

Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area Honey Springs Ranch Unit Dog Training Area Enhancements Project Plan

(Last Revised 3/31/09)

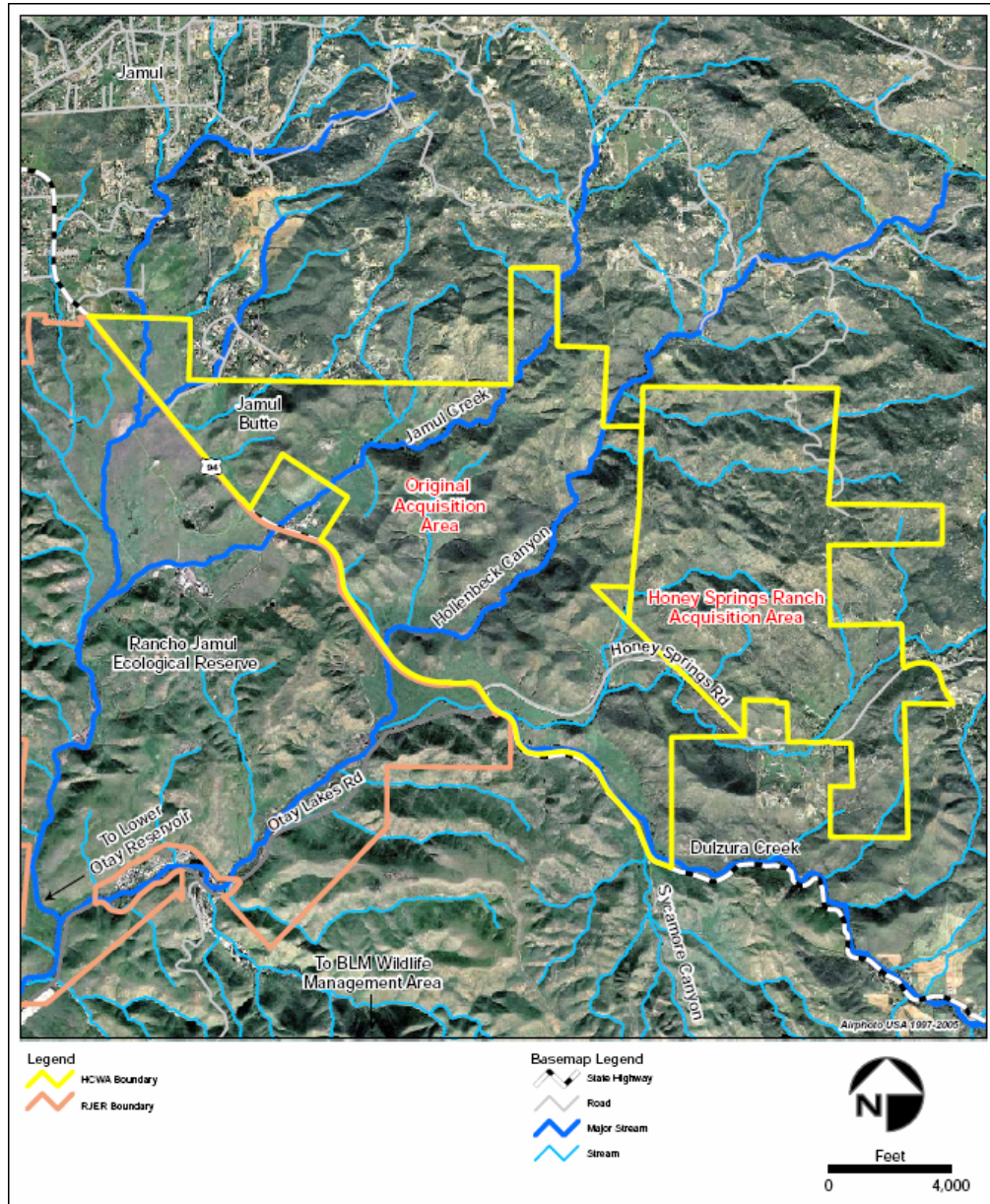
1.0 Background

The Hollenbeck Canyon Wildlife Area (HCWA), as shown in Figure 1, was acquired in 2001 by the California Department of Fish & Game. Located approximately 5 miles east of Jamul and northeast of Lower Otay Lake and accessed via State Hwy 94 (Campo Road), the 5,189 acre wildlife area provides a wildlife corridor between Otay Mountain and Jamul Mountains. Habitat includes coastal sage scrub, chaparral, oak woodlands, riparian forests, freshwater marshes and grasslands. Elevation ranges from a low of 750' to 2,100' at the highest peak. DFG recently completed a Land Management Plan for this property and it can be reviewed at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/mgmtplans/hcwa/>.



While a dog training area consisting of an open field of approximately 300 acres currently exists on the western edge of the HCWA, it is very limited in utility, with only an open field, a small parking area and no ponds. This area was established prior to the acquisition of the Honey Springs Ranch adjunct to the HCWA and has served the dog training community well, given its inherent limitations.

With the Honey Springs Ranch unit expansion of the HCWA, as shown in Figure 2, the opportunity now exists to develop a truly functional and versatile dog training area that meets the needs for training both retriever and pointing breeds of sporting dogs.



Land Acquisition Map

Figure 2

2.0 Purpose

The purpose is to plan for the development of a dog training area that provides a quality experience when training dogs for upland game and waterfowl hunting. The Plan will integrate a comprehensive set of individually phased projects that, when fully implemented, will afford the San Diego sporting dog community with a training area that meets the needs of both retriever and pointing dog trainers and handlers.

3.0 Project Benefits

This project will be of obvious benefit to the sporting dog community, by providing them an area to train dogs to further conservation purposes. It is well known that hunting with a trained dog will decrease the amount of wasted game by having the trained dog find any injured or downed bird that otherwise may have gone unretrieved. However, it will also benefit the resident and migratory wildlife in the HCWA, with habitat enhancements that promote their well being. These habitat enhancements will include improved feed, cover and nesting opportunities, with the planting and irrigation of native plant species. Additionally, the increased availability of readily accessible water sources will supply a year-round source of drinking water that currently doesn't exist. This project is envisioned as a win-win-win, benefiting the public as well as the flora and fauna of HCWA.

4.0 Project Partners and Stakeholders

This project is intended to serve as a model of the level of cooperation between the DFG and the various partners and stakeholders that can be achieved when everyone shares responsibility and is willing to compromise when needed, with the goal of overall project success. To that end, community outreach is critical to project success.

Because buy-in and ownership by the project partners is a key factor to ensure project success, project description, progress and status meetings will be conducted at regular intervals throughout the project life cycle. These meetings will afford the stakeholders the opportunity to weigh in on options and alternatives, prior to any decision finalization by the DFG.

The California Department of Fish & Game (DFG) is the overall project authority, as owners and managers of the HCWA. The San Diego County Fish & Wildlife Federation (SDCWF) will be the lead non-governmental organization (NGO), representing over 20 other NGOs.

Potential additional partners to the SDCWF include Sierra Club, Jamul Trails Council, Inc., San Diego Audubon Society, San Diego Native Plant Society and the Defenders of Wildlife. SDCWF partners that will take an active role in this Plan include the North

American Versatile Hunting Dog Association, San Diego Sporting Dog Club, German Shorthair Pointer Club, San Diego Hunting Retriever Club, San Diego Retriever and Field Trail Club, and the Boy Scouts of America.

5.0 Project Phases, Focus Areas and Tasks

This project is divided into three phases: Near Term, Mid Term and Long Term. Additionally, each phase is divided into focus areas of project activity, as well as individual project tasks. The project phases are expected to be accomplished in sequence, as are the focus areas and project tasks. The early phases are designed to develop infrastructure that are required to be in place, before later phases of the project can begin.

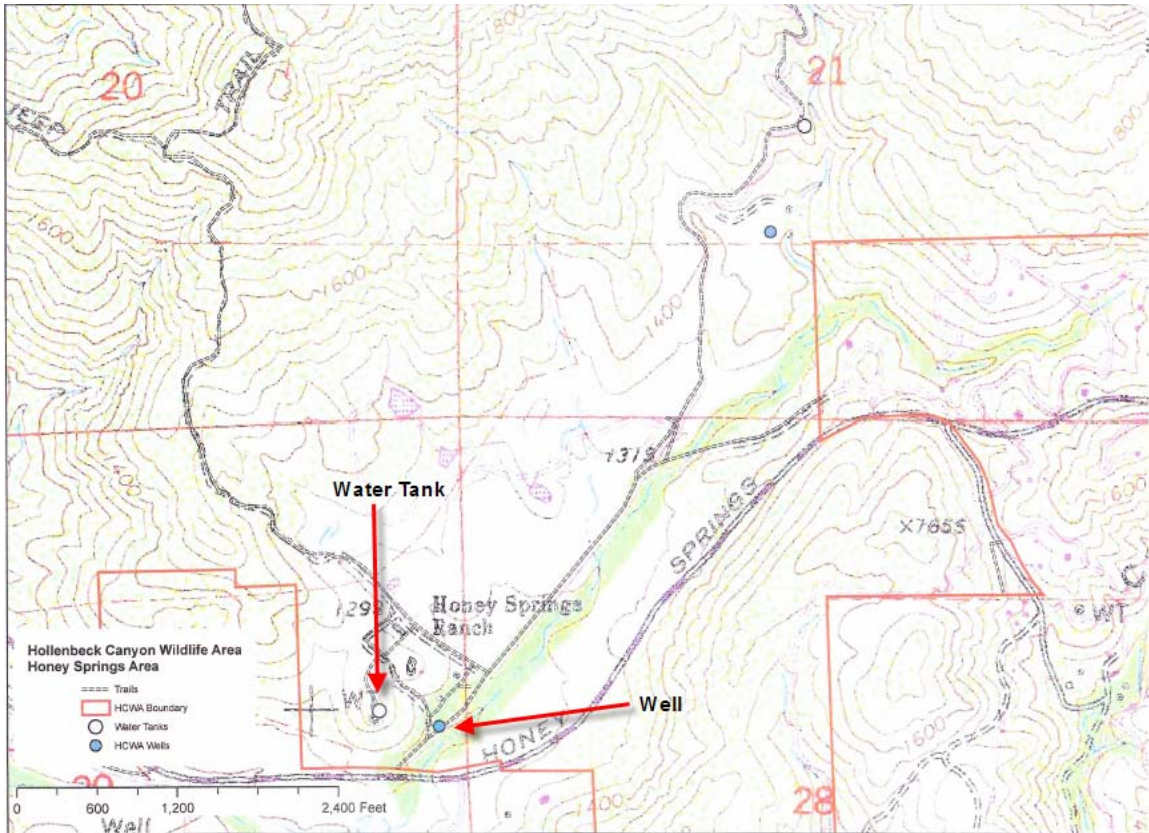
5.1 *Near Term Phase*

5.1.1 Existing Well Pump, Cistern & Electrical Supply Focus Area

There is an existing well in the near term phase project area, near the Honey Springs Ranch Road entrance (see Figure 3). There is also a cistern located on a nearby hill that is connected to the well with PVC pipe, so that the pump in the well can fill the cistern and then the water supply in the cistern can be delivered via gravity feed at modest pressure for a variety of uses.

While the well currently has a 1 ½ HP, 230 volt, 10 gpm pump installed, the wildfires of October 2007 have severed the electrical connection between the pump and breaker box located at the nearby cabin, in addition to burning up the local pump controller, timer and switches. Part of the unburied PVC pipe has been destroyed as well. This existing water source will be used on a near term basis to supply water for fire safety, grading and irrigation purposes. In order to bring this current well back on line, the following tasks will need to be performed:

- 5.1.1.1 Replace power poles and line between the cabin and the well.
- 5.1.1.2 Replace pump controller, timer and switches.
- 5.1.1.3 Repair PVC pipe between the pump and the cistern.
- 5.1.1.4 Repair PVC pipe between the cistern and the various distribution points.
- 5.1.1.5 Install 6,500 gal. poly tank in cistern to prevent contamination and to eliminate liability risks.
- 5.1.1.6 Test water quality to ensure that it is potable.



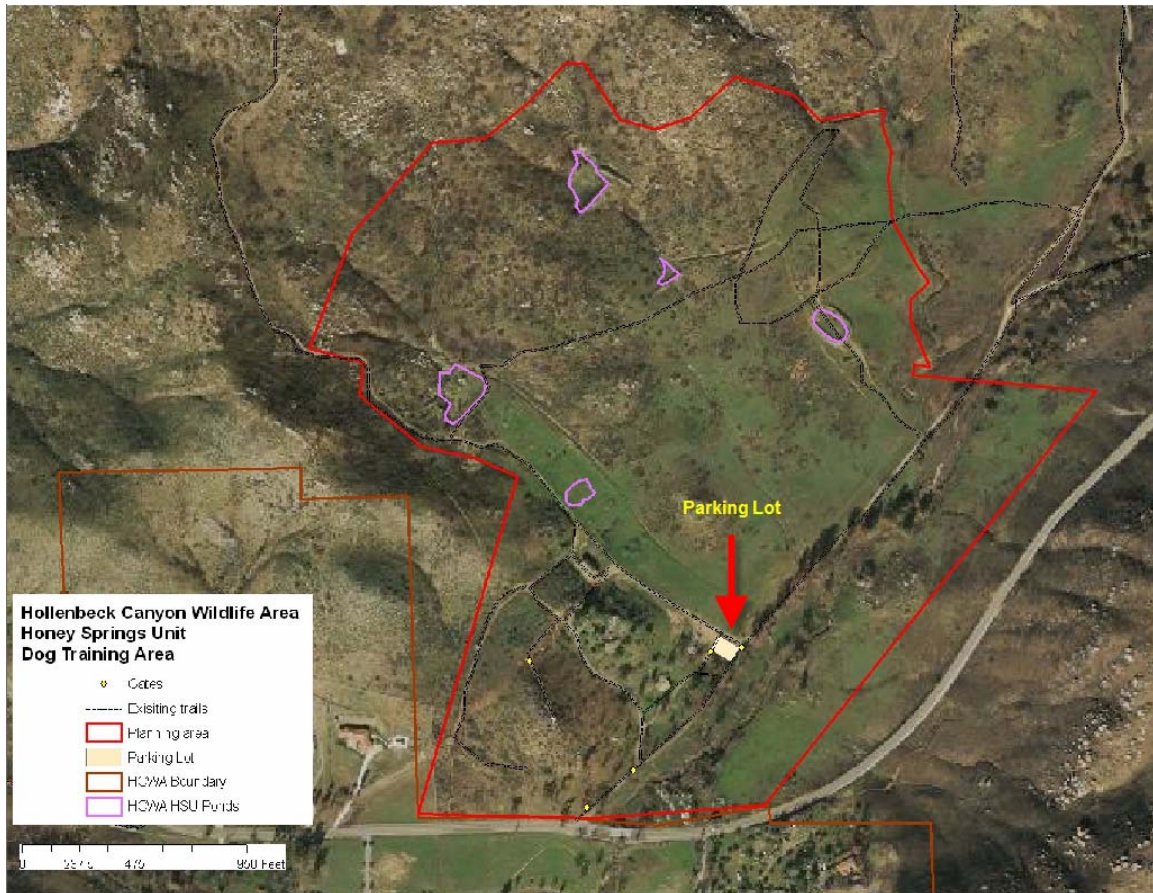
Location of Wells and Water Tanks

Figure 3

5.1.2 Access, Vehicle Parking & Staging Focus Area

It is highly desirable to have a vehicle parking area at, or very near, the actual dog training areas, as the dogs are worked only one or a few at a time and non-working dogs are staked out or kenneled in or near their handler's vehicles.

As indicated in Figure 4, there is an existing open area of approximately ½ acre near the existing cabin that is well suited to this need. However, the eucalyptus trees in this area were severely damaged in the October, 2007 wildfires and represent a safety hazard. These trees will need to be removed and replaced with native tree species, as part of the development of this area. Additionally, the area will need to be lightly graded, graveled and landscaped to provide a suitable all-weather vehicle parking and dog staging area.



Open Area for Parking Lot

Figure 4

In order to make the required improvements to these areas, the following tasks will need to be performed:

- 5.1.2.1 Remove damaged eucalyptus trees & grind stumps, as needed.
- 5.1.2.2 Lightly grade parking/staging area & cover with 2" of gravel.
[2,420 sq yards /18 sq yards per cubic yard @ 2" depth = 135 cubic yards]
- 5.1.2.3 Develop a landscaping design plan for the parking and staging area.
- 5.1.2.4 Landscape the area with suitable native plants, following submission of a plant palette to DFG for review and approval. In addition, add a micro-sprinkler/drip irrigation system that is connected to the cistern tank water source to initially and temporarily irrigate plants in order to get them established.
- 5.1.2.5 Coordinate with the Eagle Scout who will be doing a fence design and installation project in this area.

5.2 Mid Term Phase

The mid-term phase will need to take into consideration various state laws and procedures regarding public works and capital improvement projects. Fish and Game Code exempts some projects and allows NGOs to complete enhancement projects on the behalf of the Department in some circumstances. However, FGC 1501.5 (d)(2)

specifically lists drilling wells or installing pumping equipment as not exempt. A certified engineer will need to review, approve and oversee any well and pump equipment installation project. DFG will work with SDCWF to comply with these laws in furtherance of this Plan.

5.2.1 New Water Well Pump & Electrical Supply Focus Area

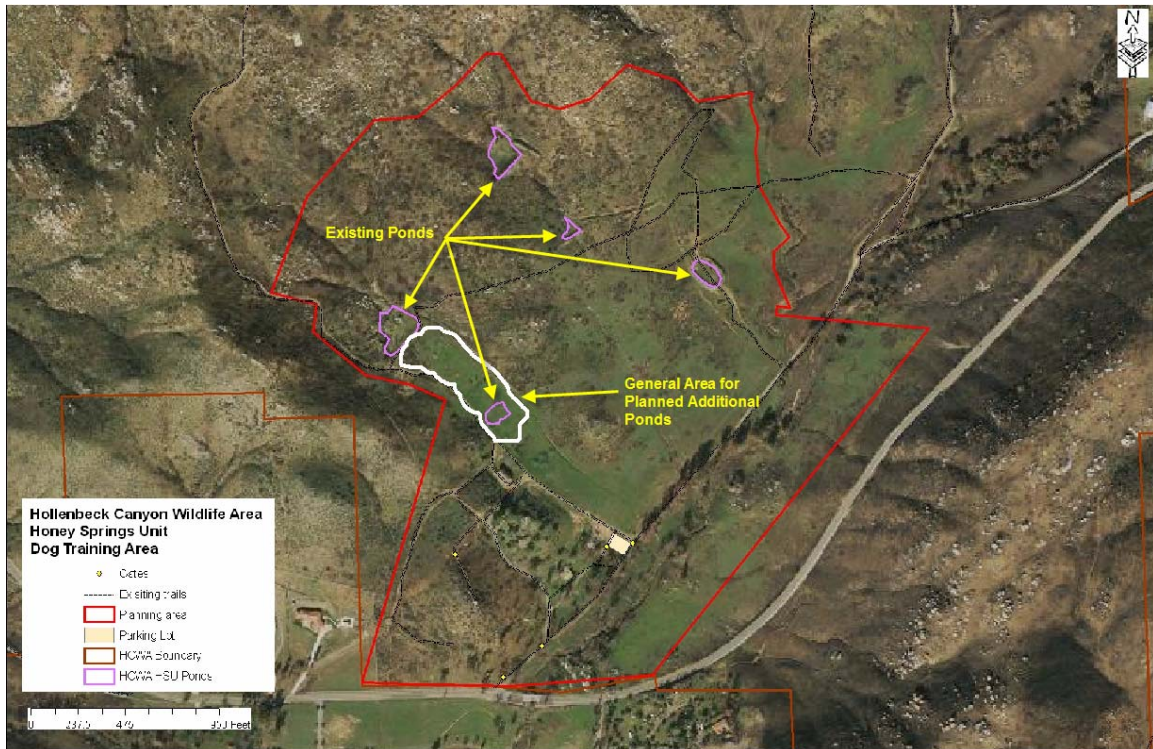
As identified in Section 5.1.1, there is an existing well on the property, near the Honey Springs Ranch Road entrance (see Figure 3). The current pump is considerably under capacity, both in terms of what the well is capable of producing (it was tested at 800 gpm for 96 hours when it was drilled) as well as for what the planned water needs for the dog training area are. Therefore, a new pump in the 15 HP range is required, capable of delivering water at a rate of 400 gpm. In order to efficiently operate a submersible pump of this capacity, 3-phase 480-volt 30-kw electricity needs to be available at the wellhead. SDG&E has been contacted in this regard and they will be providing a cost estimate for supplying the requisite power.

5.2.1.1 Install 3-phase 480-volt 30-kw electricity supply.

5.2.1.2 Install 15 HP submersible pump, sized based on the measured well depth, with pump controller.

5.2.2 Development of Two, 1-2 Acre Ponds Focus Area

Two, 1 to 2 acre eco-friendly ponds will be designed and developed to capture and conserve rainfall and runoff, minimizing the need for pumped ground water. Additionally, the ponds will be sealed with sodium bentonite (BARA-KADE brand) clay to minimize water loss from seepage through the more porous native soil. Rather than rectangular or round in shape, the ponds will be contoured to match the surrounding natural elevations and drainages, with peninsulas and islands, to mimic natural formations. The pond banks will be gradual, promoting safe entry and exit of dogs, trainers and wildlife. While pond depths will vary, it is expected that they will be between 3' and 4' in most areas, with a maximum depth of no more than 10' when completely filled. To better shelter wildlife and provide a more realistic water training environment, the pond perimeters will be planted with non-invasive vegetation selected from DFG's plant palette. Figure 5 shows the general area planned for the two ponds, with the final location and design pending a detailed elevation and grading analysis survey.



Existing and Planned Additional Ponds

Figure 5

- 5.2.2.1 Perform pond design and grading analysis survey, cultural and biological assessments in project area. Conduct appropriate environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and obtain permits as required (401). It should be noted that the Land Management Plan (LMP) is expected to be used as the umbrella Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document for this project to eliminate duplication efforts to the maximum extent possible.
- 5.2.2.2 Perform grading for pond creation, following pond design grading analysis and state statutes for public works and capital improvement projects..
- 5.2.2.3 Line ponds with sodium bentonite (BARA-KADE brand) at a rate of 200 lbs per 100 sq.-ft., approximately 2-inch thickness, covering with at least 1-inch of friable native soil.
- 5.2.2.4 Install spillways and culvert pipes between ponds.

5.2.3 Repair of Existing Ponds and Water Channels Focus Area

As shown in Figure 5, there are several existing ponds and water channels that have fallen into disrepair. The ponds need to be rebuilt where they have breached and also need to be lined with sodium bentonite (BARA-KADE brand) clay, to minimize water loss from seepage through the more porous native soil. Additionally, the water channels needs to be redesigned to minimize soil erosion during periods of extreme rain runoff, using buried plastic culvert pipe of sufficient size to handle the anticipated flows. The overall design to be followed is that upper ponds will fill and spill into lower ponds, using the culvert pipe water channels for drainage.

- 5.2.3.1 Evaluate & design necessary pond & water channel repairs. Conduct cultural and biological assessments in project area. Conduct appropriate environmental review pursuant to CEQA and obtain permits as required. It should be noted that the Land Management Plan (LMP) is expected to be used as the umbrella Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document for this project to eliminate duplication efforts to the maximum extent possible.
- 5.2.3.2 Perform grading for pond repair and water channels, pursuant to state statutes for public works and capital projects.
- 5.2.3.3 Line ponds with sodium bentonite (BARA-KADE brand) at a rate of 200 lbs per 100 sq.-ft., approximately 2-inch thickness, covering with at least 1-inch of friable native soil.
- 5.2.3.4 Install spillways & culvert pipes between ponds.

5.2.4 Installation of Water Main Between Well & Ponds Focus Area

A 3-inch PVC water main needs to be installed between the well and the uppermost ponds, to supply augmentation water between periods of rainfall. The water main must also include branches and valves to allow selective filling of individual ponds, should the need arise to allow some ponds to go dry, while keeping others full.

- 5.2.4.1 Design water main system between well and all ponds. Conduct cultural and biological assessments in project area. Conduct appropriate environmental review pursuant to CEQA and obtain permits as required. It should be noted that the Land Management Plan (LMP) is expected to be used as the umbrella Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document for this project to eliminate duplication efforts to the maximum extent possible.
- 5.2.4.2 Dig water main trenches.
- 5.2.4.3 Install 3-inch PVC water main & valves.
- 5.2.4.4 Fill in all trenches.

5.2.5 Upland Dog Training Area Focus Area

Upland dog training necessitates both ponds as well as open fields of at least 10 acres, with sufficient vegetation to allow the planting and concealment of upland game birds (e.g., rooster pheasants) to allow the dog to perform an effective search. While fields of this description already exist on the property, some cleanup of illegal dumping and debris is required. Additionally, a thorough scouring of the area to identify and remove any hazards such as barbed wire and broken glass needs to be performed. All of these activities are expected to be conducted by volunteer labor at no significant cost. This Focus Area project will require little to no environmental review or obtaining of permits and can be easily scheduled.

5.2.6 Habitat Enhancements for Wildlife Focus Area

Native flora can be found on the property in great abundance. Unfortunately, some non-native and invasive plants (eucalyptus and pepper trees for example) are also on the property. These plants need to be cut down and the debris piled into brush piles to provide nesting and defensive cover for a variety of wildlife, including California quail, rabbits, rodents and reptiles.

Additionally, the planting of native species such as *atriplex lentiformis* (quail bush), oak and sycamore trees, yucca, sage and other suitable native plants will help to restore the area to a native state, while also providing important food sources and cover for wildlife. A plant palette will be agreed upon by DFG during the design phase of this project.

All of these activities are expected to be conducted by volunteer labor at no significant cost. This Focus Area project will require little to no environmental review or obtaining of permits and can be easily scheduled.

5.3 Long Term Phase

The management and monitoring of this area will be under direction of the California Department of Fish & Game, with augmentation provided by the aforementioned project partners. It is said that nothing lasts forever and this is especially true when an area is subjected to continual use, even when that use is consistent with the intended purposes of the property.

Because of the proximity of the property to known corridors of illegal migrant traffic, additional stresses and vandalism damage can be expected to periodically occur. To that end, status monitoring and repairs are expected to be continually required.

Aquatic weed control and potential sedimentation of the ponds are other areas that are expected to require ongoing attention, to prevent cattails and other aquatic weeds from getting out of control.

A schedule of proposed maintenance and operational tasks, and a proposed plan that addresses funding to operate pumps will be provided to the DFG prior to approval and construction of any of the above listed projects and phases. Staffing, Site Security, and Operations need to assume the DFG will not be able to supply resources beyond the current level. The Project Partners and DFG will collectively strategize how funds might be raised and allocated to ensure the area is managed and maintained properly.

Finally, one or two additional ponds may be added in the future, water supply and terrain allowing, especially if the level of usage of the other ponds has reached saturation.

6.0 Schedule & Estimated Costs

The attached project schedule and estimated costs are based on having everything sequenced, with all materials, labor and funding being immediately available, as each of the various tasks is scheduled to commence. Obviously, the reality will be something else and the schedule and cost estimates are expected to need continual updating and revision, as the project progresses.

Note that only the near and mid term phases are explicitly included in the schedule and cost estimates, since they are one-time events rather than recurring maintenance in nature.