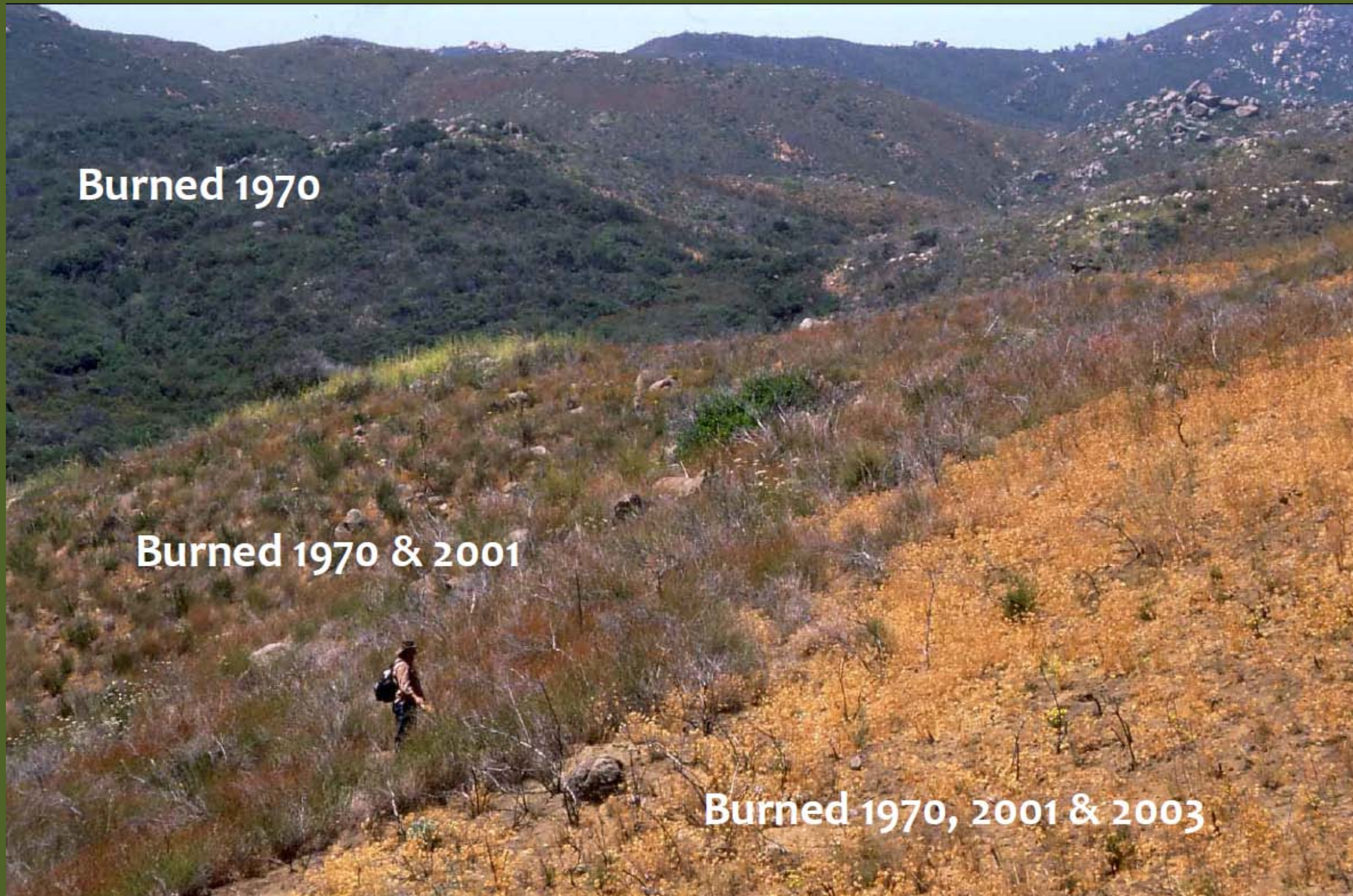
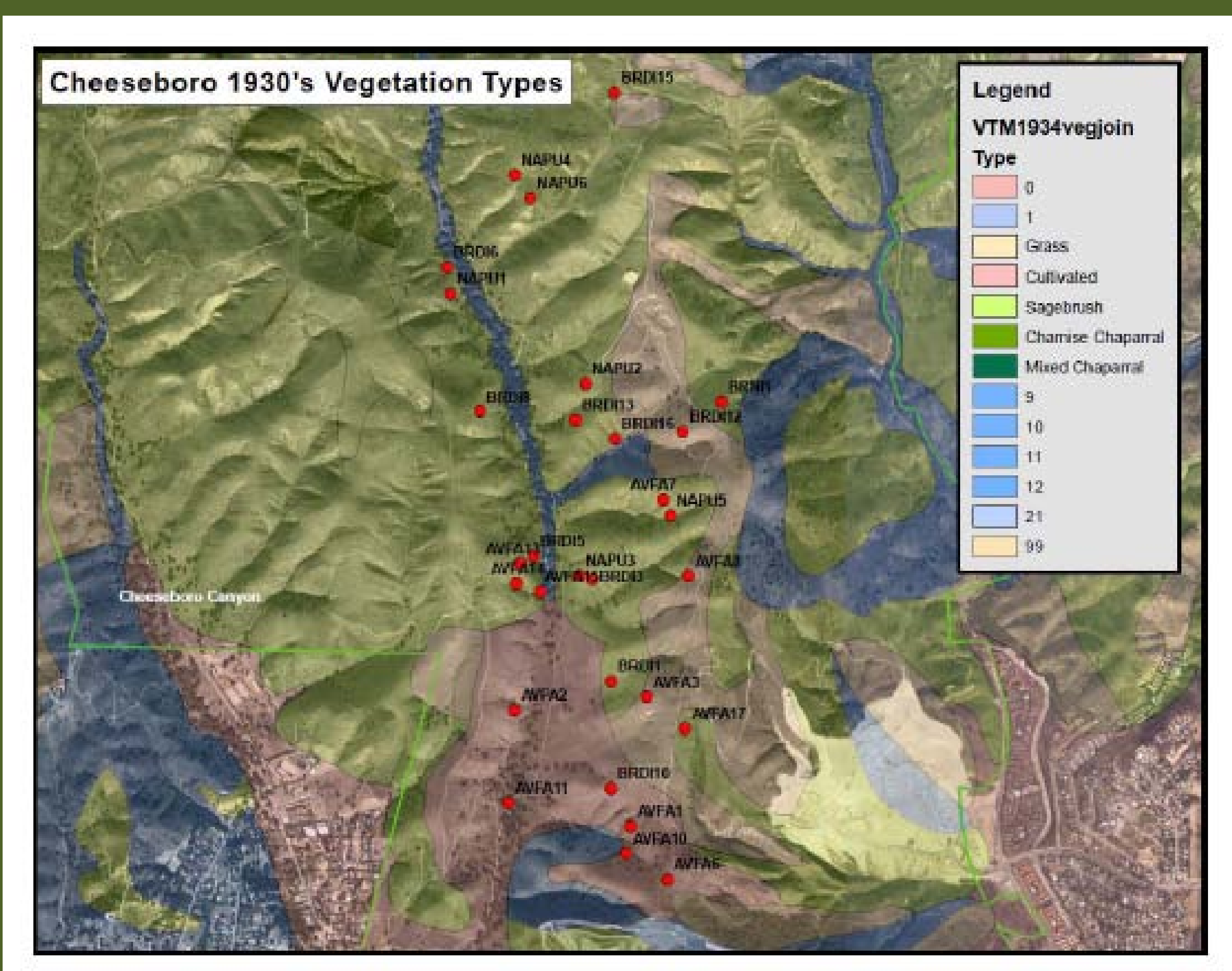
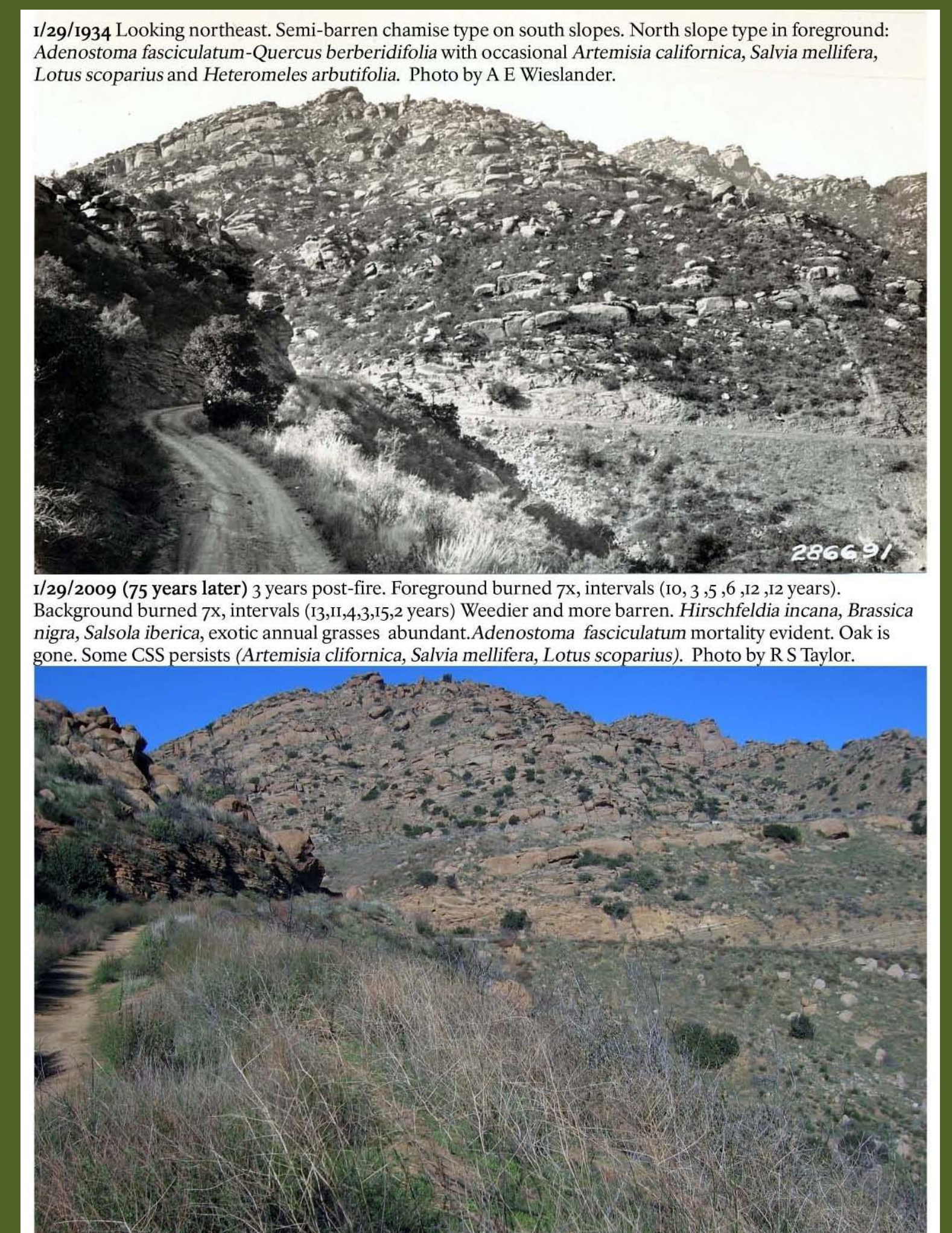
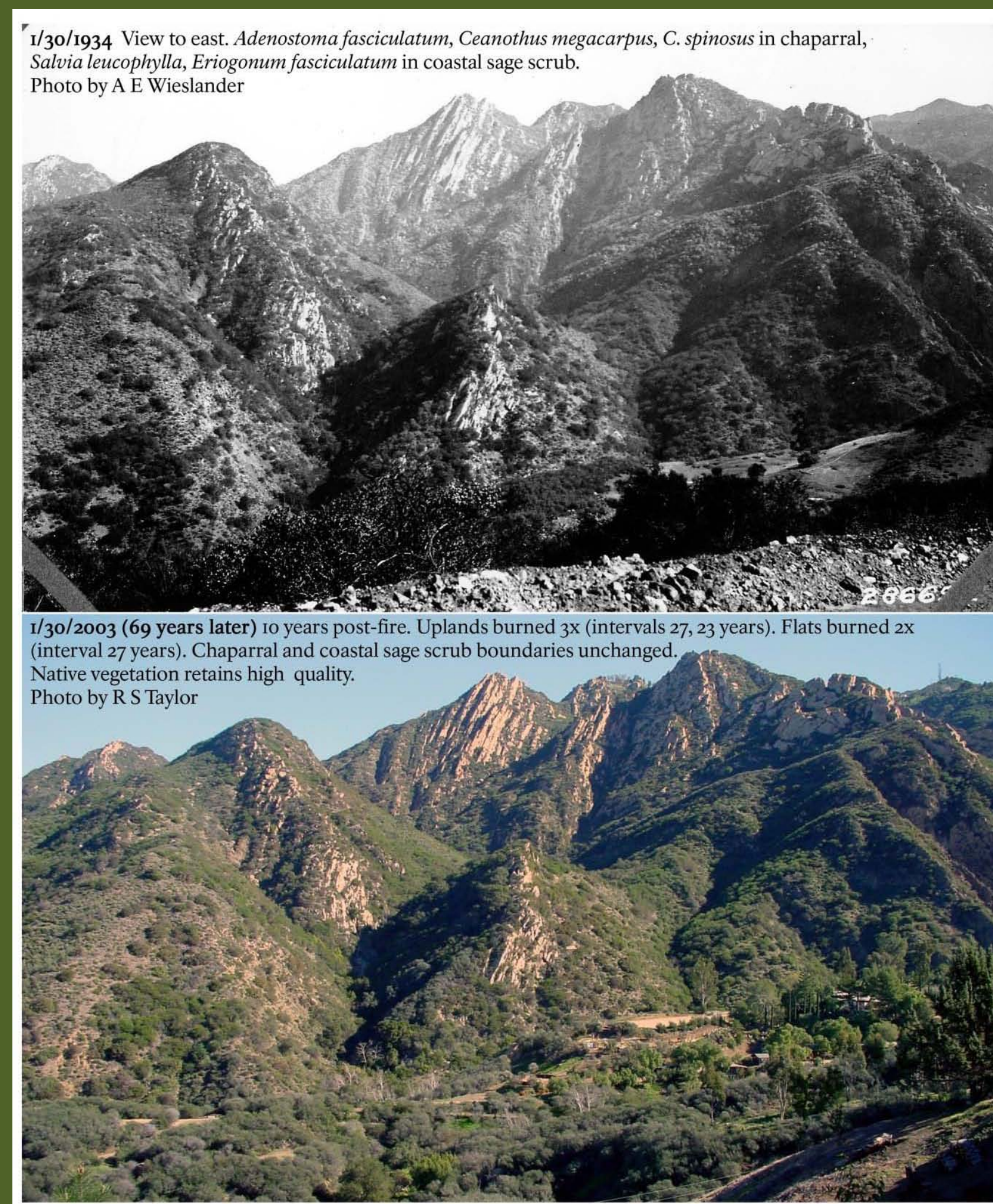


Type Conversion



When fires occur too frequently native shrubs are not able to recover as they do after a single fire. Richard Halsey photographed this location in 2004 to show the vegetation change after three fires in San Diego county: the 1970 Laguna Fire, the 2001 Viejas Fire and the 2003 Cedar Fire. We call the process of change from a native shrubland to a non-native dominated grassland *type conversion*.

These two photo series in the Santa Monica Mountains, created by Robert Taylor, show that shrubland vegetation has been remarkably stable following fires at ~ 30 year intervals (left photo). It has been type converted by multiple fires at short intervals (right photo).



1930's vegetation type of modern grassland fire monitoring plots

Type conversion leads not only to the loss of shrubs, but also to the loss of the herbs that contribute to species diversity in the Santa Monica Mountains. The upper right photo shows the abundance of herbs normally seen in the first year after a fire in coastal sage scrub. The lower right photo shows their absence in type converted coastal sage scrub after a fire.

