

MARTIAL COTTLE PARK PROJECT

INVENTORY OF FEATURES – RESOURCES SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING



OCTOBER 2008



CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS MISSION

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

Photo on reverse: View of Mt. Hamilton and the Diablo Range to the east from the park site.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....	1
PROJECT HISTORY.....	2
DONOR’S VISION.....	3
STATE/COUNTY PARTNERSHIP.....	4
 RESOURCES SUMMARY	
NATURAL RESOURCES.....	5
Topography.....	5
Meteorology.....	5
Hydrology.....	5
Geology.....	6
Soils.....	7
Vegetation.....	7
Wildlife.....	8
CULTURAL RESOURCES.....	10
Archaeological Sites and Standing Structures.....	10
Historic Background.....	10
RECREATION, INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION.....	12
AESTHETIC RESOURCES.....	13
 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING	
CLASSIFICATION ALTERNATIVES.....	14
Classification Alternatives Considered.....	14
RECOMMENDATION.....	15
UNIT NAME.....	15
PUBLIC INPUT.....	15
SELECTED REFERENCES.....	16
 RESOURCE INVENTORY MAPS.....	
MAP 1: REGIONAL LOCATION.....	19
MAP 2: PROJECT SITE.....	21
MAP 3: HYDROLOGICAL FEATURES.....	23
MAP 4: GEOLOGIC HAZARDS.....	25
MAP 5: PRIME FARMLAND.....	27
MAP 6: PARK HABITAT.....	29
MAP 7: SCENIC RESOURCES.....	31
MAP 8: ELEMENTS DETRACTING FROM SCENIC QUALITY.....	33
MAP 9: REGIONAL PARKLAND & CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS CLASSIFICATION.....	35
 APPENDIX A: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND REFERENCES (MAY BE UNDER SEPARATE COVER)	
Donor’s Vision Plan	
Grant Deeds	
Joint Powers and Operating Agreement	

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INTRODUCTION

The 287.54 acre Martial Cottle Park Project site is located at 5285 Snell Avenue in an unincorporated area of Santa Clara County surrounded by a suburban area of the City of San Jose (see **Map 1**). The project site is partially owned by California State Parks (136.52 acres) and the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department (151.02 acres). A 32 acre portion of the site is private property under a Life Estate agreement between the County and the owner, Walter Cottle Lester (see **Map 2**).

The Martial Cottle Park Project is a joint collaborative effort between the State and Santa Clara County. The State and County properties will be developed and operated as a historical agricultural park by the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department under a Joint Powers and Operating Agreement with deed restrictions for its future development and public use.

Regional access in the vicinity of the project site is provided via State Highway 101 and State Highway 85. Local access is provided via Snell Avenue, a four lane arterial road that forms the eastern boundary of the site, Branham Lane, a two lane arterial bordering the north; and Chynoweth Avenue, a four lane collector street bordering the project site on the south. Residential uses are adjacent to the western perimeter.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is generally rectangular in shape. The land is comprised of flat, open lands with a portion of the Life Estate in active agricultural production. Little of the site is comprised of native vegetation as the site has been farmed for several decades. The habitat with the site is typical of rural areas with its fallowed fields and scattered mature oak trees. The large amount of open farmland within a highly developed, suburban area makes the site an unusual geographic feature of significance.



Fallow field typical of project site

The County's portion and Life Estate property contains a variety of agricultural out buildings and residential structures dating from the mid-1800s, as well as some recent structures built after the 1960s. Most of these structures are located within the boundaries of the Life Estate private property, which is located on the eastern portion of the site, and are not currently available for inclusion in the park's resources inventory and development plans. These buildings include the main residence, an office, two barns, a greenhouse, a granary, a blacksmith building, a mill, a milk house, a buggy shed, a shanty, two garages, two oil storage sheds, and three buildings used for equipment, supplies, and vehicle storage. The only structure currently located on the state-owned property is the well pump house.

The Life Estate also has approximately 25 acres of actively-farmed land that is situated to the north and south of the area of the ranch buildings. Fruit and vegetable harvests and Christmas trees are sold at a fruit stand which is located on the northwestern corner of the Snell Avenue and Chynoweth Avenue intersection.

PROJECT HISTORY

The Martial Cottle Park Project site is one of the few remaining examples of the Santa Clara Valley's rich agricultural heritage that still exists in what is now an almost entirely urbanized portion of Santa Clara County. The park site is a remnant of what was once known – prior to its incarnation as Silicon Valley – as the “Valley of the Heart's Delight,” because of its robust agriculture. The park site is also significant in the history of the Santa Clara Valley because it has been continuously farmed by the Cottle and Lester families for nearly 150 years, from 1864 to the present.

The property was originally part of the extensive Rancho de Santa Teresa land holdings granted to the José Joaquin Bernal family by the Mexican governor in 1834. In 1864, Edward Cottle, who had immigrated to the area a decade earlier, purchased a portion of the rancho to farm and settle his family. Edward Cottle later deeded 350 acres to his son, Martial Cottle, who used the property for growing grain, orchard and row crops and raising cattle and horses. Martial and Edith Cottle had five children, most of who continued to live on and operate the ranch after Martial Sr.'s death in 1909. In 1914, Ethel Cottle, youngest daughter of Martial and Edith, married Henry W. Lester, who owned 130 acres on the east side of Snell Road and would become one of the largest prune growers in the Valley. They had two children, Walter Cottle Lester, the park Donor, and his sister, Edith Ethel Lester. The ranch passed to the two children in 1977 when Ethel Cottle Lester died, and then to Walter Cottle Lester when his sister Edith Lester died in 1999.

The idea for an historical agricultural park originated with Ethel Cottle Lester, Martial's heir and Walter's mother, who wanted to preserve the Cottle Ranch for public use and benefit. In accordance with the wishes of Ethel Lester, negotiations for the transfer of the land were initiated by Ethel's children, Edith and Walter Lester. These negotiations, which extended over a period of almost 30 years, were finalized in 2004 when Mr. Walter Cottle Lester, the sole remaining heir, transferred 136.52 acres of the site to the

California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) and 151.02 acres to the County of Santa Clara (County Parks) with the understanding that State Parks and County Parks would jointly develop and operate the respective properties as a combined public historic agricultural park. Conditions of the transfer stipulate that portions of the land will remain in agriculture in perpetuity and will offer agricultural education for the public use and benefit. The deed stipulations for State Parks and County Parks are described in detail in **Appendix A**.

The transfer agreement also reserves full control over a 32 acre Life Estate for Mr. Lester’s residence and exclusive use during his lifetime. It is important to note that the County’s Program Document, Master Plan and State General Plan will address the 32 acre Life Estate conceptually in order to establish an overall theme and an accurate depiction of the park site. Detailed programming will not be established for the Life Estate as part of the park’s Master Plan and General Plan process. According to the property transfer agreement, the Life Estate will become County property as part of the park upon the Donor’s passing, at which time detailed planning and programming of the 32 acre area will be scheduled.



View of main house in the Life Estate area

DONOR’S VISION

The park classification and subsequent planning will be guided by the Donor’s vision for the park which is that the park be jointly developed, operated and maintained as a County-State park in a manner that will show and display the agricultural heritage of Santa Clara County in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Consistent with the Donor’s vision, the land is to be used as a public historical park and working farm that promotes and sustains farming traditions.

The 2003 Donor’s Vision is expressed as an exhibit in the Grant Deed to Santa Clara County (see Appendix A). This document stipulates that the land will be used “exclusively as a public historical park that informs and educates the public about the agricultural heritage of the Santa Clara Valley, as exemplified by the Martial Cottle family, dating from the 1850s into the 20th century.”

The Grant Deed sets forth the following stipulations on park use:

- “No part of the property shall be used for high intensity, organized recreational uses such as athletic fields, playgrounds, tot lots, swimming pools (other than

private residential pools), play courts, amusement rides or similar uses, nor as a repository for historic structures that are relocated from other sites.”

- “Property may be used for passive recreational activities such as picnic facilities, trails and other low intensity uses that may be incidental to the primary historical and educational purposes of the park, and for interpretative, passive recreational, agricultural education and research and commercial uses that are reasonably related to the history of farming in the Santa Clara Valley.”
- “Commercial uses such as agricultural leases, produce stands, community gardens, farmer’s markets, interpretive programs or similar uses may be allowed if reasonably related to the primary historical purpose of the park.”

A Declaration of Purpose statement will be prepared as part of the General Plan/Master Plan process.

STATE/COUNTY PARTNERSHIP

The Martial Cottle Park Project is a collaborative planning effort between California State Parks and Santa Clara County Parks. Together, these two agencies will plan for a park of regional and statewide significance within the urban service area of San Jose that will reflect the Donor’s vision.

As requested by the Donor, the park shall be named Martial Cottle Park. Once it is officially classified by the California State Park and Recreation Commission it will become a unit within the State Park System. However, the park will be exclusively developed, operated and managed by the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department.

The Joint Powers and Operating Agreement (October 28, 2003) (see **Appendix A**) defines a collaborative planning process by State Parks and County Parks for the development of the park as a combined State and County park. However the County will ultimately be responsible for the development, operation and management of the State’s portion of the property together with the County’s donation under the terms outlined in the agreement. County Parks will also ensure the privacy of the Donor’s quiet use and enjoyment of the Life Estate and allow the Donor or his designee(s) to farm crops until park development begins. State Parks will provide staff and other assistance as required to advise and assist County Parks in the preparation of the Master Plan/General Plan for development and operation of the park.

RESOURCES SUMMARY

NATURAL RESOURCES

Topography

Martial Cottle Park (“Park”) is located within Santa Clara Valley. The valley floor is nearly flat along the San Francisco Bay, with gentle undulations and local, low hills to the south extending upward approximately 350 feet above mean sea level (amsl) at the valley’s narrowest point north of the City of Morgan Hill. Situated within the easterly side of the valley floor at an elevation of approximately 160 feet amsl, the entire Martial Cottle Park is relatively flat.

Meteorology

The climate of the area is characterized as dry summer subtropical, often referred to as Mediterranean, with cool wet winters and relatively warm dry summers. The site receives approximately 15 inches of rainfall per year. This type of climate is subject to recurring and sometimes long-lasting droughts. In normal rainfall years, about 50% of the County’s water supply is provided locally, primarily from groundwater sources. In drought years, up to 90% of the water used by the County is imported.

Hydrology

Martial Cottle Park lies within the Guadalupe River watershed. Canoas Creek, a tributary to the Guadalupe River, flows through the southwestern corner of the site (see **Map 3**). It is a constructed drainage channel that is lined with concrete. It serves as the receiving surface water body for drainage from the project site and surrounding area that transports flows into the main channel of the Guadalupe River located north of the site. This creek was redirected and contained in a concrete-lined channel in the late 1980s or early 1990s. The bottom of the creek channel segment located on the site is between six and eight feet wide. From the channel bottom the concrete walls angle outward to an approximate width of 20 feet from bank to bank at the top of the channel. The estimated depth from the top of bank to the creek centerline is 12 feet. The concrete-lined creek serves as a flood control channel that prevents water from flooding into the site.



Canoas Creek drainage channel

Sediment deposits have accumulated along this creek and provide habitat for aquatic and terrestrial vegetation. Conditions within the creek provide only marginal habitat for native plants and animals. This constructed creek channel has altered the natural hydrology and season flooding that likely occurred on the site in historic times, but still functions as a movement corridor for several aquatic and terrestrial animal species.

Canoas Creek is located within the 100-year flood hazard zone, as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). According to FEMA, areas mapped within the 100-year flood hazard zone may be inundated during the 100-year (or greater) magnitude storm event.

Based on environmental reports prepared for properties in the vicinity of the site, groundwater has been measured at depths ranging between approximately 12 to 22 feet below ground surface. According to a water well log for a well installed in Martial Cottle Park in 1997, the shallow groundwater level was noted to be at approximately 20 feet below ground surface. Water and soil quality testing at the site yielded a depth to groundwater of 15 feet.

The quality of surface water and groundwater in the vicinity of the park is affected by past and current agricultural land uses at the site and within the Guadalupe River watershed, as well as the composition of geologic materials in the vicinity. Water quality testing was conducted in 2004 to determine the potential effects of the historic farming activity on surface water and ground water quality. The testing involved collecting four water samples from Canoas Creek, three groundwater samples from three former underground storage tank sites, and five groundwater samples from the active water supply wells on the site. No water contaminants were reported above laboratory reporting limits from the well samples collected.

Geology

This area is included in the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province that extends from about 600 miles south of the Oregon border to central coastal California. Santa Clara County and the City of San Jose are located in the southern coastal ranges within the Santa Clara Valley. The Guadalupe River is about one mile to the west and Coyote Creek is about one mile to the northeast. These two fluvial systems are the source of alluvial deposits at the site.

Located in the San Francisco Bay Area, Martial Cottle Park is located in a region of significant seismic activity and geotechnical instability. The major faults in this region trend northwest/southeast. Within the vicinity of the site the major faults are the San Andreas Fault, a right-lateral strike-slip fault near the crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west, and the Hayward and Calaveras faults, both right-lateral strike-slip faults in the Diablo Range to the east. These faults have exhibited significant tectonic motion both in recent times and the distant geological past.



View of Loma Prieta peak and the Santa Cruz Mountains to the south.

Because the Park is situated in a region of significant seismic activity and geotechnical instability, there is the potential for earthquakes to occur and produce severe ground shaking and result in ground failure, thereby damaging or destroying existing historic and future built structures and Park features. Other hazards associated with earthquakes include surface rupture; differential settlement, seismically-induced landslides, and seismically-induced inundation (see **Map 4**).

Soils

Soils in the Santa Clara Valley primarily consist of clay in the low-lying areas, loam and gravelly loam in the upper portions of the valley, and eroded rocky clay loam in the hills. The clay soils that make up the majority of the valley floor, including Martial Cottle Park, are derived from alluvial deposits from the surrounding and upstream geological formations. The valley is filled by as much as 1,950 feet of primarily alluvial sediment largely accumulated within the last 780,000 years.

The vicinity of the Park is dominated by two soil associations that are very deep, level, and somewhat poor to poorly drained: Clear Lake-Campbell association, drained; and the Sunnyvale-Castro-Clear Lake association. Soils maps of the area show that the site is dominated by Orestimba silty clay loam soil, with the western-most portion consisting of Sunnyvale silty clay, drained. A section through the west central portion of the site contains Sunnyvale Series soils. Sunnyvale soils consist of poorly drained, fine textured soils, underlain by gleyed sedimentary alluvium. These soils formed on low level positions in alluvial plains, and even in a drained condition, the description notes that water may become ponded during winter months.

The site is flat and primarily fallow with limited land (25 acres) in active agricultural production within the property designated as the Life Estate. The Santa Clara County Important Farmland Map identifies the soils on the site as “Prime Farmland” or “Farmland of Local Importance” (see **Map 5**). Prime Farmland is considered to be “land with the best combination of physical and chemical features for the production of agricultural crops.” Farmland of Local Importance refers to land that is “either currently producing crops, has the capability of production, or is used for the production of confined livestock.”

Vegetation

Only a fragment of the site is comprised of the original native vegetation. Prior to agricultural conversion, vegetation probably consisted of large scattered valley oaks and coast live oaks, with an understory of native forbs and grasses. Portions of the site may have also supported alkaline, seasonal wetlands. Due to prolonged agricultural use, the natural plant communities once extant on the site no longer exist. Vegetation on the



Mature oak trees

site prior to agricultural use would likely have been classified as a valley oak savanna, which is characterized by valley oaks and grasslands intermixed with shrubs and other oak and tree species.

Eight mature valley oak trees are located in the eastern half of the site. Several other species of trees were observed in scattered locations within the outer boundaries of the site. These consist of Italian cypress, California black walnut, mayten, olive, and valley oak. Other tree species, such as coast live oak and coast redwood, were observed in the adjacent Life Estate property.

The fallow fields had been plowed approximately one month prior to the field survey. At the time of the survey the most notable vegetation growing in the nearly barren fields was non-native field bindweed. Other plants observed consisted of beets, salt heliotrope, and sacred thornapple.

Standing water may form across this western central portion of the site during the wet season. While recent disking and the historic farming have eliminated much of the natural vegetation cover, one of the plants found growing in this area was salt heliotrope. Salt heliotrope is a native plant that is often associated with moist to dry, saline or alkaline soils and is classified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an obligate wetland plant. Portions of the site which seasonally pond water may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act or the State of California's Porter-Cologne Act.

Canoas Creek, a perennially wet concrete-lined flood control channel, prevents water from flowing onto the site. Canoas Creek is also likely subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act or the State of California's Porter-Cologne Act.

No rare, threatened, endangered, or other special status plant species are known to occur within the Park.

Exotic invasive plant species observed on the site include wild oats, Italian thistle, yellow star-thistle, perennial pepperweed, Harding grass, and Himalayan blackberry.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat within the Park is typical of rural areas with fallow fields and scattered mature oak trees. The diversity of animal species present on site is limited due to the Park's location, which is surrounded by commercial and residential development separating the site from larger areas of open space. However, the trees and fallow fields on site provide foraging and/or breeding habitat for many species. Additionally, Canoas Creek may provide a suitable habitat corridor for a variety of aquatic animal species and terrestrial animal species that forage and/or move along creeks (see **Map 6**).

The valley oaks and other trees onsite provide nesting, foraging, or roosting habitat for many animal species. An active red-tailed hawk nest was observed in one of the mature

valley oaks. Other bird species observed in the oak trees consisted of white-breasted nuthatch, American kestrel, house finch, great egret, and hooded oriole. Additionally, woodpecker holes and large cavities were observed in the branches and trunks of some of the oaks. Bats may roost in the larger cavities and birds could nest in these holes and cavities. Red foxes were observed resting under the canopies of the oaks. In addition to the animal species observed in valley oaks, three white-tailed kites, including at least one immature kite, were observed in an Italian cypress tree along the western boundary of the site near the northern bank of Canoas Creek. The white-tailed kite is State-listed as a fully-protected species.

The fallow fields onsite provide foraging habitat for several species that are commonly found in rural areas including California ground squirrels, Botta's pocket gophers, and California meadow vole. These rodents provide a prey base for red foxes and several birds-of-prey that were observed on site. Other animal species seen on or near the fallow fields during the survey consist of American kestrel, great egret, turkey vulture, peregrine falcon, cliff swallow, and barn swallow. Portions of the fallow fields may pond water during the rainy season and provide a seasonal water source for animals such as Pacific tree frog, shorebirds, and waterfowl.



Fallow field on the park project site

Animal species occurring near Canoas Creek include western fence lizard, red fox, mourning dove, California towhee, American robin, lesser goldfinch, Anna's hummingbird, northern mockingbird, house sparrow, mallard, and red-shouldered hawk. Pacific (western) pond turtles, a California species of special concern, occur in the vicinity and may also inhabit Canoas Creek.

The federally threatened California red-legged frog, chinook salmon, and steelhead, although present in other creeks or rivers within the County, are unlikely to occur in the on-site portions of Canoas Creek due to the marginal habitat conditions.

Bats, black phoebes, barn owls, mourning doves, swallows, and other birds could nest and/or roost in the ranch out buildings on or adjacent to the site. A black phoebe was observed perched at the pump house structure north of Canoas Creek near the southwestern corner of the Park.

A peregrine falcon, a State endangered and fully protected species, was observed flying over the Park. No suitable nesting habitat occurs on the site, but this falcon may forage here.

Introduced animal species observed or expected on-site consist of the red fox, house sparrow, rock pigeon, ring-necked pheasant, and European starling. There is also likely a host of other non-native fish and invertebrate species present as well. Non-native species are typically of concern because they can often displace and/or prey upon many native species.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Archaeological Sites and Standing Structures

The Martial Cottle Life Estate area includes a 1880-1950s historic-era ranch, consisting of a two-story residence, barns, sheds, and other out buildings. Cottle Ranch is listed on both the City of San Jose Historic Resources Inventory and the Santa Clara County Heritage Resources Inventory. This ranch is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and it qualifies as a historical resource.

One prehistoric archaeological site, CA-SCL-295, was identified at the southwestern edge of the study area, and it may extend into the study area. This site consists of a thin scatter of fire-fractured rock and Franciscan chert. The site was identified and mapped in 1974. Sonoma State College Anthropology Laboratory issued a supplemental site record in 2000. A survey was unable to locate any surface or subsurface evidence of the site on State Park property.

The project area is sensitive for both prehistoric and historic-period archaeological sites. Settlement pattern data from previous cultural resource studies of the area indicate that the favored locations for prehistoric village sites were at low elevations on the flat valley floor and terraces near rivers and main tributaries. Prior to channelization, Canoas Creek would have meandered as high flow rates lifted the creek out of its bed, changing its morphology and seeking new flow patterns and routes. This periodic meandering of the streambed widens the area where archaeological resources potentially exist. In addition, the geology of the study area contains Holocene-aged alluvium in which prehistoric burials and sites have been identified.

Historic Background

The Park is located within Rancho de Santa Teresa, a 9,647 acre area of land granted in 1834 by Mexican Governor José Figueroa to José Joaquín Bernal, a settler who came to California in 1776 with the De Anza expedition. He settled in San Jose in 1805 with his wife and children. Rancho de Santa Teresa, located in the southeastern part of modern San Jose, ten miles south of Pueblo San Jose, centered on the year-round artesian Santa Teresa spring. Today, over 1,000 acres



View north across fields planted with grain.

of the rancho surrounding the Santa Teresa spring is Santa Teresa County Park.

In 1864, a portion of the rancho was purchased by Vermont native Edward Cottle, who came to San Jose on October 11, 1854 via wagon train from Missouri with 600 head of cattle. Edward and his family settled along Coyote Creek, purchased and farmed a portion of Santa Teresa, and in turn gave 350 acres to his son Martial. Martial used the parcel for growing grain and row crops and raising cattle. Ensuing generations of the Cottle family continued to farm and add acreage to Martial's parcel. By 1876, total aggregate ranch acreage was over 640 acres. Martial ran a dairy operation until 1885. By 1888, the home ranch grew roughly 150 acres for growing grain, the rest of which was pasture for cattle and horses. A small parcel was used as a family orchard that included quince, plum, apricot, and apple trees. The Park is located within the parcel that formed part of Martial Cottle's portion of the ranch.

Martial and Edith Cottle had five children, Leora E. (1879-1965), who married Samuel Cobb; Maybella (1881-1960); Martial Jr. (1883-1936); William Henry Mortimer (1886-1943); and Ethel Edith (1891-1977). Martial Sr. died in January 1909 and by 1910 his widow was living with Maybella, Martial Jr., Mortimer, and Ethel who married Henry W. Lester in July 1914. Henry owned 130 acres on the opposite side of Snell Avenue, which he had purchased from the Hayes estate in 1912. During WWI, he leased some of the property to a Japanese farmer, who grew sugar beets, onions, and carrots for the Braslan Seed Company. By 1920, Martial Jr.'s wife, Florence, joined the Lesters, Mortimer, and Maybella at the Cottle Ranch. By 1930, the Cottle Ranch was home to Edith and Maybella Cottle and the Lesters with their two children Edith Ethel (1915-1999) and Walter Cottle Lester (1925-).

In the 1920s and 1930s portions of the property were again leased to Japanese farmers. One farmer, Hirata, whose former residence is now used by the Donor as an office, replaced the family orchard with crops of sugar beets, pickling peppers, and strawberries. He also grew carrots and onions for seed sellers Ferry-Morse. Martial Jr. died in 1936 and Mortimer followed in 1943. Henry Lester, Walter's father, was one of the area's largest prune growers, with over 860 acres in production at various parts of southern Santa Clara Valley. Henry and Walter formed a partnership in 1944 and in the 1950s they opened a cattle venture on the Cottle property. The cattle grazed on irrigated pasture land during the spring and summer months and in the winter they were kept in corrals and given feed. Displaying a streak of self-sufficiency, the Lesters milled their own feed on site in the pole barn within ten years of starting the cattle operations. Henry Lester died in 1960 followed by Leora Cobb in 1965.

In 1977 when Ethel Lester died, the ranch went to her children Edith and Walter. Neither married and both continued to live on the ranch. Edith Lester died in 1999, leaving Walter the sole owner. He continued to keep the ranch in production, raising hay, barley, and other crops. A small orchard was planted near the house.

Today, the ranch is comprised of a Life Estate that includes 25 acres in active agricultural production and over 287 acres of inactive farmland dotted with several mature oak trees

and crossed by Canoas Creek. Produce raised on the farm is sold at a produce stand located at the corner of Snell and Chynoweth Avenues.

The ranch is historically significant in local history for its continuous association with agriculture in the Santa Clara Valley by the Cottle and Lester families for approximately 150 years. Ethel Cottle Lester, Martial Cottle's daughter, envisioned the ranch would someday be preserved for public use in her father's name. Walter Cottle Lester, Ethel's son and the last living heir of the ranch, transferred the land to the State and County in 2003 to create an agricultural park to promote, educate, and sustain farming traditions in the Santa Clara Valley.

RECREATION, INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

Martial Cottle Park will become a new park with a focus on historic agriculture. Currently and historically, the site has operated as a functioning farm and has not previously been used for recreation. As a future "agricultural park," many of the recreational and educational programs will be oriented to the agricultural use of the site. The site will also provide traditional passive, low-intensity recreational park amenities.

Martial Cottle Park is currently used for agriculture, where hay production is continued outside of the Life Estate area. Mr. Lester currently lives on the 32 acre Life Estate portion of the site in the historic home. The portion of the Life Estate south and east of the historic residence is in active production of vegetable and orchard crops, while the majority of the site was used to grow wheat and other grain crops in past years.

There are no recreational uses or public access permitted currently on the site, however there are three public agriculture-related uses: a produce stand, a Christmas tree farm, and a seasonal pumpkin patch. The produce stand sells produce grown on site as well as from other farms. Produce grown on the site includes corn, tomatoes, melons, peppers, cucumber, zucchini, beans, cherries, peaches, apricots and other stone fruit. The produce stand is busy mainly from mid-April through Labor Day.



Christmas tree farm on the project site

The pumpkin patch operation is an extremely popular commercial concession and recreational and educational amenity that operates during the month of October. School field trips from kindergarten through second grade visit the pumpkin patch, where they are given a presentation on how pumpkins are grown and the history of agriculture in the area. These groups come from around San Jose, most from within a five-mile radius. The school groups range in size from 20 to 150

children, and during the second half of October the site hosts two to three groups per day. The afternoons are made available to families. Additional amenities offered in conjunction with the pumpkin patch include a farm-animal petting zoo, a caboose ride, a hay tunnel and a corn maze.

The Christmas tree farm is located in a strip of property (within Parcel 2 of the Life Estate Area) along Chynoweth Avenue. There is a “cut-your-own” option for Christmas tree purchasers, but the operator of the Christmas tree farm has noticed a trend away from making Christmas tree procurement a family activity. The Christmas tree farm does not offer educational programs or recreational activities such as those at the pumpkin patch.

The agriculture and the operation of the produce stand, pumpkin patch and Christmas tree farm are all operated on a lease basis by the Giordano family, which has been long associated with Mr. Lester and the farm. Based on their experience with the produce stand and the pumpkin patch, the Giordano’s believe that there is strong demand for agri-tourism use of this site.

AESTHETIC RESOURCES

Martial Cottle Park represents a significant visual and scenic resource within the context of its urban setting in a fully developed section of the City of San Jose. Much of the site’s scenic value is attributable to its sparsely developed open character and the sharp contrast of its rural agricultural use and improvements with the surrounding urbanized area.



Mature valley oak

Visually, the site’s open space setting gives visitors visual relief from surrounding development and it serves as a viewpoint from which visitors can appreciate the larger landscape. The 290 acre site forms the dominant foreground element from surrounding streets and neighborhoods and consequently serves as a focal point for the neighborhood. The size and open quality of the site, combined with its flat topography, allow for largely unimpeded views from the site (see **Map 7**). These consist of high quality views of the mountain ranges that flank the Santa Clara Valley as well as less scenic foreground views of typical suburban development, including residential subdivisions, a



Well pump house

commercial shopping center, city streets, and an elevated freeway (see **Map 8**).

Numerous scenic resources, such as panoramic views, mature valley oaks, and historic ranch structures contribute to a potentially positive visual experience for future park users.

There are visual features in the Park and vicinity that detract from the quality of the views and scenic character, such as the surrounding urban development and some built features in the park site. The urban development that surrounds the site, including residential and commercial uses, significantly detracts from the area's overall visual quality and is in sharp contrast to the rural, agricultural character of the property. Features within the property including the pump house and maintenance yard/storage area are associated with an active farm but have lower visual values and detract from the overall visual quality of the setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING

CLASSIFICATION ALTERNATIVES

Different State Park System classifications were identified and evaluated to determine the most suitable classification for this unit. The challenge of classifying this park lies in recognizing the Donor's vision for the property while allowing sufficient management flexibility to address the recreational needs of park visitors.

Classification Alternatives Considered

- **State Recreation Area**
Classify the entire park as a State Recreation Area. The proposal to classify the County portion of the park was considered. The Department determined that tying the two properties together under this classification was unnecessary, and there is legal uncertainty concerning the authority of the Commission to classify county-owned land. The County has its own regional parkland classification system and has included the County property under a combined "Urban Recreation Area and Historic Site" classification.
- **State Historic Park**
Classify the state portion of the property as a State Historic Park. Initially, this was the direction taken by the planning team for classification of this park. However, after review with County staff, State Parks staff reached consensus that the State Historic Park classification might not allow for development of recreation facilities identified in the Donor's vision. The Donor's vision plan included a proposed turf area/grassy field and recreational lake/pond on the state portion of the project site. It could be argued that such recreation facilities would be inconsistent with the State Historic Park classification.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the 136.52 acre state-owned portion of the Martial Cottle Park Project be classified as a State Recreation Area (SRA) (see **Map 9**). Public Resources Code Section 5019.56 for classification of park units allows flexibility in developing visitor use facilities under the SRA classification consistent with the Donor's vision. The SRA classification will also provide the flexibility to continue agricultural uses in the state park property. Public Resources Code Section 5069 authorizes agricultural uses for the park where appropriate.

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors has accepted a combined regional parkland classification of "Urban Recreation Area and Historic Site" for the county-owned portion of the park.

UNIT NAME

As requested by the Donor, the Department recommends that the Commission name the state property "Martial Cottle Park." This name is also a requirement for the County property through the agreements between the County and the Donor, Walter Cottle Lester. This will become the name of both the state and county-owned portions of the park property.

PUBLIC INPUT

Since April 2007 the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department has facilitated a public outreach and agency coordination program for preparation of the Master Plan/General Plan that involves State Parks staff from the Planning Division, Monterey District and Gavilan Sector of the Monterey District, a Project Team, Task Force, Technical Advisory Committee, and members of the public.

On August 12, 2008 the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors accepted the Program Document that establishes the vision, goals and objectives for the park. In addition, the Program Document summarizes the Park's existing conditions, opportunities and constraints associated with the park, potential program elements to be considered in the development of the draft alternatives and a discussion of the proposed parkland classification. Based on the public and agency input received, eight goals and 74 objectives were established for public recreation, agriculture, education and interpretation, natural resources, scenic resources, land use, circulation and access, and management, funding and implementation.

Since the classification intent and name were stipulated in the deed and Joint Powers and Operating Agreement, the public offered no other recommendation as long as the Donor's vision could be realized.

SELECTED REFERENCES

LSA Associates, Inc. and Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC. 2007. Martial Cottle Park Draft Resource Inventory.

Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, with Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE) and Economic Planning Systems (EPS). March 2008. Martial Cottle Park Master Plan, Final Draft Program Document.

RESOURCE INVENTORY MAPS

All maps are taken from the Martial Cottle Park Draft Resources Inventory (LSA, Inc. 2007) with the exception of Map 9.

MAP 1:	REGIONAL LOCATION
MAP 2:	PROJECT SITE
MAP 3:	HYDROLOGICAL FEATURES
MAP 4:	GEOLOGIC HAZARDS
MAP 5:	PRIME FARMLAND
MAP 6:	PARK HABITAT
MAP 7:	SCENIC RESOURCES
MAP 8:	ELEMENTS DETRACTING FROM SCENIC QUALITY
MAP 9:	REGIONAL PARKLAND & CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS CLASSIFICATION

MAP 1 REGIONAL LOCATION

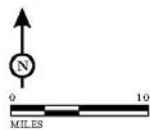


FIGURE I-1

Martial Cottle Park Project
Resource Inventory

Regional Location

LSA



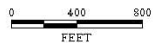
SOURCE: ©2006 DeLORME, STREET ATLAS USA ©2006.

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MAP 2 PROJECT SITE



LSA



- GATES
- CHAINLINK FENCE
- WOOD FENCE
- PARK BOUNDARY
- EASEMENTS
- BUILDING FOOTPRINTS
- MARTIAL COTTLE PARK STUDY AREA

FIGURE I-2

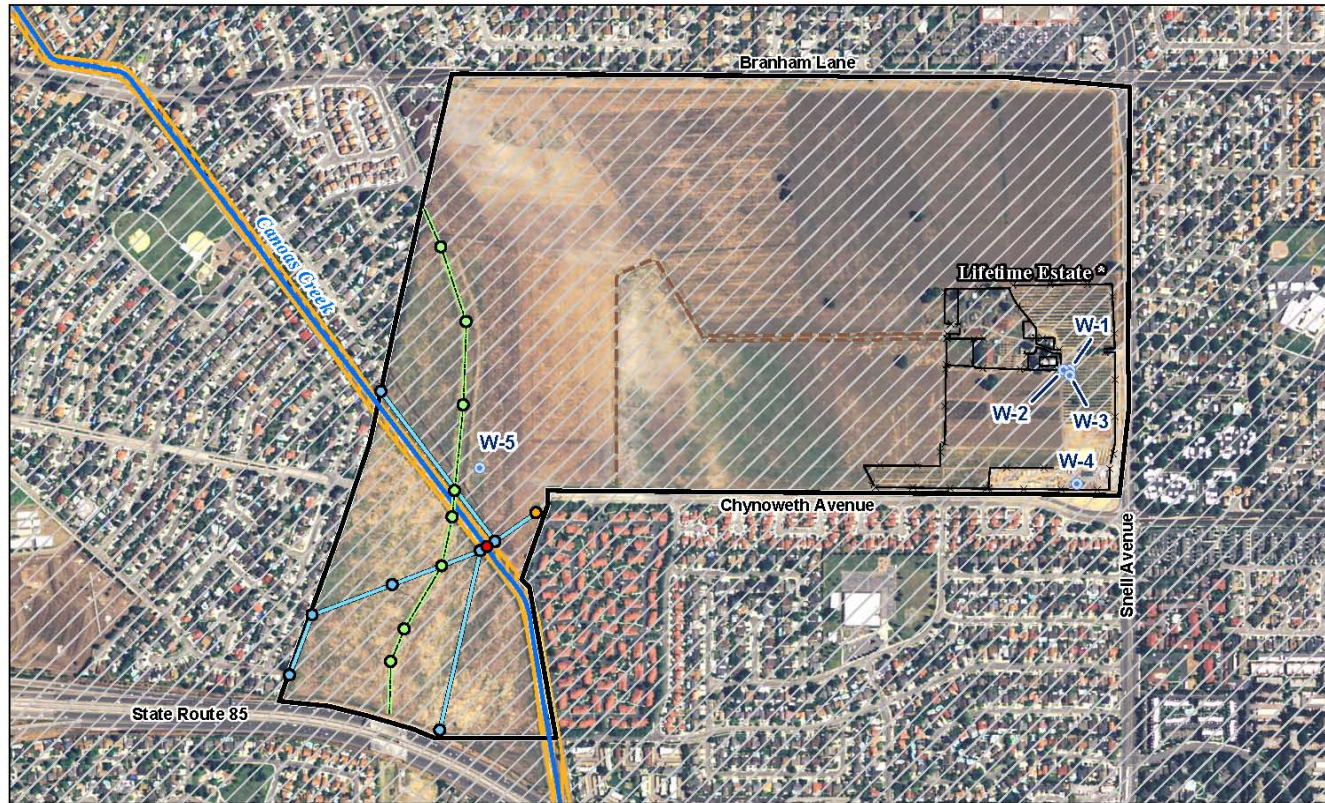
Martial Cottle Park Project
Resource Inventory

Project Site

SOURCE: Aerial Imagery from the United States Department of Agriculture-NAIP (2005) and Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department
I:\WRT0601\GIS\Map\Resource Inventory\Figure I-2_Project Site.mxd (09/27/2007)

* Not part of Study Area

MAP 3 HYDROLOGICAL FEATURES



LSA



0 400 800
FEET

- WELLS
- PUMPHOUSE
- BRIDGE
- SEWER MANHOLE
- WATER SYSTEM
- ~ CANOAS CREEK
- CHAINLINK FENCE
- SEWER LINE
- WATER LINE
- WOOD FENCE
- PARK BOUNDARY
- ▨ FEMA ZONE A:
AN AREA INUNDATED BY 100-YEAR FLOODING
(CONTAINED WITHIN CANOAS CREEK)
- ▩ FEMA ZONE D:
AN AREA OF UNDETERMINED BUT POSSIBLE FLOOD HAZARDS

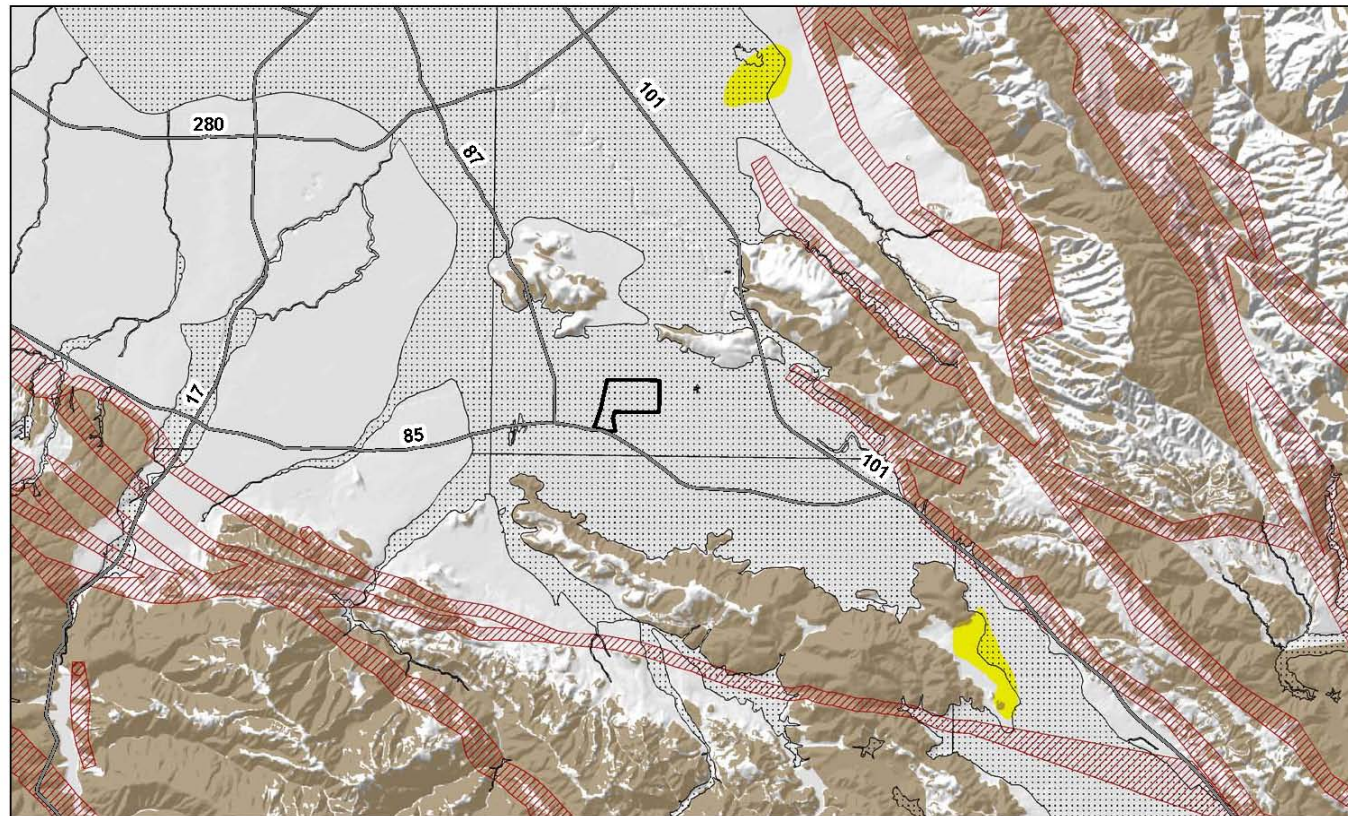
⊙ Not part of Study Area

FIGURE II-1

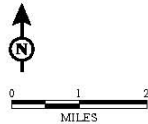
Martial Cottle Park Project
Resource Inventory
Hydrological Features

SOURCE: Aerial Imagery from the United States Department of Agriculture-NAIP (2003),
Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department and Santa Clara Valley Water District,
H:\WR\0601\GIS\Map\Resource Inventory\FigureII-1_HydrologicalFeatures.mxd (09/27/2007)

MAP 4 GEOLOGIC HAZARDS



LSA



SOURCE: United States Geological Survey and Santa Clara County Planning Office
 I:\WRT0601\GIS\Maps\Resource Inventory\Figure II-3_Geologic Hazards.mxd (09/27/2007)

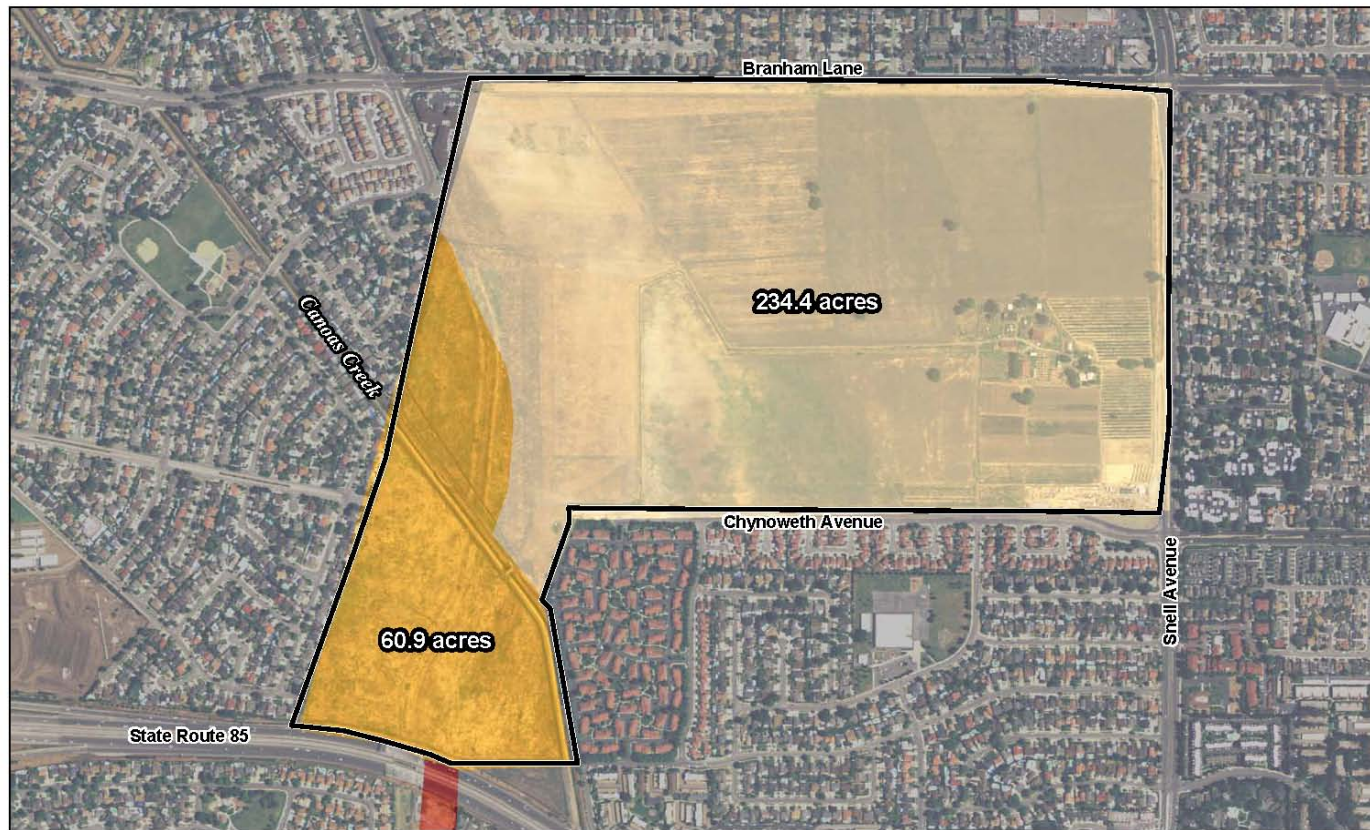
- PARK BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROADS
- LIQUEFACTION HAZARD ZONE
- SLIDING HAZARD ZONE
- FAULTING HAZARD ZONE
- COMPRESSIBLE SOIL HAZARD ZONE

FIGURE II-3

*Martial Cottle Park Project
 Resource Inventory*

Geologic Hazards

MAP 5 PRIME FARMLAND



LSA



0 400 800
FEET

□ PARK BOUNDARY

PRIME FARMLAND

FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE

URBAN AND BUILT UP LAND

OTHER LAND

FIGURE II-4

Martial Cottle Park Project
Resource Inventory

Prime Farmland

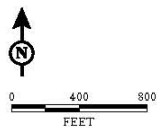
SOURCE: Aerial Imagery from the United States Department of Agriculture, NAIP (2005) and State of California Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, FMMP (2004)
I:\WRT0601\GIS\Map\Resource Inventory\Figure II-4_PrimeFarmland.mxd (09/27/2007)

MAP 6 PARK HABITAT



FIGURE III-1

LSA



- VALLEY OAK TREES
- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- CANOAS CREEK

Martial Cottle Park Project
Resource Inventory
Park Habitat

Not part of Study Area

SOURCE: Aerial Imagery from the United States Department of Agriculture-NAIP (2005)
I:\WRT0601\GIS\Maps\Resource Inventory\FigureIII-1_ParkHabitat.mxd (09/26/2007)

MAP 8 ELEMENTS DETRACTING FROM SCENIC QUALITY



FIGURE V-4b

*Martial Cottle Park Project
Resource Inventory*

Elements Detracting from Scenic Quality



MAP 9

REGIONAL PARKLAND & CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS CLASSIFICATION



Martial Cottle Park: Regional Parkland & California State Parks Classification



