

# **A. MSHCP Conservation Area Description**

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Although 65% of the vegetation patches in the MSHCP Conservation Area are less than 10 acres in size, they comprise only 0.2% of the area of the proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The vast majority of these small patches occur within areas heavily fragmented by urbanized areas in the Riverside Lowlands Bioregion. By contrast, only 28 (5%) of the patches are greater than 1,000 acres in size, but these comprise 94% of the proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. A single intact Habitat block comprises approximately 238,000 acres (50%) of the area.

### **3.5.3 Methods for Measuring Edge Effects**

Edge areas were calculated using the vegetation data base, the Bioregions coverage, highways, the proposed MSHCP Conservation Area and existing Public/Quasi-Public Lands. These polygon-based data layers were converted to 100-foot pixel grids for the quantitative analysis. The Edge Effects analysis was conducted both for the existing conditions in the Plan Area and for the anticipated “buildout” scenario after assembly of the MSHCP Conservation Area. Lands were either classified as natural Habitat or urban/agricultural under the existing conditions and buildout scenarios. For the buildout scenario, it was conservatively assumed that all non-MSHCP Conservation Area lands, including Rural/Mountainous, would be converted to urban development or Agriculture. A distance function then was used to measure the distance from urban or agricultural lands to each cell supporting land mapped as Habitat. Lands were classified under one of the three following edge categories:

1. < 250 feet - high edge
2. 251 to 600 feet - moderate edge
3. > 600 feet - low to no edge.

Again, these edge intervals are somewhat arbitrary and are not meant to reflect the absolute Edge Effects in the Plan Area but are consistent with those used for the San Diego MSCP.

### **3.5.4 Results of Edge Effects Analysis**

The results of the edge analysis are summarized in *Table 14*. This summary includes the existing conditions in the Plan Area and the potential future condition in the Plan Area assuming complete buildout in non-MSHCP Conservation Area lands. In addition, the table shows a comparison of existing conditions and buildout conditions with an idealized single circular block of Habitat as a Core Area that is the same size as the proposed MSHCP Conservation Area, and excludes any developed, disturbed and agricultural lands that would cause internal edge.