



Oak Tree Preservation



A typical oak tree.




The Mead Valley planning area contains significant oak woodland areas that provide habitat and contribute to the character of the area. These oak woodlands can be found especially in the Gavilan Hills and in the Motte-Rimrock Reserve. It is necessary to protect these natural resources to preserve their function in a rich natural habitat, as well as preserving the quality of the rural environment that characterizes this area.

Policies:

MVAP 13.1 Protect viable oak woodlands through adherence to the Oak Tree Management Guidelines adopted by Riverside County.

MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

 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).

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 this "take." 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 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.