

~ **Redlands Conservancy** ~
PO Box 855, Redlands CA 92373; (909) 792-1800; www.redlandsconservancy.org

BASELINE REPORT
For
CONSERVATION EASEMENT, #4
Portions of SAN TIMOTEO CANYON and CREEK

A Conservation Easement on parcels, APN 0175-122-11, 0175-131-24, 0175-011-62, 0175-131-01, 0175-131-18, 0294-121-31, 0175-131-14, 0175-221-08, 0175-122-15, 0294-091-61, 0294-091-60, 0294-091-62, and 0175-251-11, located east of San Timoteo Canyon Road, north of San Timoteo Creek, and west of Alessandro Road in Redlands, California, owned by the City of Redlands, for the purpose of surveying and maintaining, the parcels' conservation values in perpetuity.

Date prepared: October, 2010

Prepared by: Sherli Leonard, Executive Director,
Redlands Conservancy

Page 2: Table of Contents

Page 3: Owner Acknowledgement Statement

Page 4: Summary Information

Page 5: Introduction

Page 6: Land Uses and Management

Page 7: Structures and Improvements

Page 8: Conservation Values

Page 9: Physical Description

Page 10: Geology and Land Forms

Page 11: Hydrology

Page 12: Vegetation

Page 13: Wildlife

Page 14: Historic Values

Appendix A: Photographs, Map

Appendix B: Site Survey

Appendix C: References

**Appendix D: Qualifications and Contact Information for
Report Preparer**

Page 3: Owner Acknowledgement Statement

The No. 4 Easement is located on two parcels belonging to the City of Redlands: APN 0175-122-11, 0175-131-24, 0175-011-62, 0175-131-01, 0175-131-18, 0294-121-31, 0175-131-14, 0175-221-08, 0175-122-15, 0294-091-61, 0294-091-60, 0294-091-62, and 0175-251-11, located east of San Timoteo Canyon Road, north of San Timoteo Creek, and west of Alessandro Road in Redlands, California, owned by the City of Redlands. The easement covers the entire land of all parcels.

The easement includes a one-half mile long historic trail, known as the Carriage Trail, and portions of the San Timoteo Creek.

Owner signatures:

For the City of Redlands Date

For the City of Redlands Date

Page 4: Summary Information

Land owners: City of Redlands

Zoning: City of Redlands: The west portion of the parcels is in A-1 zone, Agricultural District, minimum 5 acres; the east portion of the parcels is in R-A zone, Residential Estate District, minimum lot size 20,000 sq. ft.

Directions: The easement land lies in the southwest quadrant of the City of Redlands, adjoining at the west end San Timoteo Canyon Road, spreading south and east along the San Bernardino County Flood Control right of way on the north side of San Timoteo Creek.

Conservation Values: The primary conservation value of Conservation Easement #4 is the natural habitat of California coastal sage scrub, the small wetlands, the riparian habitat of the San Timoteo Creek, and the historic Carriage Trail.

Supporting Government Policies: The City of Redlands' General Plan establishes guiding and implementing principles which recommend the protection of riparian habitat and open spaces. (Section 7.0, Open Space Element of the General Plan: specifically, Section 7.21e)

Statement of how the property qualifies as a tax-deductible conservation easement donation: Not applicable.

Conservation Easement Restrictions and Reserved Rights:

Grantee may conduct reasonable activities to survey, restore, and maintain the natural habitat of the wetlands, the San Timoteo Creek, and the historic Carriage Trail (Exhibit B), and to promote the public enjoyment of the land, the trail, and the remainder of the properties, including but not limited to survey and study, non-native plant removal, native plant re-planting, and peripheral trail construction for access and observation.

Grantee may conduct reasonable activities to survey, restore and maintain the natural environment of the remainder of the property.

Grantee may not build or construct any structures on the property except as are necessary to fulfill the purpose of this easement. Proposals for any building or constructions must be submitted to the City of Redlands for approval.

Grantor may not charge any fee for entry to the Conservation Easement #4 land, nor build or construct any structures on the easement land except as provided in the Management Plan (Exhibit A), nor restrict access to the easement land.

All restrictions and reserved rights detailed in the Conservation Easement Deed pertain to the entire property of the easement land.

Page 5: Introduction

The land included in the conservation easement deed was either donated to the City of Redlands as conditions of approval for development in or near the area, or purchased by the City of Redlands through the EPA grant awarded to the City of Loma Linda as mitigation for the USACE flood control project in San Timoteo Creek. The City has allowed the properties to remain undeveloped.

In 1998, the USACE subjected the property to construction of a flood control project to minimize downstream flood liability from the San Timoteo Creek. In the process, ACE significantly altered the structure of portions of the San Timoteo Creek, resulting in severe damage to the native flora and fauna and to the wildlife corridors.

The purpose of this Baseline Report is to establish the existing condition of the land and immediate environment involved in the Conservation Easement #4 in order to plan for its protection, restoration, and conservation.

Located in the riparian corridor of the San Timoteo Creek in Redlands, the easement land has a significant conservation value as a habitat for riparian flora and fauna and as an historical site.

Information for this Baseline Report was acquired through a biological survey conducted by the Santa Ana Watershed Association, a field survey by Sherli Leonard, Roger Bell, and Al Kelley, interviews with community members and immediate neighbors active in the preservation of San Timoteo Canyon and Creek, and a review of City of Redlands documents.

Page 6: Land Uses and Management

Long before the community of Redlands was settled in the 1880s, the San Timoteo Canyon was used as a travel corridor by the Native Americans and by Spanish ranchers. The San Timoteo Creek received its year-round water supply from the San Bernardino Mountains near present-day Cherry Valley, and from Yucaipa Creek which enters the creek from Live Oak Canyon. The land was most likely used to graze cattle and sheep, and was used for dry-land crop farming. Since the mid twentieth century, the easement land has been unused.

Immediately west of the parcel land, on the west side of San Timoteo Canyon Road, the Brookside Winery was established in the mid 1880s, and wine grapes and citrus were grown there until 1916 after which the area was used exclusively for citrus groves. The area continues to host several acres of groves, and the original Brookside Winery house and barn still stand in relatively good condition. Native Americans and Chinese laborers worked and lived on that property.

San Timoteo Canyon Road, which passes on the west edge of the easement lands, was used as early as the 1910s for automobile races as drivers made their way, day and night, between Los Angeles and Palm Springs. From the 1880s through the 1920s, stage coaches carried travelers from the Santa Fe Trail to Los Angeles along the San Timoteo Canyon Road. Where there were stage coaches, there were bandits, and more than a few stopped the coaches at gun point for some ill-gotten gains.

In the late 1880s, Redlanders Albert and Alfred Smiley established Cañon Crest Park on the ridge on the north side of the easement land. The park, covering 200 acres, became a world-wide attraction as an extraordinary botanical garden. To enhance the visitors' experiences, the Smiley brothers purchased more land on the south ridge of San Timoteo Canyon, planted extensive eucalyptus groves, and developed a carriage road to take guests on full-day excursions into the canyon. The road traced from the park near current-day Smiley Heights Drive down the hills above the easement land and followed along the toes of the hills east to Alessandro Road, then crossed the creek and headed up to the eucalyptus groves. Today, the old Carriage Road still exists in very good condition, and is used casually by hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians.

Since the City of Redlands acquired the land, the land has remained undeveloped.

Page 7: Structures and Improvements

No permanent structures of any kind exist on the easement land.

No apparent easements encumber the easement land.

No water or mineral rights encumber the easement land.

A temporary fence exists on the east end at Alessandro Road, approximately 300 feet long.

A temporary residence exists approximately 600 feet east of Alessandro Road.

A temporary equine facility exists approximately 600 feet east of Alessandro Road.

Page 8: Conservation Values

The primary conservation value of this conservation easement is the natural habitat for riparian flora and fauna of the wetlands and San Timoteo Creek, and the historic Carriage Trail (Exhibit B).

A small wetland on the west end of the land is one of only two wetlands in the City of Redlands, and is readily accessible to the public for educational opportunities.

The Site Assessment of the wetlands was completed by the Santa Ana Watershed Association follows.

"The survey site includes the riparian portion of the area depicted in the attached aerial map, adjacent to the San Timoteo Creek flood control channel.

The survey portion of the site is mostly inundated by a steady inflow of water from an underground pipe of unknown origin that dumps into the site. There is an outflow that empties into the San Timoteo flood control channel, but the outflow was significantly less than the inflow during our visit. There is some erosion where the wetland abuts San Timoteo Canyon Road. The street drain appears to be clogged, which may explain the erosion.

Vegetation:

The site contains wetland vegetation typical to the region, including a small amount of upland shrub species and non-native grasses. Native vegetation includes Black, red and narrow-leafed willow (*Salix sp.*), mulefat (*Brassica salicifolia*), and cattails (*Typpha sp.*). Non-native plant species in addition to grasses include a Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), Tamarisk (*Tamarix sp.*) and Brazillian pepper trees (*Schinus sp.*). The Redlands Conservancy Wetlands Project site is bordered by a residential area with a disked field north of the wetland, the flood control channel to the south and San Timoteo Canyon Road to the west. The eastern boundary of the wetland contains a swale to an ephemeral drainage that appears to flow into the wetland and additional open space along the south-facing slopes.

Avian Species:

Eleven different avian species were detected in the wetland. All species observed are commonly found wintering in this region. Individual members and diversity are low at this site, but that is expected because the wetland is small (about one acre) and isolated from the riparian habitat upstream by the flood control channel. Additional species would undoubtedly occur at this site during nesting season. For example, the red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), was absent from this winter survey, but is known to occur here during nesting season."

The historic Carriage Trail follows the contour of the hills on the north side of the properties, beginning approximately 2,000 feet east of San Timoteo Canyon Road and goes southeast approximately one and a half miles (Exhibit B). The trail is currently a footpath, located on a graded bed approximately 12 feet wide.

The survey of the Carriage Trail on the easement land was conducted by Sherli Leonard, executive director of the Redlands Conservancy, Roger Bell, principal of Bellfree Company, and Al Kelley, biologist and retired professor of biology at California State College at San Bernardino, during three two-hour field visits to the site.

The San Timoteo Creek covers the southern length of the easement land. Water for the creek comes from seasonal rains and from on-going releases from the Yucaipa Valley Water Treatment facility. The creek bed is ranges from 20 feet to 50 feet wide for water flow. The creek area is forested with naturally-occurring cottonwood and willow trees, and other flora typical of riparian habitats.

The survey of the San Timoteo Creek was conducted by Roger Bell, Al Kelley, and Sherli Leonard during several field visits to the site.

Page 9: Physical Description

The easement land is located in the south canyon area of the City of Redlands in the County of San Bernardino, approximately 60 miles due east of Los Angeles, in a region known as the Inland Empire. The land approximates 1,600 feet elevation.

The climate features Mediterranean influences, becoming progressively xeroplupic eastward. The climate is characterized by winter frontal storms and summer heat stress. The average annual temperature is listed at 62.8 degrees Fahrenheit, with normal ranges from 30 degrees in the winter to 105 degrees in the summer. The precipitation norm is 13.74 inches, with 95percent of the rain coming in November to April. Summer heat stress favors a fire-adapted ecosystem.

Page 10: Geology and Landforms

The land around the Conservation Easement is characterized by high ridges on northeast and southwest sides of a broad and flat canyon which opens into an alluvial fan plain immediately west of the easement land. The soils around are characterized by Hanford Coarse Sandy Loam and Saugus Sandy Loam on the hillsides. When the soil is dry, it can become cemented. Most of alluvial horizons show intense stratification and were deposited as a pluvial erosional feature during early Holocene. The area is located approximately 1 mile north of the San Jacinto Fault.

Page 11: Hydrology

The fauna in the area around the Conservation Easement indicates spring flooding-summer drought cycles. The easement land generally receives no continuous water flow, although the small wetland receives a continuous water supply from irrigation run-off.

Page 12: Vegetation

The vegetation of the area around the Conservation Easement is dominated by Mediterranean types of modrotertiery origin, and much of the vegetation has been modified.

The south-facing slopes are dominated by grasslands, especially *Avena barbata*, an introduced grass which is gradually replacing the native needle grasses. The increased fire frequency due to man seems to be the major factor.

The wetland site contains vegetation typical to the region, including a small amount of upland shrub species and non-native grasses. Native vegetation includes Black, red and narrow-leaved willow, mulefat, and cattails. Non-native plant species in addition to grasses include a Mexican fan palm, Tamarisk, and Brazilian pepper trees. (See Appendix B for complete listing of proper names.)

Several non-native eucalyptus groves, in severely deteriorated condition, are located along the Carriage Road.

Page 13: Wildlife:

Avian wildlife sighted on the easement land during the survey includes species typical of riparian habitat in this region. Eleven different avian species were detected in the Wetland, all of which were typical of species commonly found wintering in this region. See Appendix B, site assessment.

Sightings of deer, bobcat, coyote, foxes and wild pigs are frequent, and an occasional sighting of a cougar (puma, mountain lion) has been reported.

Other avian wildlife sighted as regular inhabitants include cooper's hawk and red-tailed hawk.

Page 14: Historic Values

This land includes the historic Carriage Trail (Exhibit B) constructed in the late 1880s by the Smiley brothers, Redlands' major benefactors. The trail was used to carry guests from the Smiley brothers' world famous botanical garden, Cañon Crest Park on the north side of San Timoteo Canyon to the south ridge of the San Timoteo Canyon where the brothers had purchased land for picnicking and partying. Later, the road was used by property owners in San Timoteo Canyon to access their dry-land farms. Along the road is evidence of farming activities, including man-made earthen dams to catch run-off water for use on the farms.