

NATURE RESERVE OF ORANGE COUNTY

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Updated -- July 27, 2017

Irvine, California-- Between August 7 and August 16, the Natural Communities Coalition (NCC), in collaboration with OC Parks, Irvine Ranch Conservancy, and The Nature Conservancy will conduct an aerial weed survey during daylight hours using a small, low-flying helicopter to document and map the distribution of over 30 weed species located within selected inland parks and open space areas. The resulting information will provide details about the abundance and distribution of invasive weeds and help land managers evaluate the effectiveness of current weed monitoring practices, identify emerging weed problems, and strategically plan future weed management actions.

Notices describing the aerial weed survey will be posted at trailheads at participating parks and open space areas during the project period.

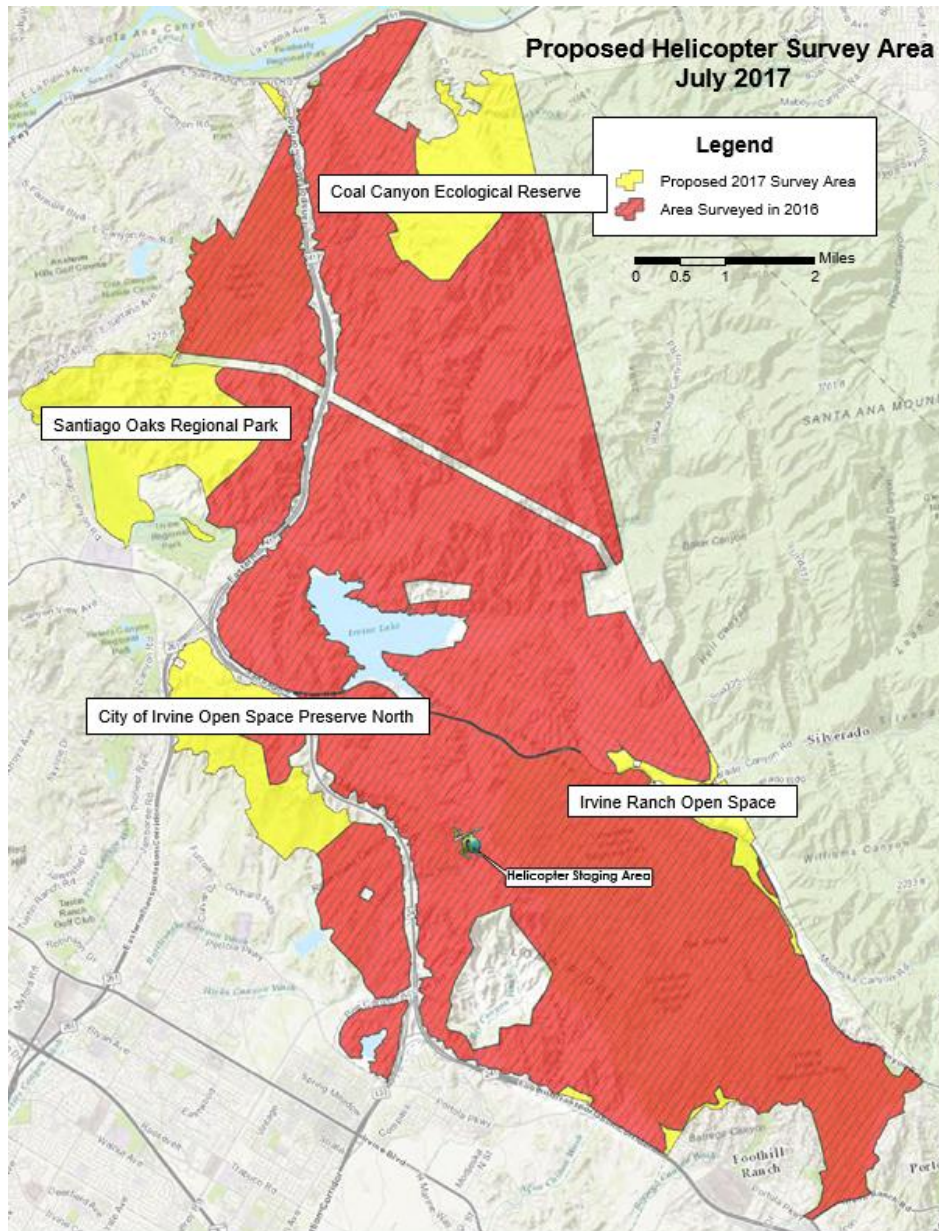
The aerial weed survey will be focused on mapping the distribution of artichoke thistle and a minimum of 30 other established and emerging invasive weeds which degrade natural habitat values important to wildlife and the park visitor experience. The survey will cover nearly 4,000 acres and involve the following land areas (also see attached map):

Aerial Survey Area	Ownership
City of Irvine Open Space Preserve North	City of Irvine
Irvine Ranch Open Space	OC Parks
Santiago Oaks Regional Park	OC Parks
Coal Canyon Ecological Reserve	California Department of Fish and Wildlife

-OVER-

The aerial survey will be conducted by an experienced team, Wildlands Conservation Science LLC, using a small helicopter (Schweizer-333) and a crew of three (an experienced pilot and two biologists conducting the survey). Surveys are conducted at low speeds and altitudes—15 to 20 mph and 30 to 150 feet respectively. Aerial surveys are limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., from August 7 to August 16, 2017.

For more information please contact Milan Mitrovich, Ph.D., Science Coordinator, Natural Communities Coalition at 714-973-6653 or mitrovich@oconconservation.org.



Proposed aerial weed survey area within the Central Subregion of the Orange County NCCP and adjacent protected areas.

#####