

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	84-AFC-06C
Project Title:	Compliance - Application for Certification of Sycamore Cogeneration Project
TN #:	214811
Document Title:	Commission Order (90-0117-08a) Approving Purchase of Habitat By Nature Conservancy November 16, 1988
Description:	November 16, 1988 - Order Approving Purchase of Kit Fox Habitat By The California Nature Conservancy
Filer:	Raquel Rodriguez
Organization:	California Energy Commission
Submitter Role:	Commission Staff
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Docketed Date:	12/15/2016

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE ENERGY RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of:)	DOCKET NO. 84-AFC-6C
)	
THE SYCAMORE COGENERATION)	ORDER APPROVING PURCHASE
PROJECT)	OF KIT FOX HABITAT BY
)	THE CALIFORNIA NATURE
)	CONSERVANCY

Based on the record of this proceeding and the comments presented at the hearing on January 17, 1990, the Commission finds the following:

1. Pursuant to the Commission Final Decision in this matter and Biological Resources Condition 5 of that Decision, the Commission must approve all proposals to purchase habitat using monies from the Sycamore-San Joaquin Kit Fox Preserve Fund. Condition 5 provides that the fund be used "for the purchase of suitable acreage for kit fox habitat preservation and to cover related administrative, site improvement and site protection costs."

2. The California Nature Conservancy, a non-profit tax exempt conservation organization that acquires and manages habitat of rare and endangered species, has proposed two additional parcels as nature preserve locations in the Semitropic Ridge area of Kern County for acquisition approval. The Nature Conservancy, in a proposal dated November 16, 1989 has proposed parcels totalling 264.84 acres at a total purchase price of \$80,954. The proposal also requires \$24,248 for land management and habitat enhancement,

*No
Ref*

and \$8,100 for administrative overhead. The total requested from the fund is \$113,340.

3. The biology committee, created by the Commission Decision in this matter to advise the Commission on the acceptability of parcels, has recommended approval of this proposal. The biology committee agrees that these parcels meet the criteria of the Commission Decision and that these parcels will help to preserve and protect the kit fox.

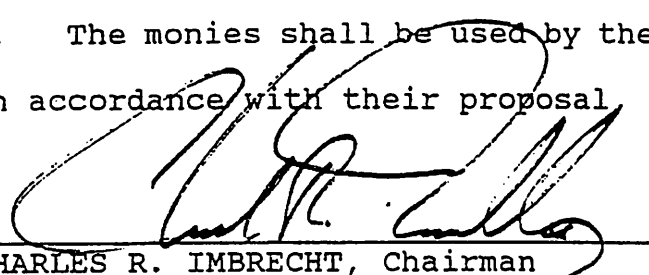
Therefore, the Commission hereby orders the following:

A. The proposal from the California Nature Conservancy dated November 16, 1989, attached hereto as Exhibit A, for the purchase of 264.84 acres at a price of \$80,954 is hereby approved.

B. The land management and habitat enhancement costs in the amount of \$24,248 is hereby approved.

C. The administrative overhead costs of \$8,100 is hereby approved.

D. The monies shall be used by the California Nature Conservancy in accordance with their proposal, Exhibit A attached.



CHARLES R. IMBRECHT, Chairman

DATED: January 17, 1990

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
SYCAMORE KIT FOX HABITAT PRESERVATION PROGRAM

LAND ACQUISITION PROPOSAL

from

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

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November 16, 1989

SUMMARY

In this proposal The Nature Conservancy presents to the California Energy Commission (CEC) the fifth set of nature preserve locations for acquisition approval under the Sycamore Kit Fox Habitat Preservation Program. If these sites meet the appropriate biological criteria, and acquisition funds are awarded to The Nature Conservancy, they will be purchased by The Nature Conservancy and managed as a kit fox habitat preserve. These sites comprise 264.84 acres at a total purchase price of \$80,954, for an average of \$306 per acre.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

The Nature Conservancy is a nationwide non-profit tax exempt conservation organization that acquires and manages habitat for rare and endangered species. The Conservancy owns and manages over 1000 preserves across the country and over 35 in California. Our San Joaquin Valley Project Office, opened in late 1987 and staffed by a full-time field representative, has as its primary objective the acquisition of San Joaquin Valley natural lands in cooperation with state, federal and local agencies working on habitat compensation plans.

In the Semitropic Ridge area of Kern County, in California's San Joaquin Valley, the Conservancy is acting to help implement the California Energy Commission's Sycamore-San Joaquin Kit Fox Preserves program. We have already established a core of key preserve lands in the area, called our Paul Paine Preserve system, to which this new site will be added. Previous Conservancy grant requests have earmarked 952 acres for acquisition.

The San Joaquin Valley Project Office will be working closely with the CEC to provide all necessary information concerning proposed preserve locations, ownership purchase options and contracts, appraisals, title insurance reports and purchase packages for approval by CEC.

PURCHASE AGREEMENTS AVAILABLE AS OF NOVEMBER, 1989

Included with this proposal on Page 5 is a legal description of the two sites currently available for Conservancy acquisition. Also attached is an area locator map (Appendix 1), two assessor's parcel maps (Appendices 2a and 2b) and a topographic map (Appendix 3) showing the location of the sites on the Semitropic Ridge, along with the location of existing Nature Conservancy ownerships.

The Conservancy normally provides an appraisal of subject properties, but because of recent CEC-funded acquisitions in this immediate area and the appraisals associated with those lands, an additional appraisal is not considered necessary in this case. Two parcels previously acquired by TNC with CEC funds (i.e., Santa Fe #2 and Del Oro) are located immediately contiguous with the subject parcels. Both have extremely similar habitat values and surface characteristics with the subject properties. Both were valued at \$300 per acre. Since the subject properties' proposed purchase price is an average of \$306 per acre, the Conservancy feels very confident that this is an accurate estimate of their current fair market value.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Two parcels are currently available for acquisition: the 106.66 acre "Hardy, et. al." parcel in Section 25 and the 158.18 acre "Santa Fe" parcel in Section 31. Both sites are located in the southeastern portion of the Paine Preserve and are comprised of undisturbed native habitat. Topographically, the sites are rough level, with numerous higher mounds, open flat areas, and lower alkali zones. Elevation ranges from 230-240 feet.

The Hardy parcel is situated immediately south of the previously acquired Santa Fe #2 parcel in Section 25. It is characterized by an open mix of valley grassland and valley saltbush scrub habitats, with scattered, small alkali playas. This site also has several low sandy ridges. The only disturbance on the site are narrow dirt roads on both east and west boundaries along the section lines, while a service road paralleling an underground oil pipeline cuts diagonally across from NE to SW.

Numerous mammal, small rodent, and lizard dens abound on the site, providing good population levels for several endangered species, including the San Joaquin kit fox, kangaroo rat and blunt-nosed leopard lizard.

Of particular botanical interest is the presence of several species of wildflowers not commonly found elsewhere in the Semitropic Ridge. Their appearance here is attributed to the higher sandy ridges, where the well-drained soils provide a suitable substrate for these colorful plants. Conservancy staff and volunteers have noted these plants on several occasions. Typical species include the Thistle Sage, Salvia carduacea, and chia, Salvia Columbariae.

The Santa Fe parcel is located just over 1/2 mile to the SE from the Hardy parcel. It also has an open mix of grasslands, saltbush scrub and alkali playas. This site is especially good for the San Joaquin kit fox. Many den sites occur here indicating a high density of utilization. Numerous signs of this nocturnal predator were found, along with abundant rodent and lizard activity. This locale also contains 2 larger alkali playas. Narrow dirt roads encircle this parcel on four sides.

STEWARDSHIP/ENHANCEMENT PLAN

In a previous Conservancy funding proposal to CEC dated October 13, 1988, we developed a detailed Stewardship and Enhancement Plan for CEC-funded parcels in the Semitropic Ridge area. This document represented the Conservancy's goals and objectives for the active management of these specified kit fox habitat areas. Since the subject parcels of this proposal are located immediately contiguous with several of those parcels, The Nature Conservancy proposes to apply that Stewardship and Enhancement Plan directly to these new properties. The same management methods, techniques, timetables and cost estimates will apply to these 264.84 acres. Conservancy stewardship staff will begin implementation as soon after purchase as possible.

GRANT REQUEST

The following grant request is based upon the California Energy Commission's Sycamore Co-Generation Project AFC decision (Biological Resources No. 5, p. 124). That finding provided that an account be established which will be used "as a fund for the purchase of suitable acreage for kit fox habitat preservation and to cover related administrative, site improvement and site protection costs."

Accordingly, based on your May 7, 1987 contract specifications and The Nature Conservancy's specification of services available, dated May 5, 1987, the following services are hereby offered:

1. Fee title acquisition of the parcels indicated in this proposal in the amount of \$80,954.
2. Land management and habitat enhancement of the acquired preserves for the first 2 years after acquisition in the amount of \$24,248 (at 30% of the total acquisition cost of \$80,954). This amount will be placed in a separate land management account drawn against solely for direct expenses

- at the Semitropic Ridge/Paine Preserve sites.
3. 10% administrative overhead at \$8,100. These funds will be placed in a Nature Conservancy operations account to reimburse the direct expenses related to the proposed acquisition. Approved expenses will include surveys, telephone, document preparation, legal expenses, title insurance, postage, and personnel, office and travel expenses directly chargeable to the acquisition and management of the CEC parcel.

Nature Conservancy expenses and accounting will remain available to CEC and its representatives for future inspection and verification.

The total grant request is thus calculated as follows:

\$ 80,954	Land Acquisition
24,248	Stewardship
8,100	Administration

\$113,340	TOTAL

The Nature Conservancy will be closing escrow on these parcels by the end of 1989. Grant funds from CEC are requested at this time in order for the Conservancy to meet its financial obligations on these key habitat areas.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the above, The Nature Conservancy requests a grant from the California Energy Commission for acquisition, management and administration of kit fox preserve habitat in the San Joaquin Valley's Semitropic Ridge in the total amount of \$113,340.

SEMITROPIC RIDGE KIT FOX PRESERVE

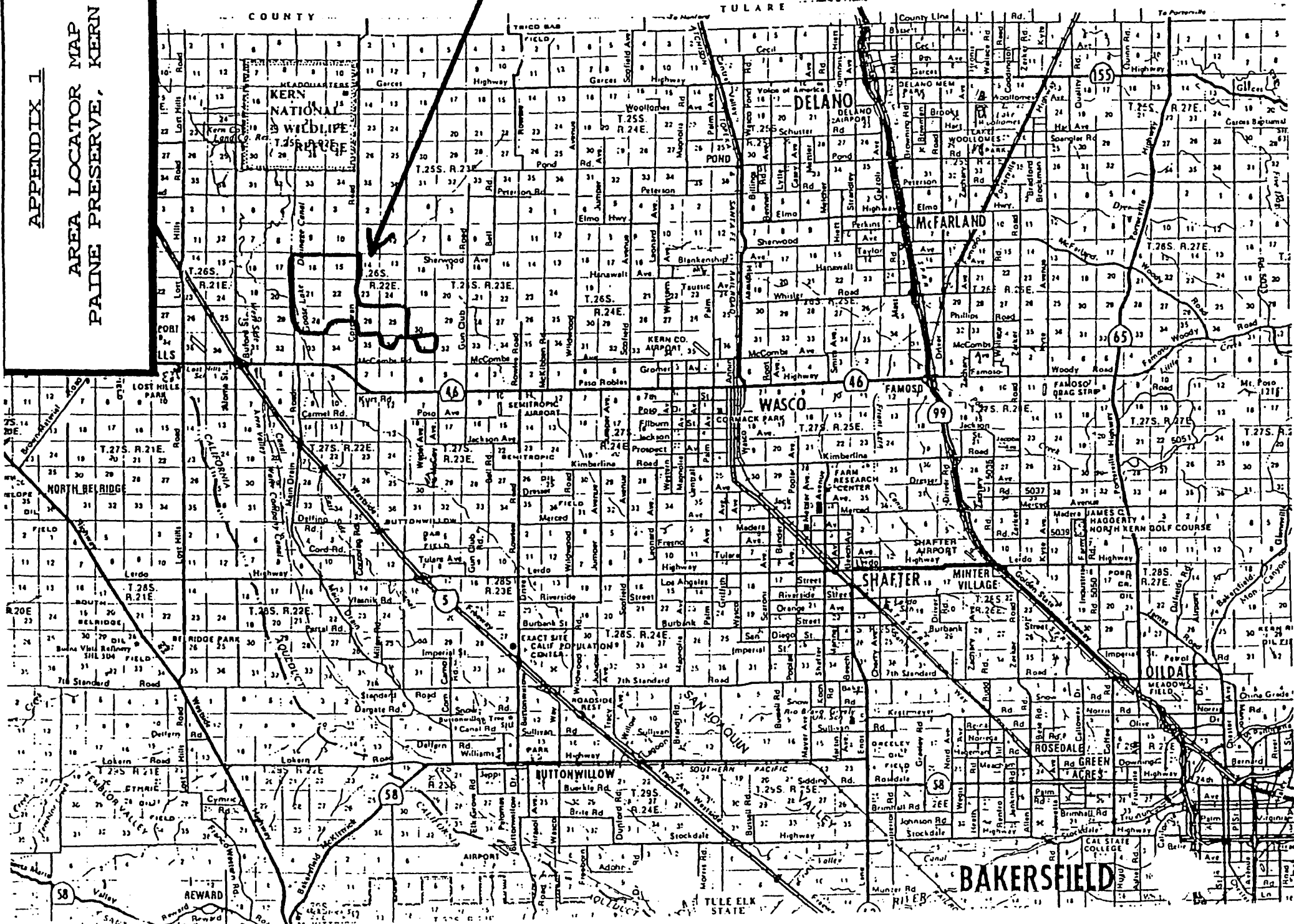
NATURE CONSERVANCY PURCHASE AGREEMENTS, NOVEMBER, 1989

	<u>TRACT</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>PRICE PER ACRE</u>
A)	HARDY, ET AL SECTION 25 T26S, R22E N 1/3 OF S/2 APN: 058-291-28	106.66	\$33,500	\$315
B)	SANTA FE #3 SECTION 31 T26S, R23E NE/4 APN: 059-160-24	158.18	47,454	\$300
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	TOTALS	264.84	\$80,954	\$306

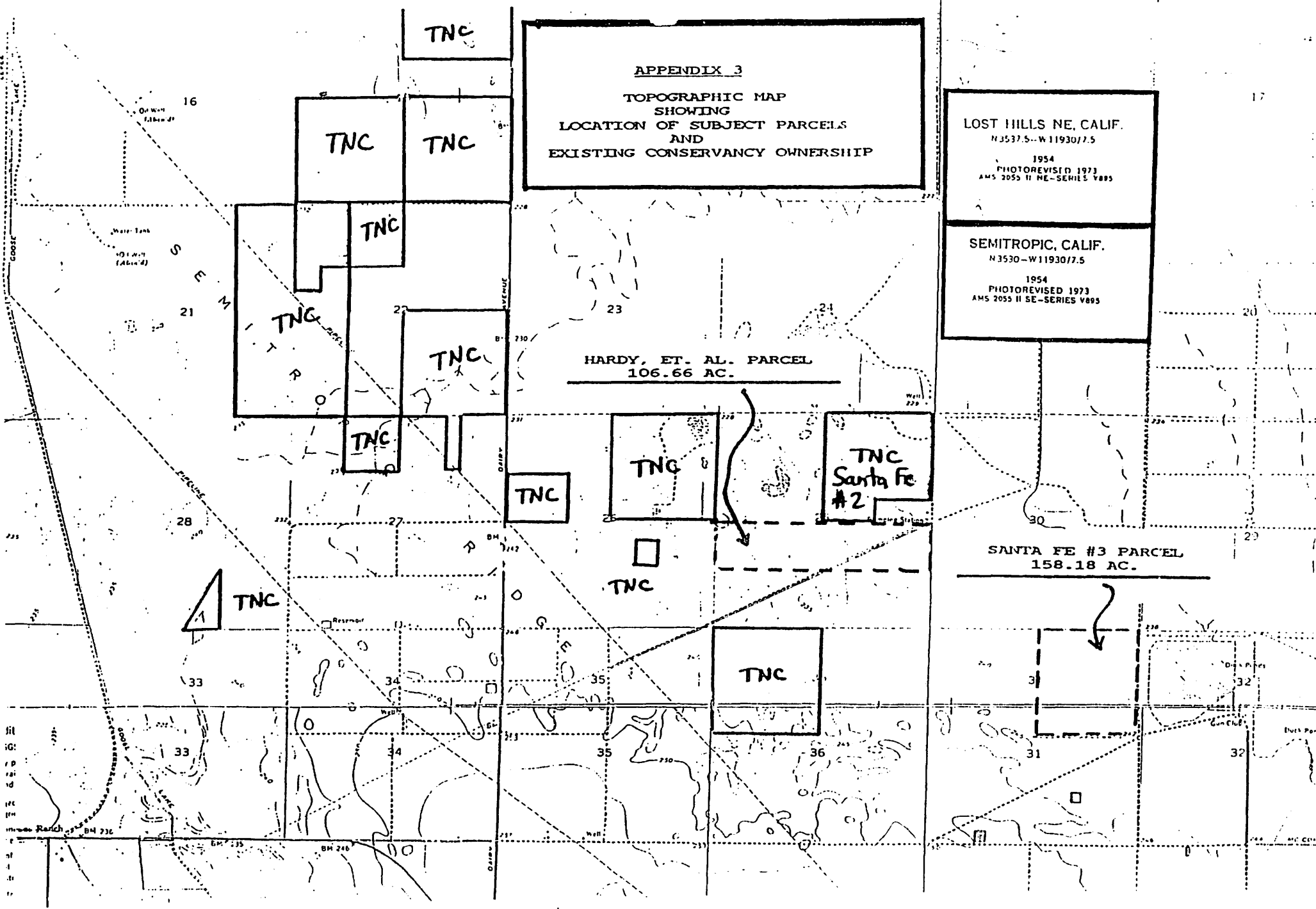
APPENDIX 1

AREA LOCATOR MAP
PAINE PRESERVE, KERN COUNTY

PAINE PRESERVE, KERN COUNTY



BAKERSFIELD



APPENDIX 3
TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
SHOWING
LOCATION OF SUBJECT PARCELS
AND
EXISTING CONSERVANCY OWNERSHIP

LOST HILLS NE, CALIF.
 N3537.5--W11930/7.5
 1954
 PHOTOREVISED 1973
 AMS 2055 II NE--SERIES V895

SEMITROPIC, CALIF.
 N3530--W11930/7.5
 1954
 PHOTOREVISED 1973
 AMS 2055 II SE--SERIES V895

HARDY, ET. AL. PARCEL
106.66 AC.

TNC
Santa Fe
#2

SANTA FE #3 PARCEL
158.18 AC.