

# NATURE RESERVE OF ORANGE COUNTY

## NEWS RELEASE

## *For Immediate Release*

June 27, 2016

**Irvine, California**-- Between June 21 to June 29 and following July 4 if necessary, the Nature 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.

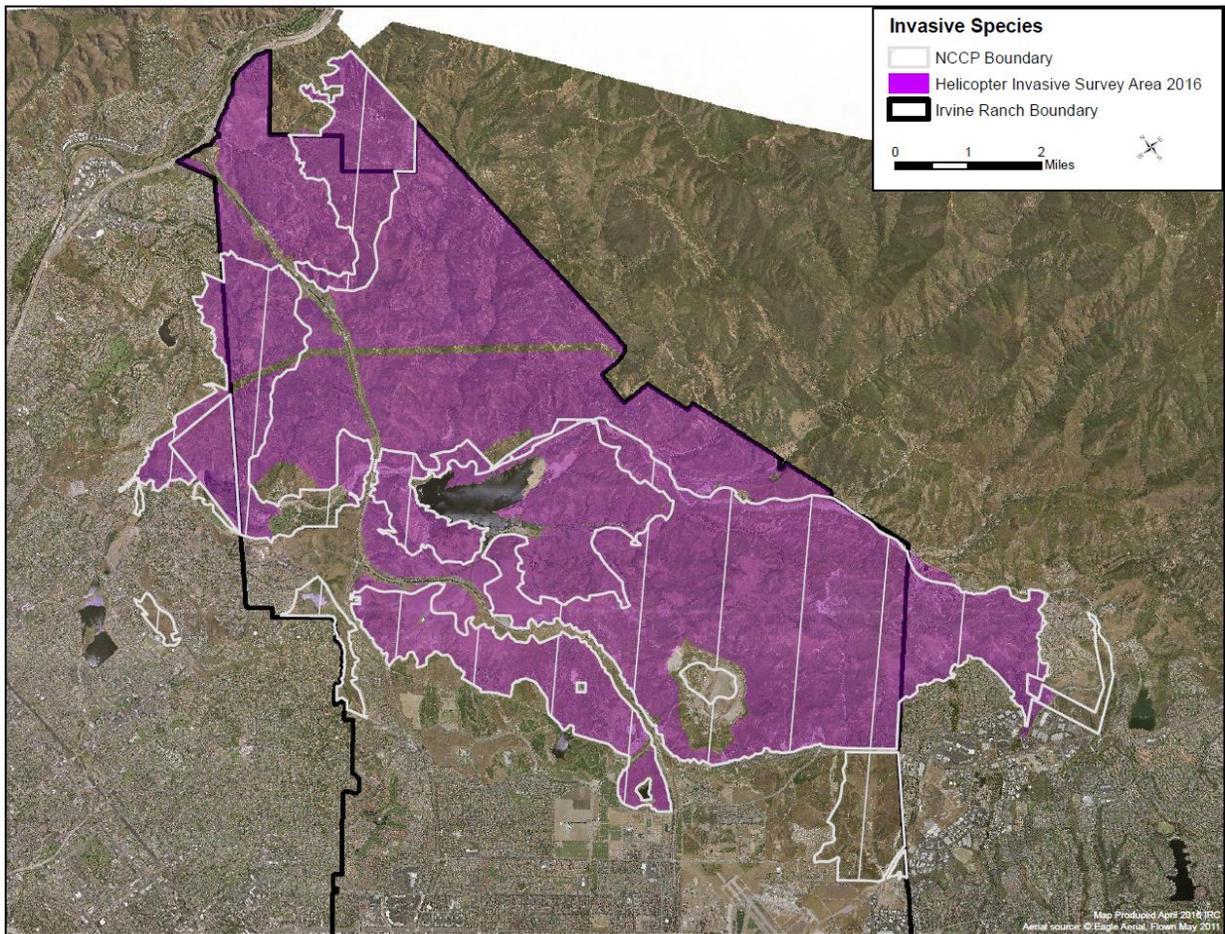
The aerial weed survey will be focused on mapping the distribution of artichoke thistle and a minimum of 30 other established and emerging invasive weeds which degrade natural habitat values important to wildlife and the park visitor experience. The survey will cover nearly 32,000 acres and involve the following land areas (also see attached map):

<b>Aerial Survey Area</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park	OC Parks
Siphon Reservoir	Irvine Ranch Water District
City of Irvine Open Space Preserve North	City of Irvine
Irvine Ranch Open Space	OC Parks
Irvine Regional Park	OC Parks
Peters Canyon Regional Park	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 June 21 to June 29 and after July 4, 2016 to be determined.

For more information please contact Milan Mitrovich, Ph.D., Science Coordinator, Natural Communities Coalition at 949-453-3324 x302 or [mitrovich@occonservation.org](mailto:mitrovich@occonservation.org).



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

#####