

Sweetwater Riding and Hiking Trail Closed due to Environmentally Sensitive Areas

It has been determined that a portion of the riding and hiking trail to the south of Sweetwater Reservoir occurs within an environmentally sensitive area containing vernal pools and associated species that are protected under federal law. Therefore, the portion of the trail subjected to this protection will be temporarily closed. As partners, Sweetwater Authority, the County of San Diego, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are working cooperatively to move in the following direction to reopen the trail with the following priorities:

- a) Process a USFWS incidental take permit that, once approved, will allow the trail to be reopened for an interim period. This interim permit will be subject to the development and implementation of long-term solution.
- b) Identify and permit a long term solution. This will require an analysis of various alternatives, including maintaining the current trail alignment as well as relocation that maintains east-west connectivity.

The time frame to complete item (a) above is approximately four months that includes a public review process. The time frame for (b) is not known at this time, but the County, USFWS, and the Sweetwater Authority are committed to working collaboratively to develop an approach that balances environmental and recreational interests. The Sweetwater Authority and County of San Diego will keep the public apprised of progress on a regularly scheduled basis.

To see a map of the portion of the trail that is impacted, please click [here](#). Signs have been posted to provide notice. Use of the remaining portions of the trail may continue and are not subject to closure at this time.