3.1 Aesthetics

This section describes the environmental and regulatory settings and draft significance criteria with respect to aesthetic resources.

3.1.1 Environmental Setting

This subsection describes the environmental setting for aesthetic resources.

3.1.1.1 Methodology

The methodology for describing the existing environmental setting for aesthetics in the study area relies primarily on the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) process and guidelines for visual impact assessment for highway projects (FHWA 1988, 2015). The FHWA methodology has been commonly used to assess the aesthetic character and quality of various types of development projects on both public and private lands within a variety of landscapes, including natural, rural, suburban, and urban settings, and therefore is appropriate for this assessment. The study area for aesthetics is defined as the area within a ½-mile distance in all directions from the proposed project. This area represents the foreground distance zone, defined as the area within which a project may appear more dominant and take on greater importance to a viewer (FHWA 2015).

This aesthetic assessment process involves identifying:

- Aesthetic character and quality of the study area;
- Important viewing locations (e.g., roads, trails, residential neighborhoods, parks, and overlooks) and the general visibility of the proposed project within the study area using descriptions and photographs; and
- Viewer groups and their sensitivity (e.g., general viewer awareness and concern for views and changes to those views).

The aesthetic character and quality of the region and the study area are described for large areas with generally distinct visual character. For large corridor projects, the division of the study area into smaller landscape character units (LCUs) of relatively homogenous landscape types assists in describing the environmental setting. Important viewing locations and the general visibility of the proposed project within the study area were determined using desktop computer analyses and field observations. Landscape character photographs are provided that show typical views within the study area showing the general character of the landscape. Viewer groups and their general levels of sensitivity were determined through identifying the various types of viewers who experience the area and their general levels of awareness and concern for aesthetics based on the types of activities in which they engage. Key observation points (KOPs) were identified for important viewing locations where the proposed project would be potentially visible to and noticeable by the sensitive viewer groups.

Vividness, Intactness, and Unity

The following criteria are used to describe the aesthetic character and quality of the region and the study area:

• *Vividness*. The visual power or memorability of landscape components as they combine in striking or distinctive visual patterns.

- *Intactness*. The visual integrity of the natural and human-built landscape and its freedom from encroaching elements. This factor can be present in well-kept urban and rural landscapes, as well as in natural settings.
- Unity. The visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape considered as a whole.
 It frequently attests to the careful design of individual components in the landscape. (FHWA 1988).

3.1.1.2 Local Setting

The proposed project would be constructed within several incorporated and unincorporated areas within San Diego County, as discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, and shown in Figure 2.1-1. The proposed project would be located within the rugged coastal foothills of the Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province that extends approximately 900 miles from Southern California to the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California peninsula. Terrain that would be crossed by the proposed project varies from steep and rolling to broad, nearly level valleys, often bordered by more rugged and rolling terrain. Dry arroyos and exposed bedrock are common features in the areas of steep terrain. Native vegetation in the area consists largely of coastal sage scrub, chaparral, oak woodlands, and some riparian and seasonal wetland areas. Non-native grasslands also occur in the area. However, much of the vegetation consists of introduced ornamental landscape plants associated with development throughout much of the area.

The visual character of the study area is predominately developed, although there are some natural and agricultural stretches. The development in the area is residential and commercial, interspersed with golf courses, a few commercial nurseries, some churches and schools, scattered developed parks, and manufacturing and light industrial uses. Commercial nurseries and some orchards occur mostly in the less developed northern portion of the study area. The southern portion, including the terminus of the proposed project, crosses Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar, which is mostly undeveloped and characterized by rolling terrain and open grasslands and shrub lands. The steep hills provide a vivid backdrop to many views in the area. The rugged and varied terrain, natural-appearing open space areas, and wooded areas also contribute to the vividness of many views throughout the study area.

3.1.1.3 Landscape Character Units

LCUs provide a context for describing and analyzing the landscape setting and are areas with generally distinct visual character distinguished by continuous, similar, or interrelated visual elements. The noticeable (i.e., aboveground) components of the proposed project would primarily be located in the northern portion of the study area east of or near Interstate (I-) 15 and along roads in communities in the southern portion of the study area (Figure 2.1-1). Most components of the proposed project that would be aboveground and visible are located along or near Line 3602. Aboveground project components visible during operations and maintenance that are not located along Line 3602 include two new check valves that will replace regulator stations (#1516 and #1500). In addition, components not located along Line 3602 that would be visible only during construction include two staging areas/laydown yards (#1A and #6A), the Mira Mesa Pipeline Extension, and Line 49-318 Replacement.

Five distinct LCUs have been identified for the proposed project and are shown on Figure 3.1-1. The general visual character of each LCU is described below, and landscape character photographs for each LCU are provided in Figure 3.1-2. In addition, the location of each landscape character photograph, with respect to components of the proposed project and sensitive visual resource areas, is shown on Figure 3.1-3. The baseline physical conditions for the proposed project are the existing environmental conditions in the study area at the time of the publication of the Notice of Preparation (May 9, 2017). The landscape character photographs were taken by the applicants in 2015 and 2016; however, the photographs represent

the conditions at the time of the Notice of Preparation publication. The California Public Utilities Commission validated the photographs taken in 2015 and 2016 by visiting the proposed project location in 2017 and confirmed that the physical conditions in the photographs have not changed.

Landscape Character Unit 1 (Mileposts 0.0 to 20.7)

The landscape of LCU 1 (Figure 3.1-1) consists generally of diverse rolling and somewhat rugged and hilly topography with a combination of southern oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, interspersed grassland, and some riparian habitats. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly rural and natural. Dominant visual features that define the visual character of this landscape unit include defined slopes and draws, low hills covered with dense forest and shrublands, and the I-15 freeway. Scattered residences, orchards, and nursery operations occur throughout the landscape unit but are not dominant elements. Landscape character Photographs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 23 (Figure 3.1-2) show some of the scattered residences and agricultural lands and operations interspersed within the mostly natural landscape. Landscape character Photographs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 (Figure 3.1-2) show the rolling and somewhat rugged terrain and generally dense natural vegetation that is dominant within this landscape unit.

Although most views are somewhat enclosed by surrounding hills and tall trees, some include partial or broad vistas of background hills (Figure 3.1-2, Photographs 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, and 19). Built elements that dominate some views within LCU 1 are associated with the roadways and consist largely of some buildings, roadside signs, guardrails, vertical wood power poles, and fences. In general, vividness, intactness, and unity of views within LCU 1 tend to be moderate to high given the landscape's predominantly natural character, lack of encroaching elements, and fairly strong visual coherence.

Landscape Character Unit 2 (Mileposts 20.7 to 30.6)

The landscape of LCU 2 (Figure 3.1-1) consists generally of rolling to flat topography within a broad, somewhat open valley. The city of Escondido is located within LCU 2. Although the northern portion of this LCU appears largely undeveloped, the central and southern portions are dominated by urban development. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly urban and developed. Natural vegetation consisting largely of oak woodlands and shrublands occurs in the northern portion of this LCU, but quickly transitions to introduced landscape trees and plants associated with urban development. Dominant visual features that define the visual character of this landscape unit include residential and commercial development, tall trees lining major roadways, parks and open space areas, and views of distant hills. Commercial buildings, municipal government buildings, professional office buildings, motels, schools, churches, individual residences, residential developments, golf courses, and parks occur throughout the landscape unit. The southern portion of this landscape unit is less urban and developed and consists largely of low-density residential development, schools, churches, parks, and open space. Parks and open space areas in the southern portion of this landscape unit include Kit Carson Park, The Vineyard at Escondido Golf Course, and San Dieguito River Park. Landscape character Photographs 24 through 30 (Figure 3.1-2) show views from roads and trails adjacent to or within open space areas in the southern portion of LCU 2.

Although much of LCU 2 is fairly flat, views within most of this landscape unit are somewhat enclosed by buildings and tall trees adjacent to roadways. Views in the southern portion of LCU 2 tend to be more open, with broad vistas of background hills (Figure 3.1-2, Photographs 24 through 30). Built elements generally dominate the views through most of LCU 2, with the exception of the southern portion, where open space and parks are dominant. In general, vividness, intactness, and unity of views within LCU 2 tend to be moderate to high given the predominance of trees and landscape plants, generally well-kept urban landscape, and moderate to strong visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape as a whole.

Landscape Character Unit 3 (Mileposts 30.6 to 38.5)

The landscape of LCU 3 (Figure 3.1-1) consists generally of gently rolling to flat topography. LCU 3 contains the city of San Diego in the northern portion and the city of Poway in the southern portion. This landscape unit is dominated by urban development, consisting mostly of moderate to low-density residential development interspersed with some areas of commercial development, offices, churches, schools, parks, open space, golf courses, and a hospital complex. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly suburban residential and developed. Natural vegetation consisting largely of shrublands with oak trees occurring on some hillsides in this LCU; however, the predominant vegetation consists of introduced landscape trees and plants associated with residential and commercial development. Dominant visual features that define the visual character of this landscape unit include residential and commercial development, tall trees lining major roadways, and views of nearby hills. Open space areas in this landscape unit include the Battle Mountain Open Space, two golf courses, the Meadowbrook Ecological Reserve, a large undeveloped area surrounding the Twin Peaks, and several smaller parks. Landscape character Photograph 31 (Figure 3.1-2) shows a view from Pomerado Road, which runs north-south through LCU 3. This photograph location shows residential areas of the city of San Diego to the west and the city of Poway to the east.

Views within most of LCU 3 are somewhat enclosed by terrain, tall trees adjacent to roadways, and buildings. Views of nearby hills and ridges are intermittent throughout the area. Built elements, primarily residential structures, are generally dominant throughout most of LCU 3. In general, vividness, intactness, and unity of views within LCU 3 tend to be moderate given the moderate distinction of visual patterns, mix of landscape plants and encroaching structures, and moderate visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape as a whole.

Landscape Character Unit 4 (Mileposts 38.5 to 43.7)

The landscape of LCU 4 (Figure 3.1-1) consists generally of steep to gently rolling topography within the city of San Diego and the southern portion of the city of Poway. This landscape unit is primarily a mix of low-density residential development and natural open space. Several schools are also located in this landscape unit. The visual character of LCU 4 is predominantly suburban residential and natural. Natural vegetation consisting largely of oak woodlands, chaparral, and shrublands occurs on steep hillsides and in draws. However, there is a predominance of introduced landscape trees and plants associated with the residential development, and many tall eucalyptus trees lining the major roadways in LCU 4. Dominant visual features that define the visual character of this landscape unit include residential development; tall trees lining major roadways; and expansive views of hills, ridges, and valleys. Open space areas in this landscape unit include the Scripps-Miramar Open Space and various smaller undeveloped areas. Landscape character Photographs 32 through 35 (Figure 3.1-2) show views along Pomerado Road, which runs generally northeast and southwest through LCU 4. These photographs show the landscape plantings and tall trees lining the roadway throughout the residential and open space areas in LCU 4. Landscape character Photographs 36 through 38 (Figure 3.1-2) show views that include tall trees and dense plantings in the vicinity of Pomerado Road and its intersection with Willow Creek Road and Avenue of Nations.

Views within most of LCU 4 are a mix of broad vistas overlooking valleys, draws, hills, and ridges and views enclosed by tall trees lining the roadways. Expansive views are intermittent throughout the area. Low-density residential development is prominent throughout LCU 4. In general, vividness, intactness, and unity of views within LCU 4 tend to be moderately high to high given the predominance of trees and landscape plants, lack of encroaching elements, generally well-kept landscape, and moderately strong to strong visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape as a whole.

Landscape Character Unit 5 (Mileposts 43.7 to 47.0)

The landscape of LCU 5 (Figure 3.1-1) consists generally of gently rolling to low rugged hilly terrain mostly within MCAS Miramar. The northern portion of this landscape unit is within the city of San

Diego. LCU 5 consists primarily of natural open space and its visual character is predominantly natural. Vegetation, consisting largely of chaparral shrublands and grasslands, occurs on the rolling terrain and in draws in MCAS Miramar. The dominant visual feature that defines the visual character of this landscape unit is the open, rolling terrain covered in low shrublands and grasslands. No public roads or trails exist in LCU 5, and no landscape character photographs for this landscape unit are provided.

Although there is no public access within LCU 5, views of portions of this landscape unit are available from the vicinity of the school campuses to the north, I-15 to the west, and the San Clemente Canyon/Mt. Soledad Freeway (State Route [SR] 52) bordering the southern boundary of MCAS Miramar. These views generally provide expansive vistas overlooking the open, rolling landscape of MCAS Miramar. In general, vividness, intactness, and unity of views for LCU 5 are moderately high to high given the predominance of natural vegetation, lack of encroaching elements, and moderately strong to strong visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape as a whole.

3.1.1.4 Scenic Highways

Eligible and Designated State and County Scenic Highways are located in the study area. The Designated State Scenic Highway closest to Line 3602 is the portion of SR 52 (Mt. Soledad Freeway) south of MCAS Miramar between highway mile marker 9.5, near Santo Road, and highway mile marker 13.0, near Mast Road, just west of the city of Santee (Caltrans 2011). The next nearest Designated State Scenic Highway to the proposed project is SR 125, located approximately 7.0 miles southeast of the south terminus of Line 3602 (Caltrans 2011).

Several Eligible State Scenic Highways are located within 1 mile of Line 3602 (Caltrans 2011). In addition, there are eight Designated San Diego County Scenic Highways located within 1 mile of Line 3602 (County of San Diego 2015a). Table 3.1-1 lists the Eligible State Scenic Highways and Designated San Diego County Scenic Highways within 1 mile of Line 3602. Because components of the proposed project associated with Line 1600 and other features of the proposed project would be primarily belowground and would not generally be noticeable, only scenic highways within 1 mile of Line 3602 are identified in Table 3.1-1.

Table 3.1-1 Scenic Highways within 1 Mile of Line 3602

			Location	Figure 3.1-3
Roadway	Segment	Status	(Milepost)	(Page[s])
I-15	Riverside County line to SR 76 (Pala Road)	Eligible State Scenic Highway	0.0-8.3 (Adjacent/crossed)	1–2
I-15	Riverside County line south to Escondido city limits	Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	0.0-20.7 (Adjacent/crossed)	1–3
Live Oak Park Road/ East Mission Road	SR 76 north and east to I-15	Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	3.8–4.1 (Intersects)	1
Reche Road	SR 76 north and east to I-15	Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	5.1 (Intersects)	1
SR 76 (Pala Road)	Oceanside city limits east to SR 79	Eligible State Scenic Highway and Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	8.4 (Crossed)	3
Camino del Rey	SR 76 to its terminus at Old Highway 395	Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	13.1 (Intersects)	3
Gopher Canyon Road	Vista city limits east to Lilac Road	Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	14.1 (Intersects)	3, 5
Old Castle Road	Vista city limits east of Lilac Road	Designated San Diego County Scenic Highway	14.2 (Intersects)	5

Table 3.1-1	Scenic Highways	within 1 Mi	le of Line 3602

Roadway	Segment	Status	Location (Milepost)	Figure 3.1-3 (Page[s])
SR 52 (San Clemente Canyon Freeway/ Mt. Soledad Freeway)	East of highway mile marker 9.5 near Santo Road	Eligible State Scenic Highway	46.6	11
SR 52 (San Clemente Canyon Freeway/ Mt. Soledad Freeway)	West of highway mile marker 9.5 near Santo Road to highway mile marker 13.5 near Mast Road west of Santee	Designated State Scenic Highway	46.6	11

Sources: County of San Diego 2015a; Caltrans 2011.

Kev:

I-15 = Interstate 15

SR = State Route

3.1.1.5 Sensitive Viewer Groups

In general, sensitive viewers are people who could be affected by the visual changes introduced by the proposed project. These viewers are described in terms of their exposure to the project components and levels of sensitivity.

Viewer exposure considers the distance of the viewer from the proposed project, the position of the viewer in terms of relative elevation, the direction of the view, the approximate number of viewers, and the duration and frequency of views. Usage volume is estimated based on the size of the viewer group where quantifiable (e.g., number of residences or traffic counts) or on the amenities offered in the case of a recreation facility (e.g., an auditorium would have a high usage volume compared to an unstaffed park without amenities). Duration of views is estimated based on the amount of time the typical viewer would be able to see a project component. For example, a motorist on a winding road through undulating terrain is likely to have shorter-duration views of a project component than a motorist on a straight stretch of highway through flat terrain. Frequency of views is estimated based on how often a typical viewer is likely to be present in the location that defines the viewer group. For example, local neighborhood residential viewers would have high view frequency, whereas motorists or transient visitors occasionally passing through the area would have relatively low view frequency.

Viewer sensitivity describes a viewer's expectation or concern for a view based on viewer activity and awareness, any local or cultural significance of the site or area, and any scenic designations associated with the viewing locations, such as scenic vistas or scenic roads or highways. Visual sensitivity associated with views in a particular area is the combination of viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure. Generally, when viewer sensitivity for a particular viewer group is low to moderate, visual sensitivity increases with an increase in total number of viewers, the frequency of viewing (e.g., daily or seasonally), and the duration of views (i.e., how long a scene is viewed).

Table 3.1-2 lists the general viewer groups in the vicinity of the proposed project; defines their geographic proximity to the proposed project; qualitatively estimates the volume of viewers, duration of views, and frequency of views; identifies the viewer sensitivity of each viewer group; and identifies the overall visual sensitivity for each viewer group. Visual sensitivity levels for viewer groups in specific areas in the vicinity of the proposed project may vary somewhat from those shown in the table, based on unique local conditions described below in the environmental analysis.

Table 3.1-2 Sensitive Viewer Groups in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

	Viewer Exposure					
Viewer Group	Approximate Location Relative to Proposed Project	Usage Volume	Duration of Views	Frequency of Views	Viewer Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity
Residents in residential neighborhoods	Within 0.5 mile	Moderate	Moderately High-High	High	High	High
Recreationists using parks, trails, open spaces, and other recreation facilities	Within 0.5 mile	Low-High	Moderately High–High	Moderate– High	High	High
Travelers on Eligible and Designated State Scenic Highways	Within 0.5 mile	High	Low	Moderate– High	Moderately High–High	Moderately High–High
Travelers on County- designated Scenic Highways	Within 0.5 mile	Moderate- High	Low	Moderate– High	Moderately High–High	Moderately High–High
Travelers and local area residents on local roads, traveling for work or personal business	Within 0.5 mile	Moderate	Low- Moderate	Moderate– High	Moderately Low- Moderate	Moderate
Local area residents using local roads and paths for traveling to schools and places of recreation	Within 0.5 mile	Moderate	Low- Moderate	Moderate– High	Moderately High–High	Moderately High
People using commercial areas for work or personal business	Within 0.5 mile	Moderate– High	Moderate	Moderate	Low– Moderately Low	Moderately Low

3.1.1.6 Key Observation Points

KOPs (i.e., representative views) have been identified for portions of the proposed project that would be potentially visible to and noticeable by the sensitive viewer groups identified above (Table 3.1-2). Figures 3.1-1 and 3.1-3 show the location of each KOP within the vicinity of the proposed project. Figures E-1a through E-1d in Appendix E include photographs of the existing views from each of the KOPs discussed below.

Key Observation Point 1: View Northeast from East Mission Road near Milepost 3.8

KOP 1 (Figure 3.1-1 and Table 3.1-3) represents the view toward Line 3602 looking northeast from East Mission Road near Milepost (MP) 3.8. Figure E-1a (Appendix E) shows the existing view of the proposed project from KOP 1. This portion of East Mission Road is a County-designated Scenic Highway. Due to its proximity to I-15 and an associated interchange, this segment of East Mission Road receives a fairly high volume of use.

The primary elements within the view include the roadway; low trees, shrubs, and some landscape plants along the roadway in the foreground; medium-height orchard trees on the hillside in the distant foreground; a sign, flagpole, and some chain link fencing; and several wooden power poles and

conductors. Portions of several graded roads are also visible. The graded track extending up the hillside and crossing the ridge near the center of the view is a prominent linear feature that contrasts with the other more curvilinear and natural forms and lines in the view. Where the graded track intersects the ridge, the gap in the rounded forms of trees lining the ridgeline is noticeable.

Vividness is moderate due to the presence of some distinctive elements in the view, notably the rolling hills, tree-covered hillsides and natural vegetation. The existing trees and other vegetation contribute to the moderate unity of this view by providing visual coherence and compositional order and the overall intactness for this view is high due to the general absence of encroaching elements and the strong visual integrity of the view. Overall, the visual character of this view is rural and natural and its scenic quality is moderate to moderately high.

This and other views from East Mission Road are experienced by a moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, including local area residents traveling for personal reasons and people commuting to and from work. Because of the road's status as a County-designated Scenic Highway, viewers also include recreationists and others traveling for leisure, who have a generally high awareness of and concern for scenery. For these reasons, viewer sensitivity for viewer groups traveling along East Mission Road is moderately high. Although the duration of views by passing motorists would be fairly brief, the moderately high volume of viewers and frequency of their views, combined with moderately high viewer sensitivity, results in moderately high visual sensitivity for this KOP and other views from nearby segments of East Mission Road.

Key Observation Point 2: View North along Mule Hill Trail near Milepost 29.4

KOP 2 (Figure 3.1-1; Table 3.1-3) represents the view along Line 3602 looking north from a location along Mule Hill Trail near MP 29.4. Figure E-1b (Appendix E) shows the existing view of the proposed project from KOP 2. This view is from a location within the San Dieguito River Park Open Space area just south of South Bear Valley Parkway. Mule Hill Trail is part of the larger Coast to Crest Trail system, which runs approximately 55 miles along the San Dieguito River. This section of the trail traverses an area of mostly natural, open space bordering the north edge of Lake Hodges (currently mostly dry). It is near parking and recreation amenities, including several interpretive nodes, and is used by a large number of recreationists.

The primary elements within the view include the trail, grassy areas and shrubs along and near the trail in the foreground, tall trees in the distant foreground and middleground, a portion of the South Bear Valley Parkway Road, and several buildings, small signs, and light poles along the road.

Vividness is moderate due to the predominance and diversity of distinct vegetation forms and textures in the view. The predominance of vegetation also contributes to the moderately high unity of this view by providing visual coherence and compositional order despite some encroaching elements. Intactness for this view is also moderately high due to the presence of some encroaching elements combined with the predominance of vegetation and the strong visual integrity of the view. Overall, the visual character of this view is generally natural and its scenic quality is moderately high.

This and other views from Mule Hill Trail are experienced by a moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, consisting mostly of recreationists and others engaged in leisure activities who have a high awareness of and concern for scenery. For these reasons, viewer sensitivity for viewer groups using Mule Hill Trail is high. The duration and frequency of views by trail users is high due to their pedestrian nature. This, in combination with the moderately high number of viewers and their high viewer sensitivity, results in high visual sensitivity for this KOP and other views along and in the vicinity of the Mule Hill Trail.

Key Observation Point 3: View South along Mule Hill Trail near Milepost 29.7

KOP 3 (Figure 3.1-1; Table 3.1-3) represents the view along Line 3602 looking south from a location along Mule Hill Trail near MP 29.7. Figure E-1c (Appendix E) shows the existing view of the proposed project from KOP 3. This view is from a location within the San Dieguito River Park Open Space area approximately 2,000 feet south of the South Bear Valley Parkway. This section of the trail traverses an area of mostly natural, open space near parking and recreation amenities, including several interpretive nodes, and is used by a large number of recreationists.

The primary elements within the view include the trail; shrubs and grassy areas along and near the trail in the foreground; a metal structure beside the trail; interpretive nodes consisting of low rock walls and interpretive signs; medium-height riparian trees in the distant foreground and middleground; low hills mostly covered with residences in the middleground; and a portion of the I-15 bridge crossing Lake Hodges, visible near the right edge of the photograph (Figure 3.1-1). Distant hills silhouetted against the sky in the background are prominent features that attract viewers' attention.

Vividness is high due to the distinct and varied terrain and diversity of distinct vegetation forms and textures in the view. The predominance of vegetation also contributes to the high unity of this view by providing visual coherence and compositional order. Intactness for this view is moderately high due to the presence of very few encroaching elements and the strong visual integrity of the view. Overall, the visual character of this view is generally natural and its scenic quality is high.

This and other views from Mule Hill Trail are experienced by a moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, consisting mostly of recreationists and others engaged in leisure activities who have a high awareness of and concern for scenery. For these reasons, viewer sensitivity for viewer groups using Mule Hill Trail is high. The duration and frequency of views by trail users is high due to their pedestrian nature. This, in combination with the moderately high number of viewers and their high viewer sensitivity, results in high visual sensitivity for this KOP and other views along, and in the vicinity of, the Mule Hill Trail.

Key Observation Point 4: View South from Willow Creek Road near Milepost 43.2

KOP 4 (Figure 3.1-1; Table 3.1-3) represents the view toward Line 3602, near MP 43.2, looking south from Willow Creek Road toward its intersection with Pomerado Road. Figure E-1d (Appendix E) shows the existing view of the proposed project from KOP 4. This location is less than a mile from the Pomerado Road–I-15 interchange and receives a fairly high volume of use.

The primary elements within the view include the roadways, intersection, median, sidewalks, traffic lights, light standards, traffic signal control box, and a few signs; tall, dense trees and some landscape plants; a chain link fence with some signs mounted on it; and portions of several buildings on the Marshall Middle School campus south of the intersection. The dense trees are a strong natural feature that screens views of the school buildings and enclose the view.

Vividness is moderately low to moderate due to the presence of some distinctive elements in the view, notably the tall, dense trees. The existing trees also contribute to the moderate unity of this view by providing visual coherence and compositional order. Intactness for this view is moderately high due to the low number of encroaching elements and the moderately strong visual integrity of the view. Overall, the visual character of this view is developed with some natural elements and its scenic quality is moderate.

This and other views in the vicinity are experienced by a moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, including local area residents traveling for personal reasons and people commuting to and from work. Viewers also include some recreationists (e.g., people walking or biking), who have a generally high awareness of scenery. For these reasons, viewer sensitivity for viewer groups traveling in the vicinity

is moderately low to moderate. Although the duration of views by passing motorists would be fairly brief, the view duration for people stopping at the intersection would be somewhat longer. This, combined with the moderately high volume of viewers, high frequency of their views, and moderately low to moderate viewer sensitivity, results in moderate visual sensitivity for this KOP and other views in the vicinity of the intersection.

Table 3.1-3 Key Observation Points

	Visual Character; Scenic				
KOP	Quality	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
KOP 1: View toward the proposed project ROW looking northeast from East Mission Road near MP 3.8.	Rural and natural character; moderate to moderately high scenic quality.	Moderate due to the presence of some distinctive elements in the view, notably the rolling hills, tree- covered hillsides and natural vegetation.	High due to the general absence of encroaching elements and the strong visual integrity of the view.	Moderate due to existing trees and other vegetation providing visual coherence and compositional order.	Moderately high due to moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, including local area residents traveling for personal reasons and people commuting to and from work; County-designated Scenic Highway with viewers that include recreationists and others traveling for leisure, who have a generally high awareness of and concern for scenery.
KOP 2: View along the proposed project ROW looking north from a location along Mule Hill Trail near MP 29.4.	Natural character; moderately high scenic quality.	Moderate due to the predominance and diversity of distinct vegetation forms and textures in the view.	Moderately high due to the presence of some encroaching elements and the strong visual integrity of the view.	Moderately high due to some encroaching elements with predominance of vegetation providing visual coherence and compositional order.	High due to views experienced by a moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, consisting mostly of recreationists and others engaged in leisure activities with a high awareness of and concern for scenery.
KOP 3: View along the proposed project ROW looking south from a location along Mule Hill Trail near MP 29.7.	Natural character; high scenic quality.	High due to the distinct and varied terrain and diversity of distinct vegetation forms and textures in the view.	Moderately high due to a few encroaching elements and the strong visual integrity of the view.	High due to predominance of vegetation in this view providing visual coherence and compositional order.	High due to views experienced by a moderately high number of viewers on a regular basis, consisting mostly of recreationists and others engaged in leisure activities with a high awareness of and concern for scenery.

Table 3.1-3	Key	Observation Points
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	Visual Character;				
КОР	Scenic	Vividness	Intactnoss	Unity	Vicual Concitivity
	Quality		Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
KOP 4: View	Developed	Moderately low	Moderately high	Moderate due to	Moderate due to
toward the	character with	to moderate due	due to the low	existing trees	moderately high number of
proposed	some natural	to some	number of	providing some	viewers on a regular basis,
project ROW	elements;	distinctive	encroaching	visual coherence	including local area
looking south	moderate	elements present,	elements and the	and	residents traveling for
from Willow	scenic quality.	notably the tall,	moderately strong	compositional	personal reasons and
Creek Road		dense trees.	visual integrity of	order.	people commuting to and
toward its			the view.		from work; viewers include
intersection					some recreationists (e.g.,
with Pomerado					people walking or biking),
Road near MP					who have a generally high
43.2.					awareness of scenery.

Key:

KOP = key observation point

MP = Milepost

ROW = right-of-way

3.1.2 Regulatory Setting

This section summarizes federal, state, and local laws; regulations; and standards that govern aesthetic resources.

3.1.2.1 Federal

No federal laws, regulations, or standards governing aesthetics are applicable to the proposed project.

3.1.2.2 State

California Department of Transportation Scenic Highway Program

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) administers the State Scenic Highway Program to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways (California Streets and Highways Code § 260, et seq.). The State Scenic Highway Program includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been so designated. These highways are identified in California Streets and Highways Code § 263. The program entails regulation of land use and density of development; attention to the design of sites and structures; attention to and control of signage, landscaping, and grading; and other restrictions. The local jurisdiction is responsible for adopting and implementing such regulations. State Scenic Highways refer to highways that are either officially designated or eligible for designation by Caltrans (County of San Diego 2015a). If a highway is listed as eligible for official designation, it is treated similarly to an officially Designated State Scenic Highway, and care must be taken to preserve its eligible status.

3.1.2.3 Regional and Local

County of San Diego General Plan

The following goals and policies described in the County of San Diego General Plan are relevant to the proposed project. Goals and policies are from the elements for Land Use (LU), Conservation and Open Space (COS), and Housing (H). (County of San Diego 2015a)

Goal LU-2: Maintenance of the County's Rural Character. Conservation and enhancement of the unincorporated County's varied communities, rural setting, and character.

• **Policy LU-2.8:** Mitigation of Development Impacts. Require measures that minimize significant impacts to surrounding areas from uses or operations that cause excessive noise, vibrations, dust, odor, aesthetic impairment and/or are detrimental to human health and safety.

Goal LU-6: Development—Environmental Balance. A built environment in balance with the natural environment, scarce resources, natural hazards, and the unique local character of individual communities.

- **Policy LU-6.6:** Integration of Natural Features into Project Design. Require incorporation of natural features (including mature oaks, indigenous trees, and rock formations) into proposed development and require avoidance of sensitive environmental resources.
- **Policy LU-6.9:** Development Conformance with Topography. Require development to conform to the natural topography to limit grading; incorporate and not significantly alter the dominant physical characteristics of a site; and to utilize natural drainage and topography in conveying stormwater to the maximum extent practicable.

Goal LU-10: Function of Semi-Rural and Rural Lands. Semi-Rural and Rural Lands that buffer communities, protect natural resources, foster agriculture, and accommodate unique rural communities.

• **Policy LU-10.2:** Development—Environmental Resource Relationship. Require development in Semi-Rural and Rural areas to respect and conserve the unique natural features and rural character, and avoid sensitive or intact environmental resources and hazard areas.

Goal LU-12: Infrastructure and Services Supporting Development. Adequate and sustainable infrastructure, public facilities, and essential services that meet community needs and are provided concurrent with growth and development.

• Policy LU-12.4: Planning for Compatibility. Plan and site infrastructure for public utilities and public facilities in a manner compatible with community character, minimize visual and environmental impacts, and whenever feasible, locate any facilities and supporting infrastructure outside preserve areas. Require context sensitive Mobility Element road design that is compatible with community character and minimizes visual and environmental impacts; for Mobility Element roads identified in Table M-4, an LOS D or better may not be achieved.

Goal COS-11: Preservation of Scenic Resources. Preservation of scenic resources, including vistas of important natural and unique features, where visual impacts of development are minimized.

- **Policy COS-11.1:** Protection of Scenic Resources. Require the protection of scenic highways, corridors, regionally significant scenic vistas, and natural features, including prominent ridgelines, dominant landforms, reservoirs, and scenic landscapes.
- **Policy COS-11.3**: Development Siting and Design. Require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize visual impacts and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in rural areas, through the following:
 - o Creative site planning
 - o Integration of natural features into the project
 - o Appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape

- *Minimal disturbance of topography*
- O Clustering of development so as to preserve a balance of open space vistas, natural features, and community character
- o Creation of contiguous open space networks
- Policy COS-11.5: Collaboration with Private and Public Agencies. Coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission, power companies, and other public agencies to avoid siting energy generation, transmission facilities, and other public improvements in locations that impact visually sensitive areas, whenever feasible. Require the design of public improvements within visually sensitive areas to blend into the landscape.
- **Policy COS-11.7**: Underground Utilities. Require new development to place utilities underground and encourage "undergrounding" in existing development to maintain viewsheds, reduce hazards associated with hanging lines and utility poles, and to keep pace with current and future technologies.

Goal COS-12: Preservation of Ridgelines and Hillsides. Ridgelines and steep hillsides that are preserved for their character and scenic value.

- *Policy COS-12.1:* Hillside and Ridgeline Development Density. Protect undeveloped ridgelines and steep hillsides by maintaining semi-rural or rural designations on these areas.
- **Policy COS-12.2:** Development Location on Ridges. Require development to preserve the physical features by being located down and away from ridgelines so that structures are not silhouetted against the sky.

Goal COS-13: Dark Skies. Preserved dark skies that contribute to rural character and are necessary for the local observatories.

• Policy COS-13.1: Restrict Light and Glare. Restrict outdoor light and glare from development projects in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands and designated rural communities to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.

Goal H-2: Neighborhoods That Respect Local Character. Well-designed residential neighborhoods that respect unique local character and the natural environment while expanding opportunities for affordable housing.

• Policy H-2.1: Development that Respects Community Character. Require that development in existing residential neighborhoods be well designed so as not to degrade or detract from the character of surrounding development consistent with the Land Use Element. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

County of San Diego Community and Subregional Plans

Community and subregional plans have been developed for areas throughout San Diego County and are considered part of the County General Plan (County of San Diego 2015a). The proposed project would cross five communities or subregions: Rainbow (County of San Diego 2014a), Fallbrook (County of San Diego 2015b), Bonsall (County of San Diego 2011a), Valley Center (County of San Diego 2014b), and North County Metropolitan (County of San Diego 2011b). The following goals and policies described in the community and subregional plans for the County of San Diego General Plan are relevant to the proposed project. Goals and policies are from community and subregional plan elements for Land Use (LU), Conservation and Open Space (COS), and Circulation and Mobility (CM).

Rainbow Community Plan (County of San Diego 2014a)

Goal LU1.1: Land use that retains and enhances the rural character of the community.

• **Policy LU1.1.1:** Any development in the community shall preserve the rural qualities of the area, minimize traffic congestion, and not adversely affect the natural environment.

Goal COS1.3: The preservation, protection and enhancement of Rainbow's scenic resources.

- **Policy COS1.3.2:** Preserve open space areas such as steep slopes, canyons, floodplains, agricultural lands, and scenic views.
- *Policy COS1.3.3:* Require development to preserve the natural terrain and to minimize grading.

Goal COS1.4: Lighting on new construction will meet County policies to protect dark skies.

• Policy COS1.4.1: Restrict the use of exterior lighting throughout the Rainbow CPA, in accordance with County Dark skies policy, to low pressure sodium lighting that is shielded to prevent light pollution.

Goal COS1.8: The implementation of energy conservation practices within the community.

• **Policy COS1.8.2:** Discourage future energy projects that may negatively impact visual appealing aspects of the Rainbow rural community character.

Fallbrook Community Plan (County of San Diego 2015b)

Goal LU 2.4: New development within Fallbrook that is designed to be sensitive to the community character, while encouraging the upgrade and beautification of existing development.

- **Policy LU 2.4.1:** Require development to preserve viable mature trees and significant land forms in all public and private development projects, to the maximum extent feasible.
- **Policy LU 2.4.6:** Require grading impacts to be minimized and require landscaped areas disturbed by grading to be re-vegetated, control drainage and runoff so as not to exceed the rate associated with the property prior to grading.

Goal COS 1.2: Community Forests. Preservation and enhancement of urban and rural trees in our community for their beauty and for the health benefits that they provide.

• *Policy COS 1.2.1:* Protect heritage and large native trees.

Bonsall Community Plan (County of San Diego 2011a)

Goal LU-5.1: A physical environment where degraded riparian areas have been restored and the natural topography retained.

• **Policy LU-5.1.3:** Minimize grading to preserve natural landforms, major rock outcroppings and areas of existing mature trees. Integrate hillside development with existing topography and landforms.

Goal CM-5.1: Scenic routes where community character and natural resources are preserved by minimizing the impacts of public or private development along roadways in Bonsall.

• Policy CM-5.1.2: Preserve, to the maximum extent feasible, existing trees and vegetation located within the right-of-way of all public roads and determined to be of significant visual benefit, such as the 100-plus year old oak trees along Camino del Rey, and require removal of trees to have public or community sponsor group review. If no alternative realignment can preserve such vegetation, mitigation shall be required in the form of re-vegetation of equal or better trees, with a minimum 24-inch box, prior to, or phased with, the proposed project.

Valley Center Community Plan (County of San Diego 2014b)

Community Character Goals:

- 1. Preserve and enhance the rural character of Valley Center by maintaining a pattern of land use consistent with the following regional categories.
 - B. Semi-rural lands: Preserve and maintain the overall rural and agricultural character of the semi-rural areas.
 - C. Rural lands: Preserve and maintain the overall rural and agricultural character of the rural lands area outside the semi-rural area.
- 6. Conservation General Goal: Provide for a "dark sky" which would retain the rural setting and not detract from astronomical research at Palomar Mountain.

North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan (County of San Diego 2011b)

Policy 14: Designate Resource Conservation Areas

- A. it is County policy to protect and manage environmental resources in order to maintain them for future needs; and
- B. an initial inventory of valuable resources has been completed (refer to Appendix).

The resource conservation area (RCA) designation is applied to protect sensitive biological, archaeological, aesthetic, mineral, and water resources. Projects requiring environmental analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that occur within resource conservation areas should be carefully analyzed to assess their impact on the resource conservation area.

Appendix B: Resource Conservation Areas

A. Scenic Preservation

Goal: Preserve, to the extent possible, the scenic attributes of the I-15 corridor.

Standards and guidelines for scenic preservation for the I-15 corridor are essentially the same as those identified in the Bonsall community plan.

County of San Diego Interstate 15 Subregional Corridor Plans

The I-15 corridor in San Diego County extends from the Riverside County line south approximately 20 miles to the Escondido city limits and generally encompasses land within view of the highway. The northern approximately 8 miles of this portion of I-15 is both a State Eligible and County-designated Scenic Highway, and the remaining approximately 12 miles is designated as a County Scenic Highway. Each of the five community and subregional plans identified above contain guidelines and standards for scenic preservation for the I-15 corridor crossing through these plan areas. Because the guidelines and standards for scenic preservation of lands within the corridor are the same or similar for each of the plans, the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines (Appendix A) from the Bonsall Community Plan are

summarized below and considered representative of those identified for the other four community and subregional plans.

Interstate 15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines, (County of San Diego 2011a, Appendix A)

Objective: The purpose of the following scenic and planning quality guidelines is to:

- 1) protect and enhance scenic resources within the Interstate 15 Corridor planning area, while accommodating coordinated planned development which harmonizes with the natural environment:
- 2) establish standards to regulate the visual quality and the environmental integrity of the entire Corridor; and
- 3) encourage scenic preservation and development practices compatible with the goals and policies of the five community and subregional planning areas encompassed by the Interstate 15 Corridor area, when appropriate.

These standards address man-made and natural features which affect the scenic quality of the Interstate 15 Corridor area.

I. Site Design

A. Site Planning Standards:

- 1. Individual projects shall reinforce the character of the sites, the attributes of adjacent projects, and preserve the viewsheds, natural topographic features, and natural watercourses.
- 2. Individual projects shall relate on-site open space and pedestrian areas with those of other projects, both visually and in terms of providing for continuous paths of travel.

C. Site Lighting Standards:

- 1. Site lighting shall minimize emission of light rays into both the night sky and neighborhood properties, especially as it pertains to Mt. Palomar Observatory.
 - a. Site lighting shall be limited to that necessary for security, safety, and identification and shall be integrated with project landscape design.

D. Landscape Design Standards:

9. Major stands of native trees shall be preserved.

E. Public Utilities and Safety Standards

- 3. Utilities shall be placed underground (electrical, telephone, cable, etc.), where practical.
- 4. The alignment of utility infrastructure shall be correlated with the topography to minimize disruption of natural features within the viewshed areas.
- 5. Transformers and related utility components shall be placed in vaults or be screened with retaining walls and/or plantings, and located to avoid conflict with pedestrian paths.

F. Development Standards for Steep Topography and Natural Features

- 1. Extensive grading of slope areas within viewsheds will be minimized.
- 2. Hillside development shall be integrated with existing topography and landforms. Areas of steep topography, tree stands, hillside agricultural activity, and rock outcroppings shall be respected and preserved.

- 6. The visual quality shall be maximized and the erosion potential shall be minimized by planting native and naturalized plants, especially in disturbed areas adjacent to upgraded hillsides and watercourses.
- 7. Natural watercourses shall be protected and existing watershed and groundwater resources shall be conserved.
- 8. Any grading above 25 percent slope will blend with the surrounding area and be landscaped appropriately to look natural.

City of San Diego General Plan

The City of San Diego (2015) General Plan contains policies for aesthetic protection relevant to the proposed project. These relevant policies, identified below, are from the general plan elements for Conservation (CE), Mobility (ME), Urban Design (UD), and Public Facilities (PF). In addition, the City of San Diego General Plan is broken down into community plans that govern specified areas of the city. Applicable aesthetic policies from the two potentially affected communities, Rancho Bernardo and Scripps Miramar Ranch, are also summarized below.

Policy ME-C.6: Locate and design new streets and freeways and, to the extent practicable, improve existing facilities to: respect the natural environment, scenic character, and community character of the area traversed; and to meet safety standards.

- e. Preserve trees and other aesthetic and traffic calming features in the median and along the roadside.
- f. Avoid or minimize disturbances to natural landforms.
- g. Contour manufactured slopes to blend with the natural topography.
- h. Promptly replant exposed slopes and graded areas to avoid erosion.
- i. Employ landscaping to enhance or screen views as appropriate.
- j. Select landscape designs and materials on the basis of their aesthetic qualities, compatibility with the surrounding area, and low water demand and maintenance requirements.
- k. Utilize signs, lights, furniture, and other accessories suitable for the location.
- l. Place utility lines underground.

Policy ME-C.7: Preserve and protect scenic vistas along public roadways.

Policy UD-A.1: Preserve and protect natural landforms and features.

a. Protect the integrity of community plan designated open spaces (see also Conservation Element, Policy CE-B.1).

Policy UD-A.3: Design development adjacent to natural features in a sensitive manner to highlight and complement the natural environment in areas designated for development.

- a. Integrate development on hillside parcels with the natural environment to preserve and enhance views, and protect areas of unique topography.
- b. Minimize grading to maintain the natural topography, while contouring any landform alterations to blend into the natural terrain.
- g. Screen development adjacent to natural features as appropriate so that development does not appear visually intrusive, or interfere with the experience within the open space system.

- The provision of enhanced landscaping adjacent to natural features could be used to soften the appearance of or buffer development from the natural features.
- i. Ensure that the visibility of new development from natural features and open space areas is minimized to preserve the landforms and ridgelines that provide a natural backdrop to the open space systems. For example, development should not be visible from canyon trails at the point the trail is located nearest to proposed development. Lines-of-sight from trails or the open space system could be used to determine compliance with this policy.
- l. Protect views from public roadways and parklands to natural canyons, resource areas, and scenic vistas.

Policy UD-A.13: Provide lighting from a variety of sources at appropriate intensities and qualities for safety.

- c. Use lighting to convey a sense of safety while minimizing glare and contrast.
- e. Focus lighting to eliminate spill-over so that lighting is directed, and only the intended use is illuminated.

Policy UD-A.16: Minimize the visual and functional impact of utility systems and equipment on streets, sidewalks, and the public realm.

b. Design and locate public and private utility infrastructure, such as phone, cable and communications boxes, transformers, meters, fuel ports, back-flow preventors, ventilation grilles, grease interceptors, irrigation valves, and any similar elements, to be integrated into adjacent development and as inconspicuous as possible. To minimize obstructions, elements in the sidewalk and public right of way should be located in below grade vaults or building recesses that do not encroach on the right of way (to the maximum extent permitted by codes). If located in a landscaped setback, they should be as far from the sidewalk as possible, clustered and integrated into the landscape design, and screened from public view with plant and/or fencelike elements.

Policy CE-B.1: Protect and conserve the landforms, canyon lands, and open spaces that: define the City's urban form; provide public views/vistas; serve as core biological areas and wildlife linkages; are wetlands habitats; provide buffers within and between communities; or provide outdoor recreational opportunities.

Policy PF-M.1: Ensure that public utilities are provided, maintained, and operated in a cost-effective manner that protects residents and enhances the environment.

Rancho Bernardo Community Plan (City of San Diego 2015)

Planning Goals:

- 1. Preserve and enhance the high quality and character of the Rancho Bernardo community, including its neighborhood identities.
- 2. Develop the community's image as an important housing, employment, trade and recreational center.
- 3. Develop an attractive community that takes advantage of natural and man-made amenities while respecting the environmental assets and constraints inherent in the Rancho Bernardo setting.

Community Facilities Objective: To locate facilities in structures that enhance the character of the community and recognize the human need and appreciation for aesthetics.

Scripps Miramar Ranch Community Plan (City of San Diego 2015)

Overall Community Goals:

Preserve and enhance the valued natural resources of the Scripps Miramar Ranch community: hills, trees, water resources, Miramar Reservoir, Carroll Canyon and subsidiary canyons; maximize public benefit through public ownership and/or access, both visual and physical, to these resources.

Provide a harmonious physical environment within the community by maximizing preservation of existing stands of trees and foresting appropriate open space areas as development occurs.

In order to provide a well balanced and aesthetically pleasing system of open space and recreational facilities and opportunities, the following objectives have been selected to meet this goal:

Maximize preservation of existing mature eucalyptus groves, natural slopes and major canyons through careful siting of roadways and structures.

Design of all roadways in the planning area should consider the following objectives, in addition to the standards outlined in the Design Element.

- Maintain and enhance the rural, forested character of the community.
- Preserve mature trees wherever possible.

City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program, Multiple Species Conservation Plan Subarea Plan

The City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program, Multiple Species Conservation Plan Subarea Plan contains policies for lighting and signage relevant to protecting aesthetics within the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (City of San Diego 1997). These policies are identified below.

General Planning Policies and Design Guidelines

Fencing, Lighting, and Signage:

2. Lighting shall be designed to avoid intrusion into the Multi-Habitat Planning Area and effects on wildlife. Lighting in areas of wildlife crossings should be of low sodium or similar lighting. Signage will be limited to access and litter control and educational purposes.

City of Escondido General Plan

The City of Escondido General Plan contains policies for aesthetic protection relevant to the proposed project (City of Escondido 2012). These relevant policies are identified below.

Community Character Policy 1.10: Reduce light pollution and preserve views of the night sky through the design and sighting of light fixtures to minimize light spill-over onto adjacent properties.

Land Use Goal 12: Open space lands that provide an attractive environmental setting for Escondido and visual relief from development, protect the viability of natural resources and habitat, offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, and protect the public from the risks of natural hazards.

Visual Resources Goal 3: Preservation of significant visual resources such as ridgelines, hillsides, and viewsheds that serve as a scenic amenity and contribute to the quality of life for residents.

Visual Resources Policy 3.1: Preserve significant visual resources that include unique landforms (e.g., skyline ridges, intermediate ridges, hilltops, and rock outcroppings), creeks, lakes, and open space areas in a natural state, to the extent possible.

Visual Resources Policy 3.2: Require new development to avoid obstructing views of, and to minimize impacts to, significant visual resources through the following: creative site planning; integration of natural features into the project; appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape; clustering of development to preserve open space vistas and natural features; minimal disturbance of topography; and creation of contiguous open space networks.

Visual Resources Policy 3.4: Prohibit development on skyline ridges and seek to obtain scenic easement dedications for these areas from property owners in conjunction with development on other suitable locations of the property. Require property owners of such scenic easements to retain, maintain, preserve, and protect the public view of these areas in their natural state, without obstruction by structures, and prohibit clearing of brush or planting of vegetation except as necessary to reduce fire hazards.

Visual Resources Policy 3.5: Regulate development on intermediate ridges, hilltops, and hillsides to preserve the natural appearance and landform, and minimize impacts on terrain with a slope greater than 15 percent subject to the following requirements:

1. Intermediate Ridges and Hilltops

- a) Prepare landscaping plans that minimize the visual impact of the development from adjoining properties and the valley floor;
- b) Concentrate development in subordinate or hidden locations, which shall not project above the natural landform;
- c) Prepare grading plans that minimize disruption of the natural landform and vegetation; and
- d) Allow development on intermediate ridges only in association with the preservation of significant open space, habitat, cultural resources or agricultural uses within the same project.

2. Slopes Greater than 15 Percent

- a) Locate development to avoid potentially hazardous areas and environmentally sensitive areas, as well as to avoid dislocation of any unusual rock formations or any other unique or unusual geographic features.
- b) Design development to minimize grading requirements by incorporating terracing, padding, and cut-and-fill grading that conforms to the natural contours of the site and protects the visual continuity of the hillsides.
- d) Landscape the site with existing trees and other natural vegetation, as much as possible, to stabilize slopes, reduce erosion, and enhance the visual appearance of the development.
- e) Minimize the visual impact of development on adjoining residential areas to the extent feasible.

Visual Resources Policy 3.6: Require that development within the Interstate 15 corridor be located and designed in consideration of its potential visual impacts and preservation of prominent views along the corridor that include: outstanding continuous, panoramic views of the valley floor, surrounding ridges and Lake Hodges, and focal views where the eye is channeled toward a visually dominant feature such as an undisturbed hillside or steep slopes with rock outcroppings. Require development proposals within the I-15 scenic corridor (defined as the area within 1,750 feet of the freeway) to include a visual assessment and conform to the community design policies which address:

- a) The siting of new structures outside of significant viewshed corridors;
- *b)* The protection of hillsides and ridgelines; and
- c) The need to blend developments with their setting in terms of height and scale.

City of Poway General Plan

The City of Poway General Plan contains policies for aesthetic protection relevant to the proposed project (City of Poway 1991). These relevant policies are identified below.

POLICY A – STREETSCAPE: Seek to develop an attractive streetscape which reflects the rural small town character of the City.

Strategy 2: Screening such as solid walls or fencing should principally serve as a device to restrict visual and acoustical impacts, but should also be designed to enhance the streetscape.

Strategy 5: All utilities, except electrical lines carrying more than 345 KV, should be located underground.

POLICY C - SITE DESIGN: Attractive, efficient site design shall be required of all development.

Strategy 1: The layout of a site should consider the planning of adjoining parcels to ensure visual and functional compatibility with surrounding development.

Hillside Developments

Strategy 14: Prominent ridgelines and hilltops shall not be built upon.

Strategy 15: Buildings should be sited so as not to project above the natural landform when possible.

Strategy 16: Intermediate ridges and hilltops shall be preserved in a natural state to the maximum extent possible. Development on intermediate ridges shall only be permitted in association with the preservation of significant open space, habitat, tree and rock outcroppings, unique geographic features, and/or cultural or agricultural uses within the same project. Open space proposed for dedication to the City should perform multiple functions, such as view maintenance, resource protection and hazard avoidance.

Strategy 20: Hillside development should vary the location and design of structures, landscaping and access to give a more natural appearance and should be designed to follow the natural contour of the land and to limit land alteration.

Strategy 23: Natural vegetation shall be preserved where feasible; clearing should be limited to access roads, homesites and fire break buffering. Where visible slopes are created adjacent to areas of natural vegetation, similar plant materials shall be introduced for erosion control and to mitigate the visual impact of land alteration.

POLICY D – GRADING: Necessary grading should be done so as to minimize the disturbance to the site and the environmental and aesthetic impacts.

Strategy 2: Grading in hillside areas shall leave rounded-off, natural appearing slopes and shall use a variable slope ratio instead of manicured cut and fill areas. Grading shall be limited to that required for building pad placement and for driveways and utility lines.

Strategy 4: All exposed graded slopes shall be revegetated with plant materials compatible with surrounding vegetation.

POLICY H – WALLS AND FENCING: Walls and fencing should be provided where necessary to ensure privacy or provide noise attenuation.

Strategy 5: All walls and fences which are adjacent to arterial roadways shall be enhanced by pilasters or offsets and landscaping shall be provided to soften the visual impact.

POLICY I – LIGHTING: Lighting should provide for public convenience and safety but not conflict with the rural nature of the community.

Strategy 3: All lighting shall be shielded and directed so as to not shine on adjoining properties.

San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan

The San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan (San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority 2002) establishes the framework for preserving and protecting the sensitive resources within the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park's Focused Planning Area (FPA). The plan was adopted by the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority and its member agencies to guide the use and management of the park. The proposed project would cross Landscape Unit G, East Lake Hodges, of the FPA for the San Dieguito River Park. The plan contains objectives and guidelines for aesthetic protection relevant to the proposed project. These relevant policies are identified below.

Park Objectives:

Conservation of Sensitive Resources - Preserve the existing natural character, visual quality, and sensitive resources of the open space corridor, including the preservation, enhancement, and protection of sensitive coastal wetlands, hillsides, riparian and other freshwater habitat, native vegetation and historical and cultural resources.

Establishment of Design Guidelines - Establish and seek to have enforced design and development standards for future development within the Focused Planning Area that would ensure the retention of the largely rural character of the planning area and would limit the visual and physical encroachment of development into the Focused Planning Area.

Appendix D. Part II. Design and Development Standards Recommended for Private and Other Public Proposals within the FPA

Grading

Grading within the FPA should be limited to the extent possible and where grading is proposed it should be designed so as to retain the natural shape of the landform and reflect the topographic constraints of the terrain. In all cases mass grading shall be avoided.

Depending on the scale of the project, grading should be phased to allow prompt revegetation to control erosion and visual impacts.

Structural Design

Within the FPA, the form, mass and profile of the individual structures and architectural features should be designed to blend with the natural terrain.

Materials, finishes, and colors for all buildings, accessory structures, walls and fences should be compatible with the intent of minimizing the visual impact on the FPA. Colors should be limited to subtle earth-tone hues, with style and texture that reflects the traditional/rural character of the FPA. Colors should not be bright, reflective, metallic or otherwise visually out of character with the natural setting. In addition, colors such as white or pink that contrast with the landscape should be avoided. The use of natural materials is encouraged.

The visible area of the buildings and uses should be minimized through a combined use of regrading and landscaping techniques.

Structures located within the view of the FPA should be generally low in profile.

Under no circumstances shall structures be greater than 30 feet in height at any point of the structure measured from natural existing grade.

The facades of structures should be angled at varying degrees as required to follow the natural topography of the site.

The use of exterior lighting should be limited to that needed for security purposes. If proposed, lighting should be a low-sodium type with horizontal cut-off and shall be shielded downward such that the light would not be visible to adjacent properties. A site lighting footcandle diagram may be required to demonstrate conformance with this guideline.

Structures and improvements should be located so as to minimize removal of trees and existing vegetation.

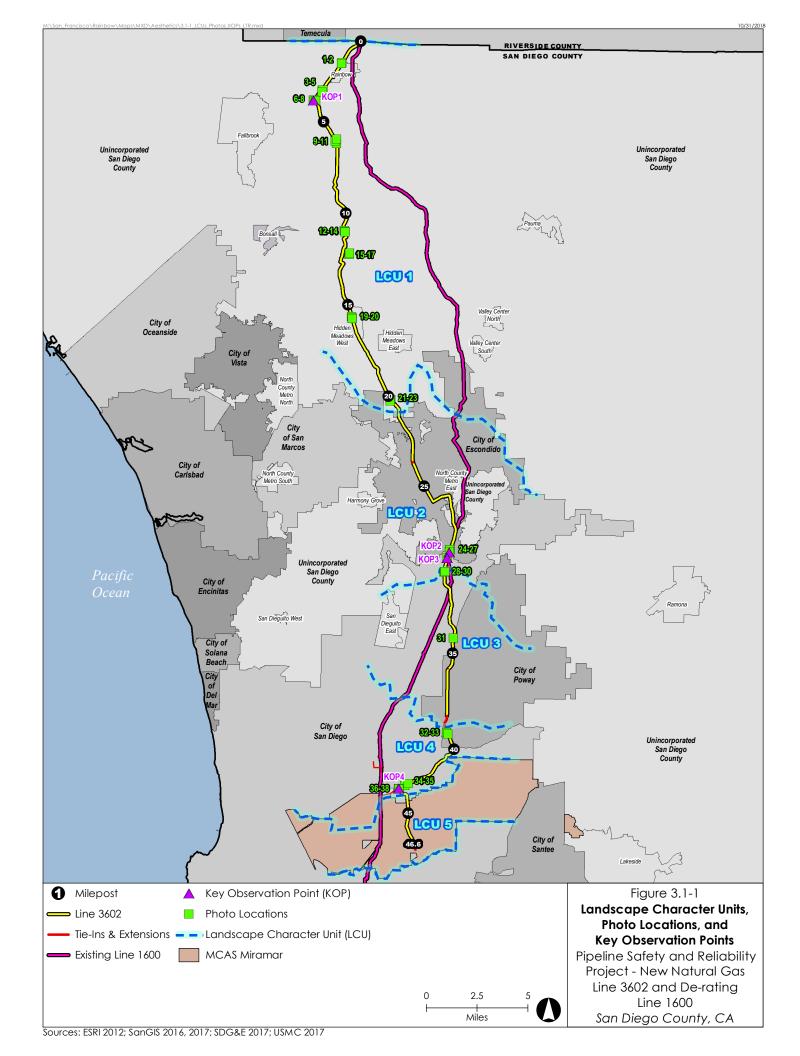
3.1.3 Draft Significance Criteria

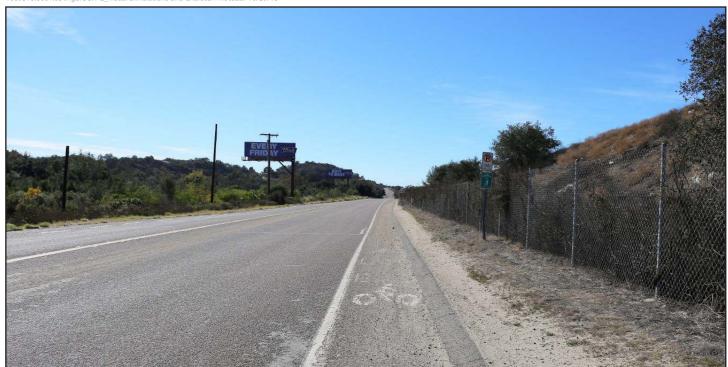
Had an impact analysis been completed for the proposed project, significance criteria would likely have been based on California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Appendix G. An impact might have been considered significant if the project would:

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

3.1.4 Draft Analytical Figures





Photograph 1 (LCU 1). View looking south along Old Highway 395 at approximate Milepost (MP) 1.5.



Photograph 2 (LCU 1). View looking east from Old Highway 395 at approximate MP 1.5.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 3 (LCU 1). View looking southwest toward the proposed Project right-of-way (ROW) from the southwestern end of Rainbow Hills Road at approximate MP 3.2.



Photograph 4 (LCU 1). View looking south along I-15 near approximate MP 3.2, as seen from a vehicle traveling south along I-15.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 5 (LCU 1). View looking west from I-15 near approximate MP 3.3, as seen from a vehicle traveling south on I-15.



Photograph 6 (LCU 1). View looking northeast from Mission Road of the Proposed Project ROW near approximate MP 3.9.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 7 (LCU 1). View looking northeast from Mission Road of the Proposed Project ROW near approximate MP 3.9.



Photograph 8 (LCU 1). View looking north from Mission Road of the Proposed Project ROW near approximate MP 3.9.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 9 (LCU 1). View looking north-northwest along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 6.3.



Photograph 10 (LCU 1). View looking south-southwest along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 6.2.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 11 (LCU 1). View looking south-southeast along I-15 near approximate MP 6.1, as seen from a vehicle traveling south on I-15.



Photograph 12 (LCU 1). View looking southeast along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 10.8.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 13 (LCU 1). View looking southeast along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 10.9.



Photograph 14 (LCU 1). View looking northwest along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 11.0.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 15 (LCU 1). View looking northeast along Old Highway 395 near MP 12.1.



Photograph 16 (LCU 1). View looking northeast along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 12.1.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 17 (LCU 1). View looking southwest along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 12.0.

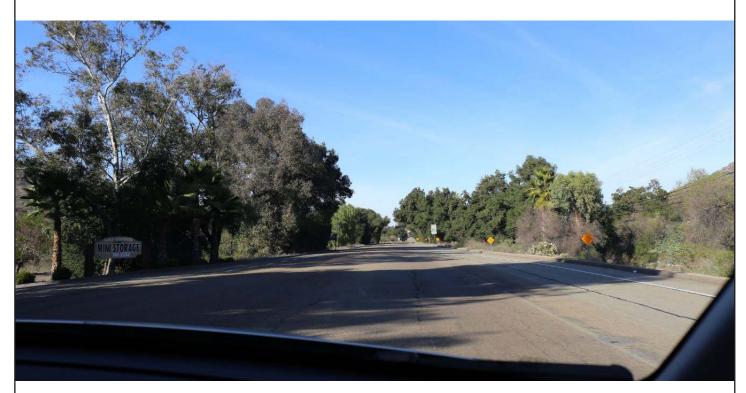


Photograph 18 (LCU 1). View looking north-northwest along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 15.5.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 19 (LCU 1). View looking south-southeast along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 15.4.



Photograph 20 (LCU 1). View looking north-northwest along Old Highway 395 near approximate MP 15.5.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 21 (LCU 1). View looking north-northwest along North Centre City Parkway near approximate MP 20.1.



Photograph 22 (LCU 1). View looking northwest from Old Highway 395 toward I-15 near approximate MP 20.0.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 23 (LCU 1). View looking north from I-15 near approximate MP 20.1, as seen from a vehicle traveling north on I-15.



Photograph 24 (LCU 2). View looking southeast from Bear Valley Parkway near MP 29.3.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)

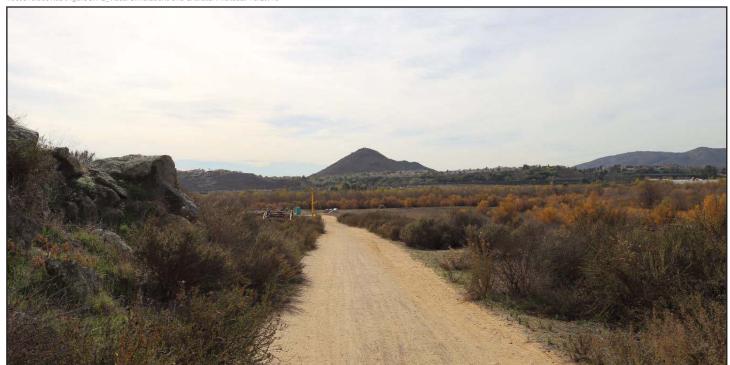


Photograph 25 (LCU 2). View looking southeast from Beethoven Drive near approximate MP 29.3.



Photograph 26 (LCU 2). View looking south along Mule Hill Trail in the San Dieguito River Park near approximate MP 29.4.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)

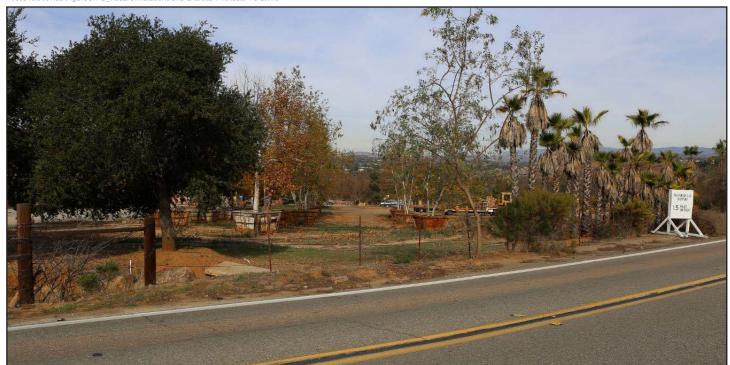


Photograph 27 (LCU 2). View looking south along Mule Hill Trail in the San Dieguito River Park near approximate MP 29.8.



Photograph 28 (LCU 2). View looking east along Highland Valley Road near MP 30.5.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 29 (LCU 2). View looking north along Highland Valley Road near approximate MP 30.5.



Photograph 30 (LCU 2). View looking northwest along Highland Valley Road near approximate MP 30.5.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 31 (LCU 3). View looking south along Pomerado Road near approximate MP 34.0.



Photograph 32 (LCU 4). View looking south along Pomerado Road near MP 38.9.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 33 (LCU 4). View looking north along Pomerado Road near MP 39.0.



Photograph 34 (LCU 4). View looking north along Pomerado Road toward near MP 43.0.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)



Photograph 35 (LCU 4). View looking south along Pomerado Road near MP 42.8.



Photograph 36 (LCU 4). View looking southwest along Willow Creek Road toward the intersection with Pomerado Road near approximate MP 43.3.

Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)

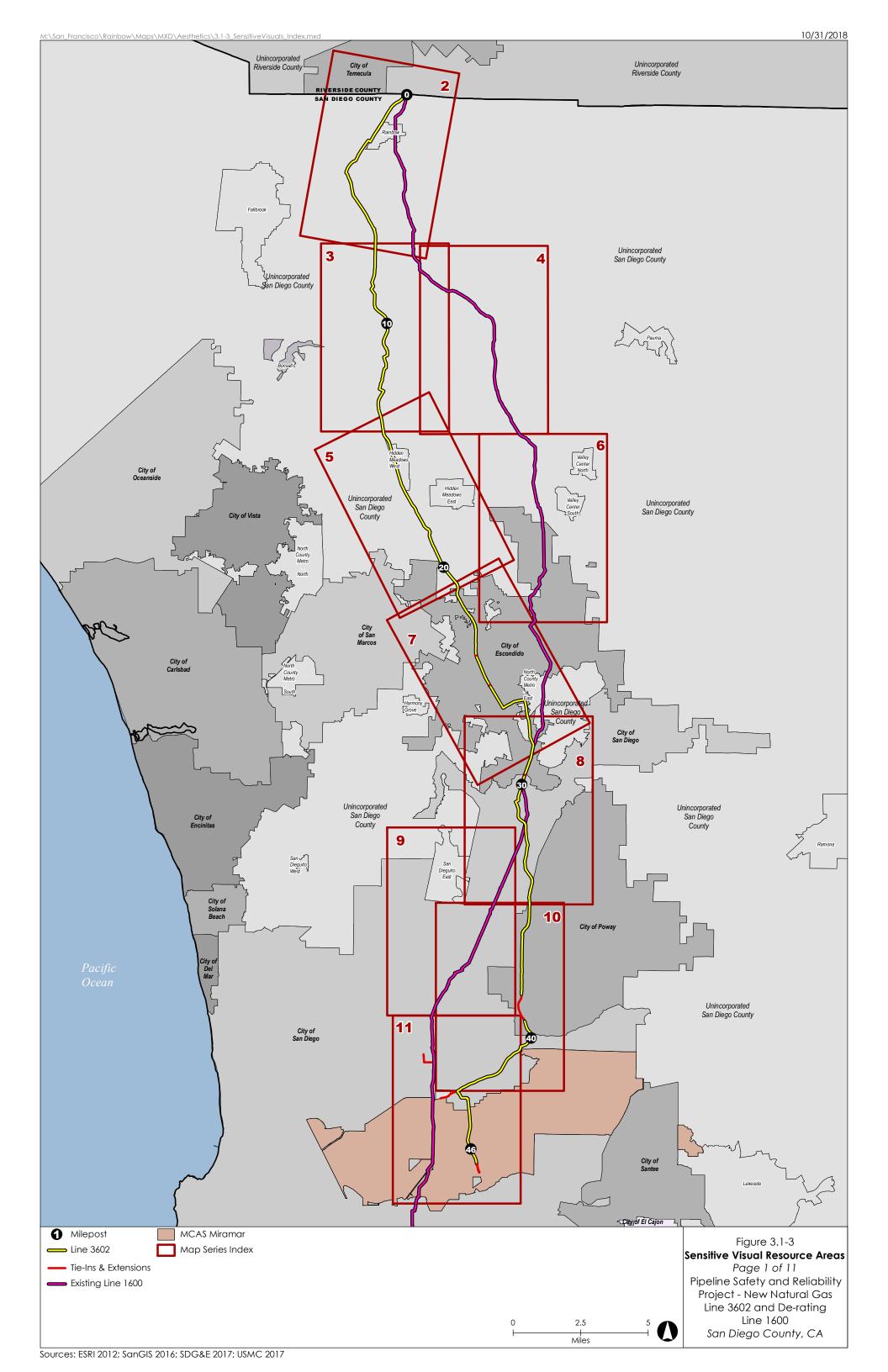


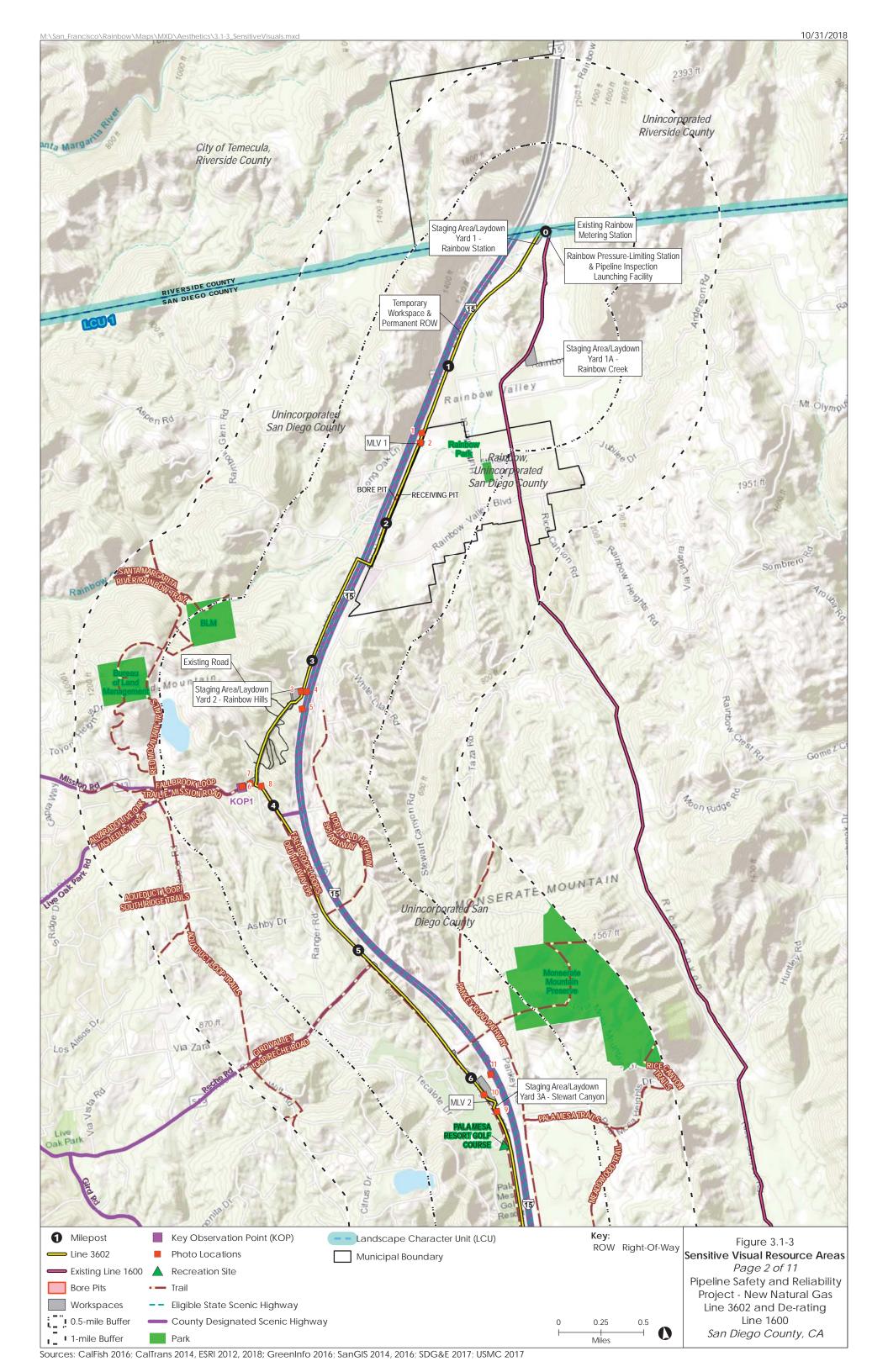
Photograph 37 (LCU 4). View looking southeast along Avenue of Nations near approximate MP 43.3.

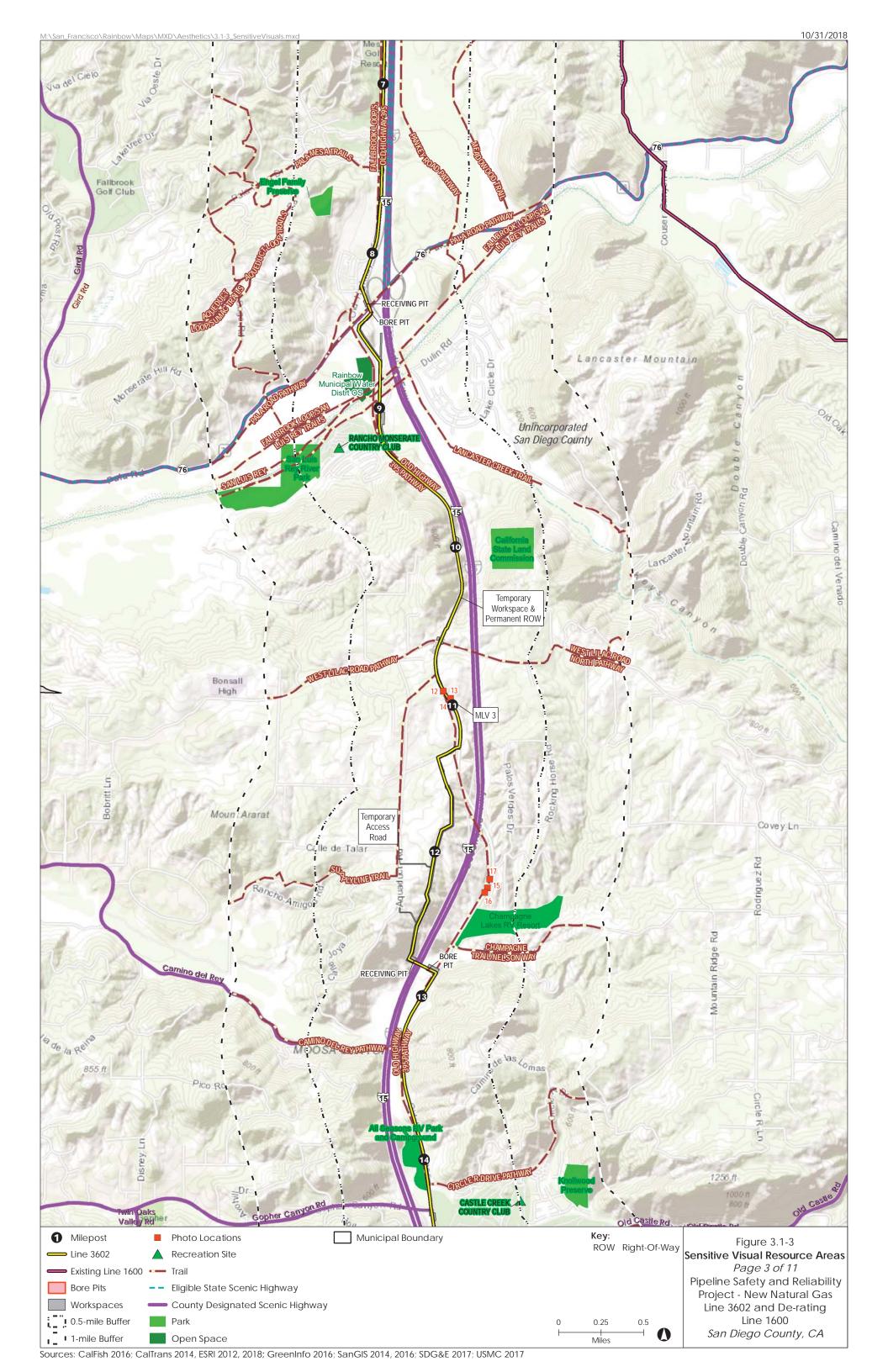


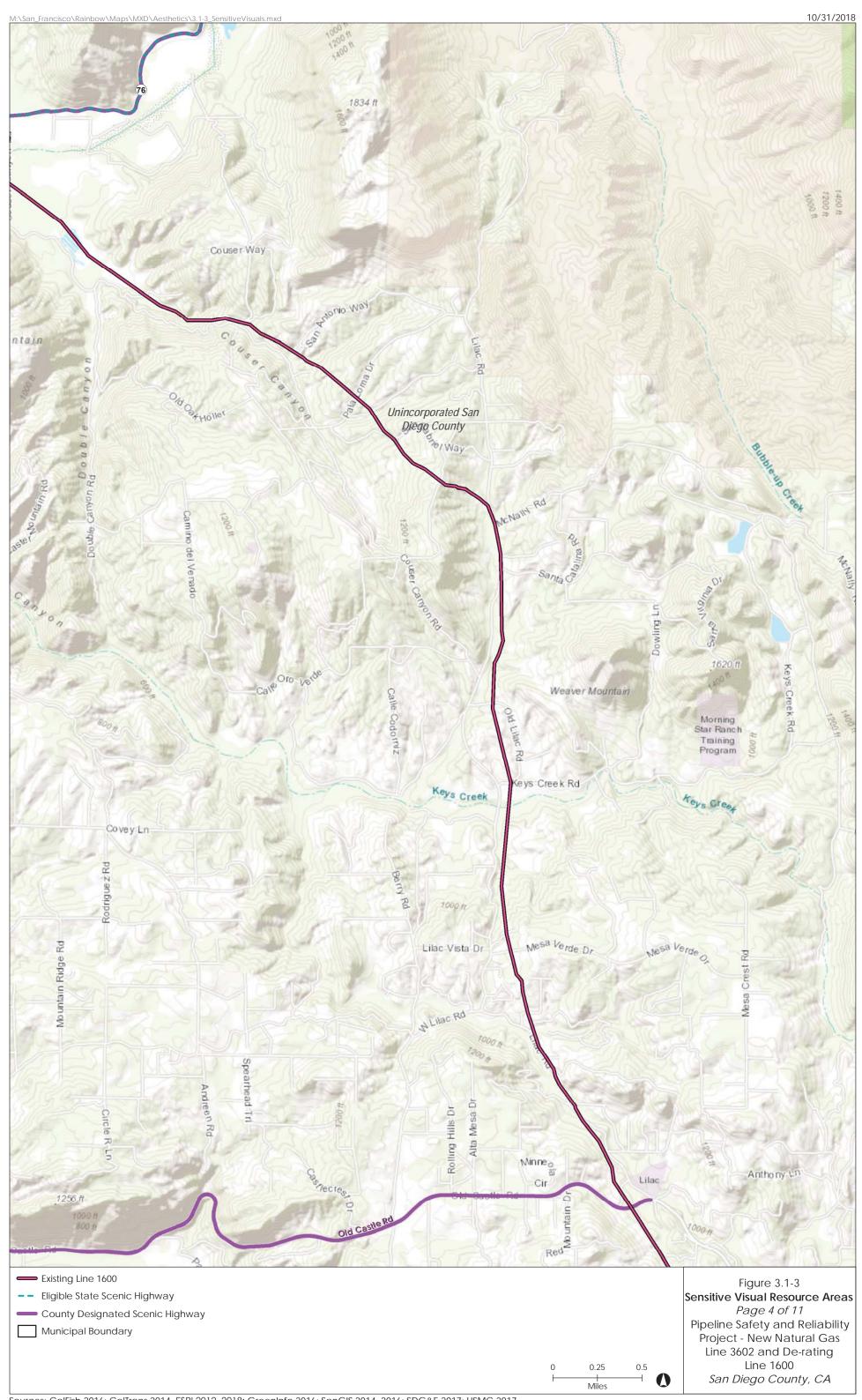
Photograph 38 (LCU 4). View looking west from the sidewalk along Pomerado Road near approximate MP 43.3.

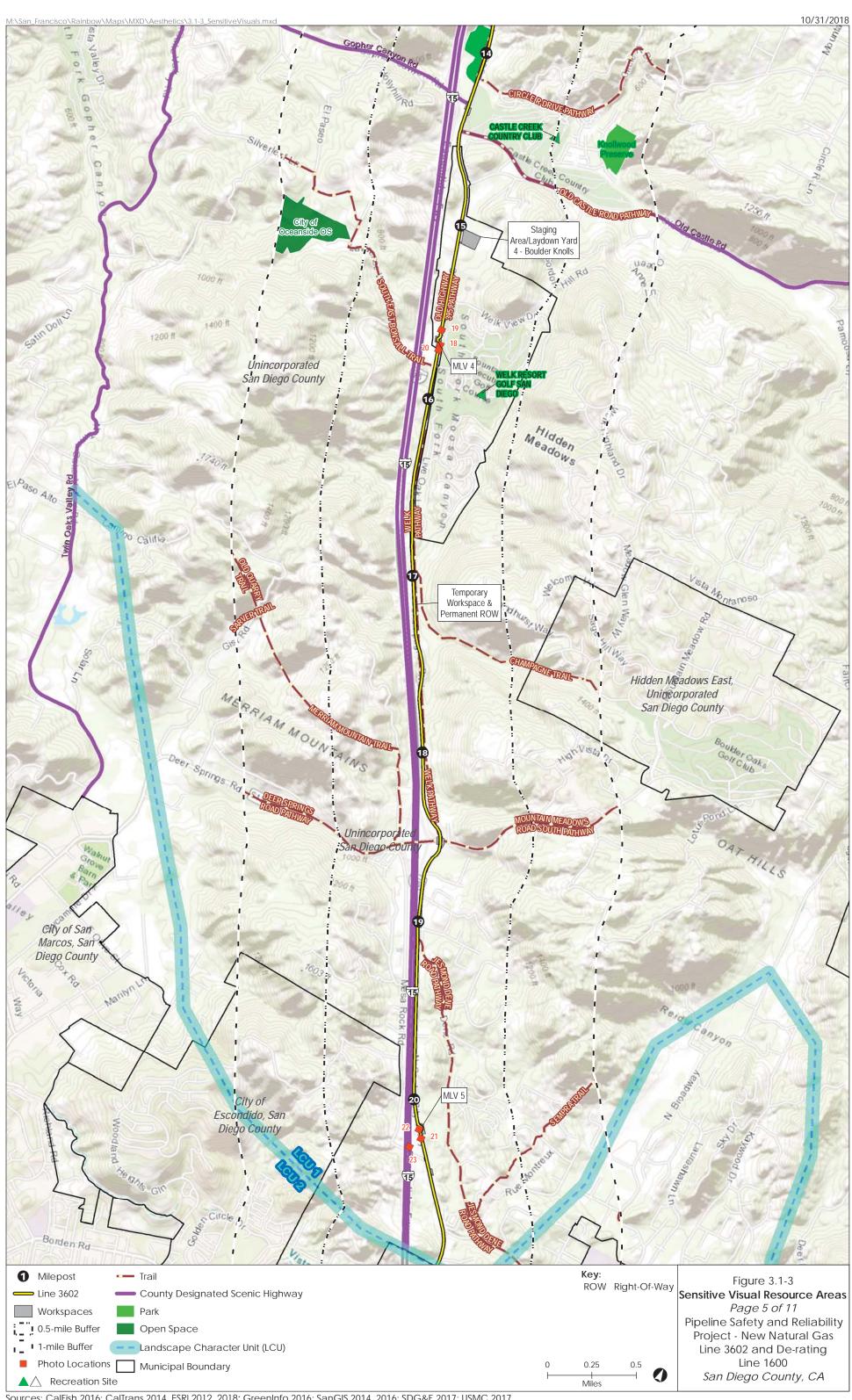
Figure 3.1-2 Landscape Character Photographs
Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project –
New Natural Gas Line 3602 and
De-Rating Line 1600 (PSRP)

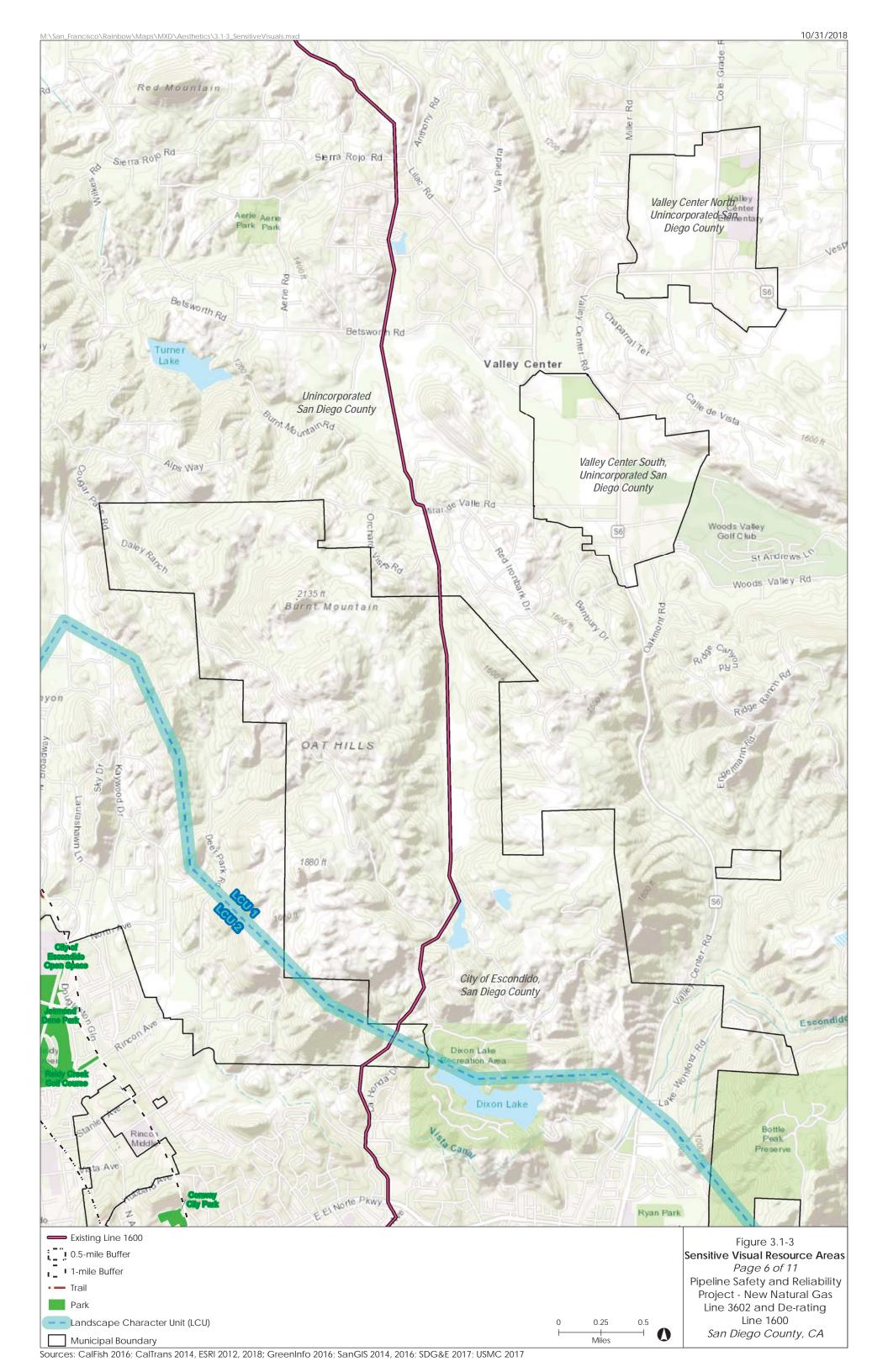


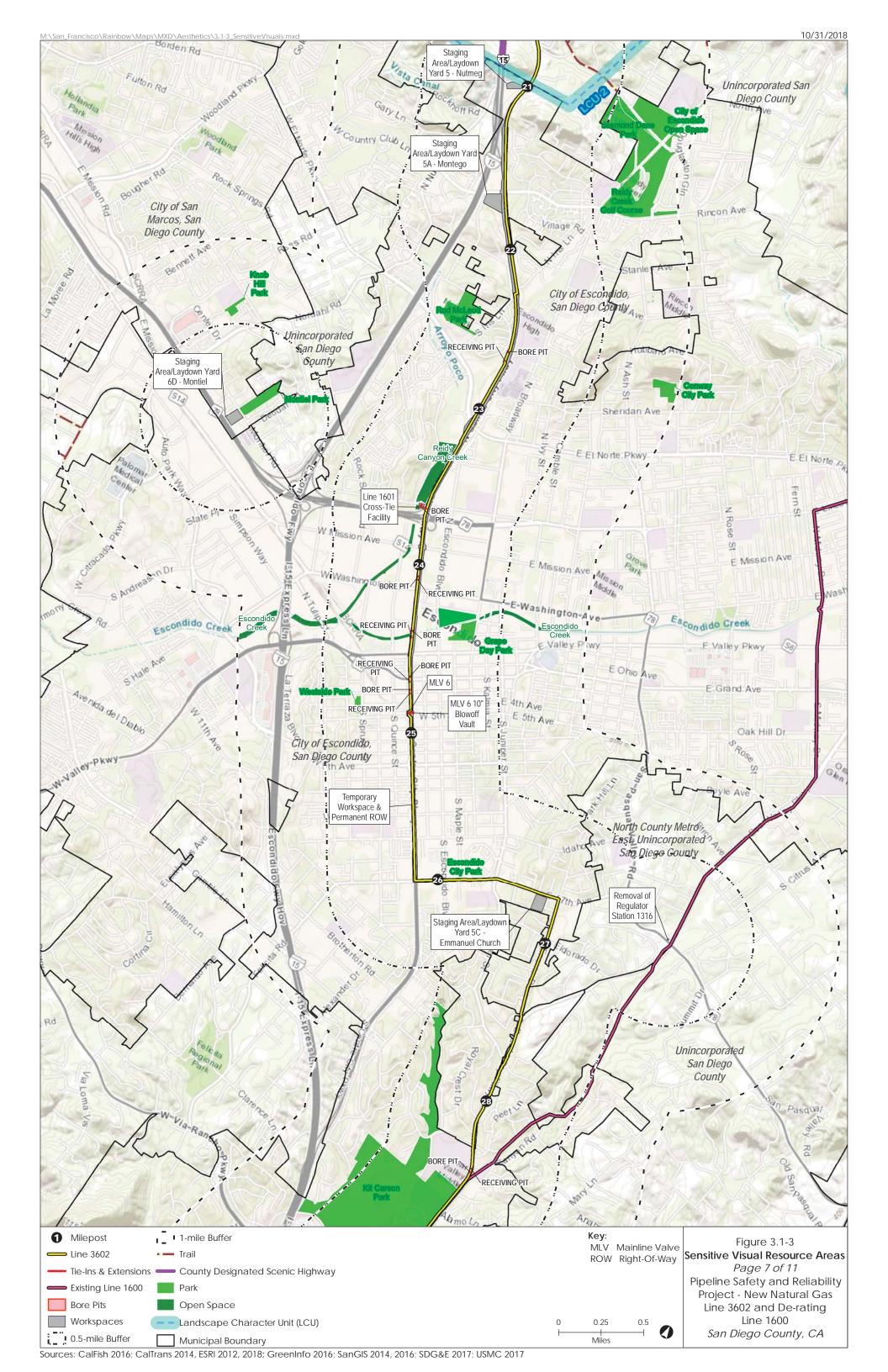


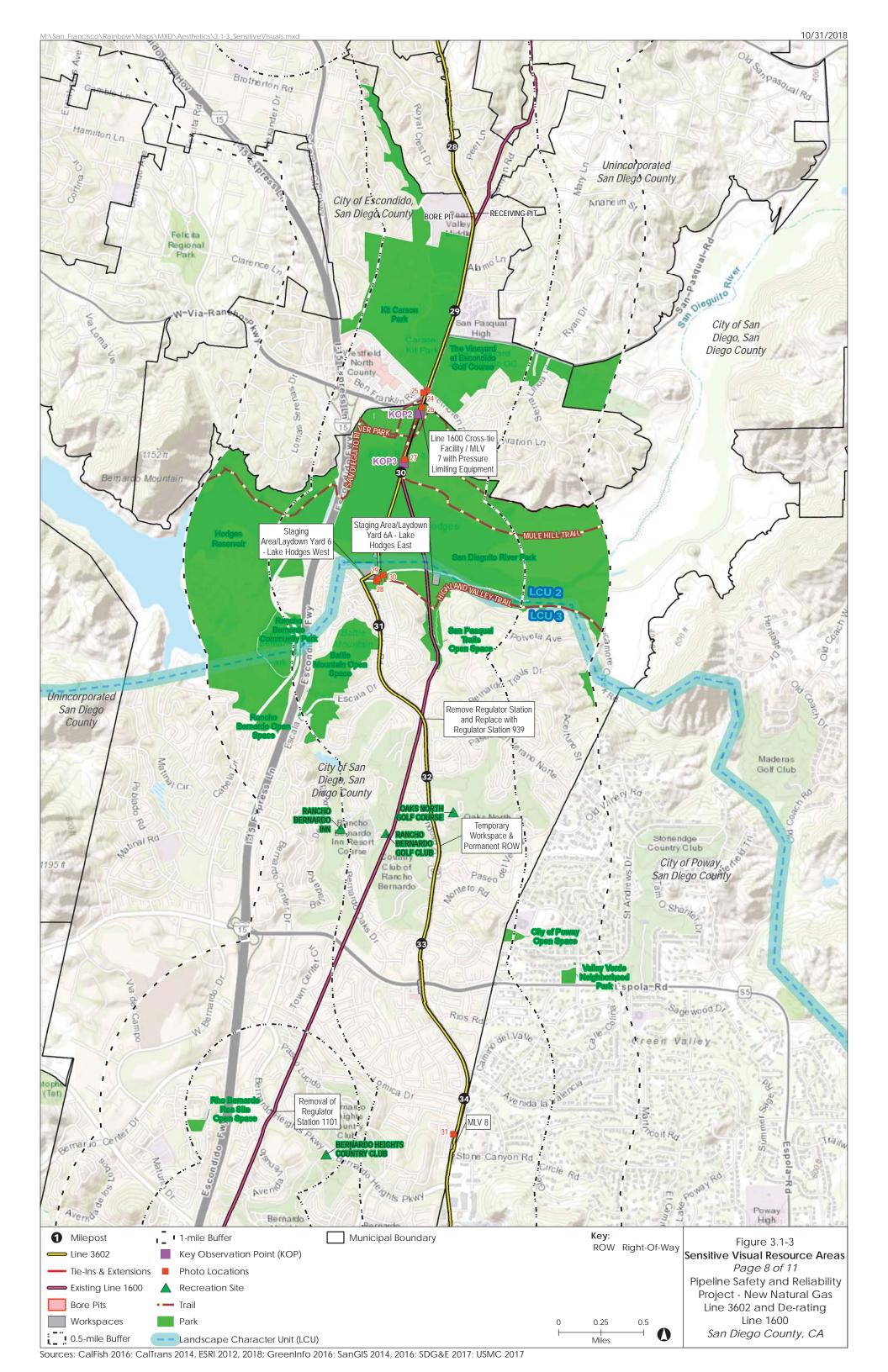


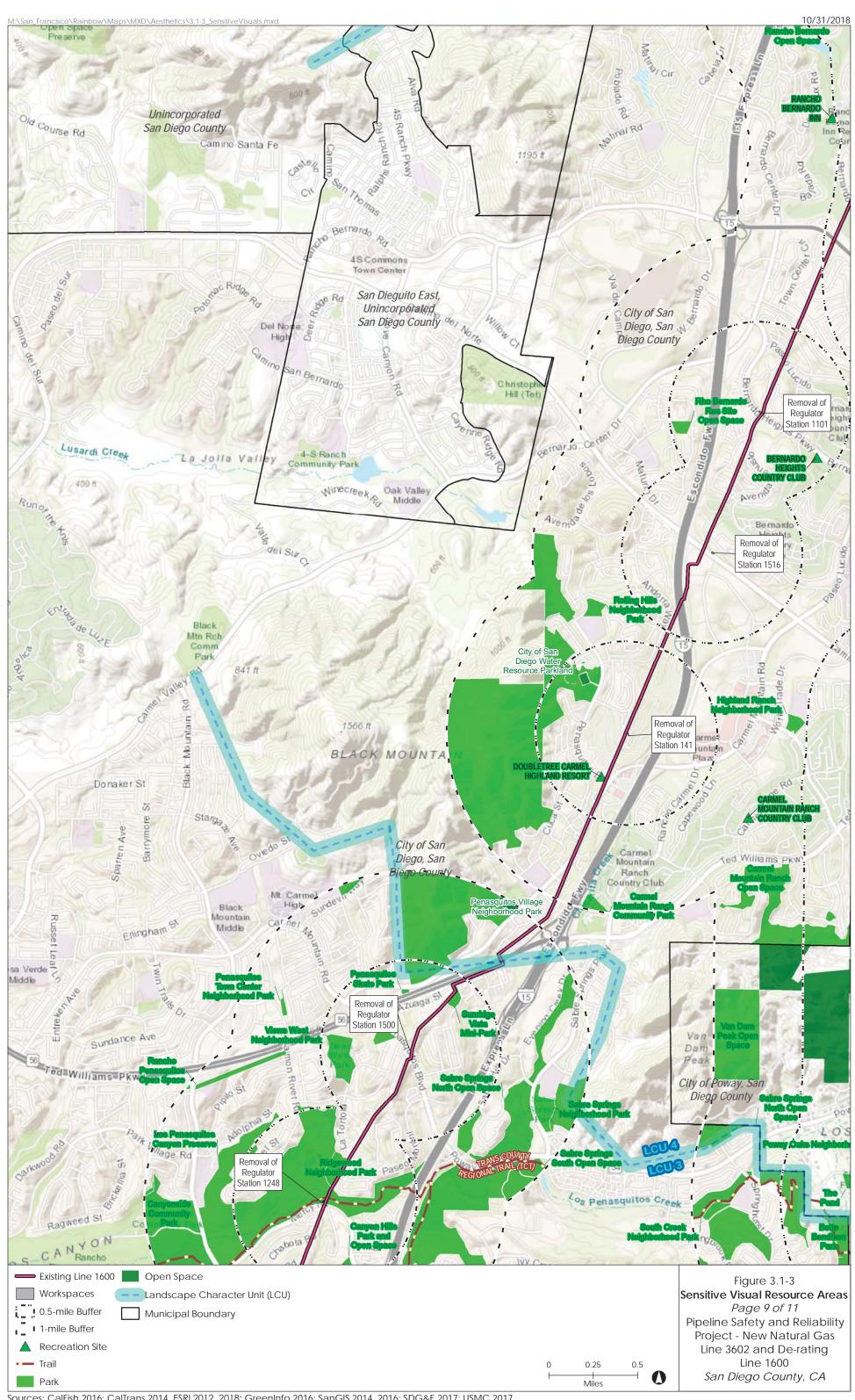


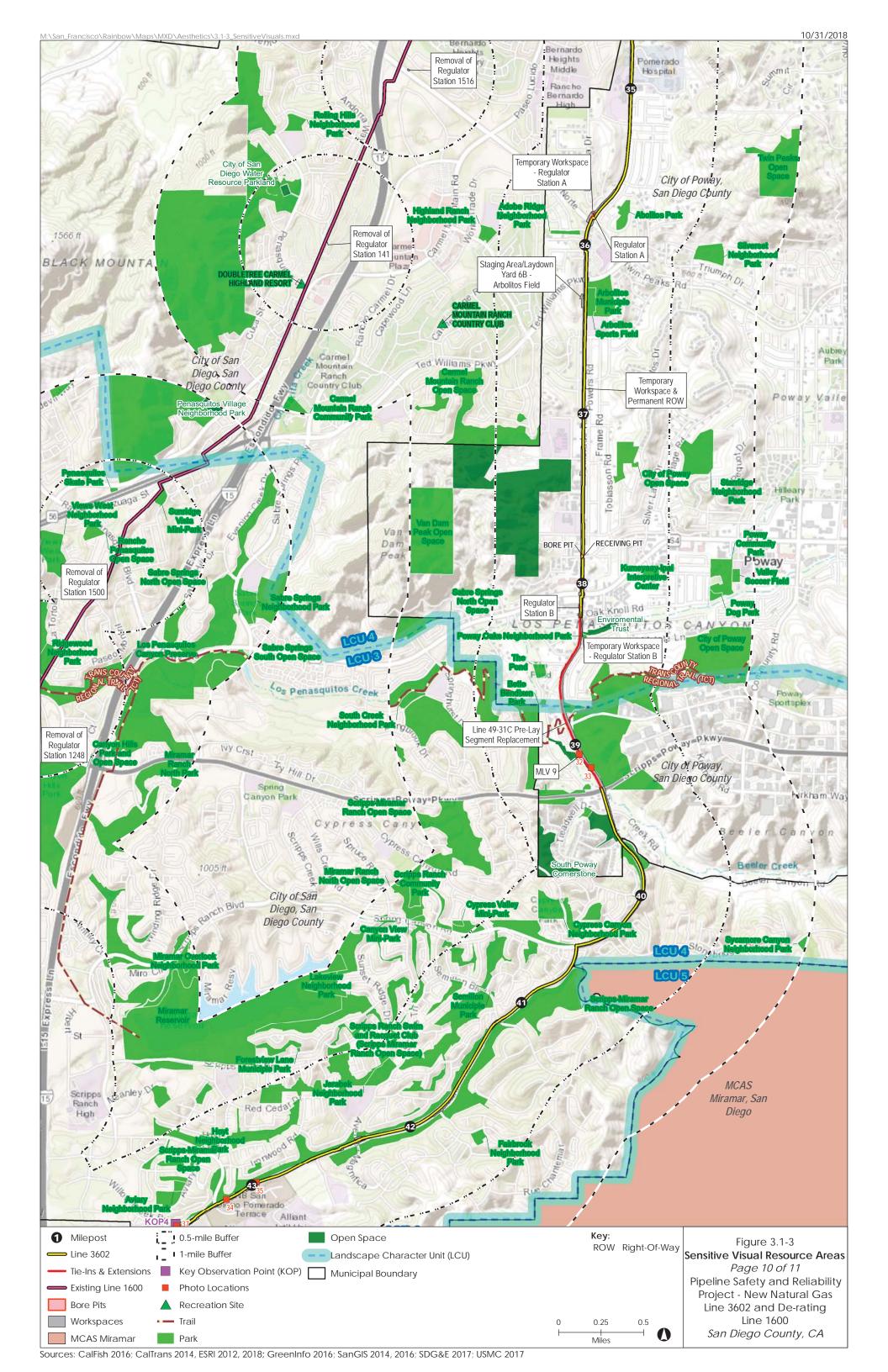


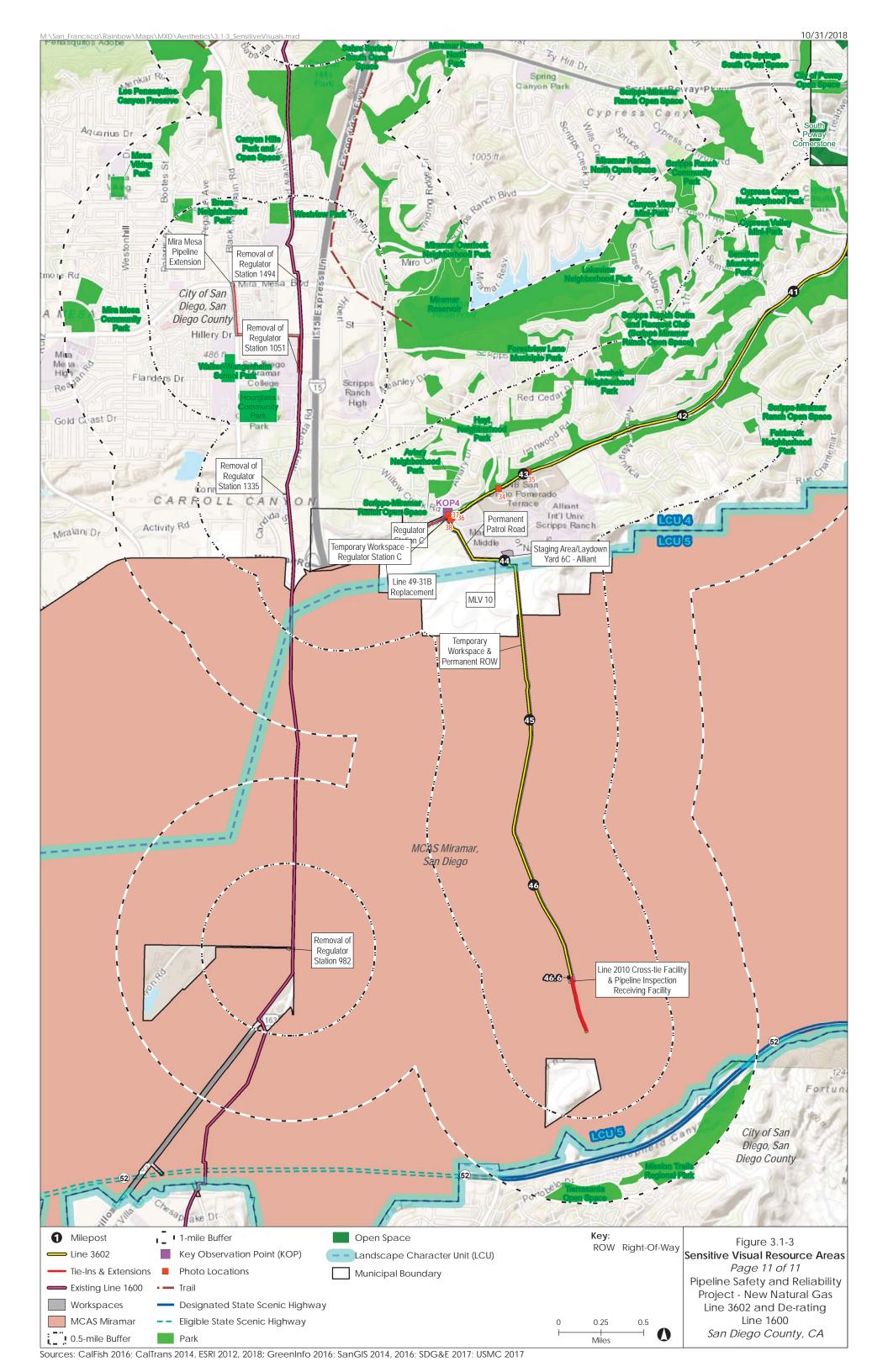












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