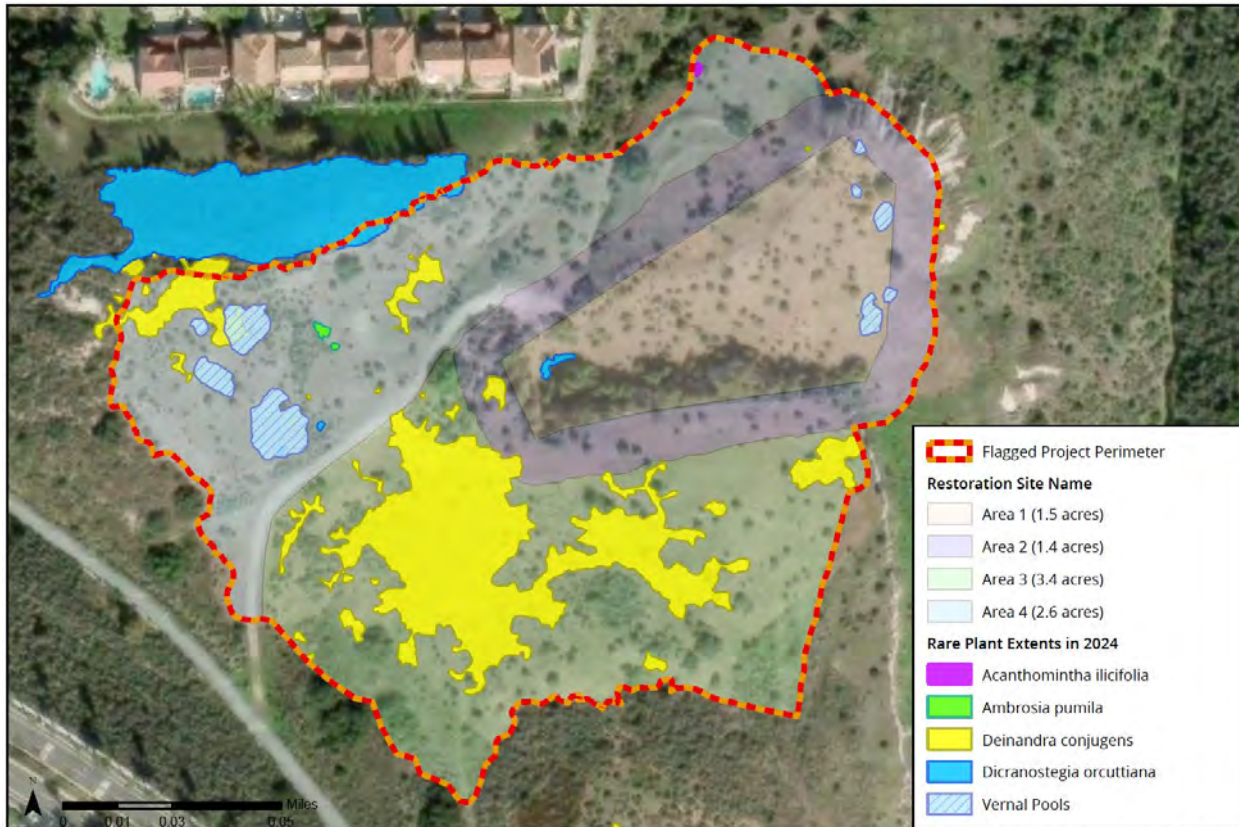


Photo 5.4: Biologists surveyed for Otay tarplant seedlings and marked any observed seedlings with yellow flags.



Photo 5.5: Contracted crews performed targeted herbicide applications to control competitive nonnative weeds.

Figure 1: Mapped Extents of Rare Plant Species in the Project Area in 2024



Denner Canyon Rare Plant Restoration Project 2024

SDMMP Project Page

This quarterly report was added to the Denner Canyon Rare Plant Restoration Project Page on the SDMMP website on 10/22/2024.

Performance Measures

Project performance measures are included in the Excel workbook linked below. Click the Excel icon below to open the workbook.

