 <p>The Community Foundation <i>Serving the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino</i></p>	<p align="center">S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund Grant Evaluation Form</p>
<p align="center">Grant Period:</p>	<p align="center">June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2013</p>

Organization: National Audubon Society dba Audubon California/Starr Ranch Sanctuary

Contact Name: Sandy DeSimone

Title: Director of Research and Education

Phone Number: 949-858-0309

Grant Period: June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2013

Award Amount: \$20,000

Grant Number: 2012380

- Describe the project's key outcomes and results based on your goals and objectives. Provide the number of clients served and other relevant statistics.

Bordering the Santa Ana Mountains, the Cleveland National Forest, and two suburban developments, Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary preserves 4,000 acres of woodland, riparian forests, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and needlegrass grassland. Starr Ranch operates as a nature preserve and an active ecological research station, serving 6,000 visitors a year through environmental education, citizen science, and robust volunteer programs. Habitat restoration is a long-term commitment for Starr Ranch, and our overarching objective is to preserve, enhance and restore native habitat on the ranch to its most pristine state. Overall our goal is to restore 1,600 acres across all habitat types, about 40% of the Ranch's total acreage. We expect to reach this goal by 2020.

Our riparian or streamside restoration project has been ongoing since 2003. Bell Creek is a 15-mile long watercourse originating in the Santa Ana Mountains, 4.71 miles of which run through Starr Ranch before joining the San Juan Creek and emptying into the Pacific Ocean. Our work in this corridor focuses on the entire riparian ecosystem by controlling invasive plant species, restoring native habitats using non-chemical methods, and monitoring wildlife and water quality. To date, we have successfully controlled the spread of three highly invasive plant species (periwinkle, smilo grass, and English ivy) within a 4.5-acre area along the creek. With support of the S.L. Gimbel Fund this year we initiated planning for a next phase of invasives control that involves adding additional target plant species, began the intensive restoration work on additional acreage, and developed new GIS maps of wildlife distribution in the corridor. In our proposal we established three goals and are pleased to report successful outcomes for all three.

Goal 1: Complete a survey of a 4.71 mile section of stream bank and generate GIS maps that documented the incidence of priority invasive plant species along Bell Creek.

Accomplishment: Interns completed a walking survey of the entire 4.71 mile section of Bell Creek this year. Through this survey, they documented the presence or absence of four new target invasive plant species: pampas grass, palm, olive, and giant reed (not found). None of these species are native to California and require intensive methods for removal. GIS maps were generated to show presence, distribution, and density. At right, the map of incidence of olive along Bell Creek will help us to plan removal of these invasive plants.

Goal 2: Remove non-native invasive plants from 1.5 new acres along Bell Creek, expanding from the 4.5 acre area that has already received intensive restoration work, with assistance from Weed Warrior volunteers.

Accomplishment: Our Weed Warrior volunteers working with our interns exceeded our goal by adding 1.57 acres to our intensive work area this year. This popular program draws volunteers from all over Southern California. Volunteers come on Saturdays to work for four hours with staff and interns to remove targeted invasive plants from the riparian corridor. This past year, the two seasonal interns recruited 388 Weed Warrior volunteers who worked 1,042 hours over fifteen Saturdays between November and the end of May.

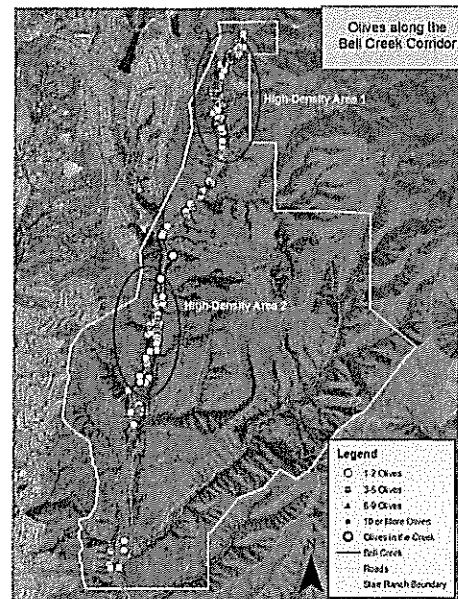
Goal 3: Produce preliminary GIS maps showing occurrence of and distribution of vertebrates along Bell Creek, and produce a GIS map of perennial pools showing likely perennial water sources for aquatic vertebrates, especially rare species.

Accomplishment: Since the beginning of stream vertebrate surveys in 2011, we have surveyed thirteen 250 meter stretches of creek, three of which were monitored in all three sample periods. We found abundant aggregations of arroyo chub and a single observation of a two-striped gartersnake, both California Species of Special Concern. We have also been able to draft distribution maps for all detected species within Bell Creek, and to detect potential trends in species diversity throughout the length of the creek within our borders. Based on the three years of survey data, species richness appears to be highest in the southern portions of the Sanctuary, and decreases in the upper reaches of Bell Creek. Additionally, fish abundance appears to be highest near or downstream of potential permanent water sources suggesting that these areas act as dry-season refugia. No fish species were detected in the upper reaches of Bell Creek which may signify that our road crossings, particularly a culvert crossing, present barriers to dispersal. All of the maps developed with the support of the S.L. Gimbel Fund are included as enclosures.

- What were the challenges and obstacles you encountered (if any) in attaining your goals & objectives? How did you overcome and/or address the challenges and obstacles? What were the lessons learned?

Our two seasonal interns, Andrew and Maranda, reported poison oak and steep stream banks were significant challenges for the Bell Canyon biweekly walks to survey the presence (or absence) of target plant species. One solution for the poison oak was to wear protective polypropylene suits and had to adjust survey protocols to conditions found in the field, key lessons all new field scientists must learn.

For Weed Warriors program, the interns were challenged by getting people to commit to a date, arrive on time, and focus on the task at hand for the time period. They overcame some of above challenges by sending regular reminders to Weed Warrior volunteers to come on time (which didn't always work) and



to be flexible working with the volunteers who did show up, great lessons for working with volunteers that the interns will carry forward into their careers.

For control of invasive plants, it is especially difficult to remove recurring target invasives in the entire 4.3 acre “maintenance area” where periwinkle and other weeds have been removed while at the same time adding new acreage to the maintenance area. We welcome volunteers, and our partnership with the Orange County Conservation Corps is invaluable to help us bridge this labor capacity gap.

- Describe any unintended positive outcomes as a result of the efforts supported by this grant.

One of the interns decided she wants to work with volunteers as a result of her Weed Warrior experience (despite the challenges). Both interns learned a lot of new plant species and how different southern Californian riparian systems are from the Eastern and Midwestern parts of the United States. Thanks to completing the survey, we also were surprised to learn of the absence of giant reed in the corridor which allows us to focus on control of the other target species.

- Describe the overall effect this grant has had on your organization.

As a nonprofit organization, we cannot do our award-winning restoration work on Starr Ranch Sanctuary without support from foundations like the Community Foundation and the S.L. Gimbel Fund.

- Tell us a few success stories that made an impact on your organization and/or community as a result of this grant.

Our interns are typically recent college graduates so the Starr Ranch internship is usually a first experience in organizing a number of complex tasks, writing proposals and reports, collecting data, and managing volunteers. One intern said, “this is the best experience in my life so far.”

One regular Weed Warrior volunteer said, “I didn’t think it was possible to rid large areas of non-native plants without chemicals. But at the end of the season looking over the area where I worked, I felt such a sense of accomplishment that I was able to do so much with only hand tools and a little effort.”

- Provide a financial report on the use of your grant funds (expenditures).

The Starr Ranch Audubon Sanctuary used the funds generously granted by the S. L. Gimbel Foundation Fund as anticipated, as illustrated in the table below:

Line Item Description	Line Item Explanation	Requested Amount From TCF	Actual Expenditures
Salaries & benefits	Director of Research & Education; Sanctuary Manager; Riparian Interns (2)	\$16,000	\$16,000
Professional services	Guest biologist for stream bioassessment	\$500	\$500
Insurance	Liability, property	\$0	
Repairs & Maintenance	R & M for ranch equipment and vehicles	\$0	
Equipment & Supplies	Hand tools, work gloves, etc	\$1,000	\$1000
Indirect (15%)	Administrative Costs	\$3,000	\$3,000
TOTALS:		\$20,000	\$20,000

- ❖ Please send copies of publicity and other promotional materials.
- ❖ All variances or time extensions must be approved by The Community Foundation's Grant Committee. Please contact us at 951-684-4194, ext. 114 immediately if a variance or extension becomes necessary.

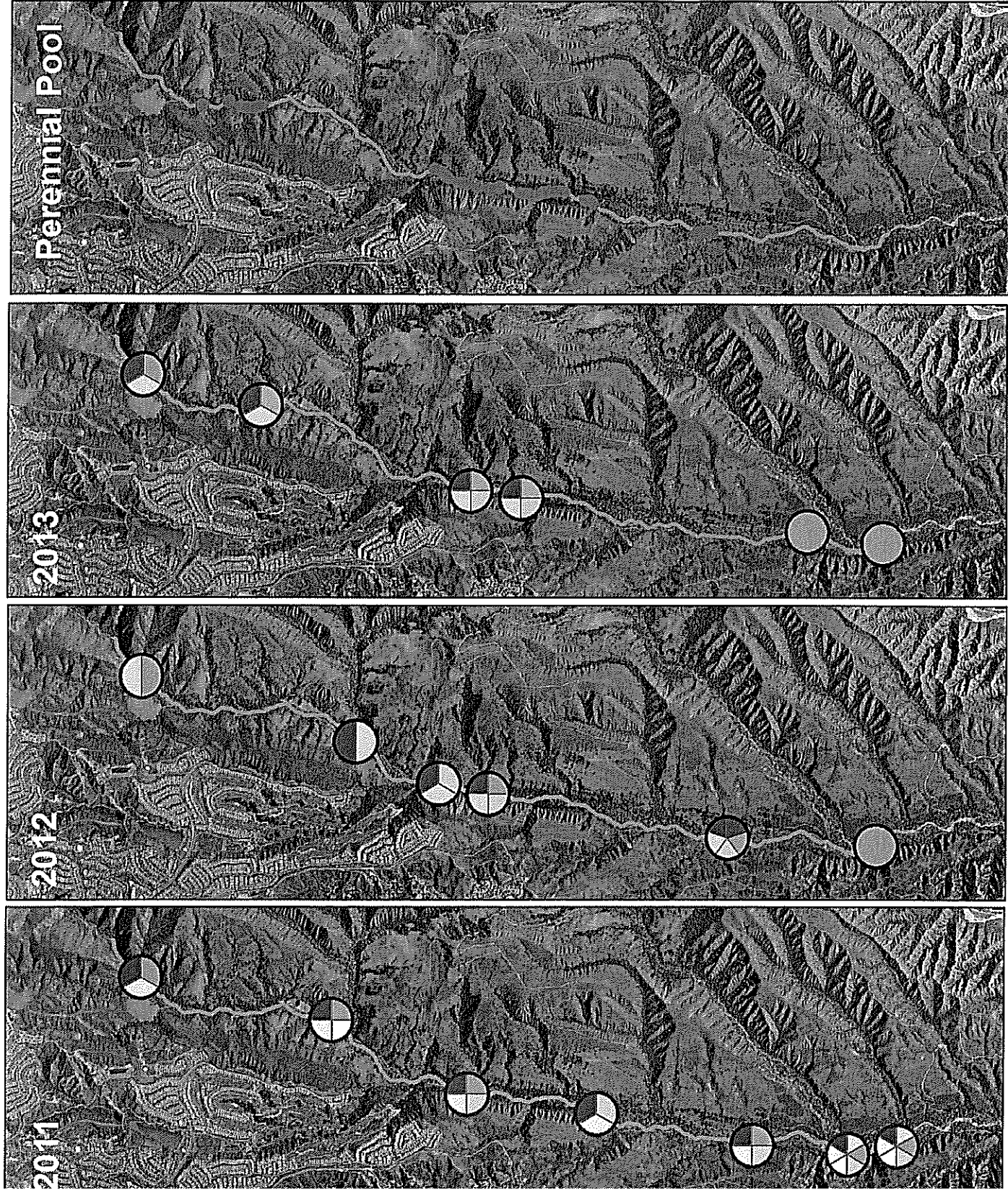
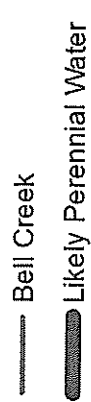
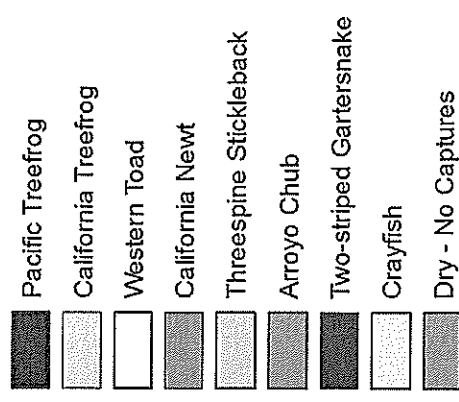
Please return the completed form to:

Celia Cudiamat

3700 Sixth St., Suite 200, Riverside, CA 92501

Or email to: ccudiamat@thecommunityfoundation.net

Species Detected



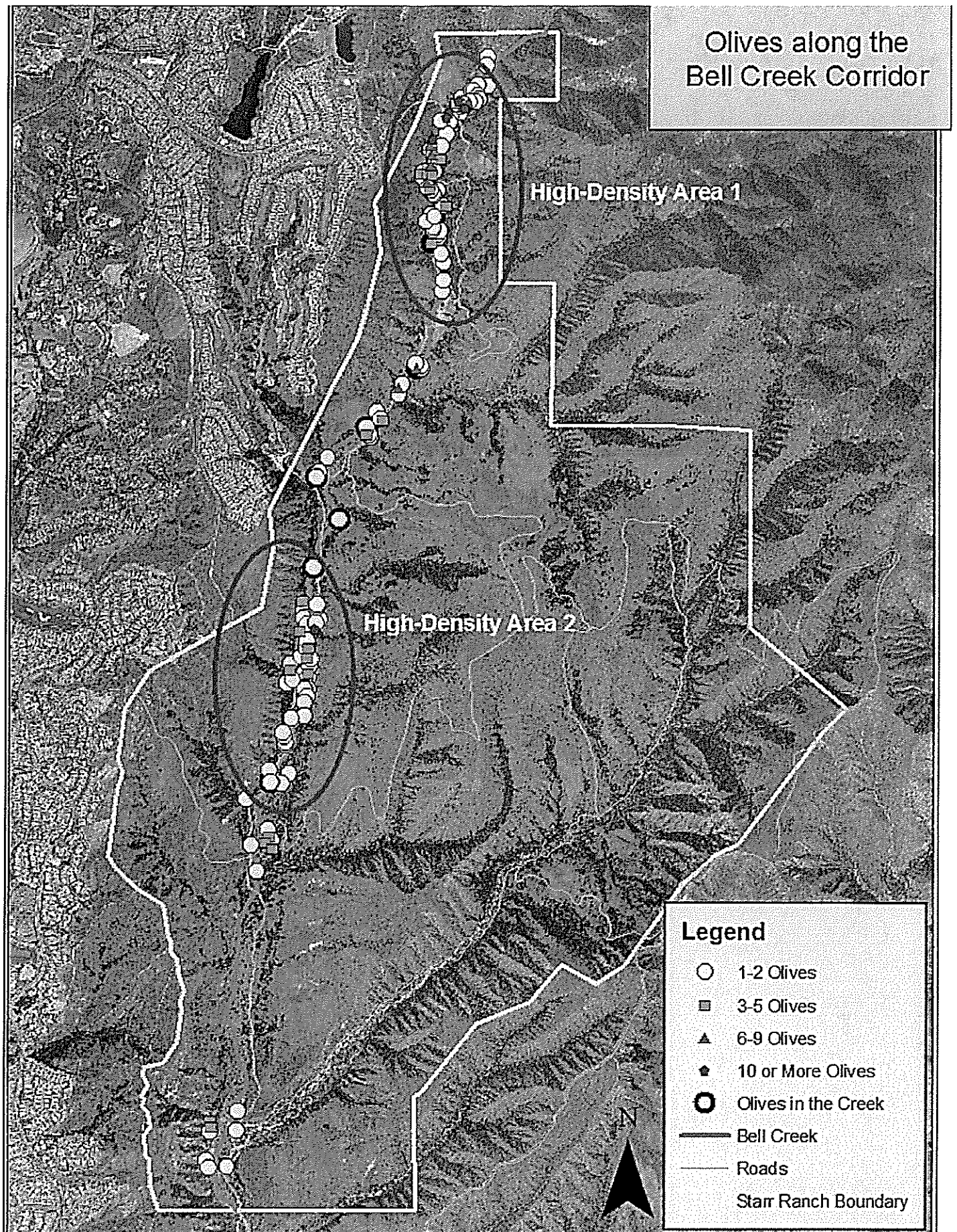
Olives along the Bell Creek Corridor

High-Density Area 1

High-Density Area 2

Legend

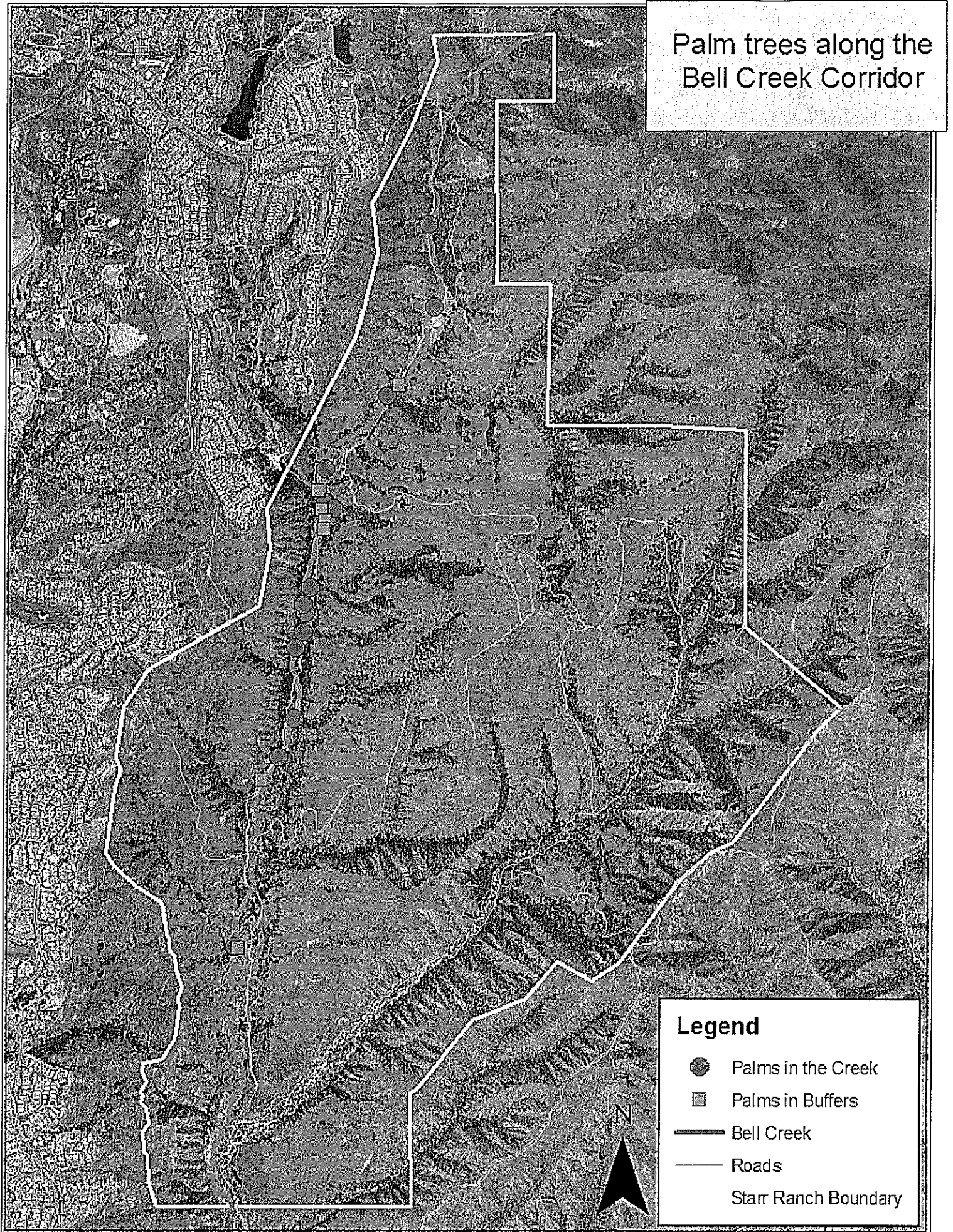
- 1-2 Olives
- 3-5 Olives
- ▲ 6-9 Olives
- ◆ 10 or More Olives
- ⊙ Olives in the Creek
- Bell Creek
- Roads
- Starr Ranch Boundary



Palm trees along the Bell Creek Corridor

Legend

- Palms in the Creek
- Palms in Buffers
- Bell Creek
- Roads
- Starr Ranch Boundary





220 Montgomery Street, Suite 1000
San Francisco, California 94104
www.caaudubon.org

Via email: ccudiamat@thecommunityfoundation.net

June 12, 2013

Ms. Celia Cudiamat
Vice President, Grant Programs
The Community Foundation
3700 Sixth Street, Suite 200
Riverside, CA 92501

Dear Ms. Cudiamat:

On behalf of Audubon California and everyone at Starr Ranch Sanctuary, I want to again thank the Community Foundation and the S.L. Gimbel Fund for your investment in the work at Starr Ranch. Your support has helped preserve and restore streamside habitat, home to diverse plant and wildlife communities by improving aquatic ecosystems, soil health, and water quality – all important ecological issues for Southern California. With appreciation for the S.L. Gimbel Fund's generosity, I am pleased to send you this report on our efforts this year made possible by your \$20,000 grant.

We deeply appreciate the S.L. Gimbel Fund's commitment to Starr Ranch Sanctuary. You are helping us to preserve and restore key ecological habitats in Southern California, to inspire people to appreciate and conserve wildlands, to offer hands-on conservation opportunities grounded in science and, for our interns, to increase understanding of land and resource management techniques that can be applied elsewhere. Thank you again for your support.

I will arrange for a hard copy of our 2012 Annual Report to be sent to you separately. In the meantime, the web version can be found here: <http://audublog.org/annualreport2012/>.

Best regards,

Sandra DeSimone, PhD
Director of Research and Education

cc: Brigid McCormack, Managing Director, Audubon California

Enclosures

Final Evaluation Report Form
Aquatic vertebrate and perennial pool GIS Map
GIS Maps of Palms and High Density Olives