

A. MSHCP Conservation Area Description



A central area mainly composed of lowlands and plains lies inward from the mountainous borders of the Plan Area. The predominant lowland feature of this area is the Perris Plain, which cuts a wide swath punctuated with rocky outcrops and low hills and mountain ranges from Corona to Hemet. Other smaller valleys, hills, and low mountain ranges also occur in this central area.

2.2 Conservation Planning Context

The MSHCP Plan Area is bounded on the north, east, south and southwest by Public/Quasi-Public Lands and other various conservation planning efforts (*Exhibit 3*). The Plan Area is bounded on the north by the San Bernardino County Preliminary MSHCP Plan Area and San Bernardino National Forest, on the east by the San Bernardino National Forest and the Coachella Valley MSHCP, on the south by the Cleveland National Forest and San Diego Multiple Habitat Conservation and Open Space Program, and on the southwest by MCB Camp Pendleton, Cleveland National Forest, the Central Orange County Subregion NCCP and the Southern Orange County Subregion NCCP.

2.3 Climate

Latitude, topography, and the influence of the nearby Pacific Ocean produce a Mediterranean climate in the Plan Area, consisting of warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters. However, at a local level, the Plan Area exhibits substantial climatic variation, resulting in high biotic diversity. For example, average January high temperatures in the Plan Area range from 54° Fahrenheit (F) in Idyllwild in the San Jacinto Mountains to 65° F in the City of Riverside in the northwest corner of the Plan Area. Nighttime lows in January and February often drop below freezing throughout the Plan Area. July high temperatures range from 96° F in the northeastern edge of the Plan Area near Beaumont and Banning to 72° F in the Santa Ana Mountains in the southwest corner of the Plan Area. Low altitude areas, however, have long mid-summer stretches of daily highs exceeding 110° F. Average annual precipitation ranges from 26 inches near Idyllwild in the San Jacinto Mountains, to approximately 10 inches in the Riverside and Moreno Valley areas. Typical rainfall in the Plan Area is 10 to 15 inches per year.

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