



An Employee-Owned Company

# Sunrise Powerlink Adaptive Weed Control Strategy: A New Approach to Weed Treatment for Linear Projects

Poster by Adrienne Beeson, Tim Buonaccorsi, Robert W. Hobbs, and Marc Doalson  
reconenvironmental.com | facebook.com/RECONenvironmental  
twitter.com/RECONenv | linkedin.com/company/recon-environmental-inc.

## INTRODUCTION

The non-native species targeted for control by the Weed Control Plan within the confines of the 200-foot-wide right-of-way (ROW) are not practical due to their extensive coverage in adjacent lands. Long-term treatment using this method would be futile, as reinfestation is likely to occur once management actions cease.



Previously approved weed control area for treatment within 200-foot-wide transmission line ROW

To alleviate this issue, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), in consultation with RECON Environmental, developed an Adaptive Weed Control Strategy (AWCS) for the Sunrise Powerlink Energy Project that takes a holistic watershed approach by focusing on enhancement of large, biologically significant parcels of land as opposed to traditional weed control specifically within the powerline ROW. The AWCS is intended to be a dynamic document which allows the project proponent in conjunction with state, federal, and local jurisdictions to utilize resources slated for non-effective weed control in a manner that benefits not only the natural environment but assists stakeholders in meeting long-term natural resource goals.

## THE ADAPTIVE APPROACH

The AWCS serves as a mechanism for reallocation of financial resources to meet weed control objectives in areas that may be outside of the ROW but are significant to project stakeholders. The treatment areas proposed by the AWCS target the limits of entire populations of weed species within large contiguous parcels. Complete suppression of local noxious and invasive weed species populations provides a greater ecological and wildfire prevention benefit to the region compared to treatment of weeds within the confines of the ROW. AWCS treatment areas were determined using the following six key variables:

1. Species categorized by the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) as High or Moderate
2. Presence of sensitive biological resources
3. Presence of wildfire promoting promoting non-native species in high risk-burn areas
4. Relative distance to residential/populated locations
5. Association with project structures/impact areas
6. Connectivity to undisturbed lands

## BENEFITS

For the 50-year duration of the Sunrise Powerlink project, SDG&E, land managers, and all other applicable stakeholders will have a flexible program and allocated funding to target critical weed issues from the standpoint of need and not prescription.

- Successfully suppress entire populations of weed species, stop future encroachment of other invasive species, and reduce the biomass load in high burn areas
- Watershed approach to weed control so the source of problem species is treated first
- Betterment of native flora and fauna by implementing habitat restoration
- Reconnecting disturbed areas with adjacent native habitat
- Quick response to unanticipated impacts (e.g. fire impact areas)
- Creation/enhancement of habitat for sensitive wildlife species
- Targeted control and/or eradication of Cal-IPC High/Moderate species
- Rapidly respond to discovery of Cal-IPC High populations encountered during monitoring

