



Multipurpose Open Space

As described in earlier sections, the Eastern Coachella Valley contains a variety of open spaces that serve a multitude of functions. Open space areas within the Valley include the Joshua Tree National Park, the Santa Rosa Mountains, the Mecca Hills, the Dos Palmas Reserve, the Salt Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the Painted Canyon, the Whitewater River, and the Salton Sea. These open spaces encompass a variety of habitats. There are also a number of recreation areas within the Eastern Coachella Valley in which many of these resources can be enjoyed. This Multipurpose Open Space section is a critical component in preserving the character of the County of Riverside and the Valley. Providing a scenic background and preserving the natural character of the Eastern Coachella Valley, these open spaces also help define the edges of, and separations between, communities.

LOCAL OPEN SPACE POLICIES

Habitat Conservation/MSHCP

With its rich and varied landscape, the Eastern Coachella Valley accommodates several ecological habitats that are home to numerous flora and fauna. Preserving habitat not only aids in sustaining species' survival, but also maintains the quality of life in the Valley.

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments is preparing, on behalf of its member agencies, a proposed Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan which is intended to cover 28 species of plants and animals in the Coachella Valley. Currently, this plan proposes to conserve between 200,000 and 250,000 acres of privately owned land through general plan land use designations, zoning/development standards, and an aggressive acquisition program for a total conservation area of between 700,000 and 750,000 acres. Figure 8, Coachella Valley Association of Governments Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, delineates that portion of the MSHCP that lies within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.

Policies:



ECVAP 14.1 Protect visual and biological resources in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element, as well as policies contained in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

Ridgelines

The ridgeline of the Santa Rosa Mountains along the western edge of the Eastern Coachella Valley, together with the ridges of the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains in the east, constitute important natural resources within the Area Plan.