

**San Diego Association of Governments
West Bernardo Mountain HMA
Enhancement & Restoration
San Dieguito River Park, JPA.
Quarterly Progress Report
Reporting Period: **OCTOBER 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2024**
Submission Date: **January 2025**
SANDAG Contract Number: **SI125508****

Quarterly Status Report Overview

PLEASE DO NOT CHANGE OR ALTER THE FORMATTING OF THIS DOCUMENT!

SANDAG has developed a standardized grant monitoring and tracking program for the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) Land Management Grant Program. The purpose is to collect information on individual projects and the grant program as a whole for reporting to the Regional Habitat Conservation Taskforce, SANDAG Policy Advisory Committees, and the SANDAG Board of Directors. SANDAG monitors grantees through invoices, progress reports, performance measures, and designated photograph points. These standardized reporting templates and instructions for submittal are included below.

Work Performed this Period:

1. **Task 1- INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL: 20% done year 2**
 - a. No significant invasive species growth.
 - b. No weed control work occurred, other than monitoring and planning
 - c. Herbicide application will commence this winter.
 - d. No dethatch planned for non-planting areas.
 - e. Planting areas (West Site) were dethatched in preparation of weed control and planting.
 - i. Gas powered weed whips were used to clear dead invasive weeds. Some of the materials were raked into consolidated piles and rows for erosion control. Work was performed by SDRP rangers and volunteers and Black Sage Environmental.
 - ii. Planting areas will require invasive species control in addition to the original site.
 - iii. Approximately 3 acres were dethatched.
 - f. TWO areas are to be treated: 15.33 acres.
 - i. 2.83 acres: SDRP proposed to SANDAG that the cactus planting site be moved and they agreed. The new site is called "West Site." This is additional invasive species control work.
 - ii. 12.5 acres: The original site will still receive invasive species work and the original project goals will be met.

2. **Task 2- HARVEST, GROW, DELIVER CACTI : 60% done year 2**
 - a. 400 cacti were delivered and installed in the original site.
 - b. 1000 cacti were delivered and moved to the West Restoration Site
 - c. 800 cacti to be delivered in 2025.
 - i. Spring delivery- some plants will be ready in spring 2025 and could be installed in areas that are likely to get watered.
 - ii. November 2025 is when most plants will be delivered.
 - d. 575 cacti still to be grown. Pads will be harvested early spring.
 - i. Budget needs to be re-evaluated since cost of container plants are more expensive than 2022.
 - ii. SDRP will grow cacti to augment commercial nursery production if needed.

3. **Task 3 – INSTALL ROOTED CACTUS (2,775 project total). 90% done year 2**
 - a. West Site: this is the primary planting site.
 - i. Entire planting site was dethatched.
 - ii. 1000 cacti delivered and moved to planting site.
 1. 763 installed in November and December.

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- a. **SDRP staff:**
 - i. **Transported cacti from the location of the delivery drop off to the planting site using a side-by-side ATV. Some modifications of the trail were required.**
 - ii. **Transported cacti from the planting site drop off to the areas to be planted.**
 1. **Cactus gurney.**
 2. **Versa mule.**
 - iii. **Installed container cactus.**
 - iv. **Facilitated volunteer work days.**
 - v. **Performed quality control.**
 - b. **SDRP volunteers planted cactus for 5 days**
 - i. **Transported cacti from the planting site drop off to the areas to be planted.**
 - ii. **Installed container cacti.**
 - c. **Homeschool Meetup group made up of 4 adults, 3 children installed 138 container cacti.**
 - d. **Black Sage environmental dethatched part of the planting site and will install the remaining cacti.**
- 2. Remaining 237 to be installed in January**
- b. **Original site: 400 container cacti were delivered and installed in the original site.**
 1. **150 installed in April 2024 in the upper reaches of the site.**
 2. **250 installed in December 2024 in an area that was dethatched in December 2023, received 1 year of invasive species control work, and was earmarked to be planted before the bulk of planting site was moved to the West Site. This location is close enough to the trail so that it could be watered if needed.**

Provide the exact work start date, a description of the work completed under each task, and percent complete. Add additional tasks as necessary

Work Anticipated Next Period

This does not need to be task specific but should include a short paragraph or bullet point list of activities anticipated for next quarter.

- **Next work period: January, February, March 2025.**
- **Install remaining plants.**
- **Water.**
- **Maintain plants.**

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- **invasive plant species control.**
- **Harvest cacti to be grown in nurseries.**

Issues to Note

Please provide a brief description of any issue(s) encountered during the reporting period and any steps taken to address the issue(s).

Photographs & Figures

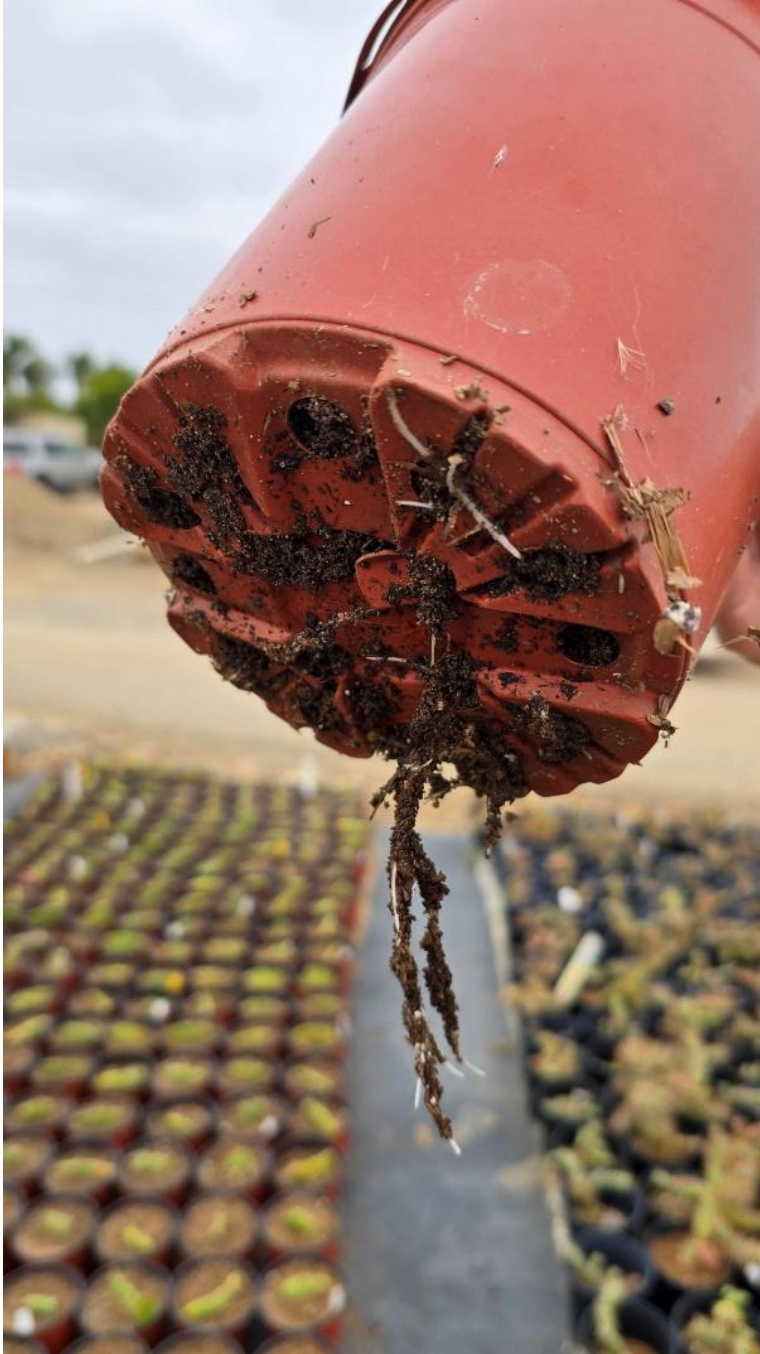
[SEE BELOW](#)

SDMMP Project Page

[Updated January 2024](#)

Performance Measures

Please include the Project's Performance Measures for each Quarterly Invoice and Progress Report in order to receive reimbursement.



October 2024- Container cactus at Native West Nursery. Plants are being grown from cuttings from Bernardo Mountain. Top growth is small but containers are rooted. The rooted cactus is more resilient to negative pressure such as herbivory and drought.

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October 2024- Cactus planted in April 2024. This site was planted by SDRP staff and volunteers. The location is difficult to access. Delivery methods were tested and it was determined that the site was too difficult to plant without an influx of inexpensive labor such as inmates. Helicopter assistance was solicited and secured. Ultimately, the planting site was moved because of the natural recovery of coastal sage scrub was apparent and the installation of 2,775 cacti would have negatively affected that process. A better site was located and with coordination with SANDAG staff, the planting site was moved. 400 cacti will be installed in the original site with the remaining cacti being planted at the “West Site”. All goals of the original project will be met and there will be an additional 3 +/- acres of invasive species control.

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October 30th Cactus Delivery: Cacti was dropped off near the Lake Hodges Boat Dock on the Coast to Crest Trail (North Shore Lake Hodges section). Cacti was then loaded into an ATV and driven on the Bernardo Mountain Lake View Trail to the planting site drop off area. This is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile round trip.

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October 2024: Cactus from the first delivery (March 2024) were watered throughout the summer and installed in the original site. The 400 cacti in the original site will augment existing cactus scrub habitat.

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WEST SITE Cacti drop off area: From here cactus was moved to the planting sites located above and below the trail. Rangers and volunteers used cactus gurney's and "versamule" back packs to move cactus. There are remnant cacti, coastal sage scrub species, but mostly invasive species at the West Site. These new cacti, combined with existing cacti and neighboring coastal sage scrub areas should provide for enough habitat for a new coastal cactus wren territory.

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West Site Dethatched: Cactus planting areas in November 2024 before the installation of container plants. Planting criteria was given to rangers, volunteers, and Black Sage Environmental. New container cactus was generally not planted near existing cactus and coastal sage scrub plants.

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East Arm West Site: Dethatched and ready for weed control. This area is the farthest point away from a water source making watering here difficult. Timely planting of container plants is needed as well as using rock to shade the plants. The goal here is to plant the middle and along the trail. Cacti will not be planted closer than 6 feet from coastal sage scrub species.

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November 14, 2024: Container cactus installed above the trail. Note (red arrow) the “thatch row” that is made up of dead invasive plants. The planted site was raked mostly clean of thatch that also contains seed. The row will help with surface run off erosion but may need to be treated with herbicide.