# Stanford University
# Special Conservation Area Plan

Final
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# 1. Background

### 2000 General Use Permit

Condition K.7 of the 2000 General Use Permit (GUP) requires "Within 12 months of approval of the General Use Permit, Stanford shall submit to the County Planning Office for approval a Special Conservation Plan, in accordance with the requirements of the Community Plan." Stanford submitted a draft "Special Conservation Plan" in December 2001, fulfilling Condition K.7. At approximately the same time, Stanford began preparation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to address federally protected species on its lands. Stanford and Santa Clara County staff realized that the geographic area and conservation goals of the Special Conservation Areas and the HCP overlapped. In order to achieve consistency between these plans, it was decided that County staff and Stanford would work on the "Special Conservation Area Plan" after completion of the HCP. The status of the HCP is provided below.

### Stanford Community Plan

The "Special Conservation Areas" (SCA) designation is for specific areas of high environmental sensitivity and natural resource constraints on the lands south of Junipero Serra Boulevard, outside of the Academic Growth Boundary (see **Figure 1**). This designation requires that no "physical" development, other than that which supports conservation efforts, may occur in these areas – plus maintenance of existing utilities and roads.

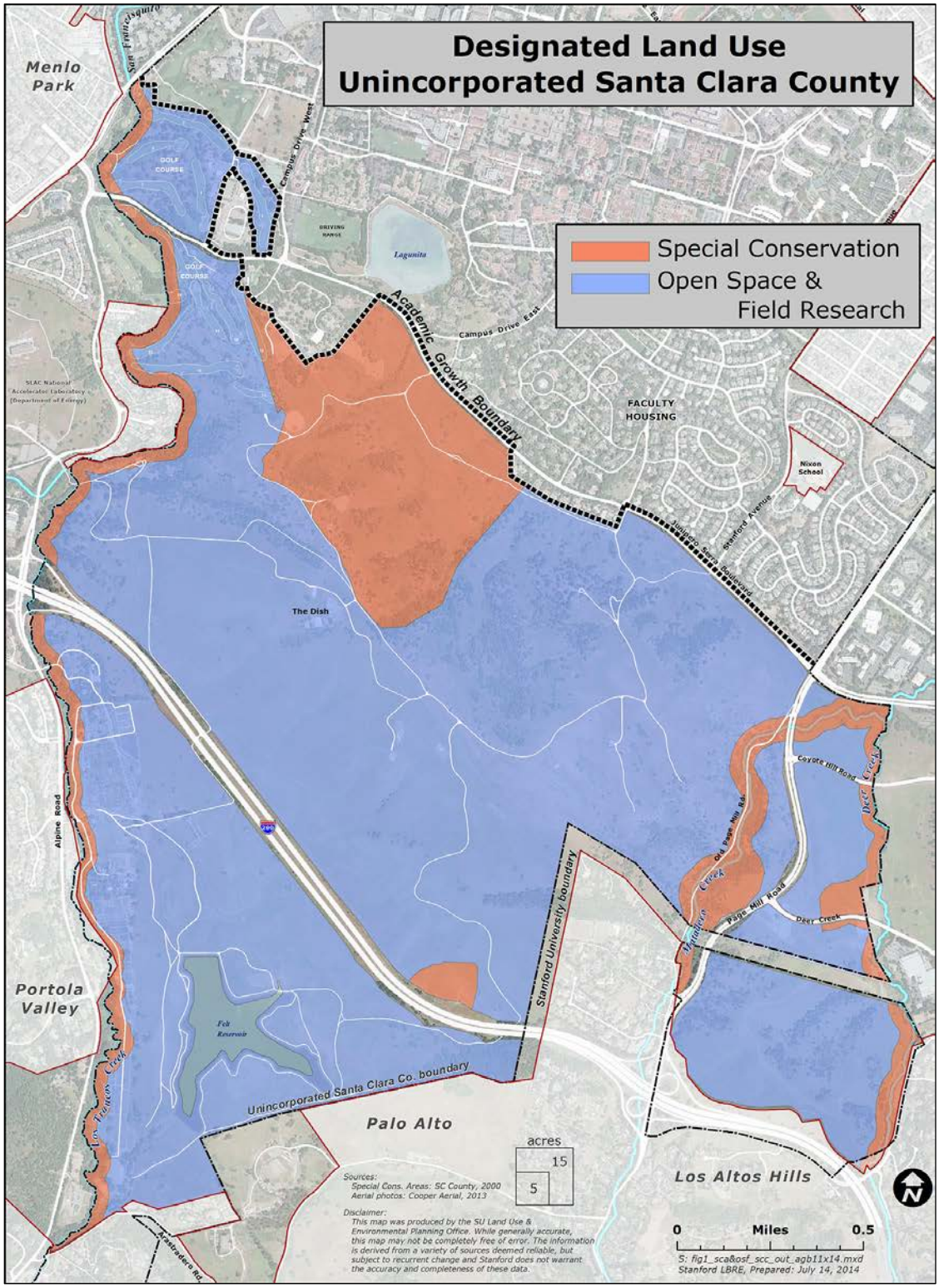
The Community Plan (***Land Use Policy SCP-LU 30***, Page 36) identified the following environmental and resource constraints for the SCAs:

- Steep or unstable slopes.
- Seismic or other geologic hazard zones;
- Riparian areas extending 150 feet from the top of creek banks; and
- Sensitive habitat areas, particularly for special status species.

The Community Plan (***Land Use Policy SCP-LU 33***, Page 36) requires a "Special Conservation Plan" to provide management guidelines to address the following goals:

- Habitat management within the area for 25 years;
- Control of invasive, non-native species;
- Control of erosion;
- Avoidance of undisturbed areas;
- Public safety;
- Appropriate access; and
- Minimization of human-caused impacts.

**Figure 1: Special Conservation Areas**



SCP-LU 33 further states: "The plan will contain measures specific to California tiger salamander, red-legged frog, and steelhead habitat; riparian habitat; and geologic and seismic hazard areas. The plan will consider such activities as resource conservation, construction of facilities to support conservation activities, access, vegetation management, and best management practices for Stanford lessees located in the Special Conservation Areas."

For the purposes of this plan, separate guidelines have been developed for the "resources" portions of the SCA designation (i.e., riparian areas and other sensitive habitat areas), and the "hazard" portions (i.e., seismic, geologic hazard zones, steep or unstable slopes).

**Habitat Conservation Plan**

Stanford's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was developed to comply with the federal Endangered Species Act. The HCP protects habitat important to the Covered Species through avoidance and management measures.

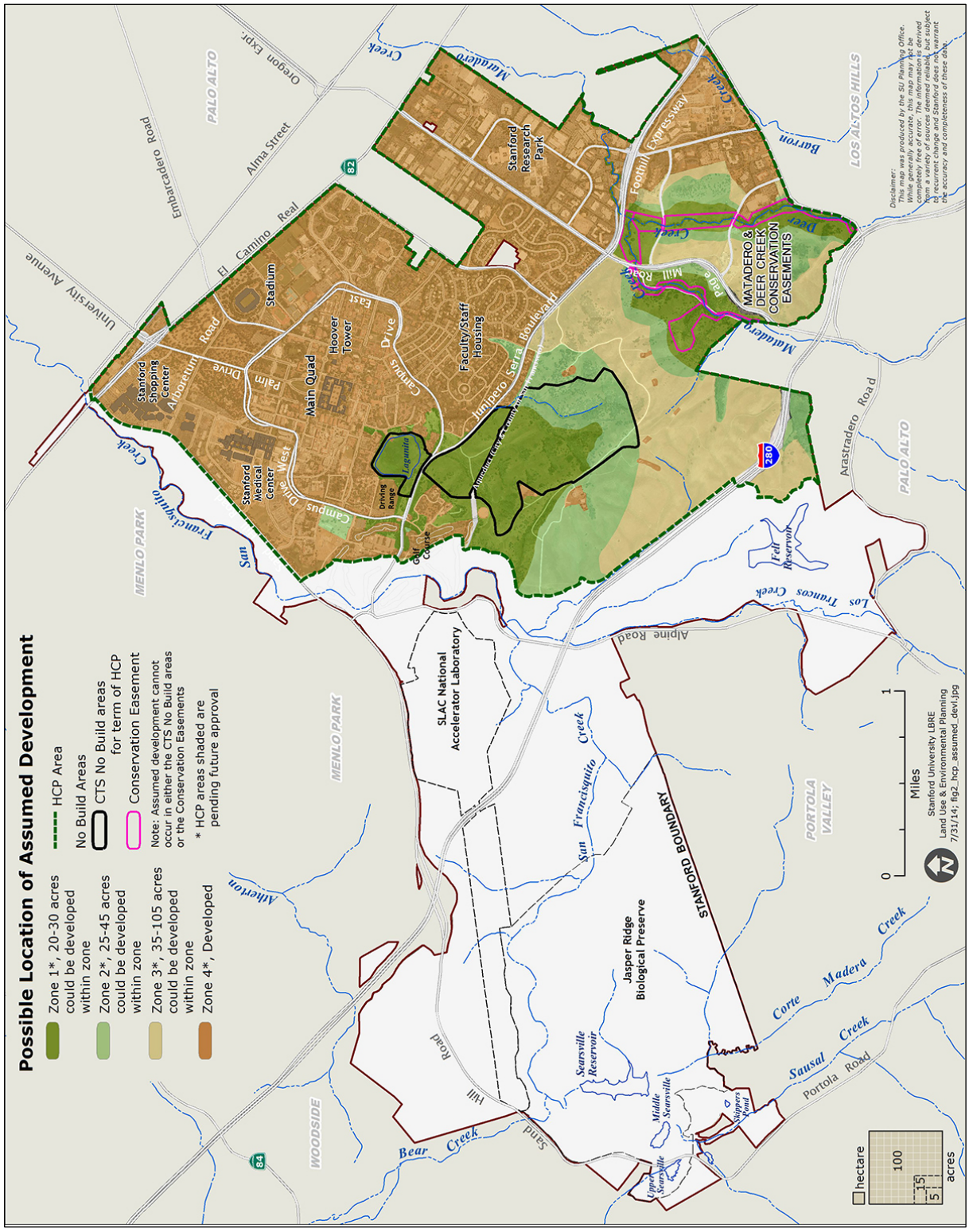
The HCP and its Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were published on November 23, 2012. The HCP was revised in March 2013 to exclude the Los Trancos/San Francisquito creeks and riparian area. On August 13, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approved the HCP, which covers the habitat for the California tiger salamander and the riparian areas of Matadero and Deer creeks (**Figure 2**). The HCP is effective for 50 years from the date of approval.

**Archaeological Resources**

Some portions of the SCAs also contain cultural resources, especially along the creeks. These resources are protected by Conditions O.1 through O.4 of the 2000 General Use Permit Conditions of Approval (Pages 30-32), as well as the following Federal and State laws and statutes:

- The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended;
- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969;
- The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended, and California Public Resources Code §21000 et seq.;
- California Public Resources Code §5079, Preservation of Significant Archaeological Resource Areas and Associated Artifacts;
- California Public Resources Code §5097, Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites; and
- California Health and Safety Code §7050.5, §7051, §7052, and §7054(c), related to Archaeological Human Remains.

**Figure 2: Habitat Conservation Plan – Management Zones**



## 2. Special Conservation Area Plan Guidelines

### Resource areas and hazard areas

As identified in Land Use Policy SCP-LU 30, the "Special Conservation Area" (SCA) designation in the Community Plan carries two types of concerns – resource areas and hazard areas. This Plan presents different management guidelines to address each of these types of concerns.

The SCA resource and hazard "subareas" are shown in **Figure 3**.

### Resource-based Guidelines

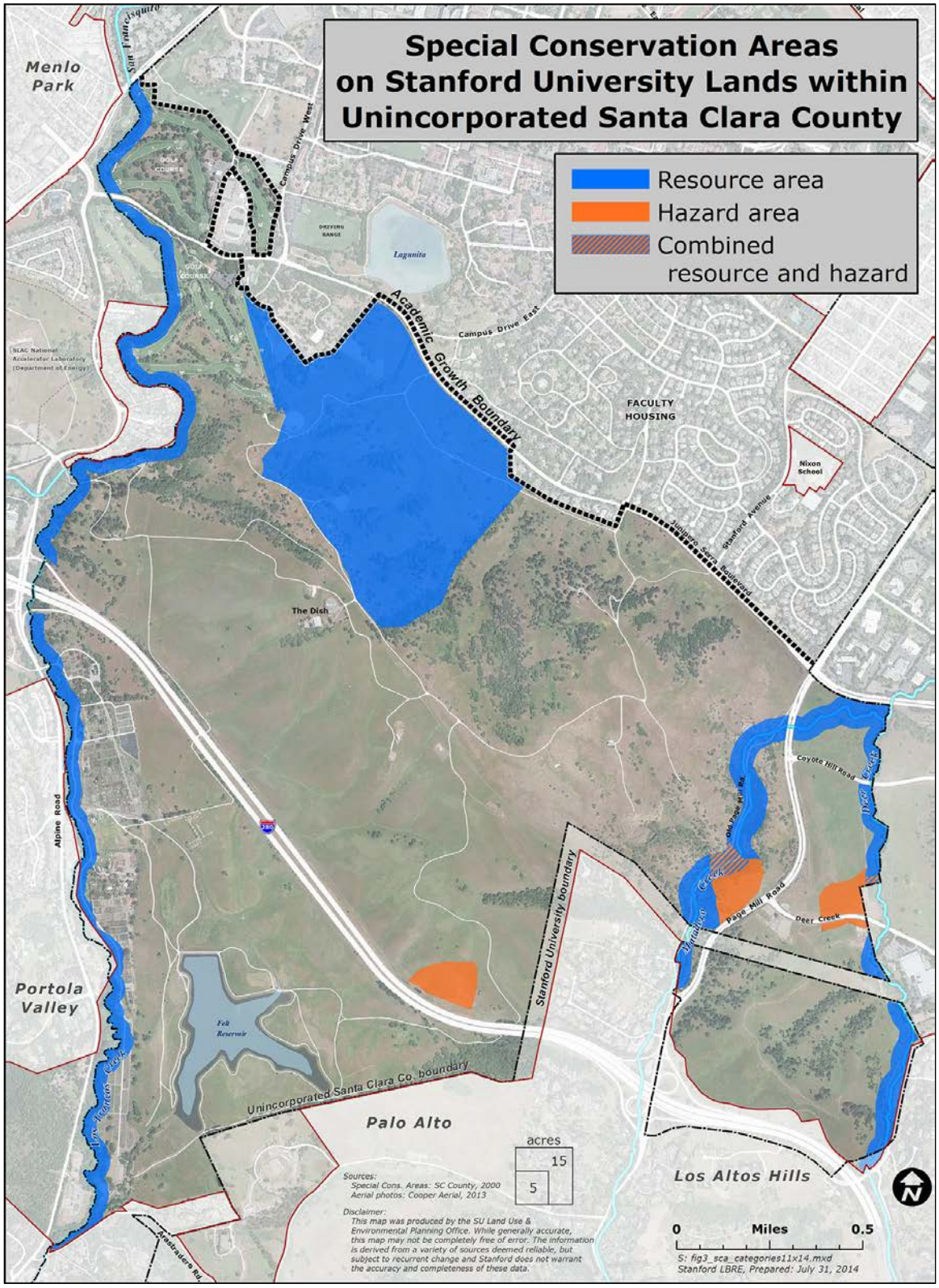
The HCP contains effective measures specific to the California tiger salamander and the California red-legged frog; as well as the riparian zone along Matadero and Deer creeks. Within the areas included in the HCP, the HCP fulfills the following functions of the Special Conservation Area Plan:

- habitat management within the area for 25 years (HCP duration is a minimum of 50 years, with management of easement areas being permanent);
- control of invasive, non-native species;
- control of erosion;
- avoidance of undisturbed areas;
- appropriate access; and
- minimization of human-caused impacts.

The HCP identified the existing habitats of the Covered Species on Stanford lands. In order to maintain and enhance these habitats to benefit the Covered Species, the HCP classified the lands outside of the Academic Growth Boundary into four Management Zones described below, according to their quality of habitat provided in each zone, with corresponding measures to minimize the potentially adverse effects of human-caused impacts and development (Pages 4-1 to 4-2).

- Zone 1: These areas support one or more of the Covered Species or provide critical resources for a Covered Species.
- Zone 2: These areas are occasionally occupied by a Covered Species and provide some of the resources used by the Covered Species.
- Zone 3: These areas are generally undeveloped open space lands that have some biological value, but provide only limited and indirect benefit to the Covered Species.
- Zone 4: These are lands that do not support or cannot sustain the Covered Species, including urbanized areas or areas completed surrounded by urban development, or are otherwise isolated from areas that support a Covered Species, or small but highly developed facilities located within other Zones.

**Figure 3: Special Conservation Areas and Categories**



***Section 4.2 of the HCP document*** (Pages 4-2 to 4-16) describes the measures to minimize the potentially adverse effects of Covered Activities, which include:

- Management and maintenance of Lagunita Reservoir;
- Creek maintenance activities;
- Field academic activities;
- Utility installation and maintenance;
- Addition and maintenance of general infrastructure;
- Maintenance of recreational and athletic facilities;
- Maintenance of grounds and control of vegetation;
- Maintenance of leaseholds with equestrian and grazing activities;
- Maintenance of commercial and institutional leaseholds;
- Future development as permitted; and
- Habitat management, monitoring and enhancement.

The Minimization Measures described in the HCP apply to the Covered Activities when they occur in Zones 1 and 2 of the HCP. Zones 1 and 2 include the Matadero/Deer Creek riparian area and California tiger salamander areas and generally overlap with the SCA designations of these areas[1]. While the San Francisquito/Los Trancos riparian areas of the SCA are not included in the HCP, Stanford will apply the Minimization Measures in the HCP to all "resource" sub-areas within the SCA designation. The Minimization Measures include general creek protection measures to avoid and minimize the effects of creek maintenance activities.

In addition to the Minimization Measures in the HCP, Stanford will implement the following measures to provide protection for steelhead in the San Francisquito/Los Trancos riparian areas of the SCA.

- In order to prevent loss of steelhead, no fishing will be allowed from Stanford lands.

- If water quality conditions detrimental to steelhead or other wildlife are discovered, the Conservation Program Manager will coordinate investigation of the source and feasible measures to reduce the adverse effect.

- Steelhead require cool water and vegetation cover for successful reproduction; Stanford and its tenants will maintain riparian canopy to shade streams.

The HCP also notes that the management of the HCP areas must be dynamic and flexible to adapt to changing conditions, new technologies and experience. Therefore, the HCP identifies adaptive management strategies to reduce uncertainty in resource management, and to achieve the successful conservation of resources over the long term (Pages 4-28 to 4-32).

[1] Small portions of the SCA near the CTS Reserve are located on areas designated as Zone 4 in the HCP because they are developed areas (**Figure 2**). The HCP minimization measures would not apply to these portions of the SCA, which are already developed.

**Hazards Guidelines**

Within the hazards sub-areas, the primary concerns are slope stability and public safety. The specific management guidelines for this area therefore focus on the control of erosion and public safety:

- Any proposed removal of trees in the hazard areas should be reviewed and approved by County staff according to the County's Tree Preservation Ordinance and Condition K.4 of the 2000 GUP. Vegetation trimming and removal should be carefully monitored by the University Biologist in accordance with the management guidelines stated in this Plan, to avoid increasing the risk of landslides.

- Prior to construction of any utilities, roads or other structures or infrastructure within the hazard areas, Stanford will conduct site-specific geotechnical analysis to ensure slope stability both during and after construction.

- All work or maintenance should be scheduled outside the wet season (October 15 to March 15). If any work or maintenance must take place within the wet season, the Conservation Program Manager must be consulted and may assign measures that reduce or avoid the risk of landslides.