

SECTION 5.0

MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

5.1 MANAGEMENT/ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

This section summarizes the overall regulatory framework and overriding goal of the Adaptive Management Program for the MSHCP. Guidance regarding Adaptive Management Programs for Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) and Natural Communities Conservation Plans (NCCPs) is detailed in federal and state guidelines for such programs. Federal guidelines programs are described in *Section 3.B.3.g of The USFWS/NMFS Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook* (November 1996) and in the handbook's five-point Addendum dated June 1, 2000. The *Federal Register* notice contains the following guidance regarding Adaptive Management Programs:

- An Adaptive Management approach allows for up-front mutually agreed-upon changes in an HCP's operating conservation plan that may be necessary for the species in light of new information. In order to be successfully implemented, Adaptive Management provisions must be linked to measurable biological goals and monitoring.
- Not all HCPs or all species covered in an Incidental Take Permit need an Adaptive Management strategy. However, an Adaptive Management strategy is essential for permits that cover species that have biological data or information gaps that incur a significant risk to that species. Possible significant data gaps that could lead to the development of an Adaptive Management strategy include, but are not limited to, significant biological uncertainty about specific information about the ecology of the species or its Habitat (*e.g.*, food preferences, relative importance of predators, territory size), Habitat or species management techniques, or the degree of potential effects of the activity on the species covered in the Incidental Take Permit.

The following definition of Adaptive Management, from the California NCCP Act of 1991 as amended in 2001, will be used in this document:

"To use the results of new information gathered through the monitoring program of the plan and from other sources to adjust management strategies and practices to assist in providing for the conservation of covered species."

Western Riverside County is already a highly fragmented landscape that may not function in the future without human intervention through land-based management and Adaptive Management. The County's population is expected to double by 2020, from 1.4 million to 2.8 million people; to respond to the increased demands that will be placed on the region's ecosystems as a result of this growth, there must be effective land management.