



## Multipurpose Open Space

The Eastvale area contains a multitude of functions, hence the label of “multi-purpose.” The point is that open space is really a part of the public infrastructure and should have the capability of serving a variety of needs and diversity of users. The Eastvale natural open space resources are somewhat more limited than in certain other parts of the County. That means that each resource that does exist requires thoughtful preservation and, in some cases, restoration. This Multipurpose Open Space section is a critical component of the character of the County of Riverside and of the Eastvale Area Plan. Preserving the area’s remaining natural resources gives meaning to the “remarkable environmental setting” portion of the overall Riverside County Vision. Not only that: these open spaces also help define the edges of and separation between communities, which is another important aspect of the Vision.

In this area plan, the natural characteristics are not dominant. They offer design opportunities for quality development, but on a somewhat limited basis. Habitat preservation opportunities are less extensive here than in many other areas. The single exception is the very significant Santa Ana River, which offers valuable frontage to development all along the south face of the planning area. Achieving a desirable end-state of valued local open space to benefit residents and visitors will require sensitive design attention in laying out development proposals.



*The open space system and the methods for its acquisition, maintenance, and operation are calibrated to its many functions: visual relief, natural resources protection, habitat preservation, passive and active recreation, protection from natural hazards, and various combinations of these purposes. This is what is meant by a multipurpose open space system.*



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Though urban development is destined to envelope much of the area, the Eastvale Area Plan does seek to preserve the character and habitat value of the Santa Ana River corridor, thus enhancing its value as an important ecological habitat, as a scenic and recreational resource, and as a natural buffer between Eastvale and the City of Norco. The proposed network of recreational parks and multi-use trails will also serve to provide additional open space areas within Eastvale. This Multipurpose Open Space section is an important component in achieving whatever sustainable open space can be set aside.

## LOCAL OPEN SPACE POLICIES

### Watersheds, Floodplains, and Watercourses

The Eastvale planning area is part of the Santa Ana River watershed, which centers on the Santa Ana River and also includes Cucamonga Creek. Both natural and man-altered watercourses affect this area. In addition to their fundamental water-related functions, these watercourses provide corridors through developed land and link open spaces together. Among other things, these corridors are what allows wildlife to move from one open space to another without crossing developed land. The following policy preserves and protects these important watercourses.

#### Policies:

- EAP 11.1 Protect the Santa Ana River watershed, its tributaries, and surrounding habitats, and provide flood protection through adherence to those policies located in the Open Space, Habitat & Natural Resource Preservation section of the General Plan



**Watercourses** are the corridors of streams, rivers, and creeks, whether permanent or seasonal, and whether natural or channelized.





Land Use Element, and those policies in the Water Quality section of the General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element.



A major thrust of the multipurpose open space system is the preservation of components of the ecosystem and landscape that embody the historic character and habitat of the County, even though some areas have been impacted by man-made changes.



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## MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

Regional resource planning to protect individual species and habitats such as the Stephens Kangaroo Rat and Coastal Sage Scrub habitat has occurred in Riverside County for many years. Privately-owned reserves and publicly-owned land have served as habitat for many different species. This method of land and wildlife preservation proved to be piecemeal and disjointed, resulting in islands of reserve land without corridors for species migration and access. To address these issues of wildlife health and habitat sustainability, the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Program (MSHCP) has been developed. The MSHCP comprises a reserve system that encompasses core habitat, habitat linkages, and wildlife corridors outside of existing reserve areas and existing private and public reserve lands into a single comprehensive plan that can accommodate the needs of species and habitat in the present and future.

### MSHCP Program Description

The Endangered Species Act prohibits the "taking" of endangered 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 the "take" of threatened, endangered or otherwise sensitive species. The intent of the plan is for the Wildlife Agencies to grant a "take authorization" for otherwise lawful actions that may incidentally take or harm species or habitats outside of preserve areas, in exchange for supporting assembly of a coordinated reserve system. In addition to the conservation and management duties assigned to the County and other agencies, a property-owner initiated habitat evaluation and acquisition negotiation process has also been developed. This process applies to property which may be needed for inclusion in the MSHCP Reserve or subjected to other MSHCP criteria. In this area plan these properties are identified by subunit on Figure 7, Western Riverside County MSHCP Reserve Areas, and total more than 300 acres.



The Wildlife Agencies include The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)



The following species, covered under the MSHCP, may be found within the subunit of this Area Plan:

- southwestern willow flycatcher
- least Bell's vireo
- Santa Ana woolly-star
- loggerhead shrike
- bobcat
- Santa Ana sucker

### Conservation Areas

Habitat lands in the Eastvale area lie primarily along the Santa Ana River. The river serves several habitat functions, including the accommodation of wildlife corridor movement. Though Eastvale is primarily an agricultural region with a strong existing open space character, increasing urbanization in the area will have significant long-term impacts on biological resources in the area, including habitat lands along the river.

The total target conservation acreage for Eastvale is more than 1,000 acres, 730 of which are existing public/quasi public lands. The remaining privately-owned land is encompassed within one conservation subunit as shown on Figure 7,