



Project Introduction and Overview

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1.1 Purpose and Objectives

The Prado Regional Park Master Plan (PRMP) is a planning effort that will serve ² as a vision and a blueprint for future changes in Prado Regional Park. The plan is meant to be both visionary as well as practical. An overall goal is to provide a range of ideas that can be considered for the improvement of the park, while at the same time preserving other areas of the park. This plan embraces the park's natural resources and provides opportunities to allow park patrons to see and understand the rich agricultural heritage and natural conditions of the park. The plan is intended to identify changes that can occur in the immediate future, as well as the next 20 years. The overall horizon year for the plan is 2040, although an update of this plan should occur prior to 2030.

The PRMP is an important and exciting opportunity that will help the County take the necessary actions to improve park amenities and experiences so that its potential as a major destination that provides fun, family-friendly attractions and amenities can be realized.

The PRMP respects the natural resources within the park by protecting and enhancing the environment while providing unique and engaging opportunities for visitors. The PRMP will also maintain the diversity of available activities and opportunities that so many people have come to love. All of this will be possible with updated strategies that will aid the County of San Bernardino in operating a fiscally-responsible regional park. Project objectives include:

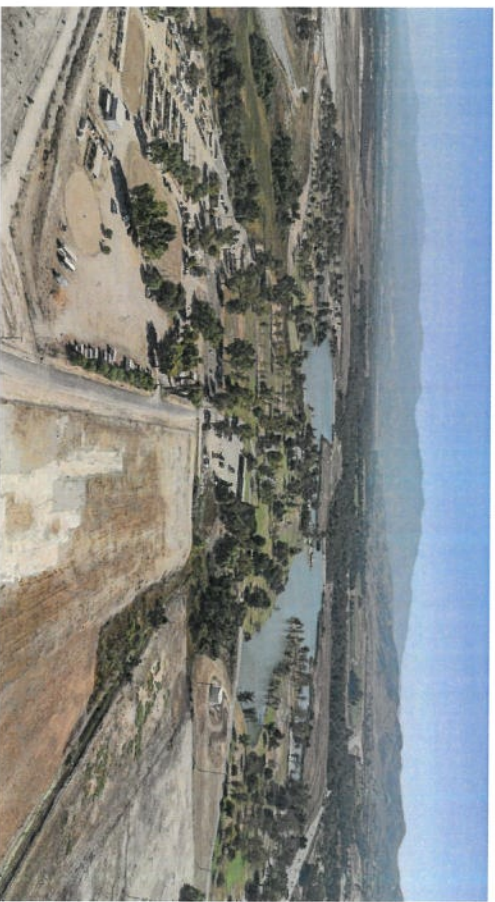
1. Determining what the park can become given the interests of the community and the capabilities of the resources of the park.
2. Suggesting areas of the park where changes can and should occur and other areas of the park that should be protected or enhanced based on a thorough review of the site conditions (Constraints, Opportunities, Liabilities and Assets-COLA).
3. Providing a vision that will stir the imagination of what the park can become, while realizing that unrealistic dreams can sometimes result in the plan just sitting on the shelf because of limitations of budgets and complexity of implementation.
4. Determining how the park is being used and what works efficiently, as well as areas that may not be efficient, accessible or in a sustainable state of use.
5. Suggesting a range of uses that can be verified by possible users of the park and documenting this range for future consideration.
6. Narrowing down the range of uses to the most supportable and synergistic combination that will help the park realize its potential vision.
7. Conducting initial review of the feasibility and issues associated with the recommendations.
8. Mapping out the steps needed to implement the vision and recommendations.

1.2 Regional and Local Site Locations

Prado Regional Park is located in southern California in the County of San Bernardino, Figure 1-1.

It is unique in that the park is surrounded by three counties, including Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside. The park sits among the cities of Eastvale, Chino, Chino Hills, Corona, and Norco, Figure 1-2. Prado Regional Park is a total of 2,519 acres, including 2,251 acres leased from the Army Corps of Engineers and 268 acres purchased with Proposition 70 funding, Figure 1-6.

The region, once occupied by dairy farms, has seen significant growth over the past decade and continues to expand with new residential developments throughout the valley and the adjacent hills. Views from the park to the distant mountains of the San Gabriel Mountain Range and Chino Hills State Park provide a nice backdrop and enhance the unique character of the site. The park and the surrounding hillsides are important contributors to much-needed open space and natural character that sits amongst an otherwise urban and suburban area. The southern California region consists of 21 million persons that live within 100 miles of the Prado Regional Park site. This region is known for its diversity of urban form, natural settings, and unique demographics and cultures.



View of Prado Regional Park looking south from Pine

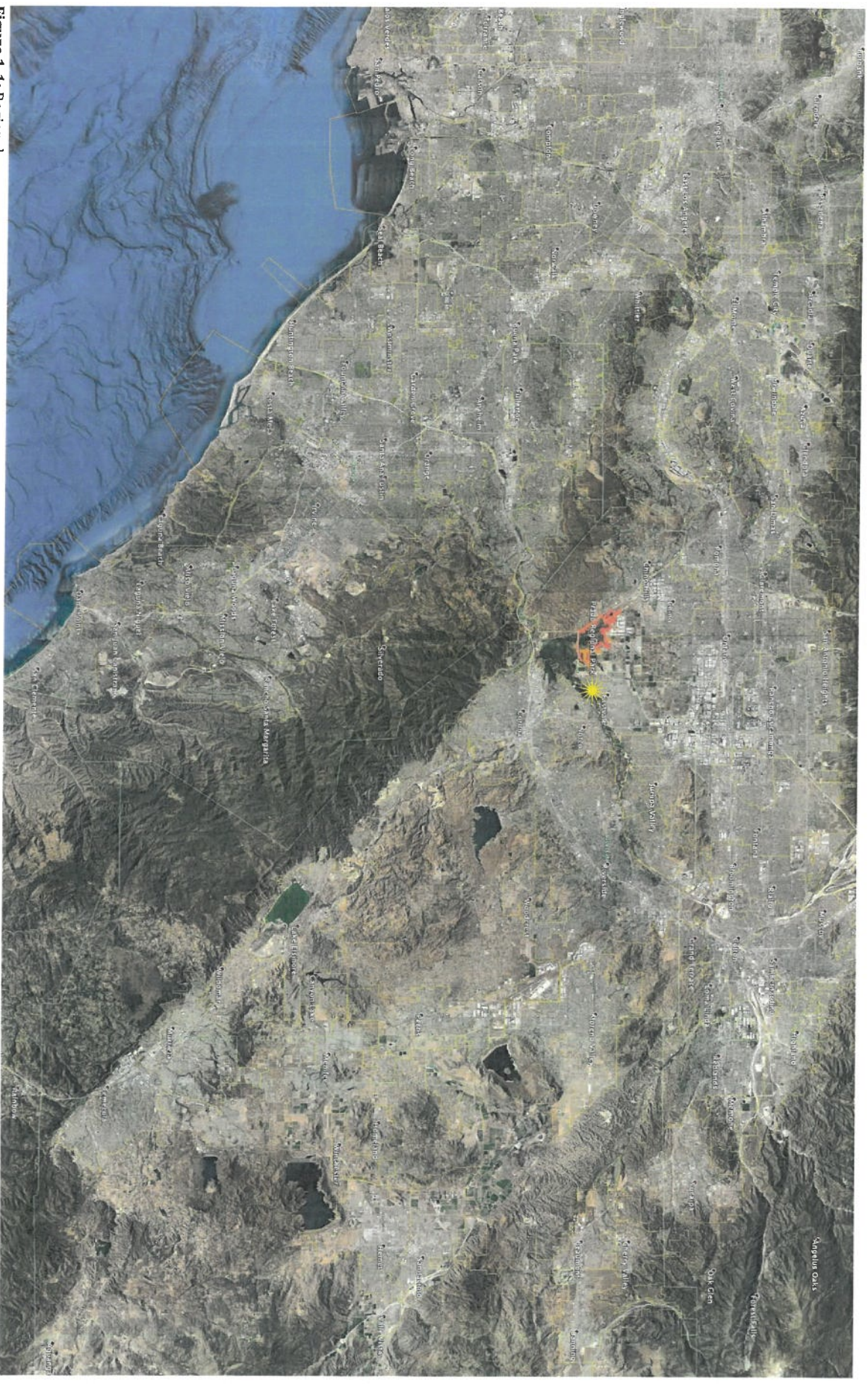


Figure 1-1: Regional

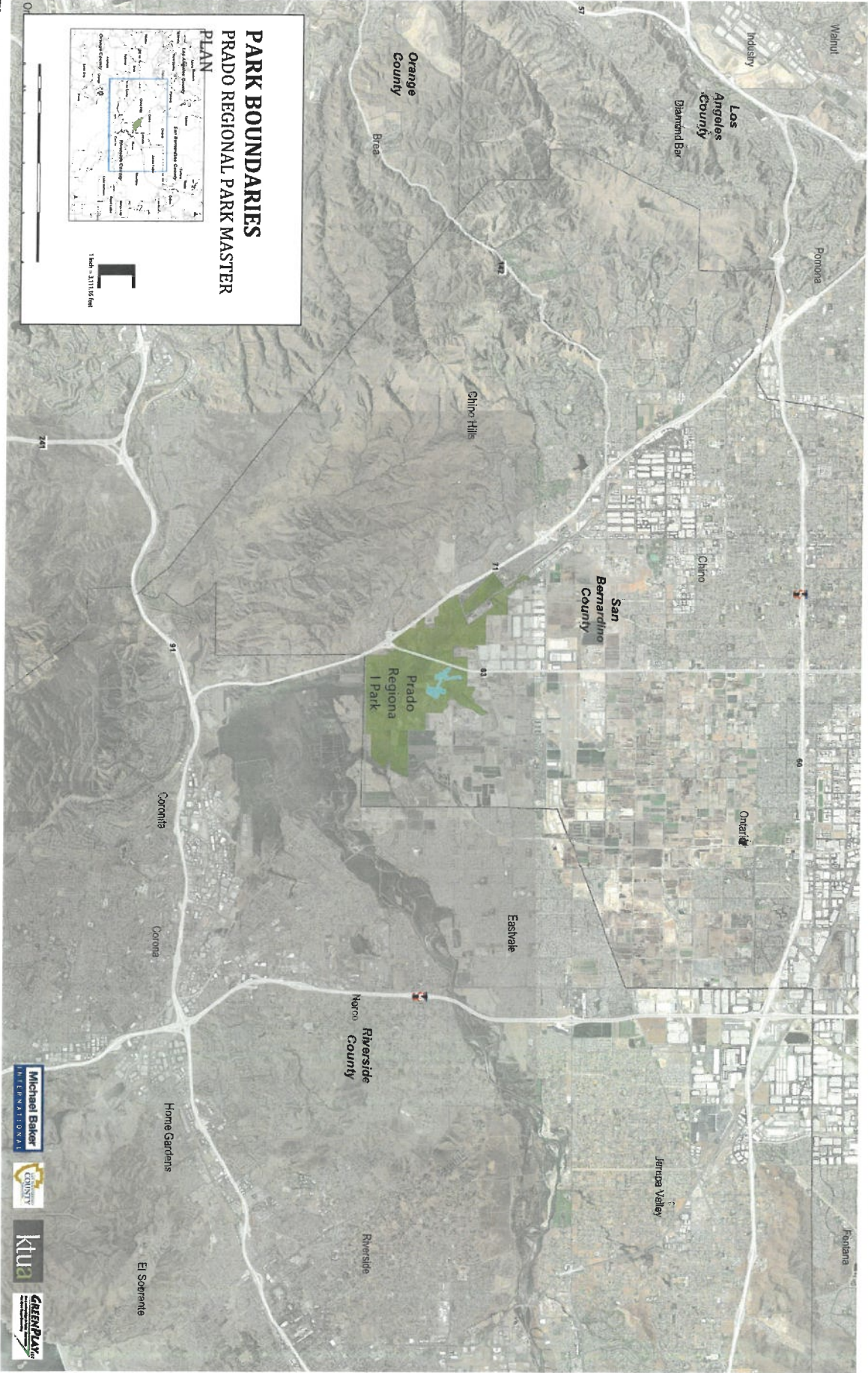


Figure 1-2: Study

1.3 Planning Process

The overall planning process is documented in Figure 1-3. The process needs to be comprehensive in its nature and logical in its direction. Any of the steps shown in Figure 1-3 that are skipped can result in improper recommendations, the wrong priorities or unimplementable plans. Although variations to the order of these steps do occur, they should generally be completed in the sequence shown.

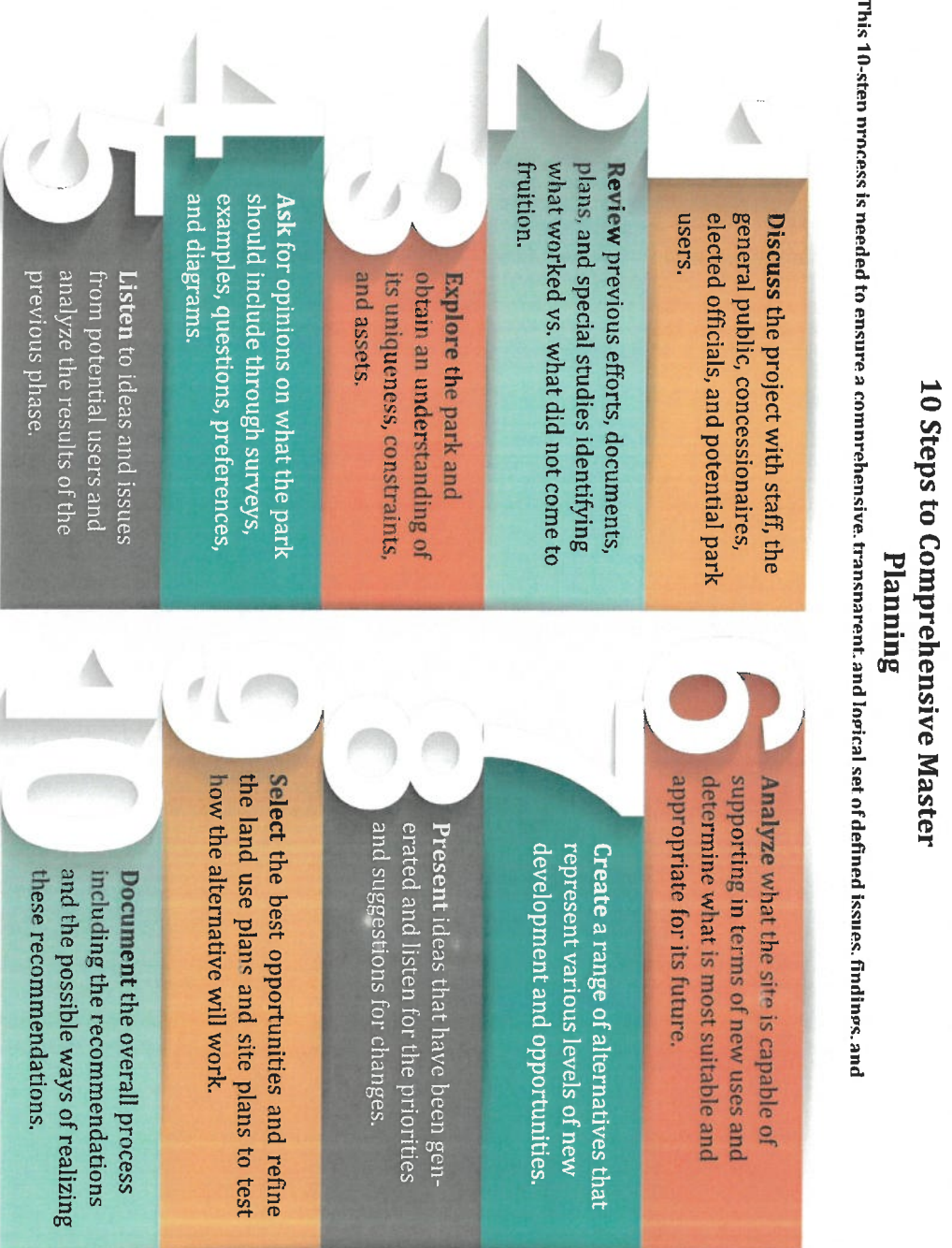


Figure 1-3: Planning Process

1.4 Vision Statement and Supporting Goals

Working with the County and key stakeholders, a vision statement and supporting goals were established at the beginning of the project. The vision and goals helped to provide the framework for all planning decisions. In the beginning of the project, ideas were grouped into one of five categories that represented the range that the vision should consider. The ideas of "Think Big, Think Fun, Think Fit, Think Quiet, and Think Smart" became an organizational method for ideas brought up by the team, staff, committees, elected officials, and the general public.

Think Big refers to the role that this regional park should play in the region. The park is not about supporting local and community level recreational activity, but should be about supporting regional level recreation that is not readily available in each of the local municipalities and unincorporated County areas.

Think Fun refers to the need that all people have to play and explore, regardless of age. Fun is not limited to traditional playgrounds for tots and kids. Fun needs to be part of our everyday life, fun is essential for good physical, social, and mental health.

Think Fit is a recognition of the role that parks need to play in providing people with exercise and general activity essential for sustaining a healthy lifestyle and a fit physical condition. These opportunities are missing in many aspects of our current built environment. Parks, especially a large regional park like Prado, can help fill in the gaps of access to physical open space, natural areas, and amenities needed to provide for the essential health goal of 30 of minutes of exercise or sustained activity per day. In order to support proper child development, this goal increases to 60 minutes per day.

The concept of **Think Quiet** is related to the need for serenity and mindful thinking that is essential for proper social and mental health. Most of the built environment can create stress and distraction to proper daily healthy activities. Parks and open space can provide much needed relief from the daily distractions of modern-day society. This is especially true for natural resourced based parks and open space areas.

Finally, the **Think Smart** concept recognizes the need for us to learn from our cultural and natural past. The Inland Empire has substantially changed over the years to the point where many will not recognize areas from just a few years ago due to rapid development. Thinking smart can provide needed interpretive and educational aspects for future generations to enjoy.

The combination of these ideas were further organized into a Vision Statement that provided direction for the alternatives and recommendations of the plan. The Vision Statement was first suggested by County Board of Supervisors Curt Hagman and then formed by the consultant team.

This draft vision was then added to and adjusted based on survey results, TAC and CAC meeting input, and workshop exercises. The refined statement consists of:

Prado Regional Park Vision Statement

"Prado Regional Park
will be a premier park
for southern California
and will include amenities
and activities that
will make it a
first choice for a regional
recreation destination."

Prado Regional Park Supporting Goals

Highest ranking goals first.



"Nature's Way" - celebrate natural park areas by allowing visual and appropriate access, providing the opportunity for the community to learn, and increase respect for nature.



"Events to Remember" - the park should expand events and programs using innovative solutions to address parking, access, flooding, and noise concerns. The public should be made more aware of the opportunities and assets of the park.



"Stay a While" - programs, partners, and special events should all focus on encouraging regional visitors to stay in the park overnight or for extended day use.



"Agricultural Roots" - the park should feature the valley's agricultural past, highlighting the social, economic, and physical conditions found today and adding an educational component to the plan.



"Keep it Fun" - adults, teens, and children should be encouraged to play and be adventurous!



"Let it Rain" - the park is a flood basin behind a dam that functions to protect public safety and property. Opportunities to excavate soil to increase wetlands could help to decrease flooding in some areas.



"Group Fun and Individual Adventures" - family oriented and group focused, but with a nod to individual accomplishments and learning.



"Ways to Go" - access should be improved for vehicles, transit, bikes, and hiking to reduce congestion while providing safe and convenient routes into the park.



"So Much More than a Park" - the park should include activities and facilities well beyond what other community and neighborhood parks offer in the valley. It should provide cohesive but diverse character and design elements.

1.5 Primary Guidance

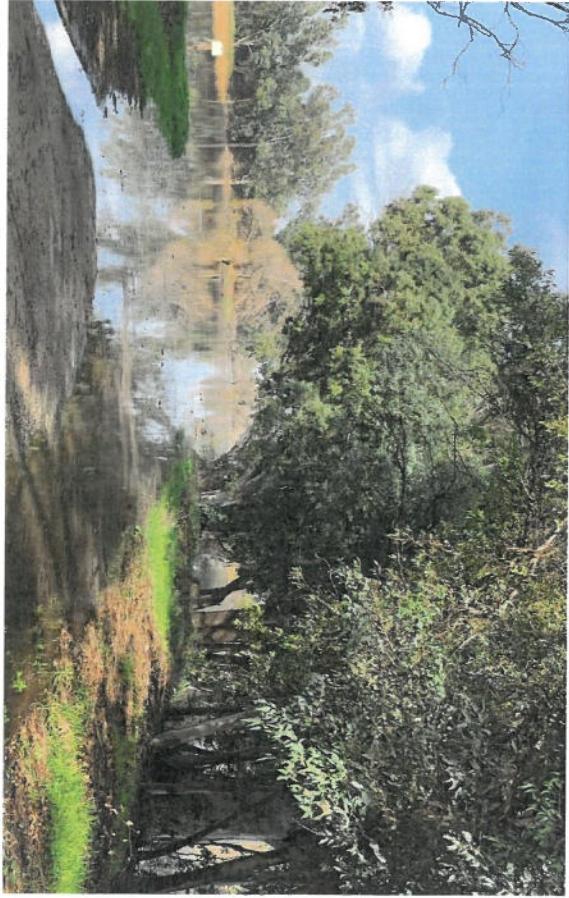
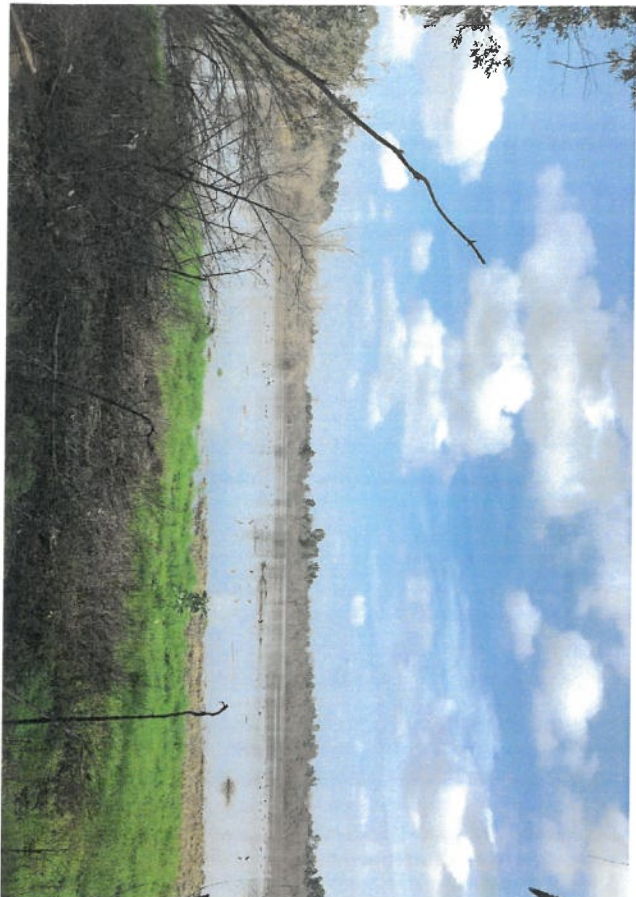
1.5.1 Guiding Documents

The plan for Prado Regional Park considers several different existing planning policies and documents, including guidance from the Army Corps of Engineers Prado Basin Master Plan and Proposition 70 funding requirements for the east side of the park. This plan covers areas leased from the Corps and is consistent with the parallel planning efforts that are currently being completed by the Corps with its ongoing master plan process. The study also recognizes the policies and lease requirements that are established for the site in the current lease agreement. The adopted general plans from adjacent incorporated cities (Eastvale, Chino, Chino Hills, Corona, and Norco) have also been used in the development of this study.

In addition to these guiding policies, representatives from key stakeholder groups, County staff, the Board of Supervisors, and the public community all provided input to help shape and form the final recommendations and plans for the park through a Technical Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee, community workshops and monthly progress check-in meetings.

1.5.2 Corps of Engineers

Most of Prado Regional Park sits entirely on land that is leased from the United States Army Corps of Engineers. As an agency, the Corps is committed to providing public open space and outdoor recreation opportunities while sustaining natural resources. Development on the land is intended to be dependent on the adjacent natural resources and water bodies, which may include amenities like trails, campgrounds, or boat launching ramps, as an example. It also supports the idea of including auxiliary facilities such as bait shops or playgrounds, for example. Programs that don't rely on the natural setting are discouraged. In addition, private exclusive use is not supported. In the case of Prado Regional Park, the land is also for the use of flood control as the park sits upstream of the Prado Dam, subjelecting much of the park land to seasonal flooding. The basin is designed to store water up to the inundation level, which is currently at elevation 566'. Any changes to the grading and amount of storage cannot be done without a re-allocation study and an approved Water Allocation Report. In addition, all modifications are required to offset their impacts. The recommendations within this report would need to be evaluated further to ensure that they all meet the policies and requirements established by the Corps and the Prado Basin.



Typical flooding of the basin is a consistent constraint affecting future park



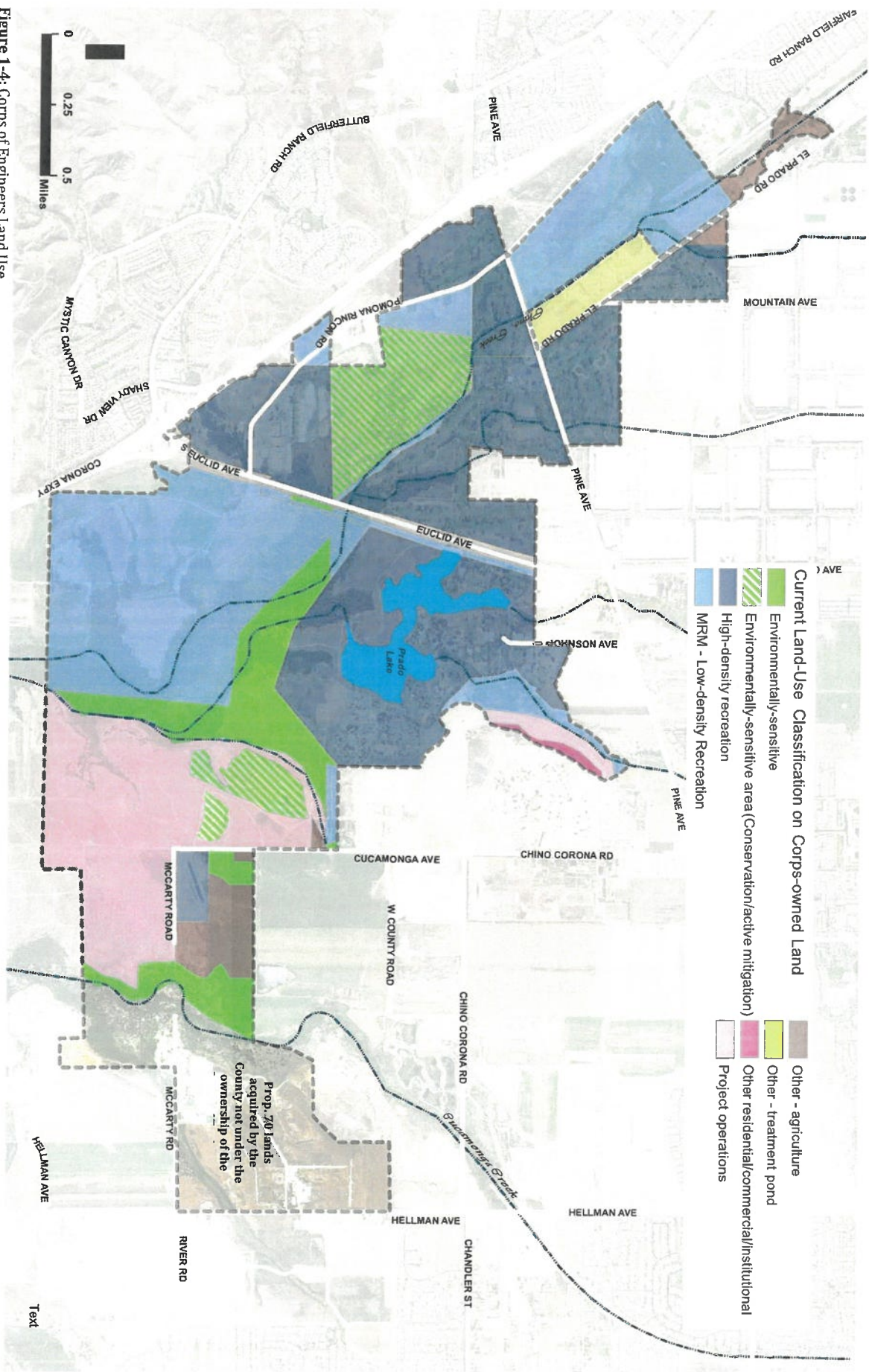


Figure 1-4: Corps of Engineers Land Use

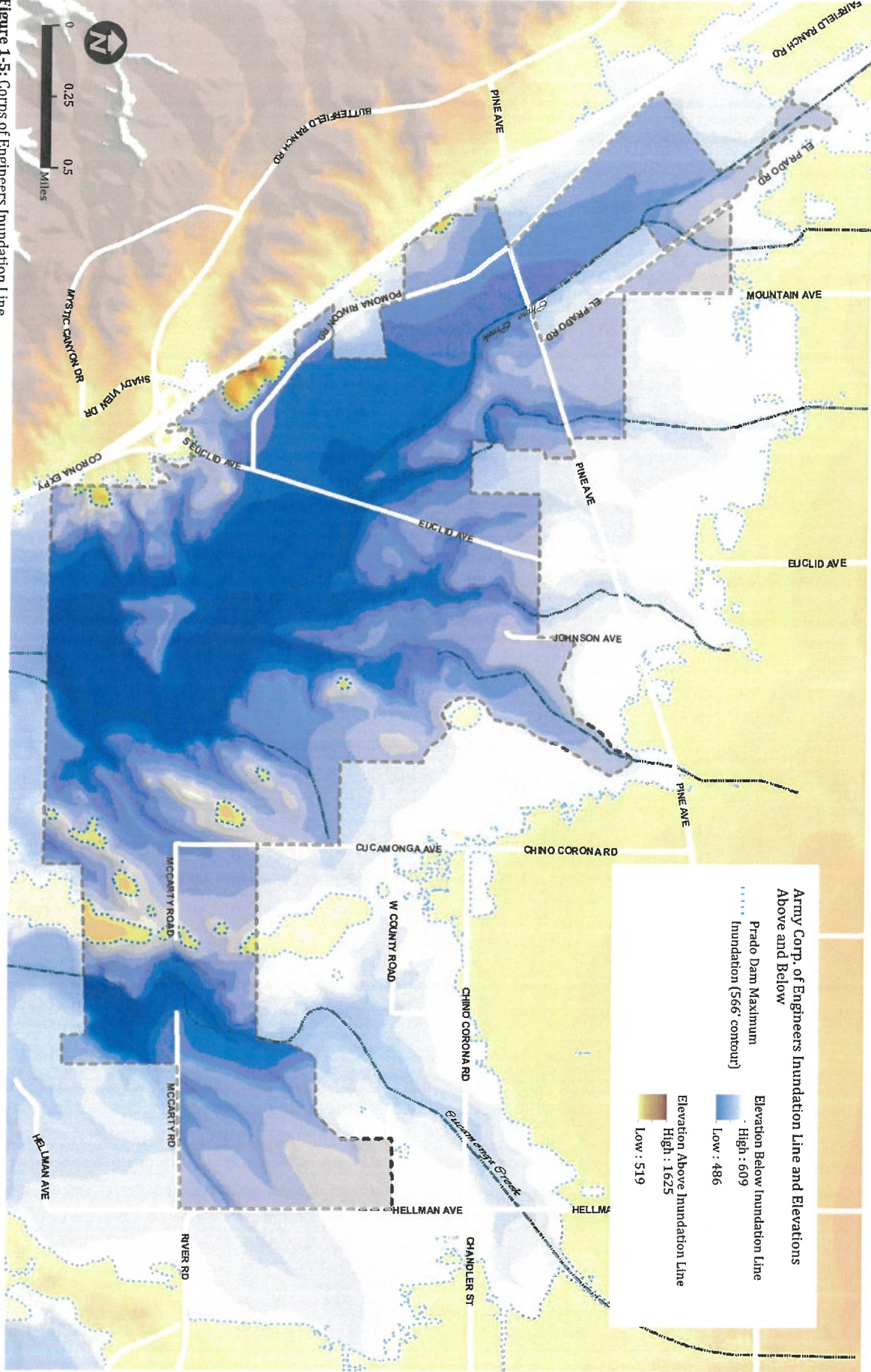


Figure 1-5: Corps of Engineers Inundation Line

1.5.3 Proposition 70 Use Guidance

In 1988, California voters approved Proposition 70 - the California Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act, of which \$20 million was set aside for the County of San Bernardino. The County purchased a total of 366.55 acres of dairies throughout the County in the cities of Chino and Ontario, with the intent to preserve and promote the cultural agricultural heritage and environmental stewardship through education and open/recreational space opportunities. Senate Bill 1124 provided guidance on how the properties should ultimately be used. In addition, the County could

sell or exchange the current holdings as long as the retained or acquired land was located within the boundaries of the Chino Agricultural Preserve, was at least equal in acreage, and the habitat value of the land was replaced with land at least equal in habitat value. With this funding, 271 acres of land adjacent to the southeast of the existing boundaries of the park was purchased as replacement properties to expand the total park area. Within the land agreements, the northern most 10 acres of the 271 acres is to be designated specifically as agricultural use.



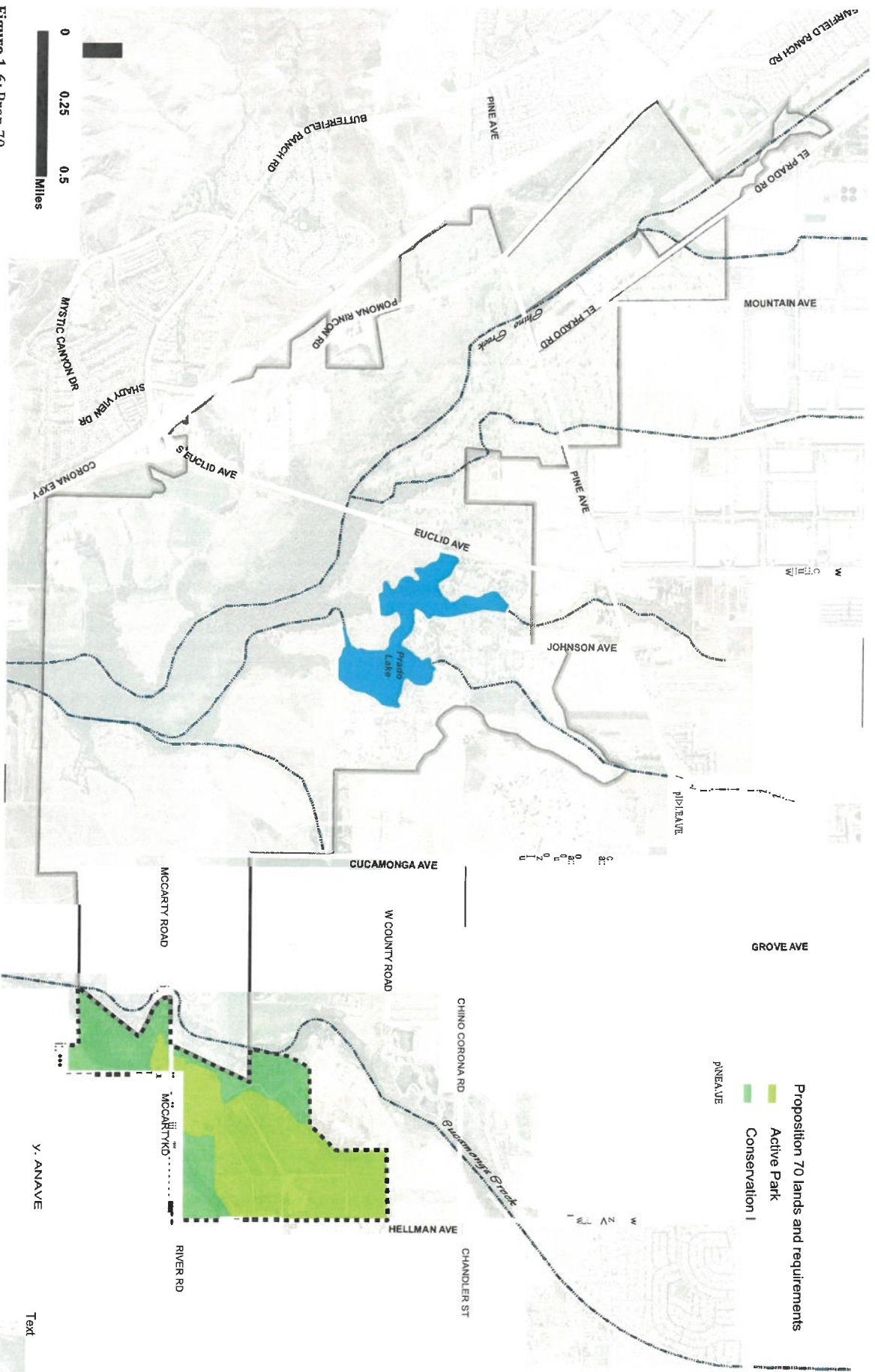


Figure 1-6: Prop 70