



Multipurpose Open Space

Palo Verde contains a variety of open spaces that serve a multitude of functions, hence the open space 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 Palo Verde area’s open space system is richer and more varied than the casual observer might appreciate. It includes features such as the Big Maria, McCoy, and Chuckwalla mountains, the extensive desert expanse between these ranges, the visual presence of irrigated farmlands stretching across the Palo Verde Valley and, of course, the Colorado River itself: a powerful force in shaping the entire valley. Within these diverse features are found a surprising array of plants and animal life, valuable in its own right and beneficial to the recreation features that abound here. This Multipurpose Open Space section is a critical component of the character of the County of Riverside and Palo Verde planning area. Preserving the scenic background and the natural resources of Palo Verde 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 the communities of Blythe, Ripley, and Nicholls Warm Springs, which is another important aspect of the Vision.



The arid but rich and sensitive environment of the Sonoran desert landscape with the Chuckwalla Mountains as a backdrop



A watershed is the entire region drained by a waterway that drains into a lake or reservoir. It is the total area above a given point on a stream that contributes water to the flow at that point, and the topographic dividing line from which surface streams flow in two different directions. Clearly, watersheds are not just water. A single watershed may include combinations of forests, glaciers, deserts, and/or grasslands.

The Palo Verde Valley is in a unique position within the County of Riverside in that it has experienced relatively little growth over the past 20 years. Palo Verde is projected to experience continued but moderate growth over the next 20 years. Much of Palo Verde’s desert and mountain land is untouched and is not served by any infrastructure. The thrust of this area plan is to maintain a balance between growth, natural resource conservation, and character preservation, a balance of utmost importance to this expansive corner of the County.

LOCAL OPEN SPACE POLICIES

Watershed, Floodplain, and Watercourses

The Palo Verde Valley is completely contained within the Colorado River watershed and located immediately west of the Palo Verde Mesa. This watershed provides water and alluvial soil for agricultural uses, as well as habitat for wildlife in the Palo Verde Valley.

Policies:



PVAP 11.1 Protect the Colorado River watershed and habitat, and provide recreational opportunities and flood protection through the adherence to the Open Space, Habitat, and Natural Resource Preservation section of the General Plan Land Use Element and the Water Resources and Watershed Management sections of the Multipurpose Open Space Element, as well as Best Management Practices.