

Brief Summary of the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Plan HCP

The HCP Plan Area is approximately 4,800 acres in size. The Plan Area located in the Santa Ana River Wash between Highland and Redlands. It is bounded on the north and east by Greenspot Road, on the west by Alabama Avenue and on the south by the Redlands airport. It includes a large reach of the Santa Ana River and Plunge Creek and a small portion of Mill Creek just above its confluence with the Santa Ana River. It would provide for the conservation of/cover three federally endangered species, the San Bernardino kangaroo rat, Santa Ana River woolly-star, and slender-horned spine flower; one federally threatened species, the coastal California gnatcatcher; and the cactus wren. It would mitigate for the impacts of mining, ground water recharge, road improvements, and other activities, both the Operations and Maintenance of Existing facilities and new facilities/activities and provide incidental take of covered species for the activities.

There are existing aggregate mining pits, ground water recharge basins, and a large borrow pit created during the construction of the Seven Oaks Dam – in other words, significant portion of the area have been developed and new development covers a much smaller area. There are just over a 1000 acres of lands that are “neutral lands” including the dam borrow pit, not to be developed or conserved as part of the HCP. New permanent impacts will be significantly less than new conservation. The two largest new permanent impacts are from new mining and the construction of new ground water recharge basins; 315 and 71 acres, respectively.

The Woolly-star Preserve Area is located within the boundaries of the HCP as is a BLM ACEC. The conservation strategy for the HCP builds on the WSPA and the ACEC. It also involves a land exchange with BLM which would reconfigure the ACEC to allow mining adjacent to the existing mining pits, and to focus conservation in areas of high quality habitat such as Plunge Creek.

The HCP would designate 981.9 acres of new conservation land and provide for the additional management of 541.4 acres of BLM land (ACEC). San Bernardino County Flood Control owns a large 334.14 acre linear portion of the reach of the Santa Ana River traversing the Plan Area. They will place a significant portion of this land in conservation to offset the effects of their projects in the Plan Area. The remainder of the land will be placed in conservation as mitigation for projects outside the Plan Area.

Conservation in the HCP Area	
Conservation	Acreage
Habitat Conservation Plan – Newly Conserved	981.9
Bureau of land Management ACEC	604.2
Woolly-star Preserve Area	773.3
City of Highland	15.5
Future SBCO Flood Control Conservation	146.1
Total:	2374.9

Scoping - A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS/EIR was published in the Federal Register on March 3, 2015. The comment period ended May 4, 2015.

Cultural Resources – Cultural resources surveys are being conducted and the BLM and the USFWS will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer per Section 6 of the NHPA.

The permit applicant is the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District. There will be a number of Participating Entities including two mining companies (CEMEX and Robertson’s), San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, East Valley Water District, the Cities of Redlands and Highland and San Bernardino County Flood Control.