
7.0 INDIVIDUAL SITE SUMMARIES

7.5 SR 1.21

Site Characteristics

Cold Creek Preserve encompasses the upper portion of this site, and is fenced against unauthorized entry. The canyon at this point is flanked on the north side by towering, nearly-vertical sandstone rock formations, topped with a soil cap supporting chaparral and oak forest habitats. The south side of the drainage is not as steep and rocky, but rises to form a narrow portal at the roadway frontage. Slopes on the south side of the drainage support oaks and taller chaparral shrubs. Figure 22, Photo 13 on page 73 shows both the upper and lower portions of the Cold Creek Preserve.

The canyon bottom is moderately sloped to the stream channel, with the lower slopes supporting diverse chaparral and riparian plants, forming dense thickets of regrowth brush and vines. The stream channel above Stunt Road is deeply-cut in the portion of the site just above the culvert, but broadens and meanders slightly in the upstream portions. There is a small waterfall in the stream channel at a point nearing the uppermost extent of the assessment area as shown in Figure 23, Photo 14, page 74. Overstory vegetation is moderately tall, submature, riparian gallery forest, and was burned or scorched in the recent fires.

The lower portion of the Cold Creek channel is situated well below the roadbed, with the culvert outfall forming a series of rock-flows and small waterfalls down to the natural creekbed. The creek winds through an area of level, broad alluvium and silts, dropping gradually over small rock-falls, and forming occasional pools. Understory vegetation is lush and tall, with a dense stand of growth along the streambed, and some aquatic plants within the flowing water. Overstory vegetation along the creek is similar to that above the road, but more extensive over the wider bottomlands.

The Cold Creek system converges upon this waterway from numerous tributaries, and flows through residential and open space lands below until it reaches the larger Malibu Creek watershed. The lower portions of SR 1.11 and 1.21 are geographically united in this area. There appear to be large riparian areas along Cold Creek channel downstream from the assessment area.

Vegetation

The slopes above the upper portion of the site support coast live oak forest, intermixed with larger shrubs and trees. South-facing slopes, above and behind the rock outcroppings, also have scrub oaks, toyon, and mountain mahogany, while the north-facing slopes have walnut, California bay laurel, spiny ceanothus, holly-leaved cherry and fuchsia-flowered gooseberry. Vegetation on the lower slopes is more shrub-dominated, but there are a few oaks intermixed all the way down to the stream channel. Understory plants form a dense, low thicket, comprised of several species of phacelia, canyon sunflower, coastal wood fern, beard-tongue, giant rye, bush lupine, all tangled with morning-glory and a few vines of virgin's bower. Both Figure 24 Vegetation Map of Site 1.21, on page 76, and Figure 25 Tree Index Map of Site 1.21, on page 77, depict the extent of Oak/Riparian Forest and the Chaparral community above it.

Bottomland and stream channel vegetation is overstoryed by submature willow, sycamore, bay laurel, ash, coast live oak, and at least on white alder. All have been burned or scorched, and are regrowing from branches (oaks only) or crown-sprouting from the root collar or burls. By July, 1994, the regrowth on most trees formed a small, shrubby basal rosette of foliage several feet tall at the bases of the dead trunks. It will be 8 to 10 years until the willow riparian habitat restores itself to its former size and canopy values.

Vegetation and habitats in the lower portion of the site, below the roadway, are broader and more species-diverse than the upper areas, but much of the diversity is due to the presence of greater numbers of upland species and disturbance-favored species, native and alien. The gallery forest is more dense and extensive, but of a similar composition to that above. There are more upland species, such as scrub oak and toyon in the lower area, due perhaps to the site lacking surrounding high rock outcrops and steep hillsides, causing the entire system to be more exposed, and therefore slightly warmer and drier.

Native understory vegetation in this area includes canyon sunflower, snowberry, poison oak, eardrops, mugwort, elderberry, verbenia, greenbark ceanothus, several species of phacelia, cudweed aster, white and purple nightshades, Plummer's baccharis, giant rye, cliff aster, and whispering bells.

Vegetation along the stream channel above and below the road is lush and dense, supported by year-round streamflow and relatively untrammelled. Native species along or in the stream channel include leather root, stream orchid, yellow and cardinal monkeyflowers, white hedge nettle, Humboldt lily, yellow-throated phacelia, eardrops, wild blackberry, and deer

LOCATION MAP-
Stunt Rd Culvert at Mile Marker 1.21
Drainage Area: 408 acres

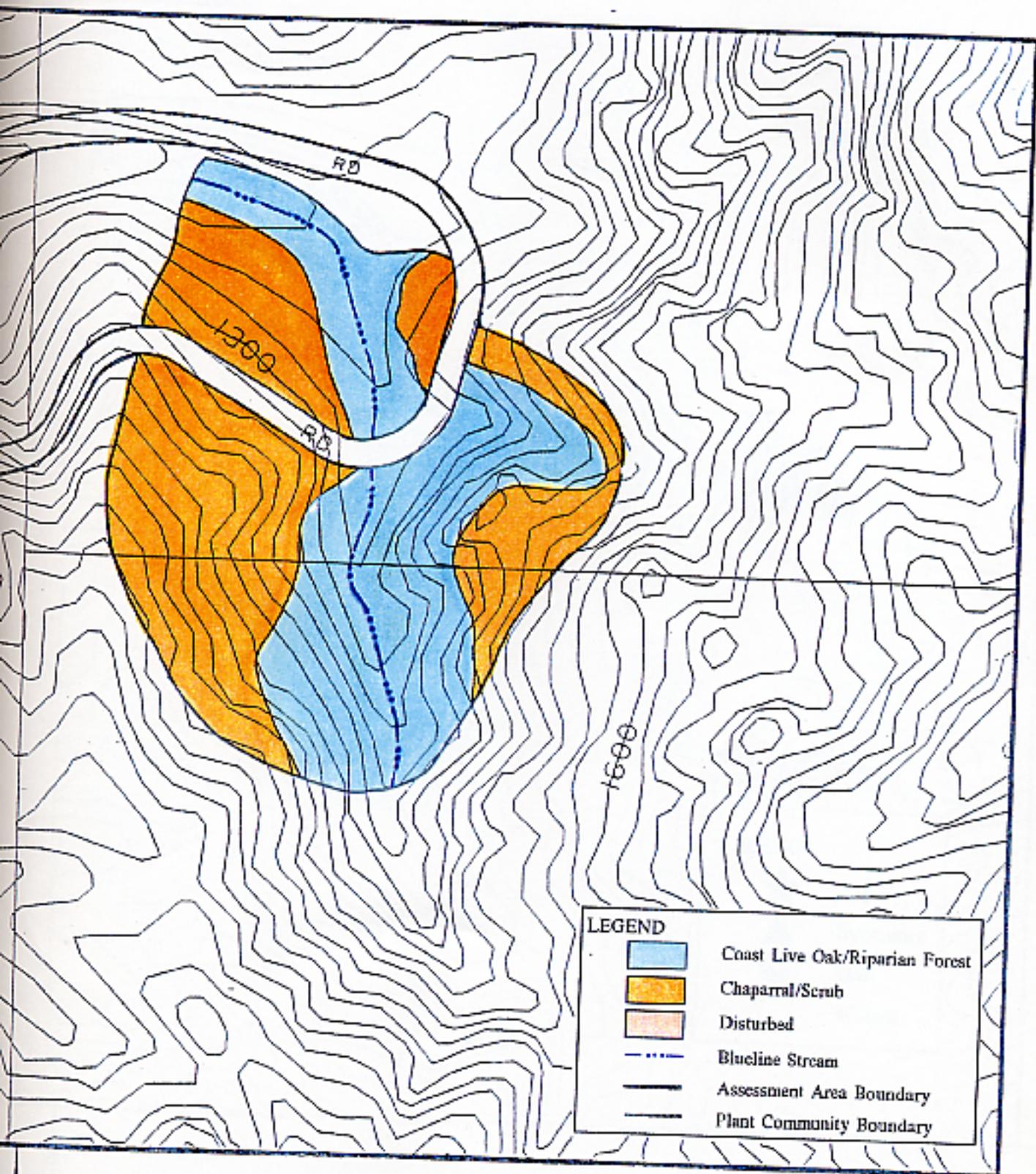


Figure 24
VEGETATION MAP

LOCATION MAP-
Stunt Rd Culvert at Mile Marker 1.21
Drainage Area: 408 acres

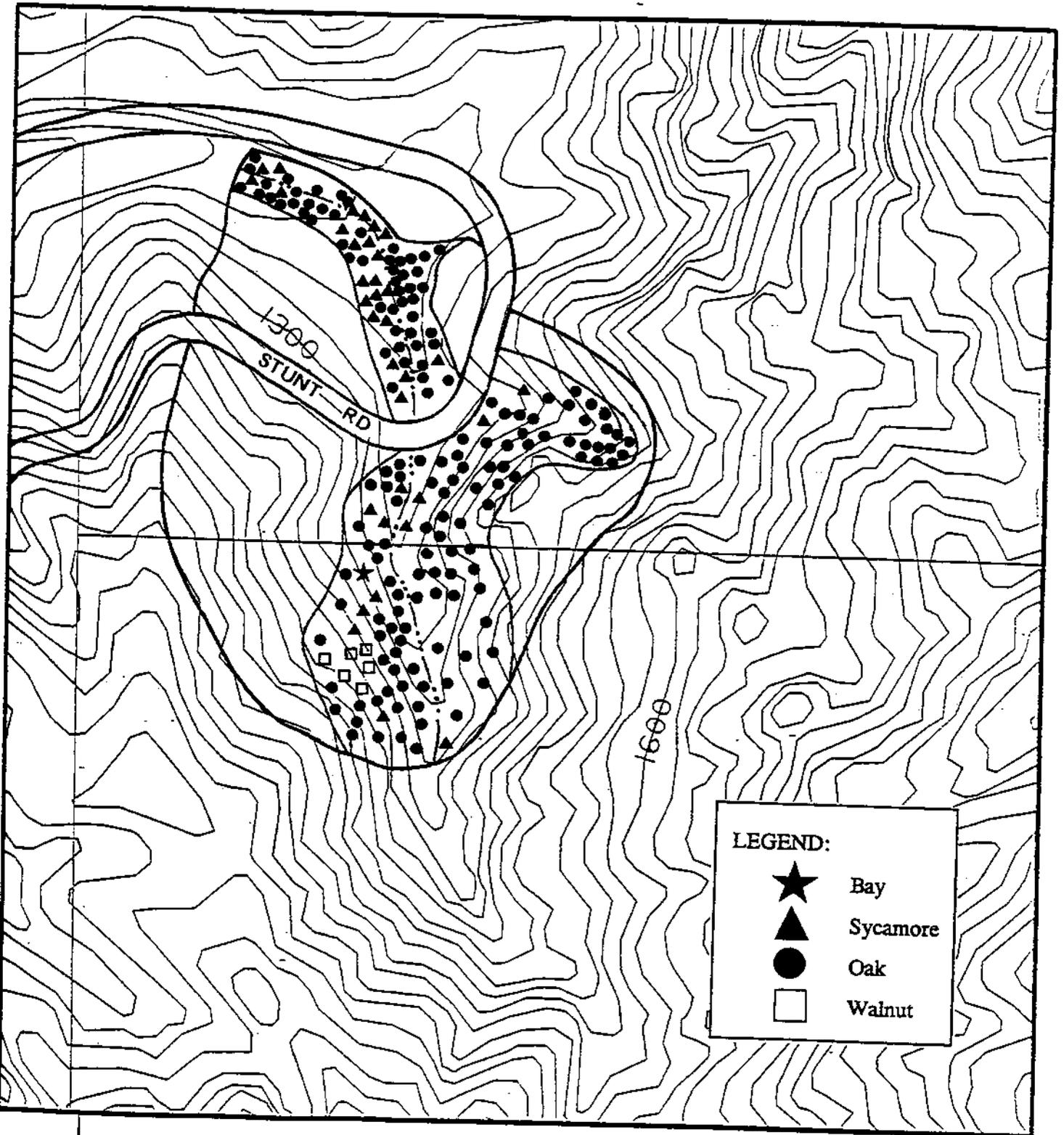


Figure 25
TREE INDEX MAP