

5.0 MANAGEMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS AND LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

MCAS Miramar's overall strategy for conservation and management is to (1) limit activities, avoid development, and perform mitigation actions in areas supporting high densities of predominantly vernal pools, threatened or endangered species, and other wetlands and (2) manage activities and development in areas of low densities, or no regulated resources, with site-specific measures and programmatic instructions. MCAS Miramar has developed Management Areas (MAs) to highlight the area's supporting differing regulated resources. MAs also serve as a basis for planning natural resource management actions. Regardless of sensitivity, all of MCAS Miramar's undeveloped areas will be subject to natural resource management, conservation, and best management practices. As a result, all undeveloped areas of MCAS Miramar will continue to provide for wildlife movement and dispersal. However, this INRMP does not dictate land use decisions but rather provides important resource information to support sound land use decisions and natural resource management. Although the Station's overall strategy is to avoid developments and limit activities in areas supporting high densities of endangered species and wetlands, this may not always be possible.

5.1 MANAGEMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS

MAs were identified on the Station primarily to support the conservation and management of Special Status Species, wetlands, and other areas identified by the HEM as warranting special attention. These designations reflect MCAS Miramar's general management strategy for the Station and are intended to be interpreted by program managers and technical experts for application to specific issues. Whenever possible, MA boundaries follow existing landmarks, such as roads, fuelbreaks, fence lines, and streambeds, to facilitate identification in the field. Generally, there was a tradeoff between the use of existing landmarks as the MA boundaries and the inclusion of all similar resources within the area. The decision of when to change from following landmarks as borders was subjective, but was based on optimizing the use of landmarks while minimizing the inclusion of other resource levels within a MA. Similarly, there was a tradeoff between the inclusion of areas with differing management requirements that are isolated and those easily grouped and included in a MA.

The proximity of high value resources (e.g., vernal pools) on the Main Station and South/West Miramar to developed areas made the design of a MA with a low edge-to-area ratio impractical in those sectors. However, due to the generally undeveloped nature of East Miramar, there was an opportunity to design the MAs in a less confined manner using existing landmarks (e.g., roads, fuelbreaks, ridge lines, etc.) thereby improving field identification of boundaries. In most cases, using field landmarks also increased the area encompassed within the MA, thereby increasing the area receiving a higher level of conservation and reducing the edge-to-area ratio. MAs specifically delineated for Special Status Species were drawn relatively tightly around those resources (e.g., California gnatcatcher habitat), reflecting the need for special management and attention to these areas in consideration of the special regulatory compliance requirements for Special Status Species and their habitat.

The entire MCAS Miramar land area has been placed into MAs (Figure 17). For planning purposes, the MAs are organized by levels based on differing resource conservation requirements and management concerns as described in the following sections.

5.1.1 Level I MAs

Level I MAs support nearly all vernal pool basins and watersheds and some closely associated coastal California gnatcatcher territories (Table 3). The highest conservation priority in these areas for MCAS Miramar is to take proactive measures to prevent damage to vernal pool resources. The special conservation requirements necessary to maintain the integrity of vernal pool resources on the Station are being highlighted by this MA designation for incorporation into Station Orders and the National Environmental Policy Act planning process. Measures include posting signs and fencing, identifying potential impacts from activities by lessees and right-of-way holders, developing procedures to respond to and fix accidental impacts on vernal pools and Special Status Species; and developing education programs to create and maintain awareness of the values of vernal pools. These proactive measures are taken to avoid accidental impacts in Level I MAs. Inventory of vernal pool basins and watersheds will continue to be maintained and updated to support proactive planning and impact avoidance. Details of these management and conservation initiatives are provided in Chapter 7.

5.1.2 Level II MAs

Conservation needs in Level II MAs focus on the California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, willow monardella, and Del Mar manzanita (refer to Table 3). Other regulated resources, such as isolated vernal pool basins within the MA, also will be conserved with additional site-specific measures, as needed. Conservation goals for Level II MAs are to maintain and, where feasible, enhance populations of California gnatcatchers, least Bell's vireos, willow monardella, and other natural resources while maintaining maximum compatible use for operational requirements. Management considerations include avoiding or minimizing the effect of planned actions on endangered species and wetlands, thereby also minimizing associated activity approval delays and mitigation to meet regulatory requirements.

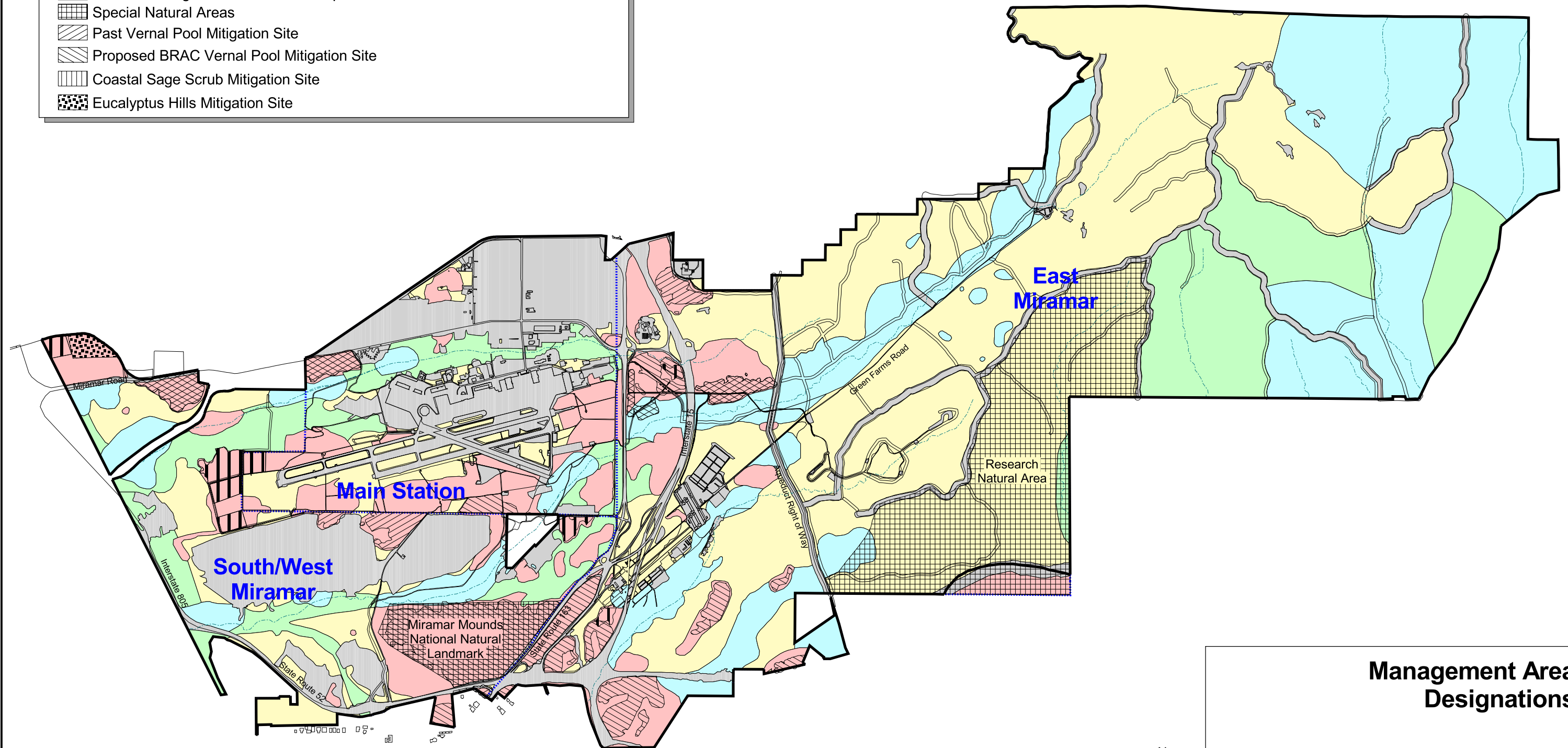
Such considerations will include avoidance of adverse effects on California gnatcatcher or least Bell's vireo reproductive success by limiting activities within the MAs during the California gnatcatcher breeding season (15 February through 31 August). Due to an ongoing study on the effects of helicopter noise on the California gnatcatcher, efforts must be made to avoid impacts on gnatcatchers and their associated habitat until the end of the study to maintain statistically valid results. The study is scheduled to be completed in September 2001.

TABLE 3 VERNAL POOLS, SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES, AND OTHER SPECIES OF REGIONAL SPECIAL CONCERN BY MANAGEMENT AREA						
Vernal Pool/Species	Management Area Level					
	I	II	III	IV	V ¹	Totals
Vernal Pool Basins: number ¹	3,568	75	47	62	121	3873
Percent of total	92.1	2.0	1.2	1.6	3.1	100
Vernal Pool Basins: acres ¹	115.4	1.7	0.5	1.5	4.5	123.6
Percent of total	93.4	1.4	0.4	1.2	3.6	100
Vernal Pool Watersheds: acres ¹	1,693.0	20.3	16.0	40.4	73.0	1,842.7
Percent of total	91.9	1.1	0.9	2.2	3.9	100
San Diego Button-celery : number of basins	221	8	2	0	4	235
Percent of total ²	94.0	3.4	0.9	0	1.7	100
San Diego Button-celery: acres of basins	11.7	0.7	0	0	0.2	12.6
Percent of total ²	92.8	5.6	0	0	1.6	100
Spreading Navarretia : number of basins	7	0	0	0	0	7
Percent of total ²	100	0	0	0	0	100
Spreading Navarretia: acres of basins	1.8	0	0	0	0	1.8
Percent of total ²	100	0	0	0	0	100
San Diego Mesa Mint : number of basins	228	0	0	0	2	230
Percent of total ²	99.1	0	0	0	0.9	100
San Diego Mesa Mint: acres of basins	9.4	0	0	0	0.03	9.43
Percent of total ²	99.7	0	0	0	0.3	100
California Orcutt Grass: number of basins	1	0	0	0	0	1
Percent of total ²	100	0	0	0	0	100
California Orcutt Grass: acres of basins	0.05	0	0	0	0	0.05
Percent of total ²	100	0	0	0	0	100
San Diego Fairy Shrimp: number of basins	A high proportion of vernal pools on MCAS Miramar support this species. No comprehensive data exist.					
Percent of total						
San Diego Fairy Shrimp: acres of basins	A high proportion of vernal pools on MCAS Miramar support this species. No comprehensive data exist.					
Percent of total						
Riverside Fairy Shrimp: number of basins	1	0	0	0	0	1
Percent of total	100	0	0	0	0	100
Riverside Fairy Shrimp: acres of basins	0.6	0	0	0	0	0.6
Percent of total	100	0	0	0	0	100
Willow Monardella: number of sites	1	102	24	1	0	128
Percent of total	0.8	79.7	18.7	0.8	0	100
Del Mar Manzanita: acres	0	28.7	0	0	0	28.7
Percent of total	0	100	0	0	0	100
Coastal California Gnatcatcher: number of current and historic locations / Percent of total ³	91 14.4	459 72.5	19 3.0	43 6.8	21 3.3	633 100

TABLE 3 VERNAL POOLS, SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES, AND OTHER SPECIES OF REGIONAL SPECIAL CONCERN BY MANAGEMENT AREA						
Vernal Pool/Species	Management Area Level					
	I	II	III	IV	V ¹	Totals
Coastal California Gnatcatcher: acres currently or historically occupied / Percent of total ³	241.6 13.0	1392.5 75.2	16.7 0.9	51.3 2.8	150.9 8.1	1,853.0 100
Least Bell's Vireo (territory): numbers of locations / Percent of total	0 0	1 100	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100
Hermes Cooper Butterfly: acres of habitat Percent of total ²	0 0	58.4 39.0	0 0	91.4 61.0	0 0	149.8 100
San Diego Horned Lizard: numbers of locations ²	29 38.7	16 21.3	10 13.3	17 22.7	3 4.0	75 100
Orange-throated Whiptail: numbers of locations / Percent of total ²	2 9.1	8 36.4	9 40.9	2 9.1	1 4.5	22 100
Burrowing Owl: numbers of locations/ Percent of total ²	0 0	0 0	0 0	3 100	0 0	3 100
Coastal Cactus Wren: numbers of locations Percent of total ²	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100	0 0	1 100
Rufus Crowned Sparrow: numbers of locations / Percent of total ²	0 0	5 6.3	12 15.0	54 67.5	9 11.2	80 100
Sage Sparrow: numbers of locations/ Percent of total ²	0 0	4 5.7	9 12.9	54 77.1	3 4.3	70 100
¹ The majority of vernal pool basins and vernal pool watersheds listed under Management Area Level V are a result of inaccurate mapping and coverage overlay problems. Mapping errors that exist in the data will be resolved as these areas are mapped using a Global Positioning System with sub-meter accuracy ² Comprehensive surveys for these species have not been completed for the entire Station. ³ The annual gnatcatcher population on MCAS Miramar has ranged from 53 to 59 pairs between 1994 and 1998. Gnatcatcher data include habitat use information from Hunsaker et al. (1994, 1995, 1997) and Hunsaker and Awbrey (unpublished data). Gnatcatcher location information also includes data from Ogden (1996a).						

Legend

- Level I Management Areas - Vernal pools and associated watersheds
- Level II Management Areas - Non-vernal pool threatened and endangered species
- Level III Management Areas - Habitat linkages/riparian vegetation
- Level IV Management Areas - Remaining undeveloped areas
- Level V Management Areas - Developed areas
- Special Natural Areas
- Past Vernal Pool Mitigation Site
- Proposed BRAC Vernal Pool Mitigation Site
- Coastal Sage Scrub Mitigation Site
- Eucalyptus Hills Mitigation Site



Management Area Designations

MCAS Miramar

Figure 17

All off-road activities, including foot traffic, will be minimized during the active growth stage of willowy monardella to avoid habitat damage and crushing of plants. Vehicle operation will be allowed only on existing roads and fuelbreaks.

Accidental or unintentional damage will be prevented by implementing site-specific measures, such as fencing where an isolated vernal pool may be threatened. Other measures will be implemented depending on the resources involved. Mitigation efforts directed at habitat enhancement or compensation for impacts to California gnatcatcher, willowy monardella, and Del Mar manzanita would be targeted for implementation in Level I and II MAs prior to implementation in Level III, IV, or V MAs.

5.1.3 Level III MAs

Level III MAs support riparian vegetation and habitat linkages not contained within Level I and II MAs. While all undeveloped areas on MCAS Miramar function as important habitat linkages, Level III MAs support areas also identified as important local or regional wildlife corridors (refer to Section 4.5). Outside of wetlands, these areas can support vehicle traffic on existing roads, fuelbreaks, and developed sites, as well as off-road foot traffic without adversely affecting the area's natural resource values. Wetlands encompassed by these MAs include vernal marshes, fresh water marshes, and portions of some riparian vegetation types. As is the case with vernal pools, management and use of these areas gives careful consideration of the Clean Water Act (CWA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the national policy (Executive Order 11990) to permit no overall net loss of wetlands. MCAS Miramar will support proactive planning and impact avoidance through inventorying and mapping of wetlands.



West Sycamore Canyon

Natural Resources Division

5.1.4 Level IV MAs

Remaining undeveloped areas not in Levels I, II, or III MAs have been delineated as Level IV MAs. These areas do not support substantial high value/regulated natural resources such as vernal pool basins and watersheds or California gnatcatcher habitat (refer to Table 3). High value natural resources within Level IV MAs are very isolated and will be managed and conserved with site-specific management and conservation measures. When planning future actions in Level IV MAs, potential impacts on wildlife movement will be thoroughly assessed. While Level IV MAs have not been highlighted as requiring special consideration, this does not imply they will be developed in the future. New required developments would first be considered for placement in Level V MAs first. These areas can support foot and vehicle traffic for a wide variety of MCAS Miramar's operational requirements with minimal overall impact on the Station's special natural resources.

5.1.5 Level V MAs

Level V MAs are developed areas that support few unaltered natural landscapes and therefore almost no high value natural resources. These areas will be considered first for placement of new facilities or other new land uses which would be likely to impact regulated resources. Management objectives for these areas include ensuring that grounds maintenance and landscaping operations are consistent with natural resource goals and objectives. The Station will discourage the use of invasive exotic plants, such as those listed by the Exotic Pest Plant Council and CNPS, for landscaping; ensure that the flightline mowing practices are consistent with the Bird and Animal Air Strike Hazard (BAASH) program and endangered species management; and keep pesticide use to a minimum. Given the proximity of many developed areas to high value and sensitive natural resources highlights the importance of these measures. Natural resource related management objectives for these developed areas are detailed in Chapter 7.

5.1.6 Other MA Design Considerations

In the Biological Opinion (1-6-95-F-33) for the Realignment of NAS Miramar to MCAS Miramar, the USFWS provides specific considerations that were included in the development of this INRMP. MCAS Miramar's need to maintain undeveloped open space in its accident potential zones and safety arcs to meet its military operational requirements (refer to Figure 3) results in retaining large interconnected blocks of unfragmented habitat that support a wide range of species. Another consideration is to retain full viability of each core California gnatcatcher population, which is accomplished through the design of the Level II MA that support California gnatcatcher territories. Linkages between Level II MAs are maintained largely through the conservation of Level III MAs as well as undeveloped areas within Level IV MAs. The Level I, II, and III MAs delineate various levels and types of management attention needed to conserve Special Status Species, vernal pools, habitat linkages, and other important resources. They do not represent intentions for disregarding natural resources in Level IV and V MAs.

On the Main Station and South/West sectors of MCAS Miramar the Level I, II, and III MAs are relatively discrete and reflect the distribution of vernal pool watersheds, California gnatcatcher territories, and east-west wildlife corridors associated with Rose and San Clemente canyons. These areas are interspersed and in close proximity to developed areas. The configuration of MAs in easternmost Miramar highlights the need for conservation of California gnatcatcher habitat, sites occupied by the endangered willow monardella, and riparian wetlands with consideration for maintenance of tracts of undeveloped lands to provide for wildlife habitat connectivity. Easternmost MCAS Miramar serves as an important regional linkage to adjacent open areas. These larger MAs in the easternmost portion of the Station reflect both differing land use history (e.g., training areas versus concentrations of facilities) and distribution of the resources.

5.2 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

To ensure land use compatibility of actions at MCAS with natural resources, the Station follows National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures in evaluating environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures expected to result from each action. Part of this process is to ensure compliance with all applicable environmental and natural resources regulations. The Environmental Management Department will involve the appropriate regulatory agencies to obtain federal permits and concurrences. MCAS Miramar will accomplish its legal requirements (for permits, consultations, and authorizations) under the ESA, CWA, and NEPA, and other laws and regulations, prior to making determinations on compatibility (refer to Appendix A and Chapter 6, Project and Mitigation Planning for more information regarding MCAS Miramar's legal requirements for compliance as well as planning time lines for regulatory compliance). Approvals of actions as compatible, with appropriate conditions, will be provided programmatically where possible for incorporation into other Station Orders, instructions, guidelines, standard operating procedures, plans, projects, and maintenance actions. The current Station Ground Training Order with its environmental protection section is one such example. Information provided in this chapter, and other portions of this INRMP, is for technical guidance to persons planning and/or preparing such Station approvals. This INRMP does not dictate land use decisions but rather provides important resource information to support sound land use decisions and natural resource management.

5.2.1 General Compatibility Considerations Relative to Management Areas

The MAs reflect the degree to which the natural resources are regulated, and therefore limit planning options. Regulatory constraints on land uses relative to MAs are hierarchical in nature. The most constrained areas of use are those supporting vernal pools and the least constraints are placed on use of developed areas. The greatest priority for habitat conservation is for vernal pools and associated watersheds (Level I) with the priority decreasing with each MA level (i.e., Level V has the lowest priority for habitat conservation). The MA levels will make those proposing actions at MCAS Miramar aware of the regulatory requirements and potential use limitations early in the planning process. Reconfiguration of the MA would be considered if changes in protective status of a species occurs (i.e., new listings) or land use requirements change.

Approval of uses within Level I MAs will take into consideration the integrity of the vernal pool resources since the vast majority of vernal pools are supported by these areas. For many uses the potential impacts will be eliminated, or greatly reduced, by specific conditions. The primary compatibility considerations in Level II MAs are California gnatcatchers and the willow monardella, due to the presence of habitat for these two species in these areas. Avoiding adverse impacts on California gnatcatcher survival or reproduction, or adversely modifying habitat within a California gnatcatcher territory in a significant way, is the primary consideration. Further, due to an ongoing study on the effects of helicopter noise on the California gnatcatcher, efforts must be made to avoid impacts on gnatcatchers and their associated habitat until the end of the study to maintain statistically valid results. The study is scheduled to be completed in September 2001. The relatively recent identification of least Bell's vireo habitat in a Level II MA will be afforded the same considerations. Frequency, duration, and intensity of the use will be important factors to consider. Use of Level III MAs will take into account the importance of conserving connections of larger habitat blocks, conserving riparian areas, and the presence of wetlands associated with the riparian vegetation. Avoidance of habitat fragmentation is an important consideration at the Main Station and South/West Miramar sectors.

Level IV MAs also support some sensitive and protected resources, but they do not support the extensive areas of regulated resources supported by Level I, II, and III MAs. As a result, use of Level IV MAs would have fewer limitations on uses since areas with greater regulatory constraints would have been avoided early in the planning process. While impacts on high value patches of habitat would still be avoided to the extent possible, Level IV MAs would be given first consideration for siting new uses outside of developed areas. Any new uses would remain subject to all general requirements for use as well as other applicable regulations. Level V MAs, given that they are mostly developed, will be considered first for placement of needed development. Many developed areas at MCAS Miramar occur adjacent to sensitive natural resource areas which will be taken into consideration when planning and conducting activities. Further, some isolated, high value natural resources (e.g., vernal pools, California gnatcatcher habitat) occur within Level V MAs which will also require appropriate management and conservation considerations.

5.2.2 General Requirements for All Areas

Many actions at MCAS Miramar require prior consultation with, and approval by, the Environmental Management Department or other cognizant department. The Environmental Management Department will determine the type and level of regulatory agency coordination and permitting that is required. Refer to project planning guidance in Chapter 6 for more detailed information. These general requirements reflect MCAS Miramar's strategy to take site-specific measures to provide special protection to isolated sensitive resources regardless of MA designation. General requirements for all areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Actions with the potential to affect the environment require NEPA compliance as required by MCO P5090.2A (Environmental Compliance and Protection Manual, Chapter 5).

- When planning to locate new facilities or concentrated military operations in or adjacent to MAs supporting large concentrations of threatened and endangered species habitat or wetlands (Levels I, II, and III MAs) the effects of such actions on those resources must be evaluated. This is particularly important when considering actions in smaller areas rated as Level I and II MAs.
- Public Works Department site approval is required for all facilities related activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, development, reconstruction, repairs, utilities, leases, and easements.
- Military operations require approval from Stations Operations (G-3) in accordance with existing Training Orders. For ground operations and training, the Ground Training Office must be contacted. Military operations are usually compatible if they do not affect species protected under the ESA, wetlands, or cultural resources.
- Unless it is an emergency, NO animals may be killed without prior approval from the Environmental Management Department. Activities that may affect birds, their nests, eggs, and/or feathers may require a Migratory Bird Treaty Act Permit from the USFWS, which needs to be coordinated through the Environmental Management Department.
- Actions that result in the possible introduction of hazardous material (including accidents) to a non-contained area must be approved by the Environmental Management Department. Any action that involves the use of hazardous substances in areas not designed for containment of these substances must be coordinated through the Environmental Management Department.
- Guidance on posted environmental protection signs and fencing must be followed.
- Actions that will dredge, fill, or damage a wetland (including vernal pools) require prior consultation with and permitting from the ACOE and USFWS pursuant to the Section 404 of the CWA and Section 7 of the ESA. Obtaining a permit or consultation with the regulatory agencies will be coordinated through the Environmental Management Department.
- Actions that may affect a threatened or endangered species may require prior consultation with, and the approval of USFWS pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA. Consultation with the regulatory agencies will be coordinated through the Environmental Management Department.
- Consideration must be given to the effects of proposed actions on wildlife movement corridors, especially those in the western portion of the Station, which are already highly constrained (see Chapter 4).
- Consideration of the preservation requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act must be addressed with the State Historic Preservation Office through the Environmental Management Department.

5.2.3 Actions Programmatically Compatible with Natural Resource Conservation

The following activities are considered programmatically compatible with natural resource conservation and do not require MCAS Miramar, Environmental Management Department, Natural Resource Division review. However, other Station approvals, such as from the Ground Training Office, and NEPA compliance may be required. Prior to conducting the following activities, reviews must occur to ensure that the general requirements for all areas (Section 5.2.2) are met.

- operation and use of existing developed facilities where no new natural resource damage occurs
- foot and vehicle traffic on existing roads, fuelbreaks, and developed sites
- off-road foot traffic in Level II MAs between 1 September and 14 February; and in Level III, IV, and V MAs all year
- minor ground disturbance in Level IV and V MAs, when wetlands are not involved (e.g., fighting holes)
- following approval of a revised MCAS Miramar Ground Training Order, use of blanks and smoke (smoke is from smoke grenades) in Level IV and V MAs all year and Level II and III MAs between 1 September and 14 February; where smoke is used, it will be only in previously cleared areas, such as existing roads, fuelbreaks, or other developed sites with approval from the MCAS Miramar Fire Department
- aircraft operations at more than 300 feet above ground level (AGL) and take-offs and landings at designated sites (includes use of and transit to and from Confined Area Landing, Mountainous Area Landing, and Heavy Lift sites)
- aircraft operations below 300 feet AGL in Level IV and V MAs and in Level I, II, and III MAs between 1 September and 14 February; undeveloped site landings in Level IV and V MAs
- maintenance activities where disturbance and activities occur entirely on developed or heavily disturbed sites except where vernal pool resources are involved
- maintenance activities in Level IV and V MAs, when wetlands are not involved and appropriate recontouring and seeding is done with seeding mixtures approved by Environmental Management Department, Natural Resources Division
- pesticide (including herbicides, rodenticides, and fungicides) application in Level V MAs and all developed facilities and maintained landscaping

- additional compatible actions may be identified in future revisions of this INRMP

5.3 MCAS MIRAMAR'S CONSERVATION CONTRIBUTION

The entire Station will be managed to support military operational requirements with conservation requirements in mind. MCAS Miramar recognizes the value of all natural resources, either locally or regionally, on the Station. Through maintaining open space for military operations, MCAS Miramar maintains important wildlife corridors; habitat linkages; populations of rare, threatened, and endangered species; and other natural resources. These military land use considerations, coupled with MCAS Miramar's management and conservation measures, results in the Station continuing to make a significant contribution to the conservation of the region's natural resources. MCAS Miramar's commitment to conserve high value natural resources is reflected in the acreage encompassed within Level I, II, and III MAs (refer to Table 3). The delineation of MAs is intended to focus conservation and management efforts. The distribution of vegetation and landcover types relative to MAs is reported in Table 4.

TABLE 4 VEGETATION AND LANDCOVER TYPES BY MANAGEMENT AREA						
	Management Area Level (acres)					
Vegetation/Landcover Type	I	II	III	IV	V	Totals
Coast Live Oak Woodlands	0	1.0	4.6	0	0	5.6
Vernal Marsh	8.3	17.6	18.8	11.5	0.3	56.5
Fresh Water Marsh	2.4	8.6	6.8	3.8	0	21.6
Native Grassland	7.1	2.0	4.6	16.6	0	30.3
Native/Non-Native Grassland	104.8	40.1	97.7	176.1	16.2	434.9
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	0.5	27.1	15.8	0	0	43.4
Southern Willow Oak Scrub	0	6.6	1.7	0.1	0.5	8.9
Mulefat Scrub	0	10.2	0	0	0	10.2
Sycamore Woodland Riparian	0.1	47.2	28.8	0.2	0	76.3
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest	2.5	0.7	26.4	3.2	0.1	32.9
Natural Flood Channel/Streambed	0.9	9.3	2.4	0.2	0	12.8
Open Water	4.0	20.3	4.8	4.6	0.1	33.8
Coastal Sage Scrub	293.4	1,638.0	737.9	889.9	52.8	3,612.0
Coastal Sage Scrub-Chaparral	29.0	106.0	87.3	224.0	10.8	457.1
Chamise Chaparral	886.2	1,216.3	557.2	3,159.7	142.4	5,961.8
Scrub Oak Chaparral	20.7	53.0	69.3	415.0	1.0	559.0
Mixed Chaparral	81.4	695.1	466.8	1,785.6	79.7	3,108.6
Ceanothus Chaparral	0	62.3	8.3	38.4	2.0	111.0

TABLE 4						
VEGETATION AND LANDCOVER TYPES BY MANAGEMENT AREA						
	Management Area Level (acres)					
Vegetation/Landcover Type	I	II	III	IV	V	Totals
Non-Native Grassland	850.5	238.9	196.1	600.1	100.9	1,986.5
Disturbed Habitat	666.5	299.7	287.1	1,068.8	328.6	2,650.7
Eucalyptus Woodland	7.4	0.7	2.5	18.0	1.5	30.1
Developed	46.9	9.3	23.9	68.4	3,470.1	3,618.6
Totals	3,012.6	4,510.0	2,648.8	8,484.2	4,207.0	22,862.6

The MAs, or other special natural area designations on MCAS Miramar, can not be considered permanent preserves. Military lands can not be set aside as permanent environmental preserves due to DoD's requirement to maintain the flexibility to adapt the defense mission to political and technological developments (DoD Inst. 4715.3, para. F.1.i(4); refer to Appendix B). Even though MCAS Miramar is precluded from establishing permanent environmental preserves, it continues to make a significant contribution to conservation of regionally important natural resources.

City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) preserve approach to conservation is to establish a permanent MSCP preserve situated within a designated Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) (Figure 18). Portions of the MSCP planning area outside of the MHPA are opened to development in the very near future by virtue of the fact that they have not been identified for preservation. Although the Station's area designations are very different, the uses allowed within the MHPA and Level I, II and III MAs on MCAS Miramar are quite similar. Potential uses of the MAs were described earlier in this chapter. Use of the MHPAs includes such similar activities as passive recreation, (including hiking, bird watching, jogging, and biking), utility lines, road construction and maintenance, water facility development, low-density residential uses, brush management, and limited agriculture.

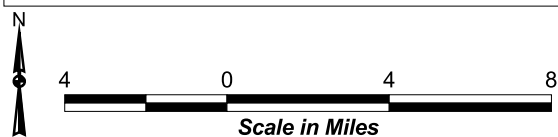
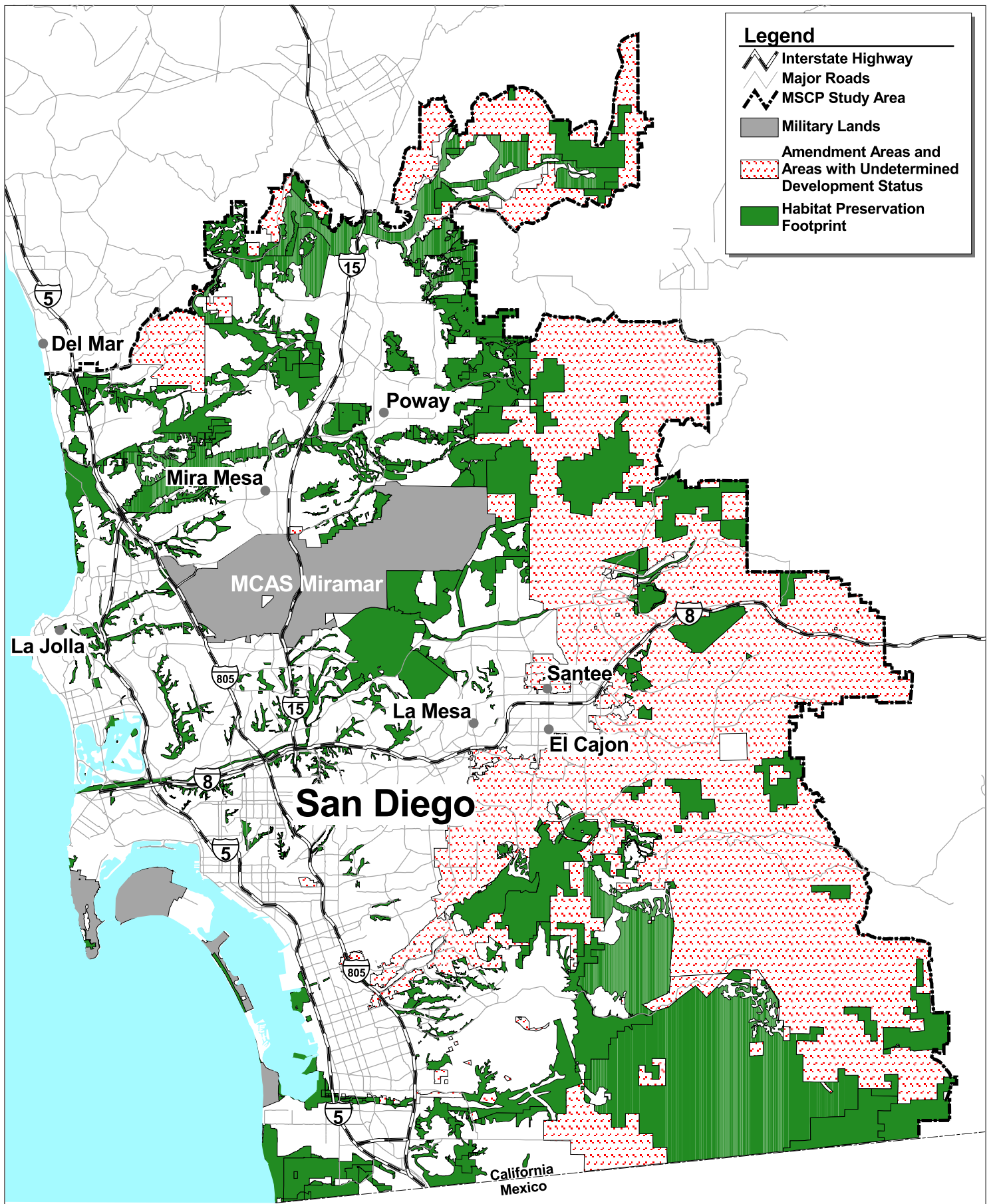
An important difference between the MSCP and an INRMP is that participants in the MSCP process receive authorization from the USFWS to incidentally take species protected under the Endangered Species Act from lands dedicated to preservation. There has been no commitment by these agencies to extend such authorizations to MCAS Miramar through implementation of this INRMP. Additionally, no "safe harbors" agreements are being provided. As detailed in Chapter 6, MCAS Miramar is required to obtain incidental take permits for future, proposed actions that may affect species protected under the Endangered Species Act. Also, the goals of the two processes are fundamentally different. The primary goal of the INRMP is to support military operational requirements while the MSCP seeks well-planned development. In terms of MCAS Miramar's relation to regional planning, it must also be recognized that the Station cannot be used for mitigating the impacts of actions occurring off of MCAS Miramar that affect natural resources (DoD Inst. 4715.3, para. F.1.i(3); refer to Appendix B), such as those occurring within portions of the MSCP planning area. DoD's policy precludes installations from accepting an unequal or disproportionate burden for conservation of these species unless A.... it is required by legal authority or it has been expressly determined that it is in the DoD's best interest.@ (DoD Inst. 4715.3, para. D.2.d; refer to Appendix B).

A comparison of coastal sage scrub conservation on the Station with the preservation goals of the MSCP provides a good example of the Station's commitment to conservation. The Level I, II, and III MAs on the Station are highlighted as requiring special management and conservation attention when making land use decisions. Collectively, these MAs encompass 74 percent of the coastal sage scrub on the Station. While these areas are not dedicated to preservation, regulatory and land use constraints will prevent any substantial loss of habitat value from these areas. This compares well with coastal sage scrub conservation of the MSCP MHPA (Figure 18) which plans to preserve 62 percent of this vegetation type occurring within the MSCP planning area. Further, because MCAS Miramar has no specific plans to develop the remaining 26 percent of the vegetation type occurring in the other MAs, a portion of this will be conserved due to operational requirements for open space and safety considerations. MCAS Miramar's natural resource management, as outlined in this INRMP, will ensure that Station lands continue to support regional conservation efforts. MCAS Miramar, along with other DoD installations, recognizes that degradation of the land degrades its use for realistic training, and thereby degrades readiness.



Coastal Sage Scrub

Natural Resources Division



Multi-Habitat Planning Area for the Multiple Species Conservation Program Study Area