



Hazards

Hazards are natural and man-made conditions that must be respected if life and property are to be protected as growth and development occur. As the ravages of wildland fires, floods, dam failures, earthquakes, and other disasters become clearer through the news, public awareness and sound public policy combine to require serious attention to these conditions.

Portions of Lake Mathews/Woodcrest may be subjected to hazards such as flooding, dam inundation, seismic occurrences, and wildland fire. These hazards are depicted on the hazards maps, Figure 9 to Figure 13. These hazards are located throughout the area at varying degrees of risk and danger. Some hazards must be avoided entirely while the potential impacts of others can be mitigated by special building techniques. The following policies provide additional direction for relevant issues specific to this planning area.

LOCAL HAZARD POLICIES

Flooding and Dam Inundation

As shown on Figure 9, Flood Hazards, there are some flood prone portions of the Lake Mathews/Woodcrest area. Areas adjacent to the Lake Mathews reservoir, Cajalco Road, La Sierra Avenue, and McAllister Road are within 100-year floodplains. Many of these areas are also where a fair amount of development exists or is intended to occur. Many techniques may be used to address the danger of flooding, such as limiting development in floodplains, altering the water channels, using special building techniques, elevating foundations and structures, and enforcing setbacks. The following policies address the hazards associated with flooding and dam inundation.

Policies:



LMWAP 12.1 Protect life and property from the hazards of flood events through adherence to the Flood & Inundation Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.



LMWAP 12.2 Adhere to the flood proofing, flood protection requirements, and Flood Management Review requirements of the Riverside County Ordinance Regulating Flood Hazard Areas.

LMWAP 12.3 Require that proposed development projects, which are subject to flood hazards, surface ponding, high erosion potential or sheet flow, be submitted to and approved by the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.



*Fire Fact:
Santa Ana winds create a special hazard. Named by the early settlers at Santa Ana, these hot, dry winds enhance the fire danger throughout southern California.*

Wildland Fire Hazard

Due to the rural and somewhat mountainous nature of the area and some of the flora, such as the oak woodlands and chaparral habitat, the foothill and mountainside areas are subject to a risk of fire hazards. The highest danger of wildfires can be found in the most rugged terrain where, fortunately, development intensity is relatively low. Methods to address this hazard include



such techniques as not building in high-risk areas, creating setbacks that buffer development from hazard areas, maintaining brush clearance to reduce potential fuel, establishing low fuel landscaping, and applying special building techniques. In still other cases, safety oriented organizations such as Fire Safe can provide assistance in educating the public and promoting practices that contribute to improved public safety. Refer to Figure 10, Wildfire Susceptibility, to see the locations of the wildfire zones within the Lake Mathews/Woodcrest area.

Policies:



LMWAP 13.1 Protect life and property from wildfire hazards through adherence to the Fire Hazards section of the Safety Element.

Seismic



Liquefaction occurs primarily in saturated, loose, fine to medium-grained soils in areas where the groundwater table is within about 50 feet of the surface. Shaking causes the soils to lose strength and behave as liquid. Excess water pressure is vented upward through fissures and soil cracks and a water-soil slurry bubbles onto the ground surface. The resulting features are known as "sand boils", "sand blows" or "sand volcanoes." Liquefaction-related effects include loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, lateral spreading, and flow failures or slumping.

Compared to many other portions of southern California, localized seismic hazard potential here is relatively slight. There is one known seismic fault within the western portion of the planning area. There are, however, more remote faults, such as the San Andreas and San Jacinto Faults, that pose significant seismic threat to life and property here. Threats from seismic events include ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, and landslides. The use of specialized building techniques, enforcement of setbacks from local faults, and sound grading practices will help to mitigate potentially dangerous circumstances. Refer to Figure 11, Seismic Hazards, for the location of seismic hazard and liquefaction areas.

Policies:

LMWAP 14.1 Protect life and property from seismic related incidents through adherence to the Seismic Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.

Slope

Lake Mathews/Woodcrest is home to the Gavilan Hills, which in some areas contain a considerable expanse of steep slopes. This rugged terrain requires special development standards and care to prevent erosion and landslides, preserve significant views, and minimize scarring through excessive grading. The following policies are intended to ensure life and property while protecting the character within these valuable resource areas. Figure 12, Steep Slope, reveals the slope conditions. Also refer to Figure 13, Slope Instability, for areas of possible landslide.

Policies:



LMWAP 15.1 Identify ridgelines that provide a significant visual resource for Lake Mathews/Woodcrest through adherence to the policies within the Hillside Development and Slope section of the General Plan Land Use Element.



LMWAP 15.2 Protect life and property through adherence to the Slope and Instability Section of the General Plan Safety Element.