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San Diego
**HABITAT
CONSERVANCY**

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**JUDD RR INVESTMENTS, LLC AND KEARNY PCCP OTAY 311, LLC
ESTABLISH RAMONA GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION BANK TO BENEFIT
BURROWING OWLS AND VERNAL POOLS**

Carlsbad, CA – Judd RR Investments, LLC and Kearny PCCP Otay 311, LLC, in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announce the permanent protection of 210 acres through the establishment of the Ramona Grasslands Conservation Bank, in unincorporated San Diego County.

The land will provide long-term protection of vernal pool and grassland habitats for the federally endangered San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a State species of special concern, along with a host of other wildlife species.

Ramona Grasslands Conservation Bank is a collaborative effort between Judd Halenza of Judd RR Investments, LLC and John Bragg of Kearny PCCP Otay 311, LLC, the Bank Sponsors. Michael McCollum is a conservation bank establishment specialist. Don Scoles heads the San Diego Habitat Conservancy, who is the long-term manager, and Barry Jones is the principal biologist for the bank.

The 210 acres of grassland habitat supports several vernal pools and is adjacent to the existing 3500-acre Ramona Grasslands Preserve. The property will be permanently protected under a conservation easement and managed in perpetuity by the San Diego Habitat Conservancy. Approval of the bank will allow for the sale of 199 conservation credits to offset impacts to grassland and vernal pool habitats.

“Conservation banks have proven to be a tremendous tool in conserving and managing habitat necessary to recover populations of federally listed wildlife and plant species. We are excited to see landowners join us in these public-private ventures for the benefit of our nation’s natural heritage because without their help, we will not be successful,” said Mendel Stewart, Field Supervisor of the Service’s Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office.

“The San Diego Habitat Conservancy is excited to be partnering with the Service and the Bank sponsors to preserve and manage valuable grassland and vernal pool habitats and sensitive species within the

Ramona Grassland ecosystem. These unique biological resources are in great need of this type of forward planning, and we commend the landowner for participating in this creative, long-term resource management effort,” said Don Scoles, Executive Director of the San Diego Habitat Conservancy.

A conservation bank is a parcel of land containing natural resources that are conserved and managed in perpetuity as wildlife habitat. Lands enrolled in a conservation bank can be used to offset impacts to species or habitats in areas outside of the bank’s boundaries. It is anticipated that projects in the areas of Otay Mesa and Ramona will benefit from the credits that will be available at the Ramona Grasslands Conservation Bank.

Conservation banks provide significant benefits to wildlife and plants by conserving large blocks of habitat that are managed to retain their wildlife values over time. Conservation banks provide an opportunity for landowners to derive economic benefits from land that supports important habitat for sensitive species.

In 2013, there were 105 approved conservation banks across the U.S. and in Saipan, with about 76 percent of the banks located in California.