



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.

Western Riverside County 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." The intent of the MSHCP 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. Therefore, the Western Riverside County 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. 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 Pass is more than 11,000 acres, some of which is Indian Land or existing public/quasi public lands. The remaining privately owned land has been broken into five conservation subunits as shown on Figure 8, Western Riverside County MSHCP Reserve Areas. These subunits are a critical portion of the criteria-based conservation plan for the Pass. The target conservation acreages for each subunit and its general location are listed below.



The following species, covered under the MSHCP, may be found within the subunits of this area plan:

- Payson's jewelflower
- Munz's onion
- Munz's mariposa lily
- Jaeger's milk vetch
- California bedstraw
- Parry's spine flower
- Slender-horned spineflower
- Mojave tarplant
- Engelmann oak
- Bell's sage sparrow
- Mountain quail
- Least Bell's vireo
- Los Angeles pocket mouse
- Stephen's kangaroo rat
- granite spiny lizard

Subunit 1: Potrero/Badlands

Subunit 1 shares the Area Plan's southwestern border to approximately San Timoteo Canyon Road. The Subunit is broken into three sections, and includes some of the City of Beaumont and public land. The target acreage range for new conservation on private lands within Subunit 1 is between 6,890 and 7,100 acres.

Subunit 2: Banning/Beaumont to Idyllwild Highway

The Banning/Beaumont to Idyllwild Highway Subunit has a target acreage range for new conservation on private lands from 1,560 to 1,600 acres. The subunit is located south of Interstate 10 and includes part of State Route 243, Indian, and incorporated land.

Subunit 3: San Gorgonio River

The San Gorgonio River subunit has two parts with a total target range for new conservation on private lands from 1,200 to 1,230 acres. One subunit is located in the eastern portion of the plan, straddling Interstate 10, and is comprised completely of Indian and incorporated land. The other portion of the subunit is located north of Interstate 10, straddling Bluff Street, and is comprised mostly of incorporated and public land.

Subunit 4: Badlands to San Bernardino National Forest

Subunit 4 has two parts, one between State Route 60 and Interstate 10, within incorporated territory, and the other is north of Cherry Valley Road, running from San Timoteo Canyon Road east to Cherry Valley, through Calimesa. The target acreage range for new conservation on private lands within the subunit is between 900 and 920 acres.

Subunit 5: San Timoteo Creek

The San Timoteo Creek subunit is tucked into the northwestern corner of the Area Plan with its southern boundary running along San Timoteo Road. Only a small portion of this subunit contains incorporated land from the City of Calimesa, the other 760 to 780 acres has been set aside for new conservation on private land.

Key Biological Issues

The habitat requirements of the listed species, combined with sound habitat management practices, have shaped the following policies, which apply to areas within identified subunits. These policies provide general conservation direction



The County of Riverside General Plan - *Hearing Draft*

The Pass Area Plan

for the MSHCP reserve assembly process. Refer to the MSHCP Implementing Agreement for specific reserve design criteria.

Policies:

- PASS 15.1 Encourage the provision of a new core reserve focused on the Portero Creek area and the associated alluvial fan for maintenance of key species such as the Stephen's kangaroo rat, Parry's spineflower, and arroyo toad; alkali vernal plains for smooth tarplant populations, and Engelmann oaks.
- PASS 15.2 Maintain large blocks of undisturbed habitat for core reserve purposes and large mammal movement between the northern and southern sections of the San Bernardino National Forest.
- PASS 15.3 Conserve a representative portion of the San Jacinto Mountain/Riverside Lowlands ecotone.
- PASS 15.4 Conserve rock and granite outcroppings for reptile populations known within this area.
- PASS 15.5 Conserve coastal sage scrub patches which support known populations of granite night lizard and granite spiny lizard.
- PASS 15.6 Ensure interconnected habitat conservation in order to provide a linkage from the San Jacinto Mountains to the Coachella Valley, east of the MSHCP Plan area.
- PASS 15.7 Provide a continuous upland habitat connection through Oak Valley that utilizes the existing public lands along this alignment. It is recognized that this connection traverses an urban area, however conservation of existing natural habitat and incorporation of ditches and other drainage features into reserve design will assist in providing this contiguous connection.
- PASS 15.8 Maintain wetlands and wetland connections via Noble Creek to conserve wetland species and wildlife dispersal.
- PASS 15.9 Maintain a contiguous connection between proposed reserves in San Bernardino County and the Badlands area.

Coachella Valley MSHCP Program Description

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. Please see Figure 9, Coachella Valley Association of Governments Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, for more information.