



Natural Resources Department Update

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A landscape photograph showing a dark, grassy hill in the foreground on the left. A single, dark tree stands on the ridge of the hill. In the background, there are several layers of hazy, blue mountains under a light blue sky. The overall mood is serene and natural.

Outline

- Mission and Purpose of Natural Resources
- Models of Natural Resources Management
- Overview of Natural Resources Core Functions
- Where is the Natural Resources Department Headed?
- Regional and Local Opportunities and Challenges
- Staffing Outlook

Santa Clara Valley Greenprint – Natural Resources

Goal

- *Protect and manage an interconnected system of wildlands and natural areas to support native habitats and species and to ensure resilience to a changing environment.*

Guiding Principles

- *Protect and restore habitat for Santa Clara County's rare and unique biological communities and species.*
- *Protect and manage large, interconnected habitats and landscape linkages to preserve the full range of biological systems and ensure their long-term viability in response to a changing climate.*
- *Provide leadership and foster collaborative land stewardship in Santa Clara County, on both public and private lands.*
- *Conduct outreach and education efforts to better inform the public about local species, habitats, and linkages and the importance of their protection.*

How Others Do Natural Resources Work

Organization	Project Management Staff	Department Field Staff	Model
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District	Yes	No	Blended office-field project managers that are subject matter experts and collaborates with field staff
State Parks	Yes	Yes	Blended office-field project managers that are generalists who oversee technician staff
Land Trusts (e.g. POST)	Yes	No	Generalist stewardship staff who work with contractors to implement field work

Natural Resources Subject Matter (Midpen)

Vegetation

Wildlife

Earth Sciences

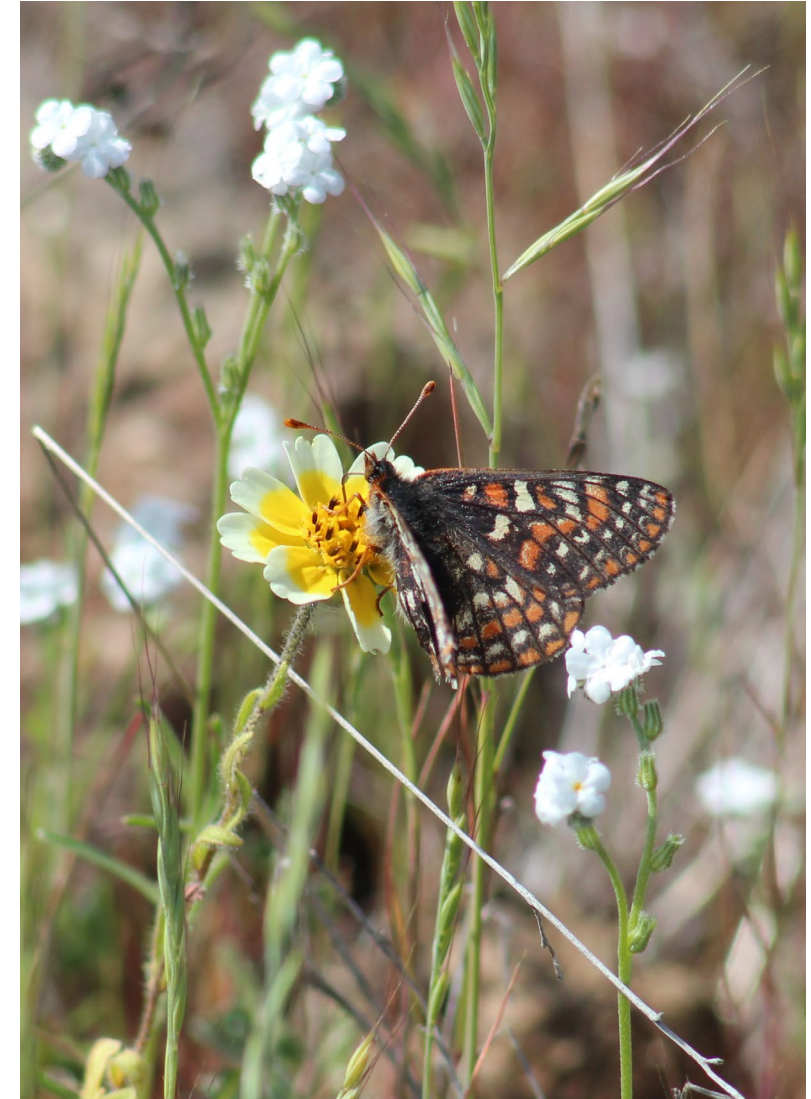
Vegetation

- Special Status Species
- Conservation Grazing
- Integrated Pest Management
- Fuels Management
- Forest Management
- Prescribed Fire
- Habitat Restoration and Maintenance
- Volunteer Opportunities



Wildlife

- Special Status Species
- Wildlife Corridors
- Habitat Restoration
- Permitting
- Public Engagement



Earth Sciences

- Watershed restoration
- Geology and soils
- Soil remediation
- Climate and Adaptation
- Permitting
- People Value This Work
- Cultural Resources



Authority Natural Resources Core Functions

Domain Expertise

- Vegetation
- Water Resources
- Wildlife
- Agriculture

Climate resiliency, biodiversity, and community are the shared themes

Monitoring, adaptation, and partnership are the shared values

Interdepartmental Support and Work

- Public access (Planning)
- Fee and Conservation Easements (Real Property)
- Maintenance BMPs and Field Project Support (Operations)
- Communications and technical advice (External Affairs)

NR Program Areas

Community Restoration

Mission: *to heal and restore the human and wildlife connection to the land through **projects** and **community** engagement*

Core Functions

- Wildlife connectivity and resiliency
- Agricultural stewardship
- Water resources and Process-based restoration

Core Values

- Healing our relationship with the land
- Engaging underrepresented communities
- Climate resiliency
- Nature-based solutions / Nature as Infrastructure
- We need to grow future generations of stewards now

Habitat Stewardship

Mission: *to use positive stewardship interventions to enhance and restore **annual**, cyclical ecosystem functions.*

Core Functions

- Fuels, fire, and ecosystem resiliency
- Conservation grazing
- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity
- Monitoring

Core Values

- Field and place-based stewardship
- The land is our teacher
- Adaptation
- Preserving our biological heritage for future generations

Regional and National Conservation Challenges

Climate Change

- Higher variation in precipitation
- Increased heat stress on vegetation
- More severe droughts
- Shifting habitats
- Unpredictable future v.s. restoring to the past

Development

- Housing, energy, and transportation projects
- Habitat fragmentation

Increasingly complex and expensive regulations to maintain and restore high quality habitats—new species and sub-species listed every year

Farming

- Unstable water supplies
- Heat stress to plants
- Economic challenges for local food production



OSA Natural Resources Opportunities & Challenges

- Implementing wildlife corridor and connectivity in Coyote Valley
- Implementing stream, wetland, and floodplain restoration in Coyote Valley
- Managing vegetation and fuels for habitat resiliency and safety
- Defining and implementing an Agricultural Program that delivers on OSA's vision
- Continuing community-based restoration and working closely with volunteers and field operations
- Delivering public access projects in an ecologically sensitive manner
- Partnership and collaboration



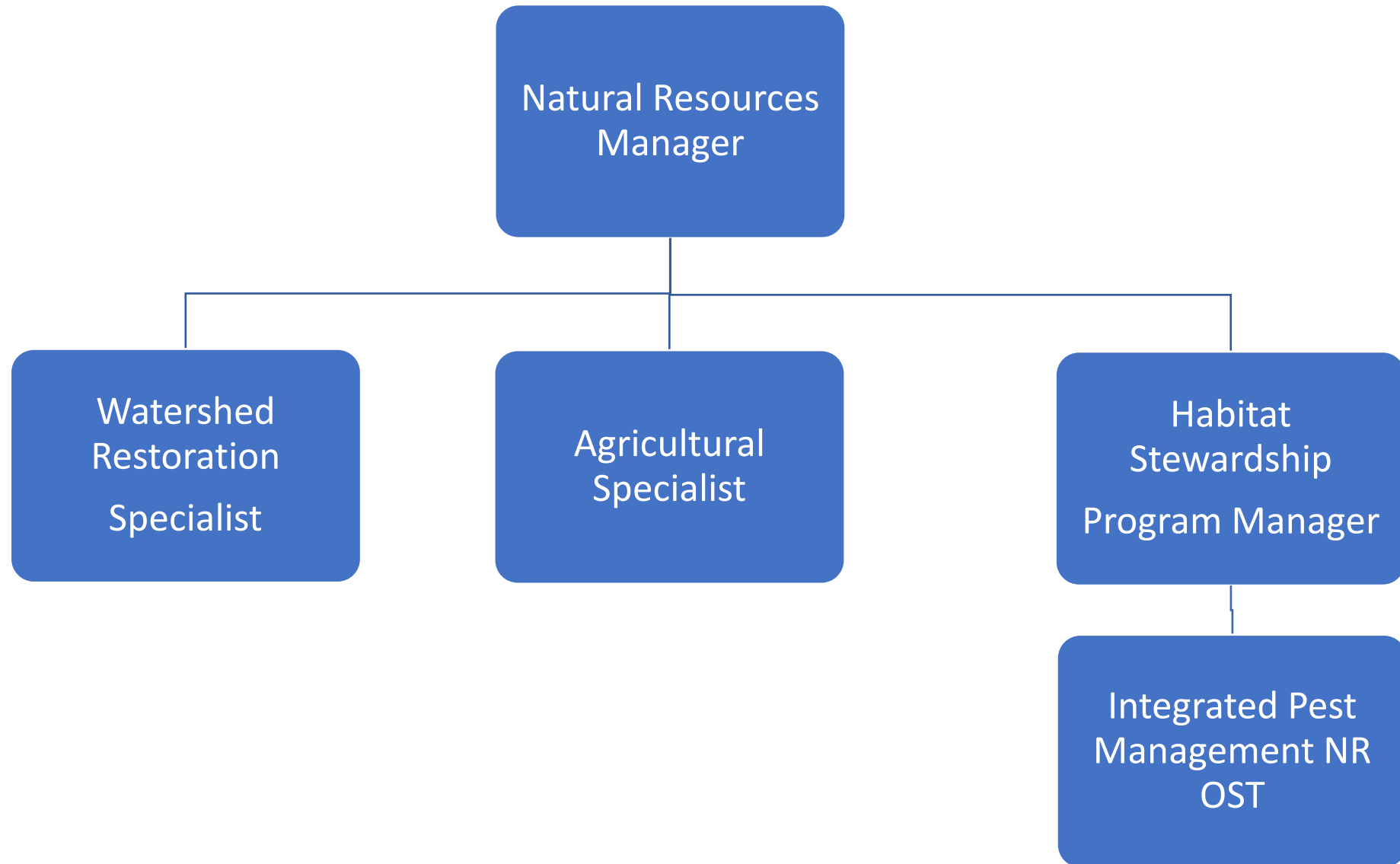
Natural Resources Staffing FY22-23 and 23-24

Working Title	Classification	Program Area
Watershed Restoration Specialist	Resource Management Specialist	Community Restoration
Agricultural Specialist	Resource Management Specialist	Community Restoration
Habitat Stewardship Program Manager	Natural Resources Program Manager	Habitat Stewardship
Natural Resources Technician (Existing)	Natural Resources Technician	Habitat Stewardship

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a hillside in the foreground covered with numerous small yellow wildflowers and green grass. Several large, dark rocks are scattered across the slope. In the background, a deep valley stretches out, featuring green fields, a winding road, and distant mountains under a blue sky with wispy clouds. The text "Questions and Comments?" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the upper portion of the image.

Questions and Comments?

2025 Natural Resources Organization Chart



How Natural Resources Does It Currently

- Ongoing programmatic stewardship, resource management, and monitoring
- Durable, capital resource management projects
- Delivers programmatic vegetation management with Operations, including IPM, grazing, and fuels work
- Manages lands through grazing and farming tenants
- Delivers resource management projects with Planning, Grants, and Partnership Organizations
- Delivers small scale restoration with the Volunteer Program

2023 on Outstanding projects

- Fuels Management Plan
- Blair Ponds
- Monterey Road Wildlife Corridor
- CVCamp Stream, Wetland, and Floodplain restoration
- MOCR Monitoring
- Agricultural Strategic Plan and implementation
- Nursery
- Pajaro River Confluence Project
- Preserve Designation System – Access/Biodiversity
- Pallasou Ponds, Steams, and Grazing Improvements
- Rancho, Diablo Foothills, and Sierra Vista Ponds
- New property work