



# Preservation

The RCIP Vision directs that,

*“Preserved multi-purpose open space is viewed as a critical part of the County’s system of public facilities and services required to improve the existing quality of life and accommodate new development. Strategies and incentives for voluntary preservation on private land are an integral part of the County’s policy/regulatory system and are referred to nationwide as model approaches.”*

The following set of policies seeks to preserve natural resources that are endangered, threatened and irreplaceable. These resources deserve special protection in order to ensure their continued viability. Open space preservation can serve many purposes, including the preservation and enhancement of environmental resources for both ecological and recreational purposes, and the proper management of environmental hazards. In this General Plan, policies related to environmental hazards are contained in the Safety Element.



## MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANS



- HCP**-Habitat Conservation Plan
- NEPA**-National Environmental Policy Act
- NCCP**-Natural Communities Conservation Plan
- CEQA**-California Environmental Quality Act
- CESA**-California Endangered Species Act
- FESA**-Federal Endangered Species Act

As urbanization has spread into Riverside County, community development has not only involved the local land use planning process, but coordination with state and federal wildlife agencies in order to attain “take permits” for impacts to endangered, threatened or otherwise sensitive species and their habitats. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game, hereafter “Wildlife Agencies,” have authority to regulate the “take” of threatened, endangered or otherwise sensitive species. Taking is defined as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect" listed species. "Harm" includes destruction of a listed species' habitat. The wildlife agencies have authority to regulate this “take”. The process of issuing “take permits,” however, has resulted in costly delays for development interests in addition to the assemblage of piecemeal reserve systems addressing the needs of single species. Mitigation lands have been preserved, but these have generally been small, unconnected habitat areas in which it is more difficult to sustain wildlife mobility, genetic flow, or ecosystem health. Instead, large, interconnected natural areas are required to assure that the County’s entire ecosystem has the potential to remain healthy.

To address the issues of wildlife and habitat health and sustainability, the County has participated in the development of two Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plans (MSHCPs). These MSHCPs are intended to encompass the reserve areas and replace the implementation measures of the single-species habitat conservation plans formerly adopted by the County. These MSHCPs are stake-holder driven, comprehensive, and multi-jurisdictional, and focus on the conservation of both species and associated habitats, in order to address biological and ecological diversity conservation needs in Riverside County. These plans are two of several large multi-jurisdictional habitat planning efforts