

# River Partners

Creating Wildlife Habitat for the Benefit of People and the Environment

**Ezra Neale**

**Restoration Ecologist, Southern California**

**June 2017**

## Overview

- Who is River Partners?
- Lower Tijuana River Valley Pre-Restoration Plan
- Questions & Discussion



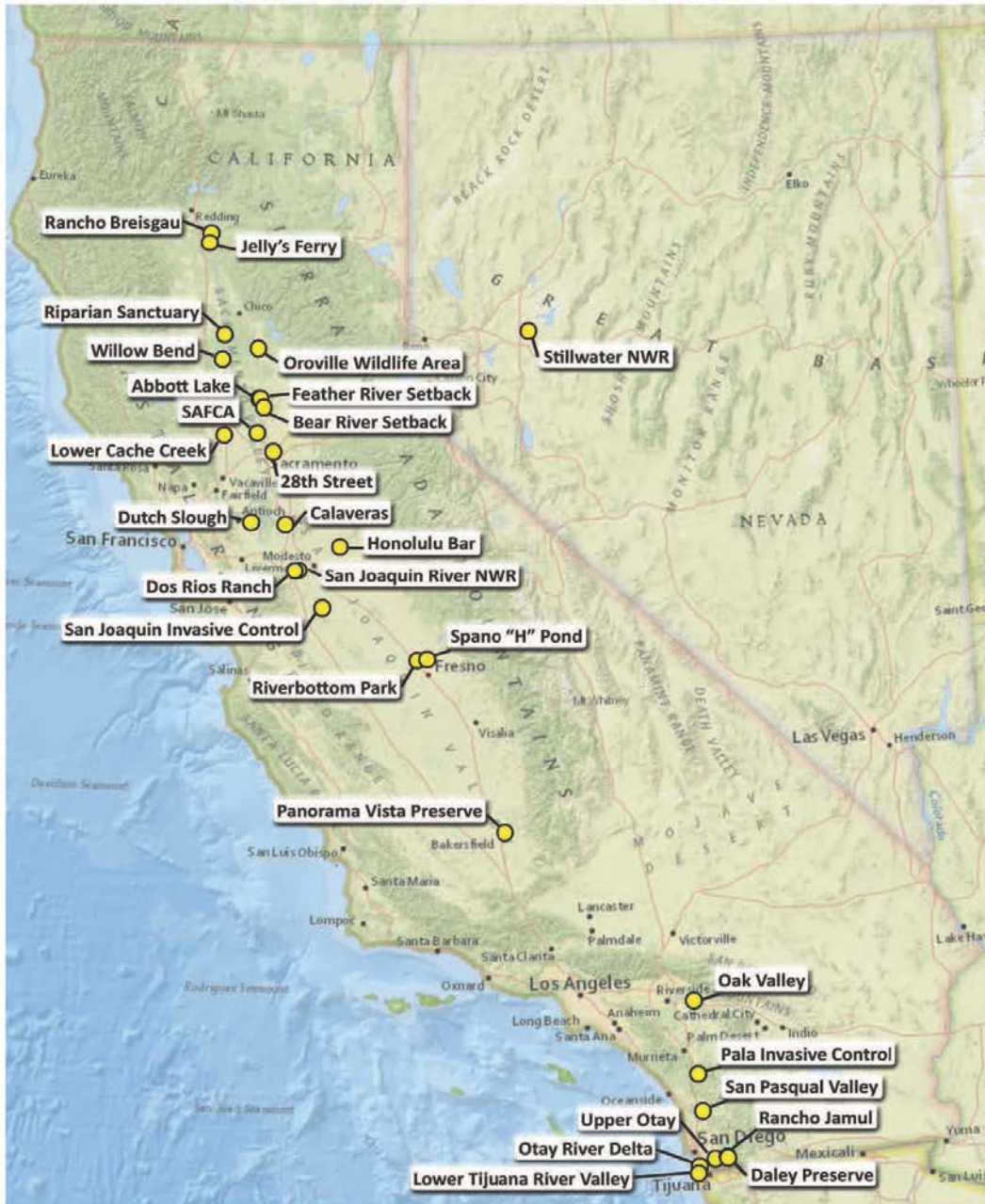
**“To Create Wildlife Habitat for the Benefit of People  
and the Environment”**

- Founded in Chico in 1998 by Two Conservation-minded Farmers
- 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization
- Focus on Large-Scale Implementation of Riparian Habitat Restoration Projects
- Combine Scientific Habitat Planning with Agricultural Practices
- 3 Offices – Chico, Turlock, San Diego
- Work in 15 watersheds – including Sacramento, Feather, Bear, American, San Joaquin, Tuolumne, Merced, Stanislaus, Mokelumne, Kern, Santa Ana, Otay, Lower Tijuana, Carson and Lower Colorado.



## CURRENT PROJECTS

(UPDATED 12/1/2015)



## To Date:

- 2,000,000 trees & shrubs planted
- Over 12,000 acres restored
- Over \$102,000,000 invested in Restoration and Conservation Activities
- Provided Habitat that led to the recovery of endangered species



# Southern California Example: Otay Delta Restoration Project

1. 65 acres
2. Improves habitat for a variety of neo-tropical migratory and resident birds including the least Bell's vireo.
3. Builds on efforts by the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, City of Chula Vista, and The US Fish and Wildlife Service to create a habitat corridor within the Otay Valley Regional Park



# Pre-Project Conditions



- Loss of floodplain geomorphology by land-leveling
- Loss of genetic diversity due to reduction of native vegetation by land-use conversion
- Invasive non-native species
- Unnatural vegetation structure = poor wildlife habitat

April 2013

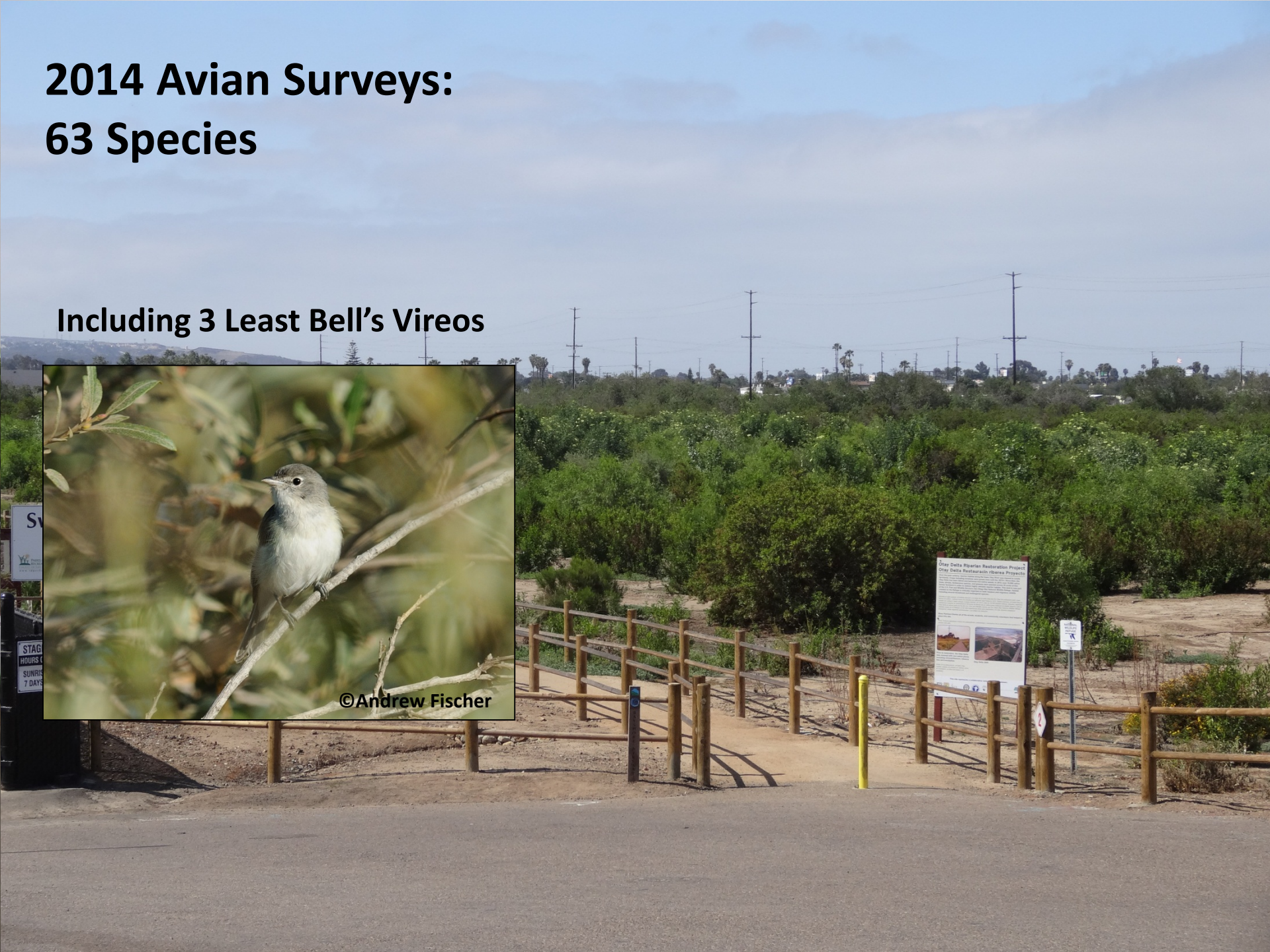


March 2017



# 2014 Avian Surveys: 63 Species

Including 3 Least Bell's Vireos





# Pre-Restoration Plan for the Lower Tijuana River Valley

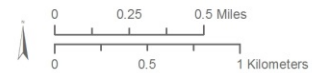


# Goals and Objectives

- Serve as a conceptual framework for the implementation of future projects to restore degraded riparian habitat.
- Build on existing planning documents and present a broad strategy for implementing collaborative, multi-objective restoration efforts.
- Make recommendations on habitat improvements for targeted wildlife in a heavily degraded area.



**Watershed Study Area**



Data Source: 2014 NAIP  
Date: June 7, 2016

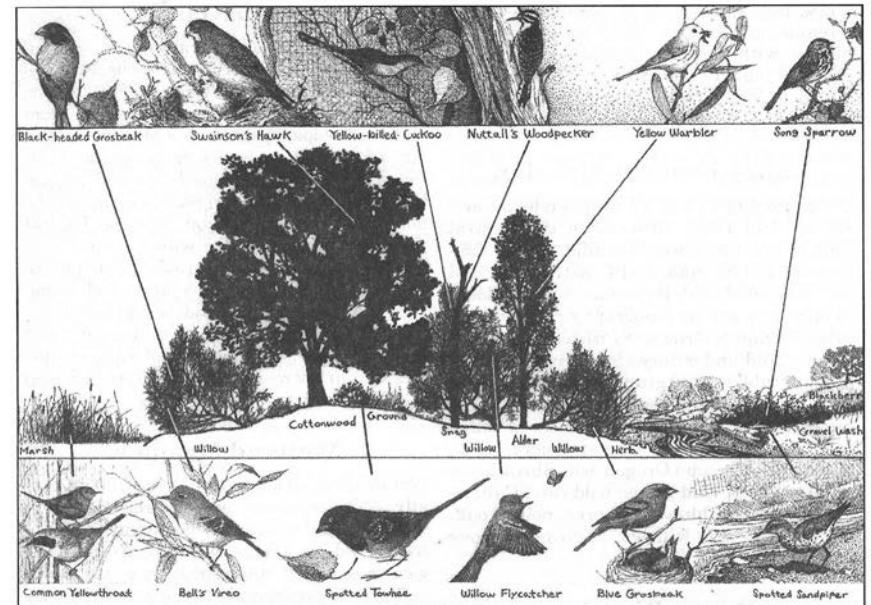
## 1. Invasive non-native species

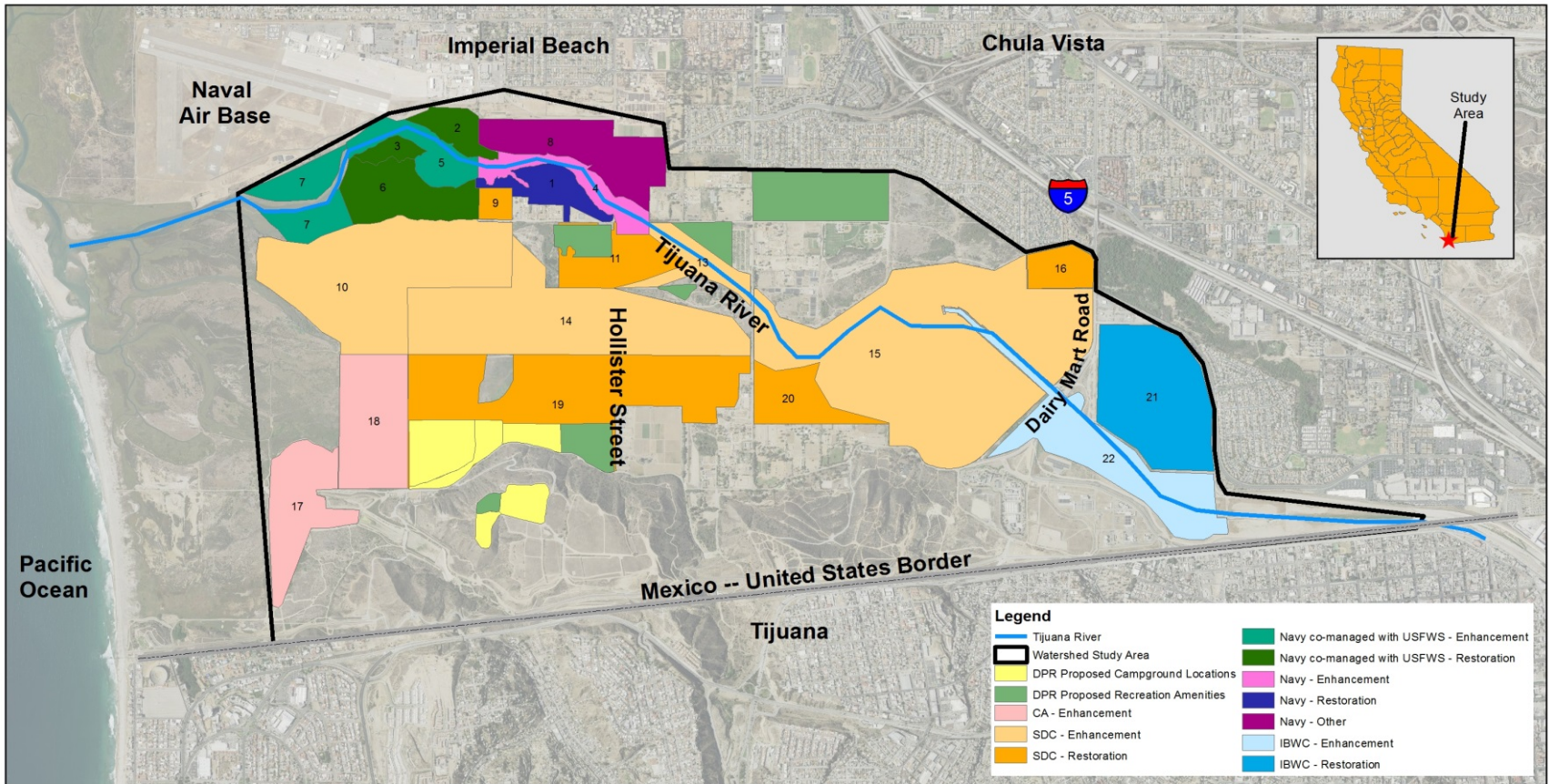


## 2. Loss of floodplain geomorphology



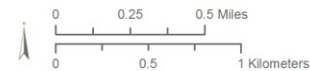
## 3. Unnatural vegetation structure and poor wildlife habitat





## Pontential Restoration Areas in Lower Tijuana River Valley

Parcels evaluated for potential riparian restoration and enhancement activities within the Lower Tijuana River Valley



Data Source: 2014 NAIP  
Date: June 7, 2016



A scenic landscape view with a clear blue sky, a green field, and distant mountains. The foreground is dominated by dark green bushes with yellow flowers. The middle ground shows a large, flat green field. In the background, there is a line of trees and a cityscape, with mountains visible on the horizon.

# Thank You!

[eneale@riverpartners.org](mailto:eneale@riverpartners.org)