



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

California State law requires each city to prepare a Comprehensive General Plan to address community policies and objectives for growth and development. The City of Glendale's General Plan establishes the policies and procedures for the use and protection of resources to meet community needs. Glendale's General Plan contains nine sections. These sections are called elements and are published separately. They address the seven topics mandated by state law and two additional topics recommended, but not required, by state law. Glendale's first Open Space and Conservation Element was prepared in 1972 as the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element. This document contained two mandated topics—Open Space and Conservation—and a third, optional topic—Recreation. The Open Space and Conservation Element coordinates planning and management for natural resources and the improvements that complement them. It provides a broad overview of existing conditions, issues and opportunities and a comprehensive approach to the management of the identified resources.

B. OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION MANDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The primary objective of an Open Space and Conservation Element is to develop a comprehensive plan for the identification and management of natural resources. This mandate ensures that public agencies will inventory their natural resources and develop policies for responsible utilization and stewardship. Although the element is directed primarily at resources and management policies within the City of Glendale, it provides the opportunity to assess the available resources within the regional context and to develop policies and implementation strategies directed toward the acquisition of additional open space land and toward achieving equilibrium between conservation and use.

C. OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION FINDINGS

The following is a summary of significant findings discussed in this element. For more detail, see the respective sections.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- The hillside areas of the City contain seven native plant communities including chaparral, southern oak woodland, southern oak riparian woodland, coastal sage, alluvial scrub, walnut woodland and big cone spruce.
- The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning has identified the Verdugo Mountains as a Significant Ecological Area (SEA).
- The California Department of Fish and Game has designated several riparian corridors in their Natural Diversity Data Base.
- Glendale contains habitat areas which could support as many as fourteen rare or endangered plant and animal species as currently identified by the California Department of Fish and Game.
- Two sensitive plant communities, Riversidian alluvial fan sage scrub and southern oak riparian forest/southern sycamore alder riparian woodland, exist within the City.
- Many public agencies, including the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Los Angeles County Regional Planning and the California Department of Fish and Game, recognize Glendale's open space as an important natural resource within the region.
- To maintain genetic diversity in plant and animal communities, habitat areas must be connected with larger expanses of open space.
- Based upon a biological resource evaluation, the Verdugo Mountains were found to contain the majority of important habitat areas. The most important natural resource in the San Rafael Hills is a 388 acre area in Sycamore Canyon.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES

- The hillside areas of the City contain many drainage courses and tributary streams that normally flow during the winter and spring rainy seasons.
- Unlined stream channels and water basins act as a means to replenish underground aquifers.
- Approximately 32 blue-line streams have been designated and are regulated by the Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

- The City is actively participating in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process in order to reduce surface and groundwater pollution.
- Glendale is progressive in its development and use of water reclamation programs, and delivers reclaimed waste water to various public and private users.
- The City has implemented a broad range of water conservation and distribution management programs in coordination with programs at Federal, State and regional levels.
- Glendale operates a hazardous materials collection facility to prevent the illegal dumping or disposal of hazardous materials in landfills to protect against groundwater contamination.

VISUAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES

- Glendale contains numerous landscaped medians, parkways, and neighborhood open spaces as well as historic and cultural resources which contribute to the City's identity and character.
- Glendale has three major physiographical features: the San Gabriel Mountains, the San Rafael Hills, and the Verdugo Mountains.
- These mountain ranges provide a dramatic scenic backdrop, open space, and valuable habitat.
- The visual significance of these landforms can be organized into distinct classifications based upon a hierarchy of criteria.
- Glendale historically has regulated the preservation of major ridgelines (as defined by location in the Glendale Municipal Code).
- Primary and important secondary ridgelines and blue-line streams as defined in Chapter IV of this document have been identified for regulation or preservation.
- The public ownership of open space land totals 5,860 acres, not including streets and other public rights-of-way; only 1,540 acres remain in private ownership, available for development.