



Multipurpose Open Space



The open space system and the methods for its acquisition, maintenance, and operation are calibrated to its many functions: visual relief, natural resources protection, habitat preservation, passive and active recreation, protection from natural hazards, and various combinations of these purposes. This is what is meant by a multipurpose open space system.



- RCIP Vision



The appeal of the Coachella Valley lies in its dramatic and expansive natural setting. The Western Coachella Valley area contains a vast open space network that encompasses a diverse variety of habitats, including riparian corridors, sand dunes, foothills and mountains, alluvial fans, and agricultural fields. These open space areas provide visual relief, serve as habitat for flora and fauna, provide recreational opportunities, form edges to communities, and otherwise establish the Valley’s unique character. Open space areas also are important in protecting citizens from natural hazards.

Due in part to this stark and diverse environment, the Coachella Valley continues to experience growth and development pressures threatening the very setting that makes this such a unique region. Establishing a balance between preserving open space areas and accommodating additional population is essential to maintaining the spectacular quality of life enjoyed by Valley residents and visitors and to sustain cultural and environmental values that draw tourists to this area.

Policies:

WCVAP 15.1 Protect visual and biological resources in the Western Coachella Valley 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.

LOCAL OPEN SPACE POLICIES



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.



Watercourses are the corridors of streams, rivers, and creeks, whether permanent or seasonal, natural or channelized.

Watershed, Floodplains, and Watercourses

Western Coachella Valley lies within the Whitewater River Watershed region. This watershed consists of the Whitewater River, which runs the length of the Valley, and its tributaries, including the San Gorgonio River, Mission Creek, Little and Big Morongo Creeks, and Box Canyon Wash. Other important streams include Snow, Chino, Falls Creek and Murray Creek, Tahquitz and Andreas Creeks on the San Jacinto Mountains, and Palm Canyon, which separates the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains. These and smaller perennial streams create a system of ever-changing channels within the Valley that change its physical appearance.

Policies:

WCVAP 16.1 Protect the Whitewater River watershed and habitat, and provide recreational opportunities and flood protection through the adherence to policies in the Open Space, Habitat & Natural Resources Preservation section of the General Plan Land Use Element, and the Watershed Management section of the General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element.