



Policies:



HVWAP 15.1 Protect the Santa Ana and San Diego Basin Watersheds and habitats, and provide opportunities for flood protection through adherence to Open Space, Habitat, and Natural Resources section of the General Plan Land Use Element and the Renewable Resources section of the General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element.



For further information on the MSHCP please see the Multipurpose Open Space Element of the General Plan.



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

MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

Regional resource planning to protect individual species and habitats, such as the Stephens Kangaroo Rat and Coastal Sage Scrub, has occurred in Riverside County for many years. Privately owned reserves and publicly owned land has 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 habitats, 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. Therefore, the MSHCP will allow the County to "take" plant and wildlife species within identified areas through the local land use planning process. The Wildlife Agencies have authority to regulate this "take". 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.

Conservation Areas

The total target conservation acreage for the Harvest Valley/Winchester planning area is more than 2,500 acres, a major portion of which are existing public/quasi public lands. The remaining privately-owned land has been broken into three conservation subunits as shown on Figure 9, Western Riverside County MSHCP Reserve Areas. These subunits are a critical portion of the criteria-based conservation plan for the Harvest Valley/Winchester planning area. The target conservation acreages for each subunit and its general location are listed below.