

# WELCOME

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Laguna Canyon Conservancy

December 9th, 2024

**Alan Kaufmann**  
Interim Deputy Director





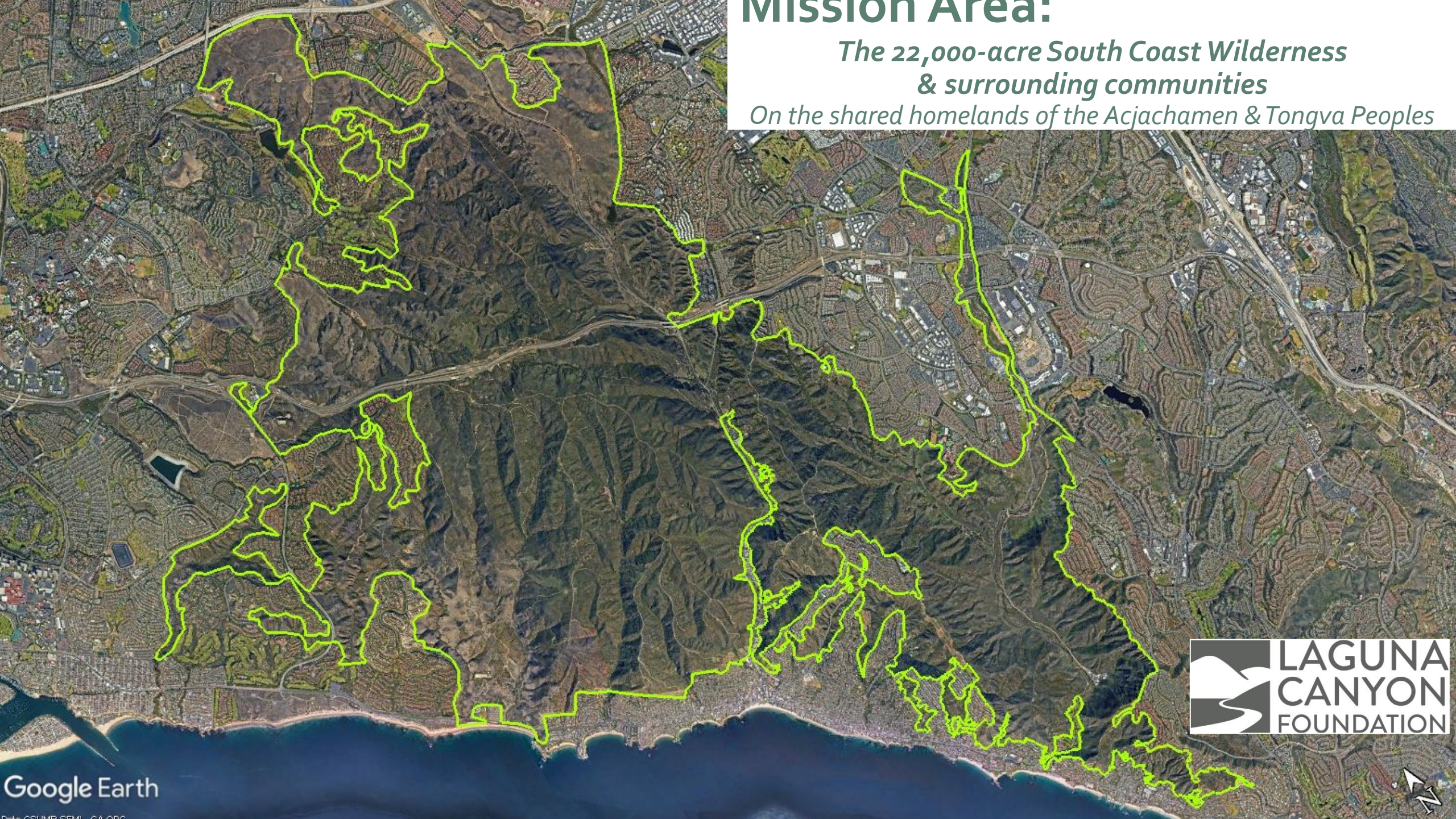
# History

- Laguna Canyon Foundation formed in 1990 to preserve approx. 2,000 acres from development
- Now more than 22,000 acres of preserved open space in the South Coast Wilderness.
- Preserving and protecting the open space with implemented programs that steward the land and educate park users.



# Mission Area:

*The 22,000-acre South Coast Wilderness  
& surrounding communities  
On the shared homelands of the Acjachamen & Tongva Peoples*



# Mission Statement

*Laguna Canyon Foundation is dedicated to the conservation and long-term protection of the South Coast Wilderness.*

*We envision thriving coastal ecosystem that serves as a source of inspiration, connection, and refuge for all.*





# Education





Outreach

# Trails





# Operations, Finance & Development



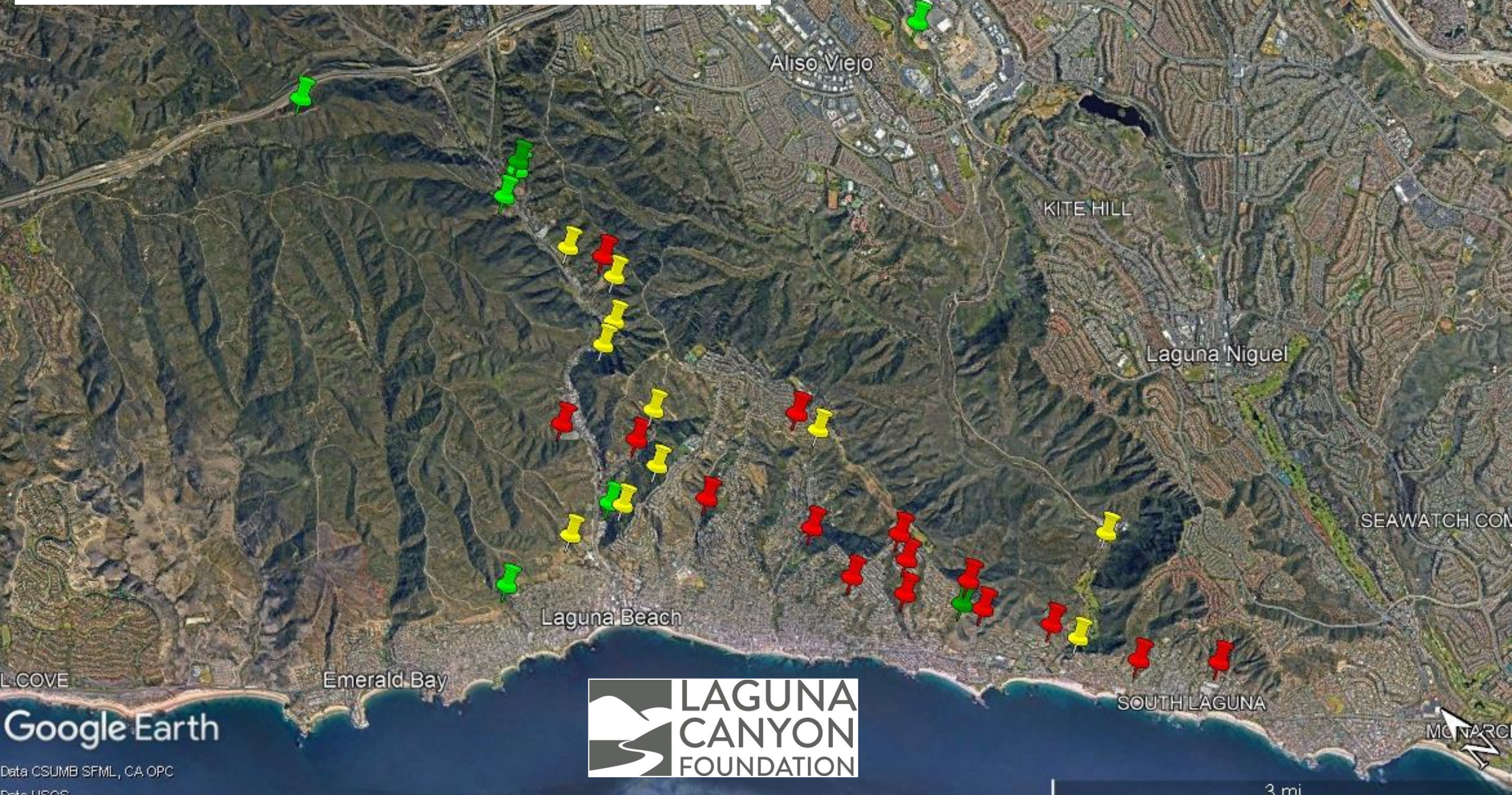




## Conservation Programs:

- Fuel Modification
- Land Management
- Habitat Restoration & Mitigation

# Current Conservation Projects



Google Earth

Data CSUMB SFML, CA OPC






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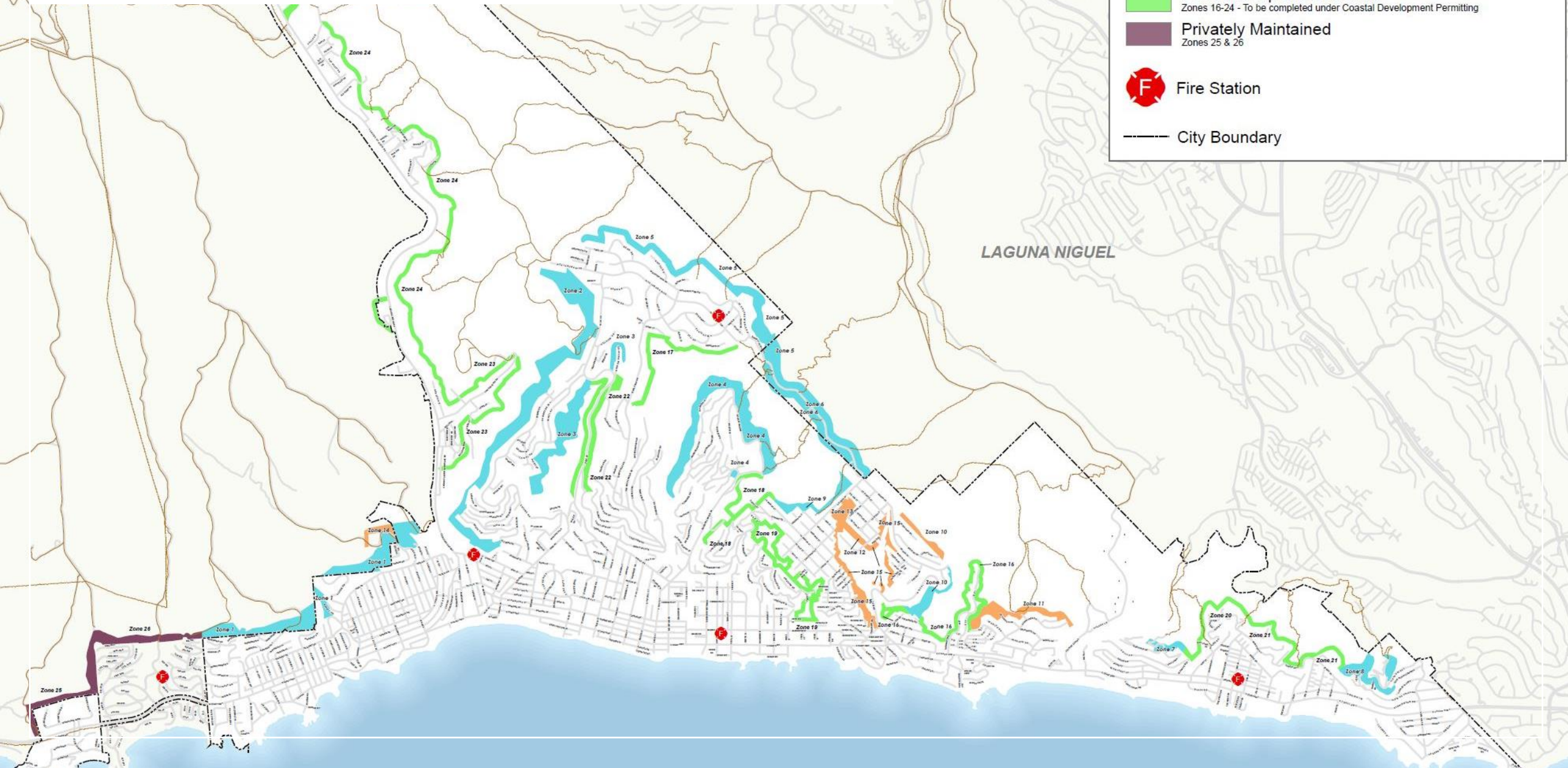


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# Fuel Modification Program

## Management Method

-  Grazing  
Zones 1-9 & 10 (partial - lower area only)
  -  Maintained Under Coastal Development Permitting  
Zones 11-15 & Zone 10 (partial - upper area only)
  -  Possible Expansion Zones  
Zones 16-24 - To be completed under Coastal Development Permitting
  -  Privately Maintained  
Zones 25 & 26
-  Fire Station
-  City Boundary

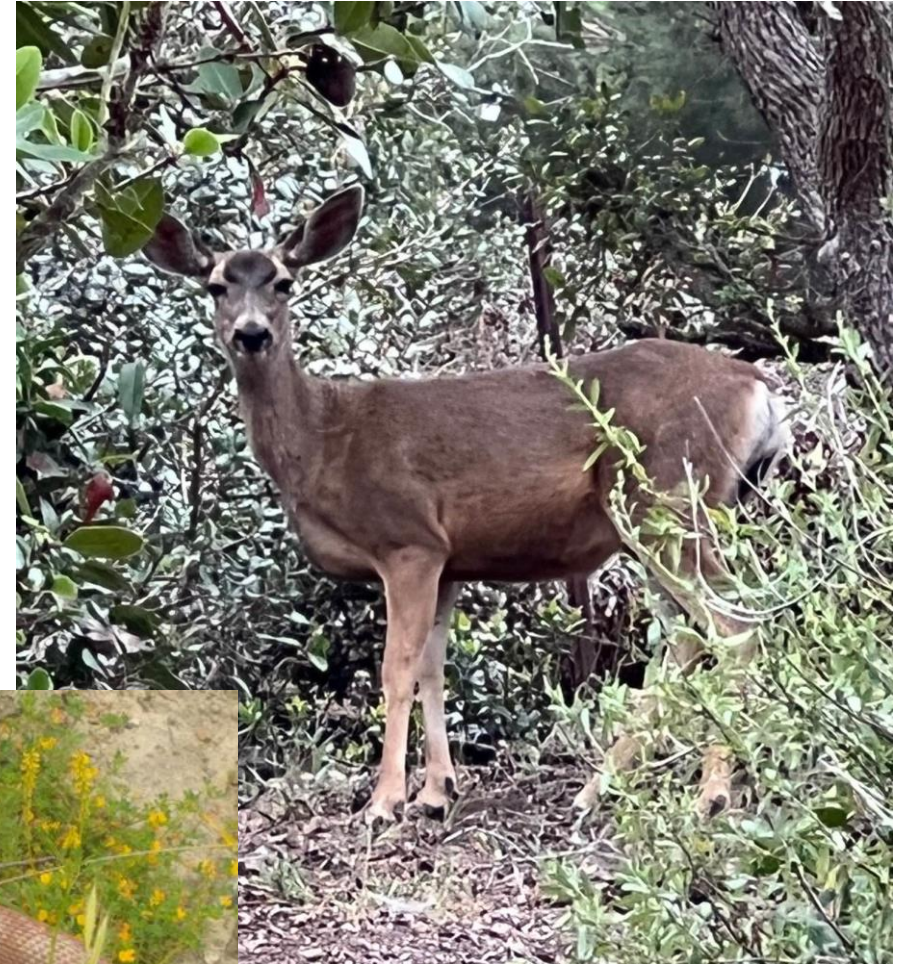




Overhead View, FMZ 12

# Benefits to Habitat & Wildlife

- Protection of habitat in open space from structural ignitions
- Regular monitoring & management
- EDRR, Targeted invasive control & Weed spread prevention
- Increase in native cover in degraded areas
- Improved habitat for some wildlife



# Land Management

- Targeted Invasive Control Projects:
  - Canary Island St. John's Wort
  - Stinking Roger
- Monitoring, Maintenance & Management Projects:
  - Prop 12 Parcels
  - Big Bend Monitoring & Maintenance





A wide-angle photograph of a lush field of wildflowers. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by numerous bright yellow daisy-like flowers. Interspersed among them are several tall, slender purple flowers. The background shows a dense line of green trees under a grey, overcast sky. The overall scene is a vibrant natural landscape.

# Habitat Restoration & Mitigation

Since 2012:

7 completed projects (42 acres)

3 ongoing mitigation projects (57 acres)

7 ongoing restoration projects (37 acres)

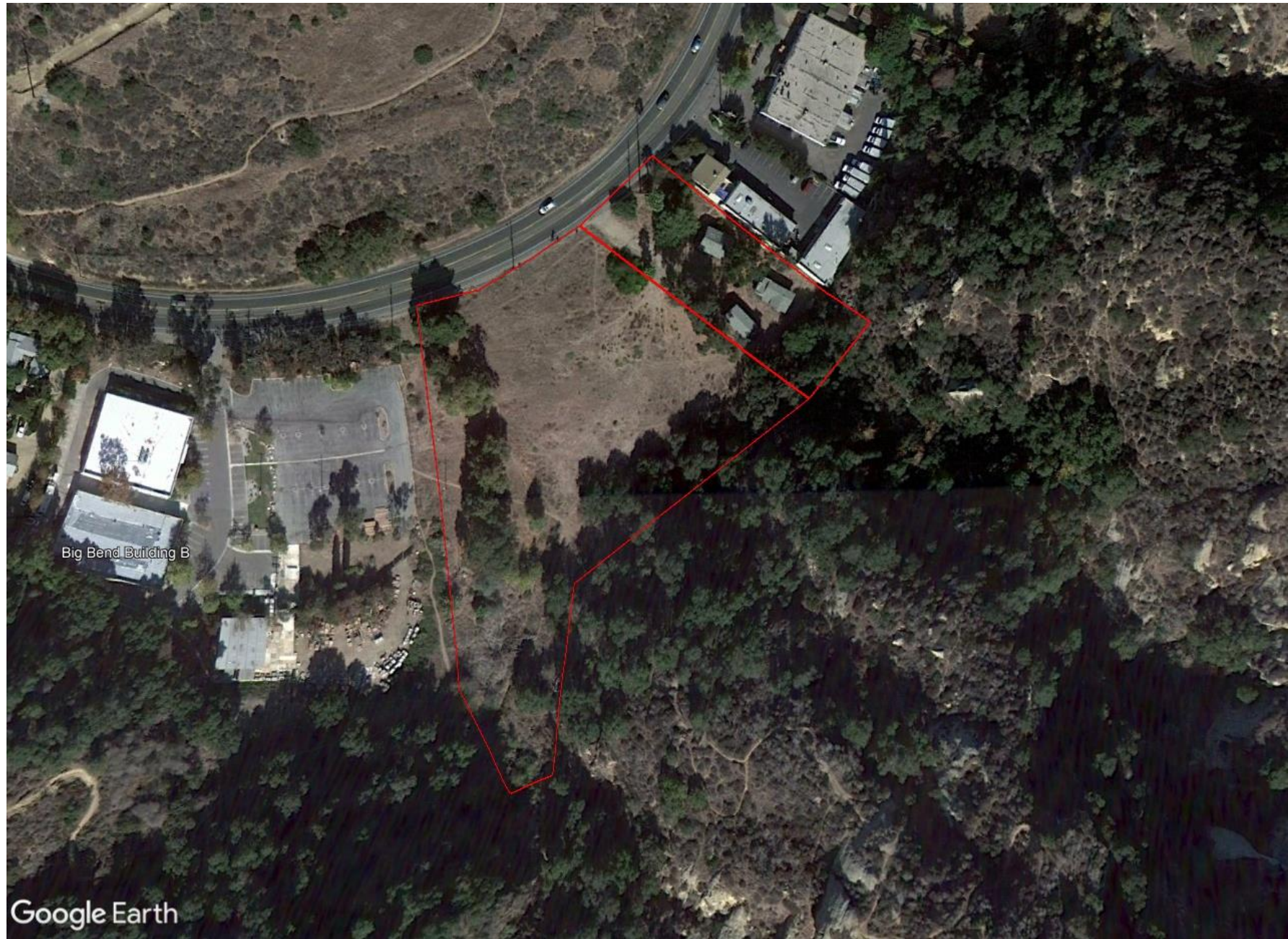
Projects in development (100 acres)

# Habitat Restoration & Mitigation

A photograph of a field of wildflowers, primarily yellow daisies and purple lupines, under a cloudy sky. The field is in the foreground and middle ground, leading to a line of trees in the background.

## Tasks:

- Planning & Permitting
- Site Preparation
- Plant Material Acquisition & Installation (seed, cuttings, containers)
- Plant Establishment (irrigation, weed management, site maintenance)
- Monitoring & Reporting



# Big Bend Mitigation Site 2011





# Big Bend Mitigation Site 2011



# Big Bend Mitigation Site 2015



# Big Bend Mitigation Site 2023















52



64°F



07/07/2024

03:35AM

BIG BEND 4



# Big Bend Mitigation Site 2023

# Aliso Creek Projects

## Current:

- OCTA Aliso Creek Mitigation: 55 acres
- WCB Aliso Creek Restoration: 21 acres
- CWRGP Aliso Creek Community Restoration: 4 acres

## Completed:

- Pecten Reef Enhancement: 26 acres



# WCB Aliso Creek Restoration Project Before & After



2021  
(Post-initial weed removal)



2024  
(Year 4)

# How Habitat Restoration Benefits Bird Species:

- “Ninety percent of the insects that eat plants can develop and reproduce only on the plants with which they share an evolutionary history,”—Doug Tallamy
- More native plants means more food for birds
- Direct relationship between caterpillar & spider abundance and breeding success
- Carotenoids are key nutrients



# WCB Aliso Creek Restoration

21-acre project 2019-2025







# OCTA Aliso Creek Mitigation

An aerial photograph showing a landscape with a golf course on the left, a creek in the center, and a large area of dense, tall reeds on the right. In the background, there are residential buildings and a bridge. The sky is overcast.

Before removal of Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*)

# OCTA Aliso Creek Mitigation

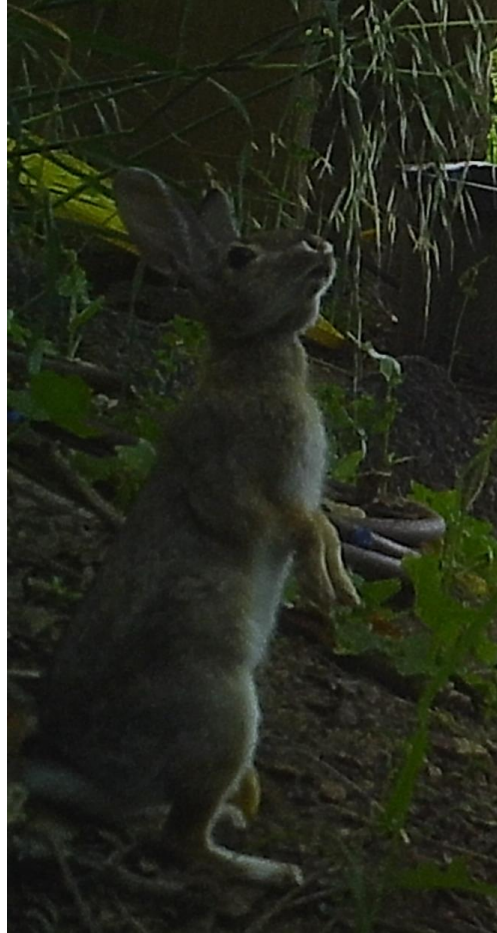


After initial removal of Giant Reed in 2015

# OCTA Aliso Creek Mitigation



July 2021







# Southwest Pond Turtle Monitoring

- Proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act
- Trapping to estimate populations since 2019 by Endemic Environmental Services
- Results show increases in recruitment, average size, proportion of females and gravidity
- Possibly the largest remaining population in Southern California



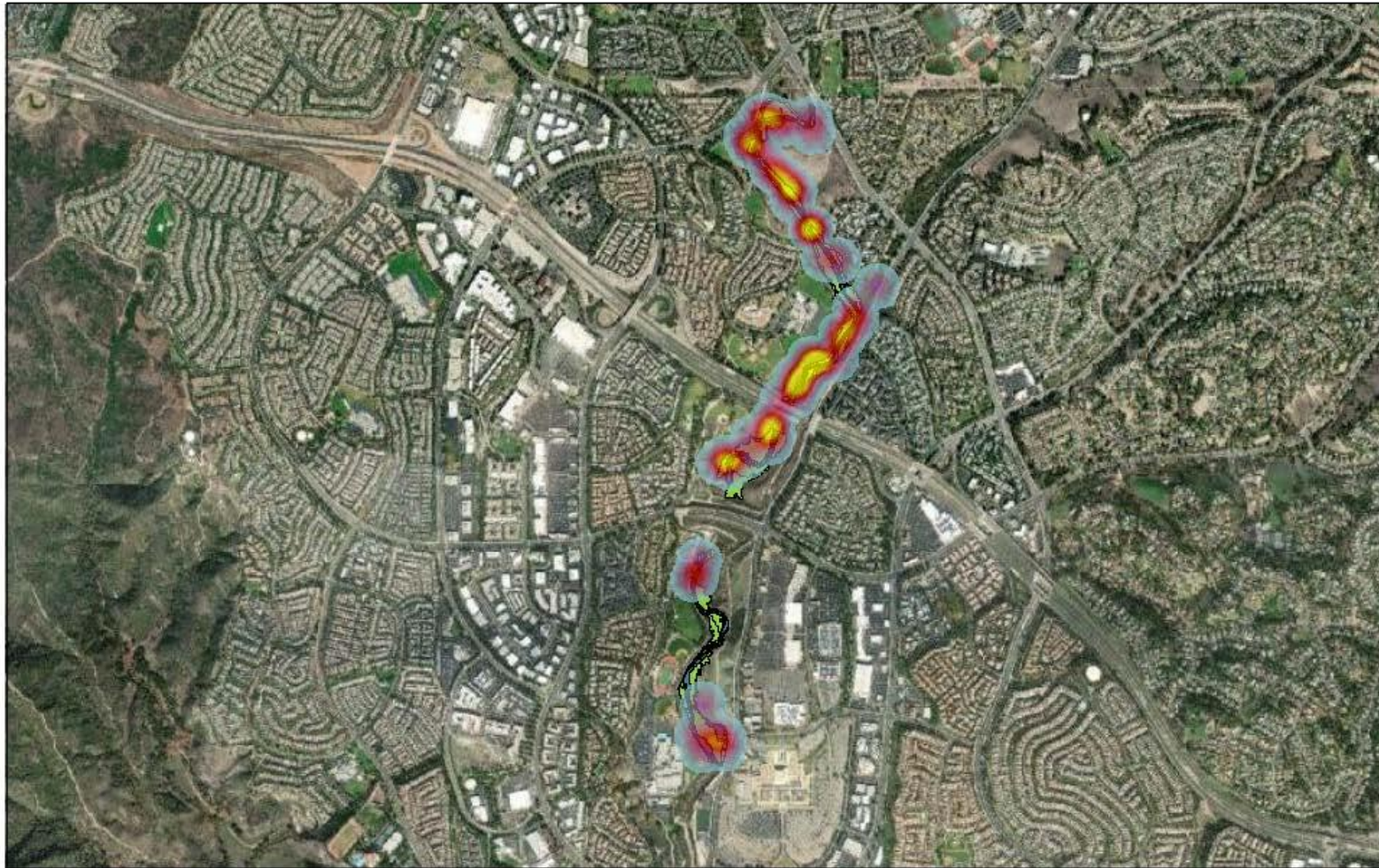


# Least Bell's Vireo



State and  
Federally  
Listed as  
Endangered

## LBVI Territories From Years 2020-2022 Observations Heat Map

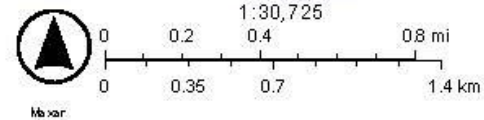


2/1/2023

Low  
High  
Riparian

Transition  
World Imagery  
Low Resolution 15m Imagery

High Resolution 60cm Imagery  
High Resolution 30cm Imagery  
Citations



- LBVI not observed prior to Arundo removal in 2015
- First observed in 2018
- Numbers seem to be increasing
- First active nest for

# Least Bell's Vireo



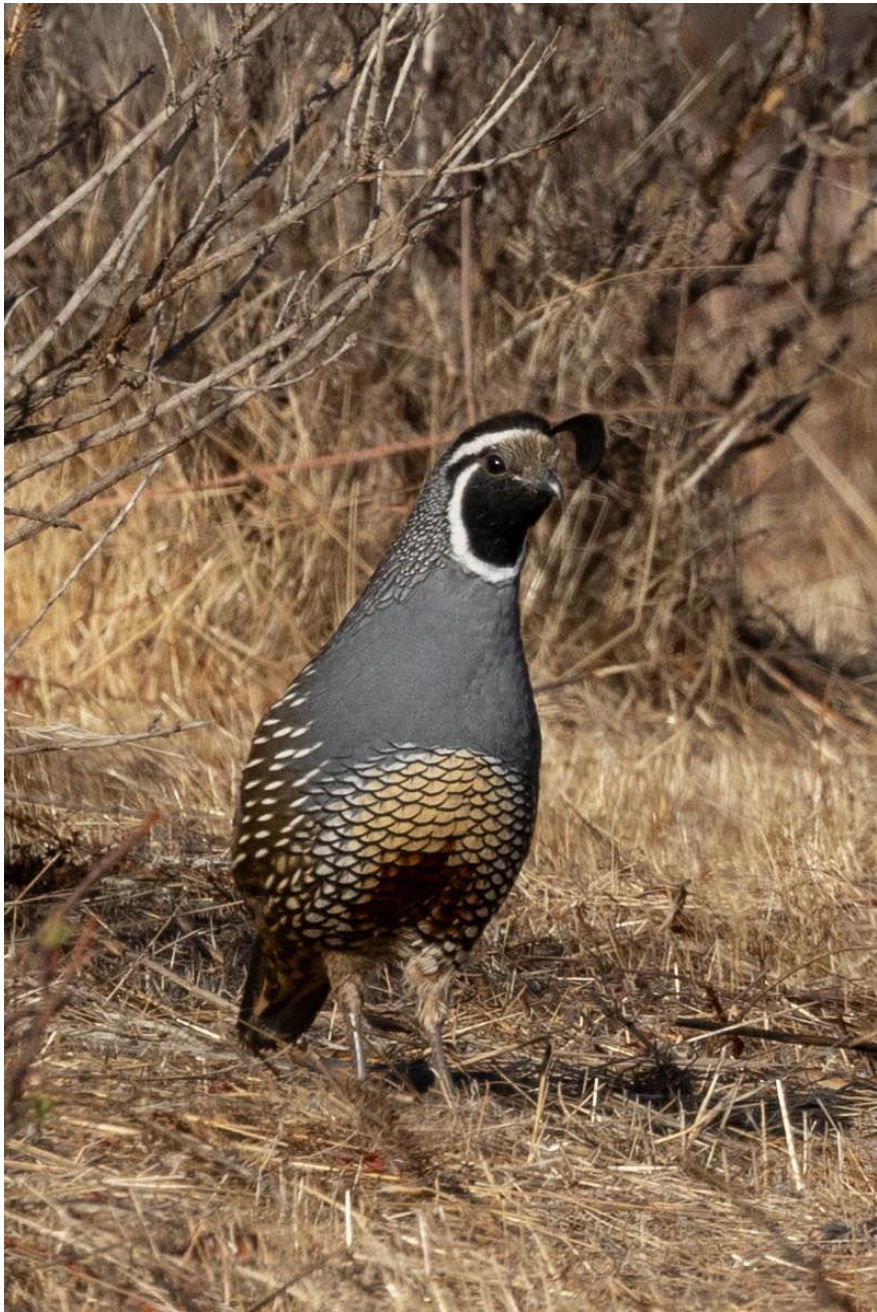


## Pacific Pocketmouse Reintroduction



**USFWS:**  
**10 acres**

**WCB/Prop 4:**  
**65 acres**



# Thank you!

## Funders:

- City of Laguna Beach
  - Orange County Transportation Authority
  - Wildlife Conservation Board
  - California Coastal Conservancy
  - Warne Foundation
  - Wayne Peterson Foundation
  - Offield Foundation
  - Draper Foundation
  - Glass Wood Foundation
- ...and many others*

## Partners:

- Orange County Parks
- Crystal Cove State Park
- Natural Communities Coalition
- Laguna Canyon Conservancy
- Laguna Greenbelt
- Village Laguna
- CANDO
- LCAD
- Earthroots Field School
- Irvine Ranch Conservancy
- California Native Plant Society
- California Invasive Plant Council

*All photos taken by LCF staff unless otherwise noted*



A photograph of a dirt path leading up a hillside. In the background, a house is visible on the slope. The foreground is filled with dense green vegetation, including bushes and trees. The sky is clear and blue.

# QUESTIONS?

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