

A. MSHCP Conservation Area Description



Chaparral vegetation covers 60% of the Bioregion. Grassland is the next most common vegetation, accounting for 13% of the Bioregion. The remaining natural Vegetation Communities each account for less than 6% of the cover. Agriculture and developed combined account for less than 10% of the Bioregion.

Overall, conservation would be 35%, and 37% excluding Agriculture and developed. Excluding Indian Land, 48% of the Bioregion would be conserved. Four of the vegetation types would be conserved at levels greater than 50%: montane coniferous forest (87%), Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub (84%), riparian (75%), and chaparral (58%). Relatively low conservation would occur for grassland (15%), woodlands and forest (33%), coastal sage scrub (20%), and meadows and marshes (7%).

Representativeness of vegetation types in this Bioregion range from moderately under-represented (grassland at -9.9%) to moderately over-represented (chaparral at +8.5%). Coastal sage scrub and grassland, in particular, appear to be substantially under-represented in the MSHCP Conservation Area. Of the 1,077 acres of coastal sage scrub in the Bioregion, only 71 acres (7%) would be conserved. Of the 3,820 acres of grassland, only 333 acres (9%) would be conserved.

3.3.8 Summary of Bioregions Analysis

Vegetation types within each of the Bioregions generally are well represented. Thus, it can be concluded that vegetation types and their distribution within the Plan Area also are adequately represented (Again, note that this does not imply adequate Conservation for Habitats, species and ecosystem function. However, adequate representation is assumed to be a prerequisite for adequate conservation. Plan Area-wide, chaparral is generally over-represented (+12.4% combined for the Plan Area) and grassland is generally under-represented (-6.3% combined for the Plan Area) (*Table 2*). Coastal sage scrub, woodlands and forest, montane coniferous forest, riparian, playas and vernal pools, Riversidean sage scrub and peninsular juniper woodland and scrub are all neutral or slightly over-represented in the MSHCP Conservation Area (*Table 2*). Apart from grassland, desert scrubs is the only other natural vegetation slightly under-represented in the Conservation Area (-0.4%). This generally positive representativeness of natural Vegetation Communities across Bioregions will be important for maintaining species diversity and ecosystem function.