NATURAL RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

California is the most ecologically diverse state in the nation, and the State Park System (SPS) protects the most ecologically diverse system of lands in the State. The department fills an important role by preserving representative examples of natural that exist within the state's ten ecological regions and is well suited to managing these areas

With diverse ecological regions that stretch over 750 miles across the latitudes, 30% of California's plant species are endemic. Due to the complexity of its relief, geology, climate, and soils, California enjoys a unique and complex biota. As California's population is expected to grow by nearly 30% in the next quarter century, the demand for resources and living space to support this population will result in ever increasing pressure on the state's remaining wild lands. In fact, the California Floristic Province is one of the world's 25 hot spots where biological diversity is seriously at risk. State Parks will, in part, focus its efforts on the preservation of under-protected, under-represented, and rarely found resources in California.

PROJECT SELECTION CHARACTERISTICS:

In seeking potential project lands to be nominated for acquisition, we recommend the following type of projects:

1. **Landscape/Habitat Linkages and Climate Change**: State Parks is seeking properties that link, or contribute to linking, existing units of the SPS to other large blocks of protected habitat (see p.10). Priority is given to necessary linkages associated with the representatives parks identified by CSP or identified in the Missing Links planning for Southern California. Linkages must serve to connect existing protected areas, facilitate wildlife movement/botanical transfer, and result in sustainable combined acreage. To offset potential impact from climate change, priority linkages include those that are associated with larger reserves, provide latitudinal or elevational linkages, or are located at the northern extent of the range of keystone or focal species.

2. **Watershed Protection**: Projects that serve to protect CSP identified Keystone Watersheds from land conversion; in many cases conservation easements may be preferred. See attached list of watersheds (p. 11).

3. **Under-Protected Habitat Types in California**: State Parks is seeking properties that support relatively large areas of under-protected major habitat types in California (not just the SPS). Focus should be on the habitat types below, which according to a gap analysis, are less than 20% protected on publicly owned lands.

   Diablan Sage Scrub
   Valley Sink Scrub
   Coastal Prairie
   Great Valley Cottonwood Riparian Forest
   Great Valley Oak Riparian Forest
   Great Valley Mesquite Scrub
   Blue Oak Woodland
   Valley Oak Woodland
   California Walnut Woodland
   Juniper-Oak Cismontane Woodland
   Northern Interior Cypress Forest

4. **Under-Protected Ecological Regions**: State Parks is seeking properties in two notably under-protected ecological regions of California and where SPS lands are relatively scarce. These regions are (1) Sacramento Valley and (2) San Joaquin Valley (see p. 13). It is preferable that properties support under-protected major habitat types (see 3, above) or under-represented resource areas (see 9, below).

5. **Evolutionary Hotspots**: State Parks is seeking areas where a comparatively high rate of speciation is occurring. Areas should be large enough to protect processes suspected to contribute to speciation. Projects that incorporate climate change protections will receive priority. Proposals should be supported by quality scientific investigation.

6. **Buffers to Existing SPS Wildlands**: State Parks is seeking meaningful buffer properties whose primary purpose is to reduce present/future impacts to existing high value SPS natural resource lands from urbanization, especially residential or other deleterious land uses.

7. **Selected Wetland and Riparian Areas**: State Parks is seeking wetland and riparian areas, especially those beyond the California coast, Central Valley or in the jurisdiction of state conservancies.

8. **Unique Biological Values**: State Parks is seeking properties adjacent to or at least within close proximity of existing park units or existing protected properties which exhibit a concentration of rare or unique habitat types and concentrations of species of concern.

9. **Under-Represented Resource Types**: Properties adjacent to or near existing park units or existing protected properties which exhibit physical features not well represented/preserved within or without the State Park System. Physical features for focus for addition to the SPS include:

   - Representative examples of landscapes and the identifying [or key or signature] geologic features for under-represented portions of the Modoc, Klamath, and eastern portion of the Sierra bioregions that are not protected by other land managing agencies.

   - Significant fossil resources, such as concentrations of significant vertebrate fossils, multiple species assemblages representing ancient environments, and trace fossils (e.g. footprints) of ephemeral conditions.

   - Type localities of geologic formations found only in California and lacking existing significant protection by other land management agencies.

   - Special geologic features not well represented in the SPS include volcanoes and volcanic features (e.g. lava tubes, columnar basalts, and inverted topography), glaciers and glacial features, limestone caves, thermal features, and tombstone rocks.

PROJECT RANKING CRITERIA:

A. High priority will be given to properties that link, or contribute to linking representative parks of the SPS with other protected areas or protective easements, especially representative parks. Functionality, total reserve size, significance of overall reserve area and improving resiliency to climate change will be assessed. Size and significance should be tied, in part, to identified focal species, whose relative significance will be assessed.

B. High priority will be given to properties that serve to (1) protect significant natural resource values within under-protected ecological regions of California, (2) protect relatively large, sustainable acreage of under-protected major habitat types, and (3) keystone watersheds.

C. High priority will be given to properties that receive priority protection from NCCP, MSHCP, or other regional conservation planning efforts. Property should tie directly to a SPS objective, including one or more of the above characteristics, regional recreation opportunities, or significant cultural resource preservation.

D. High priority will be given to properties with respect to condition of property, especially functioning natural systems, sustainability, and parcel line configuration in relationship to susceptibility to offsite impacts.

E. Additional consideration will be given to any of the above encompassing demonstrated evolutionary hotspots.

F. Medium priority will be given to unique or rare habitat types, including crucibles of evolution not protected in the ecological region or rarely found in the State Park System, or in the geographic extremes of its habitat type, or with a concentration of five or more listed species and which is intact to a high degree.

G. Medium priority will be given to environmentally sensitive habitat types such as wetland and/or riparian areas linked or capable of being linked with other protected wetland/riparian areas which possess unique habitats,

rare plant communities and habitat supporting listed animal species. Properties in watersheds with undisturbed natural processes will be given precedence.

H. Medium priority will be given to properties which include representative samples of geologic formations or geomorphic features, which are not well protected within or without the State Park System.

I. Medium priority will be given to properties possessing paleontological resources of significance that are not represented within the State Park System or other protected lands.

J. Additional consideration will be given to areas possessing the potential for more formal outdoor interpretation of a natural resource message unique to the region.

K. Other factors that will be considered include how well the property contributes to other aspects of the SPS Plan, including new urban areas, recreation, trail connections, new interpretive themes, and cultural resources.

Parks Needing Linkages

The following representative and outstanding parks have been identified as potential future fragments requiring linkage with other protected areas. Also shown is the average of the linkage needed. This information has not been peer reviewed. Contact Lisa Lynds for more information-916-653-6725.

PARK	ACREAGE	PARK	ACREAGE
Tolowa Dunes SP	634	Mt. Diablo SP	5,524
Prairie Creek Redwoods SP	X	Henry W. Coe SP	39,351
Humboldt Lagoons SP	15,897	Año Nuevo SP	2,682
Humboldt Redwoods SP	7,466	Caswell Memorial SP	1,354
Castle Crags SP	3,155 162	Calaveras Big Trees SP	7,694 499
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	493	Millerton Lake SRA	2,181 515 185
Anderson Marsh SHP	991	Gaviota SP	5,546
China Camp SP	1,421	Pt. Mugu SP	2,324
Bothe Napa Valley SP	1,784	Leo Carrillo SP	2,324
Sugarloaf Ridge SP	1,398	Chino Hills SP	3,262

California State Park Representative Keystone Watersheds, by Ecological Region

(Alpha numerics refer to USFS Ecological Units of California, August 1994)

Northern California Coast Ecological Region (263A)

1. Mill Creek Complex (Jedediah Smith Redwoods SP, Del Norte Coast Redwoods SP)
2. Prairie Creek Complex (Prairie Creek Redwoods SP)
3. McDonald Creek Watershed (Humboldt Lagoons SP, Harry A. Merlo SRA)
4. Bull Creek Complex (Humboldt Redwoods SP)
5. Jackass (Wolf) Creek-Whale Gulch Complex (Sinkyone Wilderness SP)
6. Big River Watershed (Big River Unit of Mendocino Headlands SP, Mendocino Woodlands SP, Montgomery Woods SR)
7. Willow Creek Watershed (Sonoma Coast SP)
8. Lagunitas Creek Watershed (Samuel P. Taylor SP)
9. Redwood Creek Complex (Mount Tamalpais SP)

Klamath Mountains (M261 A)

10. Castle Creek Watershed (Castle Crags SP)

Bay Delta

11. Angel Island SP

Sierra Nevada (M261E)

12. Jamison Creek Complex (Plumas-Eureka SP)
13. Burton Creek Watershed (Burton Creek SP)
14. General Creek Watershed (Ed Z'berg-Sugar Pine Point SP)
15. Beaver Creek Watershed (Calaveras Big Trees SP)

Central California Coast (261A)

16. Mitchell Creek Complex (Mount Diablo SP)
17. Waddell Creek Watershed (Big Basin Redwoods SP)
18. Wilder Creek Watershed (Wilder Ranch SP)
19. Aptos Creek Watershed (The Forest of Nisene Marks SP)
20. Malpaso-San Jose Creek Complex (Point Lobos Ranch SP, Carmel River SB, Point Lobos SR, Garrapata SP)
21. Big Sur River Watershed (Andrew Molera SP, Pfeiffer Big Sur SP)
22. Islay Creek Complex (Montaña de Oro SP)

Central California Coast Ranges (M262 A)

23. Coyote Creek Watershed (Henry W. Coe SP)
24. Orestimba Creek Watershed (Henry W. Coe SP)

Southern California Coast (261B)

25. Gaviota Creek Watershed (Gaviota SP)
26. Moro Canyon Watershed (Crystal Cove SP)
27. Big Sycamore Canyon Complex (Point Mugu SP)
28. Upper Santa Ynez Canyon Complex (Topanga SP)

Southern California Mountains and Valleys (M 262 B)

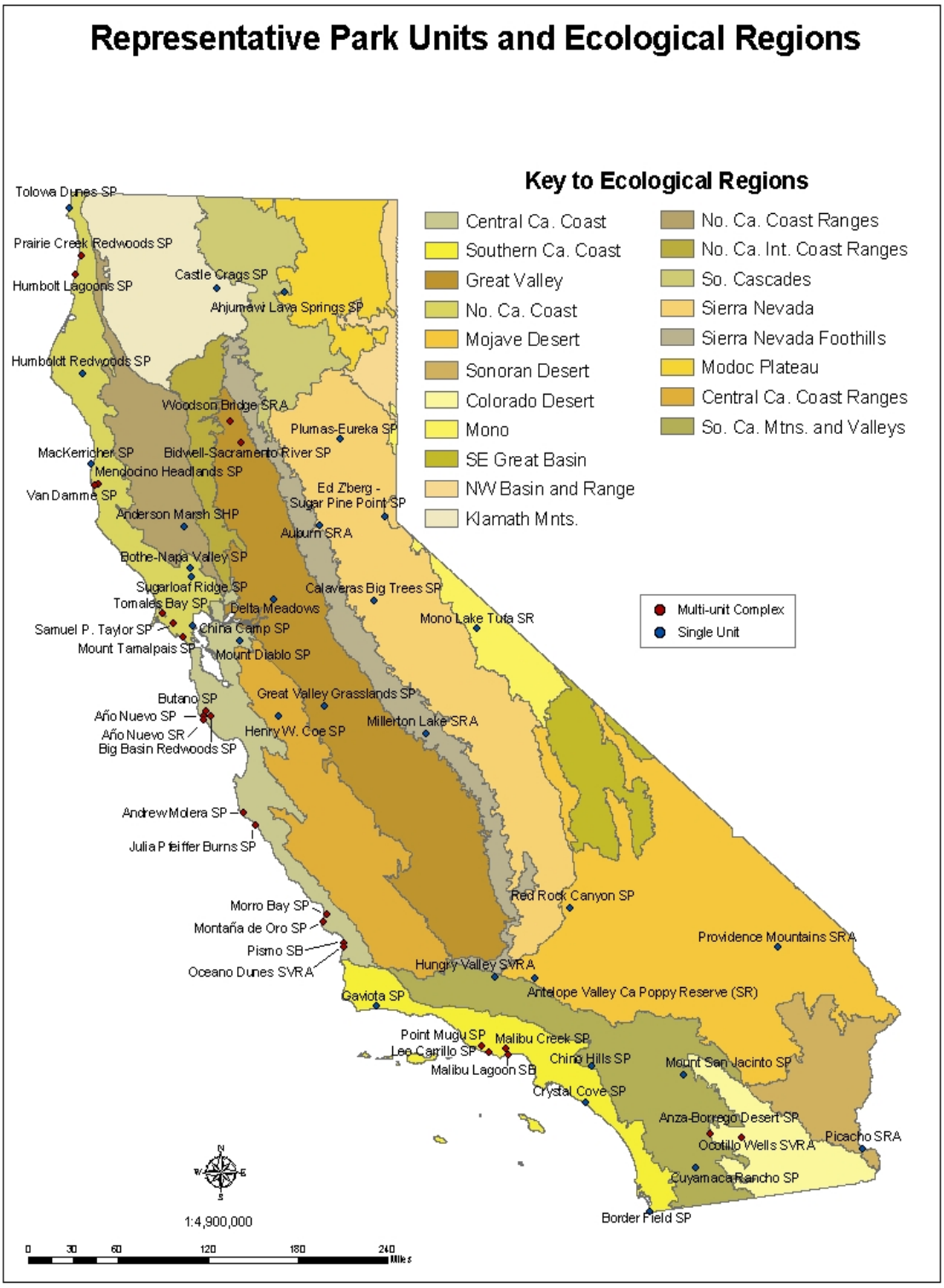
29. Aliso Canyon Watershed (Chino Hills SP)
30. North Fork San Jacinto River Watershed (Mount San Jacinto SP)
31. Sweetwater River Complex (Cuyamaca Rancho SP)

Mojave Desert (322A)

32. Upper Red Rock Canyon Watershed (Red Rock Canyon SP)

Colorado Desert (322C) and Southern California Mountains and Valleys (M262B)

33. Coyote Canyon Watershed (Anza-Borrego Desert SP)


Representative Park Units and Ecological Regions
Key to Ecological Regions
Central Ca. Coast
Southern Ca. Coast
Great Valley
No. Ca. Coast
Mojave Desert
Sonoran Desert
Colorado Desert
Mono
SE Great Basin
NW Basin and Range
Klamath Mnts.
No. Ca. Coast Ranges
No. Ca. Int. Coast Ranges
So. Cascades
Sierra Nevada
Sierra Nevada Foothills
Modoc Plateau
Central Ca. Coast Ranges
So. Ca. Mtns. and Valleys
Multi-unit Complex
Single Unit
Tolowa Dunes SP
Prairie Creek Redwoods SP
Humbolt Lagoons SP
Castle Crags SP
Ahjumawi Lava Springs SP
Humboldt Redwoods SP
Woodson Bridge SRA
Plumas-Eureka SP
MacKerricher SP
Bidwell-Sacramento River SP
Mendocino Headlands SP
Van Damme SP
Ed Z'berg - Sugar Pine Point SP
Anderson Marsh SHP
Auburn SRA
Bothe-Napa Valley SP
Sugarloaf Ridge SP
Calaveras Big Trees SP
Tomales Bay SP
Delta Meadows
Mono Lake Tuta SR
Samuel P. Taylor SP
China Camp SP
Mount Tamalpais SP
Mount Diablo SP
Butano SP
Great Valley Grasslands SP
Año Nuevo SP
Millerton Lake SRA
Henry W. Coe SP
Año Nuevo SR
Big Basin Redwoods SP
Andrew Molera SP
Julia Pfeiffer Burns SP
Red Rock Canyon SP
Morro Bay SP
Montaña de Oro SP
Providence Mountains SRA
Pismo SB
Oceano Dunes SVRA
Hungry Valley SVRA
Antelope Valley Ca Poppy Reserve (SR)
Gaviota SP
Point Mugu SP
Malibu Creek SP
Leo Carrillo SP
Chino Hills SP
Mount San Jacinto SP
Malibu Lagoon SB
Crystal Cove SP
Anza-Borrego Desert SP
Picacho SRA
Ocotillo Wells SVRA
Cuyamaca Rancho SP
Border Field SP
1:4,900,000
0 30 60 120 180 240
Miles