2.0 REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION AND REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW

The Draft EIR (September 2010) evaluated the environmental impacts of the proposed One Valley One Vision project (collectively, "original project"). However, since that time, the original project has been modified by as a result of comments taken during the public hearing process for the project and Draft EIR. The overall effect of these modifications is to strengthen language within Goals and Policies of the General Plan, update the General Plan due to changing circumstances. In no instances, did changes to the Project, increase densities, or population projections. In some instances below, no changes were made to some paragraphs but were included to provide a point of reference to the reader. This topical response summarizes and illustrates the attributes of the "revised project," and evaluates, on a category-by-category basis, the environmental ramifications of the revised project, as compared to the original project.

The following is a list of general changes that were made to the OVOV General Plan Land Use Map:

- There were modifications to a number of areas on the maps to correspond to the built environment. The majority of these changes were in existing residential communities. The areas included portions of the Stonecrest, Shadow Pines, Placerita Canyon, Sand Canyon, The Master's College, Seco Canyon, and Alderbrook communities.

- As part of the West Creek prezoning process, which included reviewing the existing land entitlements and meeting with the project developer, it was determined that there should be proposed land uses map should be slightly modified.

- The recent City Council approval of the Vista Canyon and Fair Oaks annexation projects requires that the land use map be updated.

- Over the past year, there has been a large amount of areas, both inside and primarily outside the City limits, designated as open space. The areas include Elsmere Canyon, East Walker Ranch, and the Roda properties among others. The Land Use Map should be changed to reflect this.

- The removal of the Transportation Corridor classification

- The modifications to the land use map to include the recent City Council approval of Vista Canyon Specific Plan and the Fair Oaks/West Sand Canyon communities.

The revised Land Use Map is shown on **Figure 2.0-1**.

CHANGES TO THE GOALS AND POLICIES

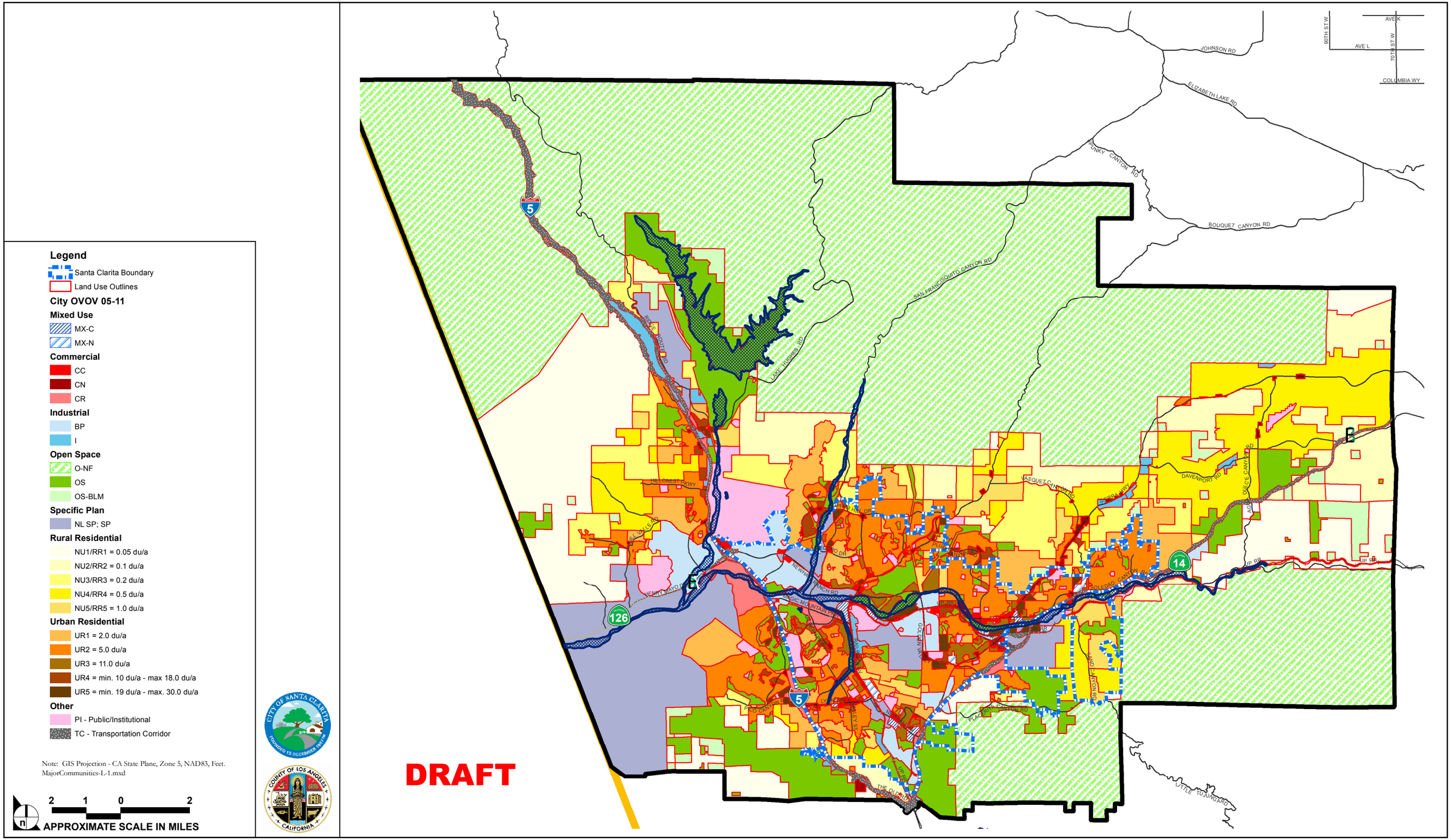
Land Use

Policy LU 1.2.6: In Placerita Canyon, ensure compatibility of development with existing rural, equestrian lots and the adjacent National Forest land; maintain community character in accordance with the City's Placerita Canyon Special Standards District (PCSSD); provide an orderly transition between existing rural and low-density residential uses and proposed new development; and require the provision of needed infrastructure. The City and the Placerita Canyon Property Owners Association shall work together to amend the PCSSD in the Unified Development Code to provide additional certainty and expectations for the developed areas within the District and to create flexibility and continuity, subject to the provisions outlined above, for undeveloped properties in the District. These changes will include transitional density provisions, specific Unified Development Code (UDC) rules and regulations that will clearly outline development codes within Placerita Canyon.

Policy LU 2.2.1: Identify areas of scenic or aesthetic value to the community, and minimize the designation of uses in these areas that would diminish their aesthetic quality.

Policy LU-7.3.6: Support emerging methods and technologies for the on-site capture, treatment, and infiltration of stormwater and greywater, and amend the City Code to allow these methods and technologies when they are proven to be safe and feasible. **Policy LU 7.7.3:** Encourage the operators of existing surface mines to consider an end use site restoration plan that will result in land use conversions to aide in implementing the jobs-housing balance policies, economic vitality goals and policies, and which will reinforce the image of the Santa Clarita Valley as an eco-conscious community.

Policy LU 8.1.12: The City, County and the school districts shall cooperate to identify appropriate land to construct new school facilities throughout the planning area**.** Annual information and update meetings between the planning agencies and the districts are encouraged.



SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - Planning City Boundary - 2008; Thomas Bros., Hydrology, Waterbodies, and Streets - 2010; LA County - Regional Planning, OVOV Boundary and Forest Boundaries - 2008

FIGURE **2.0-1**

Land Use Map

Policy LU 8.1.13: In meeting state law for mitigation, there may be times when additional resources are required in order for the district to fully provide necessary services. Accordingly, Developers are encouraged to reach full mitigation agreements with the appropriate school districts impacted by their proposed project. Mitigation may include, but might not be limited to, modifications to existing school sites.

Policy LU 8.1.14: Developers of infill projects shall be aware of the potential cumulative effect that these smaller projects have on schools. Pre and post construction, infill projects shall be monitored to evaluate student generation rates.

Policy LU 8.1.15: Proposed school sites shall be sufficiently sized, pre-identified and on California Department of Education and Department of Toxic Substances Control approvable land. Further site design considerations shall include appropriate pedestrian and bicycle access.

Policy LU 9.2.1: Ensure that the cost of extending new sewer infrastructure is fully borne by the new development that is served, and is not passed on to the existing community.

Policy LU 9.2.2: Require that all new development mitigate its impact on existing sewer capacity by upgrading facilities when warranted or payment of a fee to allow construction of new facilities when needed.

Policy LU 9.2.5: Cooperate with the development community to allow reimbursement for the cost of constructed sewer facilities with a capacity that exceeds what would be required to mitigate a project's own sewer impact.

Circulation

Policy C 1.1.6: Provide adequate facilities for multi-modal travel, including but not limited to bicycle parking and storage, expanded park-and-ride lots, and adequate station and transfer facilities in appropriate locations.

Policy C 1.3.1: Continue coordinating with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to implement the County's Congestion Management Program (CMP) for designated CMP roadways.

Policy C-1.3.2: Participate in updates to the CMP and collaborate with Caltrans and Metro to revise CMP impact thresholds, ensuring that they are adequate and appropriate.

Policy C 1.3.3: Through trip reduction strategies and emphasis on multi-modal transportation options, contribute to achieving the air quality goals of the South Coast Air Quality Management District Air Quality Management Plan.

Policy C 1.3.4: Coordinate circulation planning with the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), to ensure consistency of planned improvements with regional needs.

Policy C 1.3.5: Continue coordinating with Caltrans on circulation and land use decisions that may affect Interstate 5, State Route 14, and State Route 126, and support programs to increase capacity and improve operations on these highways.

Policy C 1.3.6: Collaborate with Caltrans and Metro to implement the recommendations of the North County Combined Highways Corridors Study and support efforts by Metro to update this Study after SCAG adopts a Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Policy C 1.3.7: Support the Golden State Gateway Coalition in its advocacy efforts to improve the Interstate 5 corridor, recognizing that the corridor facilitates regional and international travel that impacts the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy C 1.3.8: Ensure consistency with the County's adopted Airport Land Use Plan as it pertains to the Agua Dulce Airport, in order to mitigate aviation-related hazards and protect airport operations from encroachment by incompatible uses.

Policy C 1.3.9: Support the expansion of Palmdale Regional Airport and the extension of multi-modal travel choices between the airport and the Santa Clarita Valley, in conformance with regional planning efforts.

Policy C 1.3.10: Apply for regional, state, and federal grants for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects.

Policy C 2.6.1: Require that new development construct transportation improvements or provide its fair share of the cost of transportation such improvements, and ensure that required improvements or in-lieu contributions are in place to support the development prior to occupancy.

Policy C 2.6.3: Coordinate with Caltrans and other local, regional, state and federal agencies in identifying and implementing funding alternatives for the Valley's transportation systems.

Objective C 2.7: Pursue the safety, efficiency, and tranquility of existing and future residential streets by properly planning for local, collector and arterial roadways and limiting residential driveway access onto collector or arterial roadways.

Policy C.2.7.1: To the extent feasible, plan residential subdivisions with sufficient arterial and non-loaded collector streets so that projected traffic volumes on local residential streets with unrestricted driveway access remains below 2000 ADT.

Policy C.2.7.2: Discourage direct driveway access onto collector streets within single-family residential subdivisions. Limit driveway access from multi-family residential and commercial development onto collector streets to the extent possible.

Policy C.2.7.3: Where feasible, design new residential subdivisions with more than 200 residential units with direct access to an existing arterial roadway or an existing non loaded collector street. Discourage new large residential subdivisions from having primary access through local neighborhood streets.

Policy C 3.1.8: Encourage special event center operators to advertise and offer discount on-site parking incentives to carpooling patrons with four or more persons per vehicle.

Policy C 3.2.4: The City and County will encourage new commercial and retail developments to provide prioritized parking for electric vehicles and vehicles using alternative fuels.

Policy C 3.3.8: Establish performance pricing of street parking, so that the costs are enough to promote frequent turnover with a goal to keep 15 percent of spaces empty at all times, wherever feasible.

City Task 5: **Seek funding opportunities from all available sources for circulation improvements**

5.1 Support construction of regional transportation improvements through joint funding programs and other efforts as appropriate.

5.2 Continue to actively participate on regional boards and commissions that address circulation needs and improvements.

5.3 Maintain consistency with regional plans, and complete all local plans needed to compete successfully for funding.

5.4 Continue to require new development to fund its fair share of transportation improvements, which may include construction or payment of impact fees.

5.5 The City and County shall work with Metro and Caltrans to study appropriate methodologies for determining new developments' project-level and cumulative impacts on freeways and how best to assess them for their fair share contributions to mitigate project-level impacts.

The revised Circulation Map is depicted on **Figure 2.0-2, Revised Circulation Element**.

Conservation/Open Space

Policy CO 1.3.4: Promote and encourage cogeneration projects for commercial and industrial facilities, provided they meet all applicable environmental quality standards including those related to air and noise, and provide a net reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with energy production.

Policy CO 1.6.2: Use Geographic Information Systems, modeling, and other tools to indicate the locations of natural systems such as groundwater recharge areas, floodplain and floodway areas, oak tree woodlands, Significant Ecological Areas, and plant and animal species habitat.

Policy CO-4.1.9: Support the development of additional facilities to store or bank stormwater, particularly on lands located outside the groundwater recharge areas that are depicted on Exhibit CO-10.

Policy CO-4.1.10: Support emerging methods and technologies for the on-site capture, treatment, and infiltration of stormwater and greywater, and amend the City Code to allow these methods and technologies when they are proven to be safe and feasible.

Legend

- Major Highway - Existing (8 Lanes)
- Major Highway - Existing (6 Lanes)
- Major Highway - Proposed (6 Lanes)
- Secondary Highway- Existing (4 Lanes)
- Secondary Highway - Proposed (4 Lanes)
- Limited Secondary Highway- Existing (2 Lanes)
- Limited Secondary Highway- Proposed (2 Lanes)
- Parkway - Existing
- Parkway - Proposed
- Expressway - Existing
- Expressway - Proposed
- OVOV Planning Area
- City of Santa Clarita
- City Sphere of Influence
- Angeles National Forest
- County Boundary
- Waterbody and Perennial Stream

Note: GIS Projection - CA State Plane, Zone 5, NAD83, Feet.
CirculationElement-C-2.mxd

2 1 0 2

APPROXIMATE SCALE IN MILES

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
VENTURA COUNTY
LANCASTER
PALMDALE
ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST
SANTA CLARITA
LOS ANGELES
SIERRA HIGHWAY
DAVENPORT ROAD
VASQUEZ CANYON ROAD
BOUQUET CANYON ROAD
TICK CANYON ROAD
AGUA DULCE ROAD
SOLEDAD CANYON ROAD
SAND CANYON ROAD
PLACERITA CANYON ROAD
GOLDEN VALLEY ROAD
SANTA CLARITA PARKWAY
VIA PRINCESSA
RAILROAD AVENUE
LYONS AVENUE
TREMONT ROAD
COPPER HILL DRIVE
NEWHALL RANCH ROAD
MCBEAN PARKWAY
MAGIC MOUNTAIN PARKWAY
VALENCIA BLVD
PICO CANYON ROAD
POTRERO CANYON RD
HENRY MAYO DRIVE
RIDGE ROUTE ROAD
LAKE HUGHES ROAD
DAY GULCH RD
SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON
5
14
126
210

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - Planning City Boundary - 2008; Thomas Bros., Hydrology, Waterbodies, and Streets - 2008; LA County - Planning, OVOV Boundary and Forest Boundaries - 2010
Joint Highway Plan from Department of Public Works and City of Santa Clarita Public Works - 2011

FIGURE **2.0-2**

Revised Circulation Element

112-023•05/11

Policy CO 4.2.4: Protect areas with substantial potential for groundwater recharge as depicted on Exhibit CO-10, and promote recharge of groundwater basins throughout the watershed (excluding the river bed) to assure water quality and quantity. The greatest consideration should be given to the Alluvial Aquifer and Saugus Aquifer groundwater recharge areas, followed by groundwater recharge areas for other groundwater basins that are designated by the State of California.

Policy CO-4.2.7: Develop and use groundwater sources to their safe yield limits, but not to the extent that degradation of the groundwater basins occurs.

Policy CO-4.2.8: Develop and use groundwater sources to their safe yield limits.

Policy CO-4.3.8: Protect the viability of surface water, since it provides a habitat for fish and other water-related organisms, as well as being an important environmental component for land based plants and animals.

Policy CO 5.1.1: For sites identified on the Cultural and Historical Resources Map (Exhibit CO-6), review appropriate documentation prior to issuance of any permits for grading, demolition, alteration, or new development, to avoid significant adverse impacts. Such documentation may include cultural resource reports, environmental impact reports, or other information as determined to be adequate by the reviewing authority.

Policy CO 5.1.2: Review any proposed alterations to cultural and historic sites identified in Table CO-1 or other sites which are so designated, based on the guidelines contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Properties (Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 68, also known as 36 CFR 68), or other adopted City guidelines.

Policy CO 5.3.2: For any proposed development project that may have a potential impact on Native American cultural resources, provide notification to California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands within the City's jurisdiction, and consider the input received prior to a discretionary decision.

Policy CO 6.1.2: Preserve significant ridgelines, as shown on Exhibit CO-7, as a scenic backdrop throughout the community by maintaining natural grades and vegetation.

Policy CO 8.1.1: Create and adopt a Climate Action Plan within 18 months of the adoption date of the City's General Plan Update that meets State requirements and includes the following components:

a. Plans and programs to reduce GHG emissions to State-mandated targets, including enforceable reduction measures;

   i. The CAP may establish goals beyond 2020, which are consistent with the applicable laws and regulations referenced in this paragraph and based on current science

   ii. The CAP shall include specific and general tools and strategies to reduce the City's current and projected 2020 inventory and to meet the CAPs target for GHG reductions by 2020;

   iii. The CAP shall consider, among other GHG reduction strategies, the feasibility of development fees; incentive and rebate programs; and, voluntary and mandatory reduction strategies in areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation and efficiency, solid waste, land use and transportation.

b. Mechanisms to ensure regular review of progress towards the emission reduction targets established by the Climate Action Plan;

c. Procedures for reporting on progress to officials and the public;

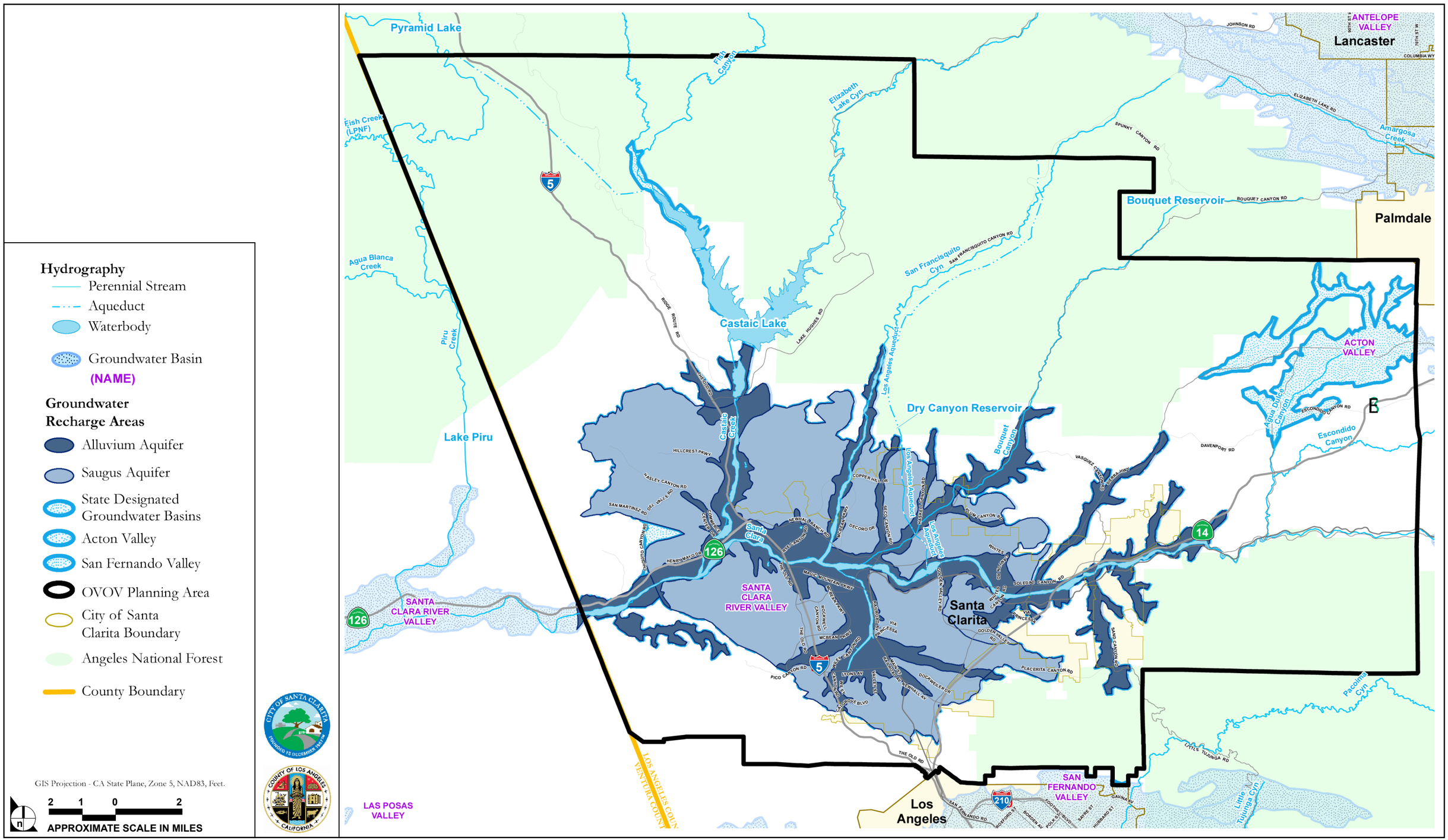
d. Procedures for revising the plan as needed to meet GHG emissions reduction targets; and,

e. Allocation of funding and staffing for Plan implementation.

After adoption of the Climate Action Plan, amend this General Plan if necessary to ensure consistency with the adopted Climate Action Plan.

Policy CO 9.2.1: Plan for a continuous and unified multi-use (equestrian, bicycling, and pedestrian/hiking) trail network for a variety of users, to be developed with common standards, in order to unify Santa Clarita Valley communities and connect with County, Regional State and Federal trails such as the dual-use (equestrian and hiking)Pacific Crest Trail.

A new graphic depicting groundwater recharge areas is included as **Figure 2.0-3, Groundwater Recharge Areas**.



SOURCE: Jurisdictions - City of Santa Clarita Planning - 2008 and U.S. Census TIGER - 2001; Watersheds - California Interagency Watershed Mapping Committee - 1999; OVOV Boundary and Angeles National Forest - LA County-Planning - 2008; Ground Water Basins - California Department of Water Resources - 2003; Aqueduct Derived from USGS DRGs - 1990; Reclamation Plants from City of Santa Clarita - 2008

FIGURE **2.0-3**

Groundwater Recharge Areas

112-023•05/11

Safety

On the Land Use Map, designate appropriate areas within the floodplain as open space for multi-use purposes, including flood control, habitat preservation, and recreational open space. Development in the floodplain will require mitigation as deemed necessary by the reviewing authority.

Policy S 6.2.2: In reviewing development plans, consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to increase public safety through establishing defensible space, clearly delineated public and private areas, and effective surveillance of common areas.

Objective S 6.4: Minimize damage resulting from aircraft accidents near Agua Dulce Airpark.

Policy S 6.4.1: Support efforts by Los Angeles County to require all new development in the vicinity of the Agua Dulce Airpark to comply with the Airport Land Use Plan and applicable Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.

CHANGES TO THE OVOV GENERAL PLAN DOCUMENT EXCLUDING THE GOALS AND POLICIES

(Page L-13)

Sand Canyon

The Sand Canyon area is generally located within the City of Santa Clarita, southeast of Canyon Country and is comprised predominantly of low-density single-family residential uses. The area is rural with extensive stands of oak trees and is characterized by large estate homes and lots, many of which are equestrian and enjoy direct access to an equestrian trail system linking the community. The community is accessible via Sand Canyon Road and Placerita Canyon Road, and is bordered on the south and east by the Angeles National Forest.

Sand Canyon is largely developed. A challenge for the Sand Canyon area will be ensuring land use compatibility between homes and adjacent natural areas in Angeles National Forest and along the Santa Clara River. Major planning issues include protecting the rural and equestrian character from development pressures to create more traditional subdivisions in this low-density area; increasing multiple purpose trail linkages; and providing an effective interface between residents and National Forest lands. In addition, development in the area must comply with the City's Special Standards District to maintain the rural community character desired by residents.

The eastern portion of the Sand Canyon region, outside the Santa Clarita city limits, is home to disturbed lands resulting from current and past aggregate mining practices, former military industrial support activities, and Superfund hazard properties. It is to the benefit of the region to have these properties restored to an economic land use rather than left in a disturbed state. These highly impaired lands are appropriate for future conversion to land uses complementary to the surrounding topography, national forest, and Santa Clara River setting. Such land uses should be consistent with the policies of this plan including jobs/housing balance, shortened commute times, and siting of new uses largely within the footprint of the disturbance area. Such uses should be planned so as to avoid adverse effects on the Santa Clara River Significant Ecological Areas (SEA).

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Libraries

The County of Los Angeles operates all public libraries in the planning area, including the Main Branch in Valencia, the Jo Anne Darcy Branch in Canyon Country, the Newhall Branch, and a bookmobile that serves the communities of Castaic, Acton, Agua Dulce, Val Verde, and the Friendly Valley senior community. The County's system contains over 8 million items in its collections and provides inter-library loan programs with other local and national libraries. Santa Clarita library branches also maintain local and regional history collections.

In addition to the public libraries, schools provide library facilities to their students. Both Cal Arts and The Master's College provide libraries for students, and College of the Canyons opens their library to both students and the general public.

Based on the County Library's service guidelines, the area and number of items within the Santa Clarita branches are not meeting service level standards. As population increases based on growth anticipated by the General Plan, it will be necessary to increase funding to support library development. In order to meet the library needs of new development in the Valley, both the City and County assess a development impact fee for library construction. Other funding sources include property taxes, bond measures, and voter-approved special taxes.

In 2008, the City Council approved purchase of three parcels on Lyons Avenue so that the City can move ahead with plans to build a new public library in Downtown Newhall. Along with the new community center, this new library facility is part of the plan to revitalize Downtown Newhall. The new library is currently under construction.

In 2010, the Santa Clarita City Council voted to take over operations of the libraries located within the City limits starting July 1, 2011.

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Mineral Resources

The planning area contains extensive mineral resources. Historically, gold mining and oil production have been the primary mineral extraction activities in and around the Santa Clarita Valley. Other minerals in the area include construction aggregate (sand and gravel), titanium, tuff, and rock.

Existing oil and natural gas fields are primarily located in the western portion of the Valley, with over 700 wells in production. In 2003, approximately 3,180 acres were used for oil and natural gas extraction in the planning area. Over 800 abandoned well sites remain in the planning area, which may be subject to re-use or remediation.

Sand and gravel resources are primarily concentrated along waterways, including the Santa Clara River, Castaic Creek, and east of Sand Canyon Road. A significant deposit of construction-grade aggregate extends along the Santa Clara River approximately 15 miles from Agua Dulce Creek in the east, to the Ventura County line on the west. Almost 19,000 acres in the planning area are designated by the State as Mineral Resource Zone-2, or areas of primeimportance due to known economic mineral deposits.

As of 2003, there were about 525 acres of land used for mineral extraction of sand, gravel, and rock. Generally, mining sites are located in Canyon Country, Agua Dulce, and Mint Canyon in the planning area, and in Acton to the north. A proposed sand and gravel mining operation in Soledad Canyon has been controversial due to concerns about noise, air pollution, truck traffic, and visual impacts.

Additional information about mineral resources is contained in the Conservation and Open Space Element. For purposes of the Land Use Element, however, the issues of land use compatibility between less intense uses and extraction operations must be considered, in order to provide for adequate separation of these uses. In addition, significant resource areas should be protected from development as they provide a needed resource to support the construction of new homes, businesses, and roads.

Finally, the Land Use Element must consider restoration and re-use of mined areas once mining operations cease. Where restoration to open space is not a practical end use solution, an alternative development program which contributes to economic development, jobs-housing balance, and/or destination eco-tourism should be encouraged.

(Page L-48)

Non-Urban 1 (NU 1) – (County Area Plan - Rural Land 20/RL20)

The Non-Urban 1 designation identifies lands in the planning area that are distinguished by significant environmental features and extreme development constraints. Lands in this designation are largely undeveloped and consist of rolling hillside areas, steep slopes, and remote mountain lands with limited access.

Uses in this designation could include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, filming and public, and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Clustering is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Development Code. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

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Non-Urban 2 (NU 2) – (County Area Plan - Rural Land 10/RL10)

The Non-Urban 2 designation identifies lands in the planning area that include environmental features and are not appropriate for intense development requiring urban services. Lands in this category are largely undeveloped and consist of rolling hillside areas, slopes, and mountain lands with limited access.

Uses in this designation could include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Clustering is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Development Code. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

Non-Urban 3 (NU 3) – (County Area Plan - Rural Land 5/RL5)

The Non-Urban 3 designation identifies lands in the planning area that include environmental features and are not appropriate for intense development requiring urban services. Lands in this category are undeveloped or partially developed and consist of rolling hillside areas with limited access.

Uses in this designation could include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Clustering is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Development Code. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

Non-Urban 4 (NU 4) – (County Area Plan - Rural Land 2/RL2)

The **Non-Urban 4** designation provides for the maintenance and expansion of rural communities in the planning area that are distinguished by large lot sizes (generally 2 acres or greater), agricultural and equestrian uses, and an absence of urban services.

Uses in this designation could include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial uses serving the local area, such as grocery stores, restaurants, personal services, and retail sale of specialty goods for rural residents, such as feed and tack stores, may be allowed in "activity areas" within this designation without a General Plan Amendment, provided that the size, location, design, and use types are determined to be compatible with the surrounding area through approval pursuant to the Unified Development Code. Such "activity centers" must be at least 1 mile from any commercial land use designation and must not exceed 5 acres in size.

Clustering is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Development Code. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

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Non-Urban 5 (NU 5) – (County Area Plan - Rural Land 1/RL1)

The Non-Urban 5 designation provides for the maintenance and expansion of rural communities in the planning area that are distinguished by large lot sizes (generally 1 acre or greater), agricultural and equestrian uses, and the absence of urban services.

Uses in this designation could include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 1 acre, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial uses serving the local area, such as grocery stores, restaurants, personal services, and retail sale of specialty goods for rural residents, such as feed and tack stores, may be allowed in "activity areas" within this designation without a General Plan Amendment, provided that the size, location, design, and use types are determined to be compatible with the surrounding area through pursuant to the Unified Development Code. Such "activity centers" must be at least 1 mile from any commercial land use designation and must not exceed 5 acres in size.

Clustering is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Development Code. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

Urban Residential 1 (UR 1) – (County Area Plan - Residential/H2)

The Urban Residential 1 designation provides for residential neighborhoods at densities that require urban services. Many of these neighborhoods provide a transition between higher density, urban development and rural communities throughout the planning area, and this designation is appropriate in such urban/rural interface areas.

Uses in this designation could include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of 2 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation without a General Plan Amendment,

provided that the size, location, design, and use types are determined to be compatible with the surrounding area through approval pursuant to the Unified Development Code.

The clustering of development, subject to underlying zoning requirements, is encouraged on lands with significant environmental and/or topographical features or resources, in order to preserve open space for protection of these natural features or resources, to provide recreational amenities, or to act as a buffer to surrounding rural communities.

Urban Residential 2 (UR 2) – (County Area Plan – Residential/H5)

The Urban Residential 2 designation provides for residential neighborhoods that typify much of the planning area. Uses in this designation could include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of 5 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation pursuant to the Unified Development Code.

The clustering of development is encouraged on lands with significant environmental and/or topographical features or resources, in order to preserve open space for protection of these natural features or resources, or to provide recreational amenities.

The Urban Residential 2 designation has been applied to residential areas that existed prior to the effective date of the Area Plan and are surrounded by Rural Land designations, in order to recognize these existing areas as conforming to the Area Plan. However, this designation in these areas should not be interpreted as setting a precedent for expanding urban development into adjacent Non-Urban Land designations, because these areas are not served with adequate levels of urban infrastructure to accommodate greater densities or intensities of use. These areas are described below and shown on Exhibit L-2.

- Sleepy Valley, a neighborhood in the northeastern portion of the planning area adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, generally located along Sierra Highway between Oak Street and Steele Avenue;

- Val Verde, a community in the western portion of the planning area adjacent to Newhall Ranch and the Valencia Commerce Center, generally located along San Martinez Road and Chiquito Canyon Road; and

- Tract 25965, a subdivision in the southern portion of the planning area adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, generally located at the intersection of Placerita Canyon Road and Running Horse Road.

Urban Residential 4 (UR 4) – (County Area Residential/H18)

The Urban Residential 4 designation provides for mixed residential neighborhoods of detaching and attached dwellings. Allowable uses in this designation include detached and attached single-family homes, duplexes, multiple family dwellings, and other residential uses maximum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation. Other incidental uses may be allowed, where determined to be in conformance with the primary use, based on the standards and requirements of the applicable zoning ordinance.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this pursuant to the Unified Development Code. Live-work units may be allowed subject to the requirements of the underlying zone.

Urban Residential 5 (UR 5) – (County Area Plan Urban Residential/H30). The Urban Residential 5 designation provides for medium to high-density apartment and condominium complexes in areas easily accessible to transportation, employment, retail, and other urban services. Allowable uses in this designation include multiple family dwellings at a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre and a maximum density of 30 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation pursuant to the Unified Development Code. Live-work units may be allowed subject to the requirements of the underlying zone.

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Regional Commercial (CR) – (County Area Plan – Major Commercial/CM)

The Regional Commercial designation is applied to central and regional commercial districts in the planning area, generally located around the Valencia Town Center and other major community centers. This designation is intended to promote the development of regional focal points for commercial, entertainment, cultural, and business uses serving the general public and drawing from a market area

encompassing the entire Santa Clarita Valley. Allowable uses include the regional mall; retail sale of automobiles and recreational vehicles, furniture, and home improvements; large-scale entertainment uses such as theaters and arenas; corporate offices and financial institutions; and hospitality services, including hotels and restaurants. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0. Coverage of the development site by buildings shall not exceed 90 percent, except as otherwise permitted by the reviewing authority pursuant to review as prescribed by the Unified Development Code.

Multiple Family dwellings (including live-work units) may be permitted in this designation as allowed by the zoning ordinance, provided the approval of multiple family dwellings does not adversely impact job creation or economic development in the planning area. Where appropriate, a mixed-use development incorporating multiple-family residential with commercial uses is allowed in this designation, pursuant to the zoning ordinance. Multiple family dwellings shall have a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per acre and a maximum of 50 dwelling units per acre.

Community Commercial (CC) – (No Corresponding County Area Plan Designation)

The Community Commercial designation is intended for business providing retail and service uses which primarily serve the local market. Representative uses include restaurants, clothing stores, hardware and auto parts stores, grocery markets, pharmacies, banks and financial services, specialty retail, theaters and nightclubs, day care centers, and medical services. These areas are typically located along arterial streets or at the intersections of high traffic corridors. Allowable uses shall have a maximum FAR of 0.75.Coverage of the development site by buildings shall not exceed 80 percent, except as otherwise permitted by the reviewing authority pursuant to discretionary review as prescribed by the Unified Development Code.

Multiple family dwellings (including live/work units) may be permitted in the designation, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation, provided that the approval of multiple family dwellings in the designation does not adversely impact job creation or economic development in the planning area. Multiple family dwellings shall have a maximum density of 18 dwelling units per acre.

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Neighborhood Commercial (CN) – (County Area Plan – General Commercial/CG)

The Neighborhood Commercial designation provides for small neighborhood commercial districts that serve the short-term needs of residents in the immediate area. Allowable uses in this designation include supermarkets; drug stores; restaurants; personal services; repair services; light automotive services; day care centers; and other local-serving shops and services for neighborhood residents. Neighborhood

commercial centers should be integrated into surrounding neighborhoods with appropriate screening, buffering, and pedestrian access. More intensive uses that are incompatible with adjacent neighborhoods, such as bars and nightclubs, heavy automobile repair, and businesses with outdoor operations or storage, are not appropriate in this designation. Coverage of the development site by buildings shall not exceed 75 percent, except as otherwise permitted by the reviewing authority pursuant to discretionary review as prescribed by the Unified Development Code. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.50. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Multiple family dwellings (including live/work units) may be permitted in the designation, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation, provided that the approval of multiple family dwellings in the designation does not adversely impact job creation or economic development in the planning area. Multiple family dwellings shall have a maximum density of 18 dwelling units per acre.

Business Park (BP) – (County Area Plan – Office and Professional/IO)

The Business Park designation provides for mixed employment districts in areas accessible to transportation and visible from freeways and major arterials and is intended to promote the development of master-planned environments with a high quality of design and construction. Allowable uses in this designation include offices; medical services, research and development; light assembly and fabrication; warehousing and distribution; and supportive commercial uses. Development in this designation is expected to provide enhanced landscaping and outdoor amenities to create a campus-like setting. Operations and storage activities are to be confined to enclosed buildings or otherwise screened from public view. This designation is appropriate in locations with good access and visibility from freeways and major arterials. Site areas should be large enough to accommodate comprehensive planning, and designs shall provide compatibility with and linkage to adjacent developments. Coverage of the development site by buildings shall not exceed 90 percent, except as otherwise permitted by the reviewing authority pursuant to discretionary review as prescribed by the Unified Development Code. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

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National Forest (OS-NF) – (County Area Plan – National Forest/OS-NF)

The National Forest designation identifies lands in the planning area within the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests. For lands owned by the United States Forest Service, specific allowable uses, maximum

intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

For privately owned lands within the National Forest (in-holdings), allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, privately owned commercial recreation with or without support facilities such as lodging and dining, filming and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards are determined by the underlying zoning designation. Clustering is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Development Code. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

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Public/Institutional (PI) – (County Area Plan – Public and Semi-Public Facilities/P)

The Public/Institutional designation identifies lands in the planning area that are used for various types of public or and community serving facilities owned and operated by public agencies, special districts, non-profit organizations, and other entities. Allowable uses include civic and governmental offices; public works yards; public or private schools; libraries; day care centers; hospitals; airports and supporting medical facilities, museums, fire stations, police stations, landfills, and prisons. Building height and coverage will be determined by the lead agency for each project, based upon the type and intensity of use. Privately owned facilities serving the general public with transportation services, such as helipads, may also be appropriate in this designation.

OVOV recognizes that there are existing utilities and associated infrastructure operating with previous approvals located in all zones dispersed throughout the Valley. The City's ability to regulate or condition said utilities and associated infrastructure operations is at times limited and, in some cases, preempted by other lead government agencies. It is expected that these uses will continue, that necessary operations and maintenance are performed, that on-site testing is needed, and that expansion will occur as demand for the utility increases. Allowable uses shall have a maximum FAR of 0.5. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the Unified Development Code.

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North Newhall Area

Table L-2
Land Use Designations and Areas

Land Use Designation	Area in Acres		Units per		
City (County)	County	City	Acre	Total Area	Percent
Non-Urban 1 (RL20)	24,298.22	0.00	.05	24,298.22	7.82%
Non-Urban 2 (RL10)	13,614.52	0.00	.10	13,614.52	4.38%
Non-Urban 3 (RL5)	10,092.57	0.0	.20	10,092.57	3.25%
Non-Urban 4 (RL2)	16,554.70	1,574.06	.50	18,128.76	5.84%
Non-Urban 5 (RL1)	1,872.43	1,681.24	1.00	3,553.67	1.14%
Urban Residential 1 (H2)	6,617.77	2,435.42	2.00	9,053.19	2.91%
Urban Residential 2 (H5)	6,062.00	9,172.59	5.00	15,234.59	4.90%
Urban Residential 3	0.00	2,087.25	11.00	2,087.25	0.67%
Urban Residential 4 (H18)	667.52	242.52	18.00	910.04	0.29%
Urban Residential 5 (H30)	407.90	556.74	30.00	964.64	0.29%
Mixed Use Neighborhood	0.00	263.73		263.73	0.08
Mixed Use-Corridor	0.00	324.96		324.96	0.10%
Regional Commercial (CM)	1,154.87	512.21		1,667.08	0.54%
Community Commercial	0.00	905.08		905.08	0.29%
Neighborhood Commercial (CN)	465.25	193.57		658.82	0.21%
Business Park (IO)	1,967.67	3,286.67		5,254.34	1.69%
Industrial (IL)	1,267.91	244.03		1,511.93	0.49%
Open Space (OS)	17,241.26	5,502.50		22,743.30	7.32%
OS-National Forest (OS-NF)	149,495.00	162.26		149,657.26	48.17%
OS-Bureau of Land Management (OS-BLM)	3,427.17	0.00		3,427.17	1.10%
Specific Plan (SP)	14,540.04	2,545.65		17,085.68	5.50%
Public Institutional/Facility (P)	4,129.48	1,489.82		5,619.30	1.80%
Nonclassified Freeway	2,952.35	533.59		3,485.94	1.12%
Total	**276,953.01**	**33,713.41**		**310,666.42**	**100.00%**

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Table L-3
Land Use Designation and Zoning Consistency Matrix

Land Use Designation	Consistent County Zoning	Consistent City Zoning
Non-Urban/Rural Land		
Non-Urban 1 (County RL20)	Light Agricultural (A-1) Heavy Agricultural (A-2)	Residential Estate (RE)
Non-Urban 2 (County RL10)	Light Agricultural (A-1) Heavy Agricultural (A-2)	Residential Estate (RE)
Non-Urban 3 (County RL5)	Light Agricultural (A-1) Heavy Agricultural (A-2)	Residential Estate (RE)
Non-Urban 4 (County RL2)	Light Agricultural (A-1) Heavy Agricultural (A-2)	Residential Estate (RE)
Non-Urban 5 (County RL1)	Light Agricultural (A-1) Heavy Agricultural (A-2) Residential Agricultural (R-A)	Residential Very Low (RVL)
Urban Residential		
Urban Residential 1 (County H2)	Residential Agricultural (R-A) Single-Family Residence (R-1)	Residential Low (RL)
Urban Residential 2 (County H5)	Single-Family Residence (R-1)	Residential Suburban (RS)
Urban Residential 3	No corresponding zones	Residential Moderate (RM)
Urban Residential 4 (County H18)	Two-family Residence (R-2) Limited Multiple Residence (R-3)	Residential Moderate (RM)
Urban Residential 5 (County H30)	Limited Multiple Residence (R-3) Unlimited Residence (R-4)	Residential Medium High (RMH) Residential High (RH)
Mixed Use		
Mixed Use Neighborhood	No corresponding zones	Mixed Use Overlay (MU)
Mixed Use Corridor	No corresponding zones	Mixed Use Overlay (MU)
Mixed Use Urban Village	No corresponding zones	Mixed Use Overlay (MU)
Commercial		
Regional Commercial (County CM)	Unlimited Commercial (C-3)	Commercial Town Center (CTC) Visitor-Serving/Resort (VSR)
Community Commercial	No corresponding zones	Community Commercial (CC)
Neighborhood Commercial (County CN)	Restricted Business (C-1) Neighborhood Business (C-2)	Commercial Neighborhood (CN)
Industrial		
Business Park (County IO)	Commercial Manufacturing (CM) Scientific Research & Development (SR-D); Light Manufacturing (M-1)	Business Park(BP) Commercial Office (CO)
Industrial (County IL)	Light Manufacturing (M-1) Restricted Heavy Manufacturing (M1.5); Heavy Manufacturing (M-2)	Industrial (I) Industrial Commercial (IC)

Land Use Designation	Consistent County Zoning	Consistent City Zoning
Open Space		
Open Space (County OS)	Open Space (O-S)	Open Space (OS)
National Forest (County OS-NF)	Open Space (O-S)	Open Space (OS)
Bureau of Land Management (County OS-BLM)	Open Space (O-S)	Open Space (OS)
Other		
Specific Plan (County SP)	Specific Plan (SP)	Specific Plan (SP)
Public Facility (County P)	Institutional (IT)	All zones
Transportation Corridor (TC)	No corresponding zones	All zones

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Additional Access for Castaic

The Castaic community, located in the northwestern portion of the planning area, has limited access to the remainder of the Santa Clarita Valley. Access is primarily provided by the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5), which is often subject to heavy congestion and closures resulting from snow, wildfires, and traffic accidents. The Old Road is the principal alternative to Interstate 5. However, The Old Road is often subject to the same constraints, as it parallels Interstate 5 through Castaic.

Castaic's limited access has been identified as a pressing issue and the community has requested alternatives to Interstate 5 and The Old Road. Specifically, an alternative access route from Castaic to the Tesoro del Valle community. The alternative access route would generally travel southeasterly from Ridge Route Road, in the center of the Castaic community, to Tesoro del Valle Drive near its intersection with Copper Hill Drive The request was evaluated and it was determined that the route should not be designated on the Master Plan of Highways. The determination was based on two factors. First, the route would traverse steep topography and other environmental constraints, making construction of a Highway extremely difficult and expensive. Second, the route would traverse lands where minimal future development is envisioned by the Land Use Map.

Although the alternative access route is not designated on the Master Plan of Highways, it could be constructed as a collector street. As described earlier in this Element, a collector street is a roadway which has an ultimate roadway section of two lanes with limited vehicular access to the roadway from driveways and cross streets. Any future land division in this area will be required to explore the

feasibility of accommodating the roadway and reserving right-of-way or constructing the roadway, where deemed appropriate.

San Francisquito Canyon Road Extension

The Circulation Element includes a proposed extension of San Francisquito Canyon Road, north of Cooper Hill Drive that would connect directly to McBean Parkway. Prior to the adoption of this Area Plan, the proposed extension was designated as a Secondary Highway. As mentioned earlier in this Element, the proposed extension was recommended to be reclassified as a Limited Secondary Highway as a result of the traffic analysis conducted for this Area Plan. Accordingly, the proposed extension is now designated as a Limited Secondary Highway on the Master Plan of Highways (see Exhibit C-2 in this Area Plan).

The community expressed concerns regarding the proposed extension of San Francisquito Canyon Road. Although the community acknowledged that a Limited Secondary Highway would have fewer potential impacts on the local community than a Secondary Highway, they requested that the proposed extension be completely removed from the Master Plan of Highways. The request was evaluated and it was determined that the proposed extension should remain on the Master Plan of Highways. The determination was based on the need for safe, effective circulation in the area, as the proposed extension is superior to the current alignment of San Francisquito Canyon Road. However, the community's concerns were acknowledged, especially as they related to equestrian users.

Prior to the construction of the proposed extension of San Francisquito Canyon Road, the City and/or County will conduct outreach to the community and will investigate any concerns that are expressed. To ensure that concerns are addressed and potential impacts are minimized, the City and/or County will also implement any required traffic mitigations. These mitigations could include an equestrian crossing above or below the roadway, provided that the crossing is technically, environmentally, and financially feasible.

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Significant Ecological Areas

The County first began to inventory biotic resources and identify important areas of biological diversity in the 1970s. These biologically important areas, such as the Santa Clara River, have historically been identified in the General Plan and Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. The primary mechanism used by the County to conserve biological diversity is a planning overlay called SEA. SEAs are defined as ecologically important land and water systems that are valuable as plant or animal communities, often important to

the preservation of threatened or endangered species, and conservation of biological diversity in the County. The SEA overlay, along with the SEA conditional use permit process, are referred to as the SEA Program, which allows the County to implement its biotic resource goals through land use regulations and biological resource assessments.

Conservation of the County's biotic diversity is the main objective of the SEA Program, and connectivity between important natural habitats plays an important role in maintaining biotic communities. The preservation of large biologically diverse areas is also important because new species may still be found within a few miles of major urban centers, such as the Xylotrechus hovorei, a beetle recently discovered near the Placerita Nature Center. Within the Santa Clarita Valley, the County has designated the following SEAs, as shown on Exhibit CO-5. A more comprehensive description of the County's SEAs is contained in an Appendix of this Area Plan.

- Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools SEA

  The Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools SEA lies in the southeastern end of the Liebre Mountains, north of the Santa Clara River and east of Bouquet Canyon. The SEA boundaries encompass the watershed and drainages of the Cruzan Mesa and Plum Canyon vernal pools, considered as a single ecosystem within the SEA. Vernal pools, which are rare in Southern California and extremely rare in Los Angeles County, form seasonally in shallow, closed basins, usually where a lens of heavy clay soil holds surface water following rainfall events.

- Santa Clara River SEA

  The Santa Clara River SEA encompasses the entire Los Angeles County reach of the Santa Clara River, primarily within unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The Santa Clara River SEA covers the length of the river and with the watershed extensions encompasses a wide variety of topographic features and habitat types. The orientation and extent of the SEA also consists of the surface and subsurface hydrology of the Santa Clara River, from its headwater tributaries and watershed basin to the point at which it exits Los Angeles County.

- Santa Felicia SEA

  The Santa Felicia SEA includes a variety of topographic features and habitat types. The orientation and extent of the SEA encompasses the surface and subsurface hydrology of the Santa Felicia watershed, from its headwater, tributaries, and basin to the point at which it exits Los Angeles County. The northernmost portion of the SEA is within the Angeles National Forest. Capturing the watershed tributaries, the eastern boundary follows a predominate ridgeline, the western boundary is the county border and the southern boundary captures two other small tributaries that feed the Santa Felicia, to encompass the entire watershed that ultimately drains into Lake Piru in Ventura County.

- Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA

The Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA is located northwest of the San Fernando Valley within unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and an incorporated area of the City of Los Angeles west of Chatsworth. The area is south of State Route 126 and the Santa Clara River, west of Interstate 5, and includes much of the Santa Susana Mountains in the north, the Santa Susana Pass, Chatsworth Reservoir, and the eastern portion of the Simi Hills in the south.

- Valley Oaks Savannah

  The Valley Oaks Savannah SEA is located on the west side of Interstate 5, north of Pico Canyon. The area contains one of the last remaining stands of valley oak in the Santa Clarita Valley and a mixture of plants from the coastal sage scrub and chaparral communities, typical of those found in the Santa Clarita Valley.

SEAs are not "preserves," and limited development is allowed within these designated areas. However, in order to conserve important biological resources, land-intensive development in SEAs within County areas requires approval of a Conditional Use Permit and an additional level of review by the SEA Technical Advisory Committee. These requirements ensure that development is designed to be highly compatible with the biological resources present in a manner that is consistent with the overall intent of the SEA program and that the impacts of development are balanced with the conservation of natural resources. Exemptions from SEA requirements include the construction of single-family residences, additions to existing single-family residences, accessory structures to single-family residences, and agricultural uses such as animal grazing and corrals.

Within the City, any development proposal in an SEA is required to include a biological study evaluating impacts on biological resources from the proposed development, and appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, the City's Unified Development Code requires that any such project be designed to be compatible with biological resources, maintain watercourses and water bodies in a natural state, maintain wildlife corridors, preserve adequate buffer areas or barriers between development and natural resources, and ensure that roads and utilities are designed to mitigate impacts to biological resources.

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William S. Hart Park and Museum	The mansion on this property was built for western film actor William S. Hart in 1927, and Hart filled it with Western art and artifacts. Many Western movies were filmed here. The William S. Hart Residence, Bunk House, Garage and Chauffeur's Quarters, Pool House, Gate Tower, Sundeck and Tea Room, Barns and Pet Cemeteries are all eligible as contributors to a district for listing in the National Register of Historical Places. The property is currently listed as a *State Point of Historical Interest (#564)*

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Harry Carey Ranch Historic District 28515 San Francisquito Canyon Road	This complex contains historic buildings associated with western film actor Harry Carey, who purchased the property for a residence and filming in 1916. Nine buildings of the complex comprise the Harry Carey Historic District. Harry and Olive Carey had the ranch house and its various outbuildings built during the 1920s and 1930s, a period when they and their children lived at the ranch. Carey's 20-year career included more than 200 films. In 2005, the County accepted the donation from the property owner as part of the approval process for an adjacent housing development. The significance of the district is based not only on its role in the early film industry, but on the character and quality of the ranch buildings and the main residence known as the Tesoro Adobe. The property is maintained as a museum by the County of Los Angeles. The property, currently known as the Tesoro Adobe Historic Park, is not officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places; it has been determined to be eligible for this status.

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Vasquez Rocks Agua Dulce	This 745-acre park of unique geological rock formations is located near Agua Dulce Springs. The park features a history trail tour about the Tataviam Indians and early Spanish settlers. Located on the San Andreas fault, the sandstone rock formations were uplifted during the Cenozoic era, approximately 25 million years ago. In 1873-74, one of California's most notorious bandits, Tiburcio Vasquez, used these rocks as a hiding place to evade law enforcement. His name has since been associated with the geologic feature. *National Register of Historic Places (Item#72000228, 1972)*

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The City funds trail construction on a project-by-project basis by combining general fund money with grant applications. Since 1995, the City has received $12-$13 million in grants used for trail construction, including both state and federal funds. For example, an MTA grant was used to fund design and construction of the continuation of the Santa Clara River trail from the South Fork to Interstate 5. The City and County also require developers to dedicate trail easements, and construct trail segments within the project boundaries of new development, based on adopted trail plans, and to provide connections to regional trails where required.

City staff coordinates with County and federal agencies and developers on projects outside the City limits, including U.S. Forest Service lands, to ensure that the City's trail systems connect with regional trails. One of the city's specific goals is to tie its trail system in with the Pacific Crest Trail, which passes through Agua Dulce near Vasquez Rocks on its north-south path from the U.S.-Canada border to the U.S.-Mexico border. The City and County will continue to cooperate with neighboring agencies and stakeholders to create additional regional trail segments.

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Conservation and Open Space Element
Appendix
Significant Ecological Area Designations
County of Los Angeles
and
City of Santa Clarita

CONTENTS

Significant Ecological Area Studies

Los Angeles County began to identify biological resources, such as the Santa Clara River, and valley oak savannahs, in the 1970s. In 1980, 61 of these biologically significant areas were adopted as part of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the Countywide General Plan, five of which were subsequently adopted in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan. A number of the SEAs were islands of significant habitats within larger undeveloped areas in 1980, which was thought would provide sensitive plants and animals ample open space and ensure their continued existence. Since 1980 however, many of these areas were impacted by rapid development activity within and around the SEAs, dramatically reducing the opportunity for species movement and genetic dissemination.

In January 2001, the County released the Los Angeles County SEA Update Study 2000. Conservation planning was the fundamental goal of this update, which was designed to accomplish the following: evaluate existing SEAs for changes in biotic conditions and consider additional areas for SEA status; delineate SEA boundaries based upon biotic evaluation; and propose guidelines for managing and conserving biological resources within SEAs.

The SEA Update Study 2000 was based on scientifically grounded concepts regarding the size and type of linkage systems necessary to sustain the biologically diverse plant and animal species that are found

within the County. The methods used to identify and delineate SEAs was multi-faceted, including: a broad outreach program focusing on government resource agencies, academic institutions, conservation groups, and the general public; a comprehensive database and literature review; field study; and the interpretation of aerial photography. The SEA Map depicts each area that has been designated as ecologically significant because it meets one or more of the following criteria:

SEA Update Study Criteria

Criterion	Intent/Rationale
A. The Habitat of Core Populations of Endangered or Threatened Plant or Animal Species	These areas are important in maintaining viable plant and/or animal populations for those species recognized by state and or federal resource agencies as being extremely low in numbers or having a very limited amount of suitable habitat available. The terms "endangered" and "threatened" have precise meanings defined in both state and federal law (see below). The identification of "core population"[1] will be determined by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG). This criterion is not meant to constitute a recovery program for listed species but rather one element of a more comprehensive conservation effort for the long-term sustainment of listed species within the county. At the local level, recovery programs of both the CDFG and the USFWS have measures in place which can impose severe penalties for the "take " of listed species or their habitat. Federally Endangered: "any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range …" Federally Threatened: "any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range." State Endangered: "…a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of its range due to one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, or disease." State Threatened: "… a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of the special protection and management efforts required by this chapter [California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sec 670.5]. Any animal determined by the commission as rare on or before January 1, 1985 is a threatened species."

1 The term "core population" as used here is a general biological term referring to a known and/or a viable population. Other locations of endangered or threatened plant or animal species may also occur in Los Angeles County which is not within a SEA. It should also be noted that the concept of core populations is consistent with current thinking of the USFWS and the CDFG.

Criterion		Intent/Rationale
B.	On a Regional Basis, Biotic Communities, Vegetative Associations, and Habitat of Plant and Animal Species that are either unique, or are restricted in distribution	The purpose of this criterion is to identify biotic resources that are uncommon on a regional basis. The geographical region considered could be as small as the Southern California coastal plains, the Transverse mountain ranges, the Mojave Desert, the Southern California coastline, etc.; or they could be as large as Southern California, the Pacific coast, all of California, the western United States, or even larger. The point being that the community, association, or habitat is either unique or restricted in distribution in an area larger than the political boundaries of Los Angeles County (i.e., coastal sage scrub, native grasslands, or vernal pools). Resources that are limited in distribution in the region being considered, but common elsewhere, are also included under this category.
C.	Within Los Angeles County, Biotic Communities, Vegetative Associations, and Habitat of Plant and Animal Species that are either unique, or are restricted in distribution	The purpose of this criterion is to identify biotic resources that are uncommon within the political boundaries of Los Angeles County, regardless of their availability elsewhere. The County has a high diversity of biological components. It and San Diego County are the only counties in the United States that possess coastal, montane, and desert subregions within their boundaries. It is a rich heritage that few local governments have an opportunity to preserve. Many biotic communities that were once common in Los Angeles County have been severely reduced due to urban and agricultural development. This is especially true south of the San Gabriel Mountains, and among the agricultural fields of the North County. Other biotic features have never been common.
D.	Habitat that at some point in the life cycle of a species or group of species, serves as Concentrated Breeding, Feeding, Resting, or Migrating Grounds, and is limited in availability either regionally or in Los Angeles County	Species or groups of species, at various points in their life cycles, tend to congregate in certain areas. These areas possess resources that are essential to the maintenance of specific wildlife species. This criterion is intended to identify those areas that are limited in distribution either regionally or in Los Angeles County, and not the primary habitat of common species or groups of species.
E.	Biotic resources that are of scientific interest because they are either an extreme in physical/geographical limitations, or represent unusual variation in a population or community	Often times scientists learn the most about a biological phenomenon by studying it at an extreme in its distribution. This frequently reveals the biological and ecological parameters under which it can survive. In addition, isolated populations and communities often are relicts of what was present in an area at some previous time, and may show genetic traits not found elsewhere in the species. These biological and ecological parameters may be useful in determining taxonomic relationships.
F.	Areas that would provide for the preservation of relatively undisturbed examples of the original natural biotic communities In Los Angeles County	The intent of this criterion was to identify examples of the primary biotic resources in Los Angeles County. At least one example (e.g., native grassland, valley oak savannah) of each vegetation type will be selected from the various geographical regions in the County in order to preserve basic bio-geographic diversity.

CRUZAN MESA VERNAL POOLS SEA

General

The Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools SEA lies in the southeastern portion of the Liebre Mountains, north of the Santa Clara River, and southeast of Bouquet Canyon. The SEA boundaries encompass the watershed and drainages of the Cruzan Mesa and Plum Canyon vernal pools, considered as a single ecosystem within the SEA. The SEA is located within in an unincorporated portion of Los Angeles County and lies entirely within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) California Mint Canyon Quadrangle.

Description

The Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools SEA includes mesas, canyons and interior slopes, with Plum Canyon creek running east west through the southern portion of the overall SEA. The extent of the SEA encompasses the watershed supporting both of these regionally unique vernal pools, including the immediate watershed surrounding both systems and the corridor in between. Plum Canyon forms the major drainage running east west through the southern portion of the SEA, draining west toward Bouquet Canyon. Uplands within the SEA are comprised of slopes and canyons supporting coastal sage scrub or scrub-chaparral vegetation. The Cruzan Mesa vernal pool complex lies within an elevated, topographically enclosed basin atop an eroded foothill between Mint and Bouquet canyons. The Plum Canyon vernal pool, situated in a landslide depression on a hillside terrace, is smaller than the Cruzan Mesa pools, but possesses the same essential vernal pool characteristics as the larger system, and the two areas together form an ecologically functional unit.

The seasonally wet vernal pools and surrounding open coastal sage scrub and chaparral slopes support a wide variety of migrant and resident birds and other native sage scrub vertebrate species. The steep cliffs which surround Cruzan Mesa, especially along the southeast and north margins, provide protected sites for perching, roosting and nesting by a variety of birds of prey.

The SEA supports several regional biological values. These values include: sensitive plant species unique to seasonal pools on heavy clay soils, several of which are at the northernmost point in their overall ranges; seasonal surface water, providing breeding sites for sensitive amphibians, including western spadefoot and Riverside fairy shrimp; vernal pools, found nowhere else in Los Angeles County, and their coastal sage scrub watershed serving as a hydrological filter; seasonal ponds and surrounding mesic vegetation providing essential foraging and wintering sites for migrating birds otherwise uncommon in the southern Liebre Mountains; steep cliffs surrounding the mesa tops and their crevices and cavities providing roosting and nesting sites in the otherwise brush-covered hillsides. These pools are the only three or four such pools in this portion of Southern California. The sensitive resources they support are

unique locally and regionally, and biologists consider these to be among most sensitive habitat types in Southern California.

Vegetation

The SEA encompasses formations of coastal sage scrub, vernal pool and non-native grassland. The vernal pool margins support limited densities of native grasses, but these do not form separate communities and are included within the vernal pool floral matrix. Sensitive plant species occurring or potentially occurring within the SEA are discussed below in the Sensitive Biological Resources section.

Plant communities within the SEA were classified using standard methodology and terminology. The communities discussed correspond directly with those listed in Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (1986 and 1992 update). Descriptions and general locations of the each plant community present within the SEA are given below.

Vernal pool sites occur in the SEA within the southern end of the Cruzan Mesa basin and on a landslide terrace on the northern slope of upper Plum Canyon, about one and one-half aerial miles southwest of the Cruzan Mesa pool system. True vernal pools, which are rare in Southern California and extremely rare in Los Angeles County, form seasonally in shallow, closed basins, usually where a lens of heavy clay soil holds surface water following rainfall events. Agency-listed sensitive plant species occurring within both of the SEA pool systems include California Orcutt grass and spreading navarretia, along with other vernal pool endemics such as hairgrass, woolly-marbles, waterwort, *Mimulus latidens* and water-starwort.

Coastal sage scrub occurs throughout the slopes and ridges of most of the SEA, in places intermixed with chaparral elements. To some extent, the mosaic of coastal sage and chaparral reflects the fire history of any given portion of the site, with scrub formations generally occurring on sites which have more recently burned. However, some slopes within upper Plum and Mint canyons, where no fires have occurred for over 30 years, still support "pure" coastal sage scrub, suggesting that the formation is a climax community on those sites.

Dominant species on most slopes within the SEA are California sagebrush, woolly blue-curls, chaparral yucca, black sage, Acton encelia, white sage, and chamise. A variety of less dominant associated species are also present including lance-leaved live-forever, common tarplant, California buckwheat, beavertail cactus, turkish rugging, and Peirson's morning-glory. Disced or cleared areas have regrown with a dense cover of oats and bromes, California poppy, fiddleneck, several species of lupines, popcorn flower, comb-bur and other disturbance-favored native annuals. Less-frequently disturbed portions of the upper watershed basin support dense stands of chamise – California scrub oak chaparral, with yerba santa abundant along dirt roads and other disturbed areas. In the lower portions of canyons and along Plum

Canyon creek, where ground-water levels permit, giant rye grass, Mexican elderberry, acourtia, redberry, toyon, holly-leaved cherry, Fremont cottonwood, western sycamore, and arroyo willow occur.

Non-native grassland generally consists of invasive annual grasses which are primarily of Mediterranean origin, and which have become the dominant ground cover formation on disturbed sites throughout the western states. Common species within this "community," which is a ruderal formation and not a true habitat or community, include oats, bromes, foxtail chess, and other grasses, along with wild mustards, yellow star thistle, wire lettuce, sow thistle, milk thistle, and other disturbance-favored "weedy" taxa. Non-native ruderal formations occur over most of the Mesa around the vernal pools, where coastal sage scrub has been disturbed or removed, in small strips and patches throughout the SEA primarily along disturbed dirt road edges and where grading or other substrate disturbances have not regrown to native species.

Mainland cherry forest is not well described but is typically composed of tall stands of hollyleaf cherry on rocky, dry slopes. Within the SEA, this community is not well developed and inter-mingles with chaparral. It can be found in a single narrow patch on a slope in the southwest portion of the SEA.

Wildlife

Wildlife diversity and abundance within the SEA are moderate, commensurate with the relative homogeneity of the natural open space habitat types. A number of local wildlife species are more-or-less dependent upon coastal sage scrub or scrub-chaparral formations, while other species are strictly limited to seasonal pool habitats. The two vernal pool systems in the SEA, along with the coastal sage scrub-chaparral uplands surrounding and connecting them constitutes a single, integrated functional ecosystem for wildlife species, both within the SEA boundaries and as a part of the larger regional scrub-chaparral ecosystem.

Analysis of invertebrates on any particular site usually is limited by a lack of specific data, but the fact that the SEA contains only two primary natural habitat types insures that there is sufficient acreage to support healthy populations of whatever invertebrate species are present, probably several hundred terrestrial species. The vernal pools, when ponded, form aquatic habitats for a moderately diverse fauna of freshwater arthropods and other invertebrates, including native fairy shrimp, aquatic flies, diving beetles, water scavengers, ostracods, and snails. The only insect order presently known to have a vernal pool endemic within the SEA is Coleoptera, with one vernal pool ground beetle species thus far having been found.

Amphibians generally are relatively common in coastal sage scrub habitats with persistent surface hydrology during the breeding season. The SEA supports abundant populations of Pacific chorus frog,

western toad, and western spadefoot toad. At least two species of salamander also may be present within more mesic portions of the surrounding canyons and chaparral.

Reptile populations in the SEA would include numerous lizard species, including San Diego banded gecko, yucca night lizard, side-blotched lizard, western fence lizard, western skink, San Diego alligator lizard, coastal western whiptail, San Diego horned lizard, and silvery legless lizard. A robust snake fauna also would be expected within the SEA, including western blind snake, coachwhip (red racer), chaparral whipsnake, coastal patch-nosed snake, California rosy boa, San Diego gopher snake, California kingsnake, California mountain kingsnake, night snake, and southern Pacific rattlesnake.

Bird diversity within the SEA is related to habitat opportunities for year-round residents, seasonal residents, migrating raptors and song birds. Open coastal sage scrub hosts a suite of birds typical of such sites at lower elevations over most of the coastal slopes of Southern California. The most productive sites for resident coastal sage scrub and chaparral birds are around riparian and freshwater systems, which also attract large numbers of migrants during Spring and Fall. The vernal pools attract moderate numbers of migrating waders and waterfowl, and provide important winter foraging areas for resident and migratory birds of prey. Coastal sage and chaparral birds resident or breeding within the SEA include ashy rufous-crowned sparrow, Bell's sparrow, black-chinned sparrow, lark sparrow, California thrasher, spotted towhee, California towhee, phainopepla, northern mockingbird, lazuli bunting, and several species of hummingbird, with additional species (western meadowlark, California horned lark, and perhaps also savannah and grasshopper sparrows) nesting and foraging in the grassland and ruderal habitats surrounding the vernal pools. Birds of prey observed around the vernal pools include red-tailed hawk, northern harrier, white-tailed kite, prairie falcon, and golden eagle. Barn owl, great horned owl, and common raven all nest in the cliffs surrounding Cruzan Mesa.

Wildlife Movement

The vernal pools situated within this SEA serve as isolated, high resource quality habitat linkage sites for migratory waterfowl. The vernal pools teem with arthropod and amphibian activity, and so provide essential feeding grounds for long-distance migrants, as well as for resident species of reptiles, birds and mammals. The ponds do not lie within any identified terrestrial movement routes for wildlife, but may serve as important seasonal watering sites for species moving through and across the Plum Canyon divide between Mint and Bouquet canyons. The Plum Canyon stream channel undoubtedly serves as a movement pathway for more mobile species of terrestrial mammals, but it no longer links any larger habitat areas directly, due to land conversion in Mint and Bouquet Canyon.

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species which have been accorded special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, rare, or otherwise of concern, principally due to the species' declining or limited distribution or population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Watch lists of such resources are maintained by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and special groups such as the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). The following indicates the habitats as well as plant and animal species present, or potentially present within the SEA, have been afforded special recognition.

Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats

This report/description supports several habitat types considered sensitive by resource agencies, namely the CDFG (California Natural Diversity Data Base [CNDDB], 2000), because of their scarcity and support of a number of state and federally listed endangered, threatened, and rare vascular plants, as well as sensitive bird and reptile species. These communities include coastal sage scrub, mainland cherry forest, and vernal pool. These communities or closely related designations are considered highest-inventory priority communities by the CDFG, indicating that they are declining in acreage throughout their range due to land use changes.

Sensitive Species

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing by the USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS. These sensitive species include, but are not limited to, spreading navarretia, California Orcutt grass, Vernal pool fairy shrimp, San Diego fairy shrimp, Riverside fairy shrimp, golden eagle, California gnatcatcher, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, San Diego desert woodrat, and southern grasshopper mouse. In addition, the SEA identifies species observed, recorded in the CNDDB, or reported in previous documentation as observed within or in the immediate vicinity of the SEA.

SANTA CLARA RIVER SEA

General

The Santa Clara River SEA encompasses the entire Los Angeles County reach of the Santa Clara River, primarily within unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The Santa Clara River SEA covers the length of the river and with the watershed extensions encompasses a wide variety of topographic features and habitat types. The orientation and extent of the SEA also consists of the surface and subsurface hydrology of the Santa Clara River, from its headwater tributaries and watershed basin to the point at which it exits Los Angeles County jurisdiction.

Description

The eastern portion of the SEA surrounds the Kentucky Springs and Aliso Canyon watersheds, portions of which are within the Angeles National Forest. It follows the river channel downstream through the Acton basin, taking in Arrastre Creek, Mill Canyon and other side drainages and significant rock outcroppings, then stays within the channel to Agua Dulce Canyon, at which point the northern boundary loops around that watershed and includes Vasquez Rocks County Natural Area, while the southern boundary encompasses the lower portion of Bear Canyon and undeveloped portions of Oak Spring Canyon adjacent to the river channel. The southern boundary leaves the river channel at the confluence with Sand Canyon and extends broadly to the south, to include all of the remaining natural areas of the Sand Canyon watershed, along with the major ridgeline, earthquake escarpment, grassland, and canyon habitat features and watersheds of Elsmere, Whitney, Placerita and Bear canyons.

From Sand Canyon west the SEA boundary remains close to the margins of the floodplain to the confluence with San Francisquito Canyon, wherein the northern boundary extends northward upstream on that drainage to the headwaters of San Francisquito Creek on the Angeles National Forest, then returns to the river channel and proceeds west to the confluence with Castaic Creek. From here, it extends north around the lower portion of Castaic Creek, embracing the riparian habitat areas around and above the confluence, with the boundaries of the SEA following the Santa Clara River channel to the Ventura County line. The biological and ecological functionality of the SEA is integrally linked to the river basin for its entire length, of course, so the biogeographic limits of the SEA would extend downstream through Los Angeles/Ventura County to its mouth at the Pacific Ocean, and encompass the significant tributary drainages (Piru Creek, Sespe Creek, Santa Paula Creek, Wheeler Creek, etc.).

The Kentucky Springs and Aliso Canyon watershed zones originate on National Forest land, in semi-arid chaparral and desert scrub habitat, but the drainages themselves support different formations of desert and interior riparian habitat, ranging from seasonal Great Basin sagebrush wash in Kentucky Springs to

dense, mature, willow-cottonwood-sycamore woodlands over permanent streams in Aliso Canyon. The surrounding uplands in the basins support pinyon-juniper woodlands, chamise, mountain mahogany, and manzanita dominated chaparral formations, buckwheat scrub, and ruderal lands. Alluvial terraces within both drainages have been rather extensively cultivated for orchard crops or dryland agriculture, and in more recent years, rural and urban-type residential developments have encroached on the watersheds. Portions of the Aliso Canyon riparian woodlands have been encroached upon by rural development, but the upper portion of the drainage possesses excellent xeric cottonwood-sycamore riparian woodland. The alluvial plain formed along the southern margin of the river basin below these canyons supports intact, high diversity xeric alluvial fan sage scrub.

Downstream of the Acton basin the SEA encompasses the Arrastre Creek drainage, which is the type locality for the federally and state endangered unarmored three-spined stickleback fish, and also loops around the high, rounded rocky butte-like outcroppings on the north side of the river. These features, while only a minor part of the watershed of the river, provide important nesting, roosting, and sheltering habitat values for bats, birds of prey, and other sensitive species foraging along the river corridor. Agua Dulce Canyon has a permanent stream and supports high quality riparian habitat formations from the confluence with the river to the intersection with the Antelope Valley Freeway; from that point north the riparian areas are fragmented, improving and maturing significantly where the creeks pass through Vasquez Rocks County Natural Area.

The alluvial terraces along the river channel as it enters the eastern portion of the Santa Clarita Valley support alluvial fan sage scrub, Great Basin sagebrush scrub, coast live oak woodland, and coastal sage scrub habitats. The alluvial fans of Oak Springs Canyon and Sand Canyon are important recharge grounds for the river aquifer; surface flows from both canyons presently entering the Santa Clara River basin through natural, unconfined channels. Recognizing the importance of this drainage, the SEA boundaries have been drawn to encompass the entire Sand Canyon-Bear Canyon watershed, most of which is within the National Forest. The major habitat linkage zones and watersheds between the river basin and the National Forest, and the protected areas of the county (Placerita Canyon Natural Area) have also been included within the SEA boundary. These canyons form a natural movement zone for wildlife moving across and through the western end of the San Gabriel range to the Santa Susana range and the Santa Clara River basin, and together encompass a spectrum of significant and unique habitat, vegetation and wildlife resources.

The segment of the Santa Clara River passing through the City of Santa Clarita is a dry channel except during seasonal runoff flows. Regardless of this condition, it supports relatively intact stands of alluvial sage scrub formations, riparian woodland, and southern riparian scrub. The dry zones are essential to the

continued genetic isolation of the unarmored three-spined stickleback population in the upper reaches of the river.

San Francisquito Creek supports dense and mature southern riparian scrub and riparian woodland formations, along with small areas of freshwater marsh, providing essential wintering areas and resident habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, marshland birds, and a variety of other vertebrate species. After San Francisquito Creek passes from County land into the National Forest, the channel flows become less seasonal, and riparian resources expand and diversify.

Relatively vast areas of willow-cottonwood forest and southern riparian scrub occur west of San Francisquito Creek and within the junction zone of Castaic Creek and the Santa Clara River, supporting numerous sensitive species and providing multi-layered riparian habitat for a wide diversity of wildlife species, particularly birds of prey and riparian-obligate songbirds.

The Santa Clara River channel and its alluvial terraces and tributary creeks together form the single most important and natural value wildlife movement zone through Los Angeles County. Mobile species can enter the river basin anywhere along its length (outside of developed areas) and proceed in either direction without having to pass through narrow culverts or blind channels, with continuous vegetative cover and only short stretches of dry substrates. The overall drainage course provides a continuum of aquatic and terrestrial movement opportunities, shelter, forage, and resident habitat from the mouth of the river at Ventura to the Antelope Valley. The drainage course connects to both districts of the Angeles National Forest, and links together two large public resource preserves (Vasquez Rocks and Placerita County Natural Areas).

Vegetation

Plant communities within the SEA include: bigcone spruce-canyon oak forest, coast live oak woodland, coast live oak riparian forest, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, coastal sage scrub-chaparral mixed scrub, non-native and native grasslands, alluvial fan sage scrub, southern cottonwood-willow riparian woodland and forest, southern sycamore-alder woodland, southern willow scrub, vernal pool, pinyon-juniper woodland, juniper woodland, freshwater marsh, and disturbed. Transitional zones (ecotones) between these communities often contain unusual species compositions. Sensitive plant species occurring or potentially occurring within the SEA are discussed below in the Sensitive Biological Resources section.

Plant communities within the SEA were classified using standard methodology and terminology. Most of the communities discussed correspond directly with those listed in Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (1986 and 1992 update); some communities are named

based upon the dominant species within them and/or other commonly used terminology. Descriptions and general locations of each plant community present within the SEA are given below.

Bigcone spruce-canyon oak forest formations typically occur in higher elevation draws on north-facing slopes, and may have incense cedar, big-leaf maple, California bay, and other shade-loving species intermixed, depending upon slope orientation, substrates, and fire history. Understory vegetation usually is dominated by chaparral species such as scrub oak, poison oak, wild grape, and manzanita. This community occurs on watershed slopes in the eastern portion of the SEA, and in a few of the narrower, more mesic canyons along the southern side of Soledad Canyon.

Coast live oak woodland consists of moderate-density overstory formations of coast live oak trees, usually on erosional plains along the margins of canyon bottoms and on lower slopes in chaparral and coastal sage scrub understory habitats. Mexican elderberry, chaparral currant, squawbush, and California peony are frequent in the understory. Extensive stands of this formation occur in Sand, Placerita, Bear, Whitney, Elsmere, and Soledad Canyons, and in unnamed tributary canyons to these drainages.

Coast live oak riparian forest is a variation of coast live oak woodland wherein the canopy is more closely grown, and the trees occur in narrower formations along watercourses. Willow, California bay, mulefat, and other riparian species often occur in the understory.

Juniper woodland is an open formation dominated by California juniper, often with an understory of foothill yucca, buckwheat, and other scrub species. This community is found on lower slopes within the eastern portion of the SEA and is mixed with a few joshua trees and chaparral species in several places.

Pinyon-juniper woodland in the SEA typically consists of a mixture of single-needle leaf pinyon pine and California juniper, with mountain mahogany, buckwheat, squawbush, foothill yucca, penstemons, and native grasses. This formation occurs on middle elevation north-facing slopes in the Kentucky Springs watershed, and sporadically along the same orientations south of Acton.

Southern cottonwood-willow riparian woodland and forest is a broad-leafed winter- deciduous habitat dominated by Fremont cottonwood, in places mixed with black cottonwood, various species of willow, rarely an alder, and on drier sites, western sycamore. Southern cottonwood-willow riparian woodland (or forest) occurs in numerous reaches of the SEA, forming mature overstory habitat on the Santa Clara River, its main tributaries, oxbow ponds, and alluvial plains. Some of the most extensive formations occur just west of Acton, in upper Aliso Canyon, in lower San Francisquito Canyon, and from Santa Clarita to the Ventura County border. Large tracts of cottonwood-willow habitat occur in Ventura County as well.

Southern sycamore-alder woodland is a formation which most often occurs on broad plains with heavy alluvial substrates, often along narrow creeks and streams with high-energy, permanent flows within the SEA. Alders typically occur along the watercourse, while sycamores usually grow a bit further from the active flowing channel. This community is uncommon within the SEA, occurring only in the upper reaches of the watershed and in portions of Bear, Sand, and Placerita Canyons and to a lesser extent in Aliso Canyon.

Southern willow scrub is a riparian community consisting of dense, broad-leafed, winter- deciduous riparian thickets occurring within and adjacent to seasonal or permanent water courses. The "scrub" formation generally is sub-mature – a state which often is maintained by frequent heavy over-flooding – and may attain woodland or forest stature if undisturbed for several decades. Dominant species of this community within the SEA are mulefat, sandbar willow, and arroyo willow. Within the SEA this community occurs throughout the tributary and primary drainages, wherever the habitat structure is maintained or repeatedly altered by frequent high water flows.

Freshwater marsh develops in areas of still or slow-moving permanent freshwater. This community is dominated by the perennial, emergent cattail or bulrush, which may reach heights of 7 feet and grow dense enough to form a closed canopy. This formation occurs in scattered ponds and slow-flow portions of the river and tributaries within the SEA.

Vernal pool systems are extremely rare in Los Angeles County and there are only two verified vernal pools currently recognized within the area; Cruzan Mesa and Plum Canyon. However, there is at least one small seasonal pond with typical vernal pool characteristics within the upper Placerita-Sand Canyon watershed break. This small pool is surrounded by coastal sage scrub, with a band of native needlegrass and melic grass on its fringes, and supports Riverside fairy shrimp and western spadefoot toad. It is considered a vernal pool by virtue of its habitat values and species unique to this type of seasonal formation.

Chaparral consists of broad-leafed or needle-leafed, sclerophyllous (hard-leafed), medium height to tall shrubs that form a dense cover on steep slopes, usually below 5,000 feet in Southern California. Dominant species found within this community include scrub oaks (several species), chamise, manzanita, wild lilac, toyon, and western mountain-mahogany on north-facing exposures; buckwheat, foothill yucca, chamise, hoary-leaf lilac, black sage, and goldenbush on south-facing slopes. This plant community occupies most of the basin slopes along the Santa Clara River and on interior ridges and slopes within the watersheds and drainages west of Acton. Chaparral also occurs on some of the higher elevations of the eastern watershed portions of the SEA, where the shrubs frequently are interspersed as understory formations within oak and conifer woodlands.

Coastal sage scrub and **coastal sage scrub-chaparral mixed scrub** are formations which typically occur on south or west-facing slopes within the western portion of the SEA. Some sites may be artifacts of fire frequency or occurrence, while other areas appear to be stable scrub communities. Dominant species typically are California sagebrush, purple sage, black sage, white sage, goldenbush, buckwheat, foothill yucca, California encelia, brittlebush, golden yarrow, chamise, hoary-leaf lilac, and a variety of annuals and bulbs. Excellent examples of coastal sage scrub occur in upper Placerita Canyon watershed and on the ridgeline to the north, along the Santa Clara River just east of Sand Canyon, and in San Francisquito Canyon.

Alluvial fan sage scrub, sometimes also known as floodplain sage scrub, generally consists of a mixture of shrubs which colonize and persist within infrequently scoured and flooded terrain such as floodplains, alluvial plains, or along seasonal streams. The dominant shrub in most washes is scalebroom, but Great Basin sage brush, rabbitbrush, and foothill yucca also usually occur in the habitat type, and may be dominant depending upon substrates and subsurface hydrology. This vegetation type is common throughout the alluvial plains and washes in the SEA, forming particularly high diversity stands along the southern margin of the river at Acton, on uplands east of the Sand Canyon confluence, along the dry reaches of the river in Santa Clarita, and in lower San Francisquito Canyon. Extensive stands of Great Basin sagebrush-dominated alluvial scrub occur around Acton and in the Kentucky Springs portion of the SEA.

Native and non-native grassland communities consist of low, herbaceous vegetation dominated by grasses, with native formations generally mixed with native bulbs and other herbaceous species, often intermixed with naturalized annual taxa. There are representatives of native grasslands scattered within the SEA, most notably patches of different needlegrass species and melic grasses on clay soils in Placerita Canyon, on slope wetlands and around oak on the ridge north of Placerita, and on less-disturbed xeric slopes in the eastern portion of the SEA. Seeps in chaparral often support homogeneous stands of giant rye; other native grasses occur sporadically within most natural habitats along the Santa Clara basin.

Non-native grassland consists of invasive annual grasses that are primarily of Mediterranean origin. Dominant species within this "community," which is a ruderal formation and not a true habitat or community, include oats, bromes, foxtail chess, and other grasses, along with wild mustards and other disturbance-favored "weedy" taxa. Non-native grasslands and other ruderal formations are the dominant understory on most disturbed substrates, and particular grazed areas.

Disturbed or barren areas either completely lack vegetation or are dominated by ruderal species. Ruderal vegetation typically found within the SEA includes non-native and native grasses and "weedy" herbaceous species, including doveweed, mustards, wire lettuce, sow thistle, telegraph weed, Russian

thistle, dock, yellow star thistle, Australian saltbush, and cocklebur. Disturbed areas occur throughout the SEA on fallow agricultural sites, disked fields, abandoned pastures, residential development, paved road margins, fire breaks, dirt access roads, trails, and other similarly disturbed areas.

Wildlife

Wildlife within the SEA is extremely diverse and abundant, commensurate with extensive acreages of natural open space and great diversity of habitat types, within the river channels and on the surrounding uplands. While a few wildlife species may be entirely dependent upon or obligate within a single vegetative community, the mosaic of vegetation communities within the area and adjoining uplands constitutes a continuum of functional ecosystems. These ecosystems support a wide variety of wildlife species, within the SEA boundaries and as a part of the regional ecosystem.

Analysis of invertebrates on any given site generally is limited by a lack of specific data, but the size of the SEA and diversity of habitats present are considered sufficient to support healthy populations of a very large number of invertebrate species, probably in excess of 2,500 species. The riparian formations, wetlands, and aquatic habitats within the SEA support diverse faunas of arthropods, including native fairy shrimp, craneflies, blackflies and other aquatic dipterans, stoneflies, caddisflies, and dobsonflies, water boatmen, giant water bugs, ground beetles, diving beetles, and tiger beetles. Terrestrial insects abound around riparian corridors and in scrub habitats, and are particularly abundant in oak-dominated habitats. Insect orders very well-represented taxonomically, and with some habitat specialization within the Santa Clara River SEA include Orthoptera, Neuroptera, Coleoptera, Diptera, Hymenoptera and Lepidoptera.

Amphibians are abundant and relatively diverse within moister woodland areas, along montane canyon bottoms, in riparian areas, and within surface water features of the SEA. The overall riparian systems of the Santa Clara River basin support abundant populations of Pacific and California chorus frogs, western toad, western spadefoot toad, bullfrog, and African clawed frog (the latter two species are non-native), and in San Francisquito Canyon, California red-legged frog and southwestern arroyo toad. Arboreal, painted, and garden slender salamanders also are present within mesic habitats in the SEA.

Open scrub, chaparral and alluvial fan habitats support diverse reptile populations, and the overall herpetofauna of the SEA would encompass numerous lizard species, along with southwestern pond turtle in Agua Dulce and Bear canyons. Yucca night lizard, side-blotched lizard, western fence lizard, western skink, San Diego alligator lizard, coastal western whiptail, San Diego horned lizard, desert horned lizard, silvery legless lizard and San Diego desert banded gecko all would be expected within the SEA.

The SEA also supports a robust snake fauna, including western blind snake, coachwhip (red racer), chaparral whipsnake, coastal patch-nosed snake, California rosy boa, San Diego gopher snake, glossy snake, California kingsnake, mountain kingsnake, long-nosed snake, night snake, California lyre snake, California black-headed snake, two-striped garter snake, San Bernardino ring-necked snake, southern Pacific rattlesnake.

Bird diversity within the SEA is related to habitat opportunities for year-round residents, seasonal residents, migrating raptors, and songbirds. Coastal sage scrub and chaparral host a suite of birds typical of such sites at lower elevations over most of the coastal slopes of Southern California. The most productive sites for resident coastal sage scrub and chaparral birds are around riparian and freshwater systems, which also attract large numbers of migrants during Spring and Fall. Coastal sage and chaparral birds resident or breeding within the SEA includes Southern California (ashy) rufous-crowned sparrow, Bell's sparrow, black-chinned sparrow, lark sparrow, lazuli bunting, California gnatcatcher, California quail, greater roadrunner, spotted towhee, California towhee, California thrasher, phainopepla, northern mockingbird, and Anna's, Costa's, and black-chinned hummingbirds. Oak woodlands and riparian areas support many more species; notable species consist of the summer tanager, Bullock's oriole, black-headed grosbeak, band-tailed pigeon, western wood pewee, several swallow species, western yellow-billed cuckoo, willow flycatcher, and least Bell's vireo. Species associated with ruderal sites and grasslands include western meadowlark, California horned lark, and savannah and grasshopper sparrows. Birds of prey (including common migrants) observed within the SEA include red-shouldered hawk, red-tailed hawk, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, Swainson's hawk, merlin, American kestrel, northern harrier, white-tailed kite, prairie falcon, and golden eagle. Resident owl species within the SEA boundaries include barn owl, great horned owl, long eared owl, and California spotted owl.

Native mammal diversity within the SEA is considerable. These include bats (at least seven species), rodents (at least four species of deer mice, two species of woodrat, Beechey ground squirrel, western gray squirrel, and more), two types of rabbits and one hare, broad-handed mole, long-tailed weasel, American badger, spotted and striped skunks, raccoon, gray fox, bobcat, coyote, mountain lion, and mule deer. Black bear also occur within the SEA boundaries, at least occasionally, but the San Gabriel Mountains population was introduced for game use, and this species is not native within the SEA.

Wildlife Movement

Historically (and prehistorically) the riparian corridor along the Santa Clara River has served as the primary east-west linkage between the Pacific coastline, coast ranges, interior ranges, high desert and southern Sierra (via the Tehachapi range). Animals moving through the Santa Clara drainage had unobstructed passage along the river and within the riparian systems between the coastal lowlands of

Ventura and the Mojave Desert, with tributary routes extending south into the San Gabriel range, northward via Castaic, Bouquet and San Francisquito tributaries over the Transverse range and into the San Joaquin Valley, west into the central coast ranges, or east through the Tehachapis and into the southern Sierra Nevada. The present configuration of the tributary drainages has impinged upon connectivity from the Santa Clarita Valley to the north, but the Santa Clara River remains relatively intact and open. The SEA embraces the river corridor and the linkage zones considered essential to insuring connectivity and resource values within the historic movement zones for all of the wildlife species present within the Los Angeles County portion of the Santa Clara River.

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species which have been afforded special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, rare, or otherwise of concern; this is principally due to the species' declining or limited distribution or population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Watch lists of such resources are maintained by the CDFG, the USFWS, and special groups such as the CNPS. The following sections indicate the habitats as well as plant and animal species present, or potentially present within the SEA, have been afforded special recognition.

Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats

This report/description supports several habitat types considered sensitive by resource agencies, namely the CDFG (CNDDB, 2000) because of their scarcity and support of a number of state and federally listed endangered, threatened, and rare vascular plants, as well as sensitive bird and reptile species. These communities include bigcone spruce-canyon oak forest, coast live oak riparian forest, southern willow scrub, southern cottonwood-willow riparian woodland, sycamore-alder woodland, freshwater marsh, alluvial fan sage scrub, native grassland, and vernal pool. These communities or closely related designations are considered highest-inventory priority communities by the CDFG, indicating that they are declining in acreage throughout their range due to land use changes.

Sensitive Species

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing by the USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS. These species include, but are not limited to, Nevin's barberry, spreading navarretia, slender-horned spineflower, California Orcutt grass, Riverside fairy shrimp, unarmored threespine stickleback, Santa Ana sucker, arroyo southwestern toad, California red-legged frog, southwestern pond turtle, California horned lizard, San Diego mountain king snake, two-striped garter snake, California condor, Swainson's hawk, White-tailed kite, California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and ringtail cat. In addition, the SEA

identifies other species observed, recorded in the CNDDB, or reported in previous documentation as observed within or in the immediate vicinity of the SEA.

SANTA FELICIA SEA

General

The Santa Felicia SEA encompasses the almost the entire Los Angeles County portion of the Santa Felicia watershed draining into Lake Piru. This watershed is largely undeveloped and contains vast stands of intact coast sage scrub and chaparral communities on south and north facing slopes, respectively. In addition to the undisturbed upland habitats, the watershed is dissected by excellent examples of mixed riparian (sycamore-willow), oak riparian and coast live oak forests and alluvial scrub in the bottomlands. Non-native grasslands occur in areas where grazing has taken place; however, there is little invasion of these ruderal taxa into the native communities. A brief summary of the plant communities present, or likely to occur, within the SEA is provided in the vegetation section below.

Description

The Santa Felicia SEA includes a wide variety of topographic features and habitat types. The orientation and extent of the SEA encompasses the surface and subsurface hydrology of the Santa Felicia watershed, from its headwater, tributaries, and basin to the point at which it exits Los Angeles County jurisdiction. The northern portion of the SEA is within the Angeles National Forest. Capturing the watershed tributaries, the eastern boundary follows a predominate ridgeline, the western boundary is the county border and the southern boundary captures two other small tributaries that feed the Santa Felicia, to encompass almost the entire watershed that ultimately drains into Lake Piru in Ventura County.

Vegetation

Plant communities within the SEA include: coast live oak woodland, coast live oak riparian forest, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, non-native and native grasslands, alluvial fan sage scrub, and sycamore-willow riparian woodland. Sensitive plant species occurring or potentially occurring within the SEA are discussed in the Sensitive Biological Resources section of this document.

Plant communities within the SEA were classified using standard methodology and terminology. Most of the communities discussed correspond directly with those listed in Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (1986 and 1992 update); some communities are named based upon the dominant species within them and/or other commonly used terminology. Descriptions of several plant communities present within the SEA are given below.

Coast live oak woodland consists of moderate-density overstory formations of coast live oak trees, usually on erosional plains along the margins of canyon bottoms and on lower slopes in chaparral and coastal sage scrub understory habitats.

Coast live oak riparian forest is a variation of coast live oak woodland wherein the canopy is more closely grown, and the trees occur in narrower formations along watercourses. Willow, California bay, mulefat, and other riparian species often occur in the understory.

Sycamore-willow riparian woodland may include the following: western sycamore, black willow, arroyo willow, skunkbush, and California blackberry.

Alluvial fan scrub generally consists of a mixture of shrubs, including scalebroom, California buckwheat, and white sage, which colonize and persist within infrequently scoured and flooded terrain such as floodplains, alluvial plains, or along seasonal streams.

Chaparral consists of broad-leafed or needle-leafed, sclerophyllous (hard-leafed), medium height to tall shrubs that form a dense cover on steep slopes, usually below 5,000 feet in Southern California. Dominant species found within this community include scrub oak, toyon, manzanita, and white sage.

Coastal sage scrub dominant species typically are California sagebrush, purple sage, giant wildrye, coyotebush, and California buckwheat.

Non-native grassland consists of invasive annual grasses that are primarily of Mediterranean origin, including short-pod mustard, tocalote, and ripgut brome.

Native grassland communities consist of low, herbaceous vegetation dominated by grasses, with native formations generally mixed with native bulbs and other herbaceous species, often intermixed with naturalized annual taxa.

Wildlife

Wildlife within the SEA is extremely diverse and abundant, commensurate with extensive acreages of natural open space and great diversity of habitat types, within the stream channels and on the surrounding uplands. While a few wildlife species may be entirely dependent upon or obligate within a single vegetative community, the mosaic of vegetation communities within the area and adjoining uplands constitutes a continuum of functional ecosystems. These ecosystems support a wide variety of wildlife species, within the SEA boundaries and as a part of the regional ecosystem.

Analysis of invertebrates on any given site generally is limited by a lack of specific data, but the size of the SEA and diversity of habitats present are considered sufficient to support healthy populations of a very large number of invertebrate species. The riparian formations and aquatic habitats within the SEA support diverse faunas of arthropods, which may include native fairy shrimp, craneflies, blackflies and other aquatic dipterans, stoneflies, caddisflies, and dobsonflies, water boatmen, giant water bugs, ground beetles, diving beetles, and tiger beetles. Terrestrial insects abound around riparian corridors and in scrub habitats, and are particularly abundant in oak-dominated habitats.

Amphibians are abundant and relatively diverse within moister woodland areas, along montane canyon bottoms, in riparian areas, and within surface water features of the SEA. The overall riparian systems of the SEA provide habitat for a number of frog and toad populations, which may include populations of Pacific and California chorus frogs, western toad, and western spadefoot toad as well as the California red-legged frog and southwestern Arroyo toad. Open scrub, chaparral and alluvial fan habitats support diverse reptile populations, and the overall herpetofauna of the SEA would encompass numerous lizard species as well as a robust snake fauna.

Bird diversity within the SEA is related to habitat opportunities for year-round residents, seasonal residents, migrating raptors, and song birds. Coastal sage scrub and chaparral host a suite of birds typical of such sites at lower elevations over most of the coastal slopes of Southern California. The most productive sites for resident coastal sage scrub and chaparral birds are around riparian and freshwater systems, which also attract large numbers of migrants during Spring and Fall. Oak woodlands and riparian areas generally support many more species; notable species consist of the summer tanager, Bullock's oriole, black-headed grosbeak, band-tailed pigeon, western wood pewee, several swallow species, western yellow-billed cuckoo, willow flycatcher, and least Bell's vireo.

Native mammal diversity within the SEA is considerable. These likely include bats, rodents, squirrel, rabbits, mole, weasel, badger, skunks, raccoon, gray fox, bobcat, coyote, and mule deer. Black bear may also occur within the SEA boundaries, at least occasionally, but the San Gabriel Mountains population was introduced for game use, and this species is not native within the SEA.

Wildlife Movement

Historically riparian corridors have served as linkages between the Pacific coastline, coast ranges, interior ranges, the high desert and southern Sierras (via the Tehachapi range). Animals move through the Santa Felicia watershed along and within the riparian systems between Piru Lake in Ventura County and the San Gabriel Mountain range and beyond. The tributary drainages in this SEA appear fully intact and open.

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species which have been afforded special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, rare, or otherwise of concern; this is principally due to the species' declining or limited population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Watch lists of such resources are maintained by the CDFG, the USFWS, and special groups such as the CNPS. The following sections indicate the habitats as well as plant and animal species present, or potentially present within the SEA, have been afforded special recognition.

Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats

The Santa Felicia SEA supports several habitat types considered sensitive by resource agencies, namely the CDFG (CNDDB) because of their scarcity and support of a number of state and federally listed endangered, threatened, and rare vascular plants, as well as sensitive bird and reptile species. These communities include: coast live oak, coast live oak riparian forest, alluvial fan sage scrub, and native grassland. These communities or closely related designations are considered highest-inventory priority communities by the CDFG, indicating that they are declining in acreage throughout their range due to land use changes.

Sensitive Species

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing by the USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS. These species include, but are not limited to, the California condor, red-legged frog and Arroyo toad. The SEA identifies other species observed, recorded in the CNDDB, or reported in previous documentation as observed within or in the immediate vicinity of the SEA.

SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA

General

The Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA is located northwest of the San Fernando Valley within unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and an incorporated area of the City of Los Angeles west of Chatsworth. The area is south of State Route 126 (SR-126) and the Santa Clara River, west of the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5), and includes much of the Santa Susana Mountains in the north, the Santa Susana Pass, Chatsworth Reservoir, and the eastern portion of the Simi Hills in the south.

Description

The Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA includes a variety of topographic features; the northern portion of the SEA encompasses Oat Mountain and much of the Santa Susana Mountains from the Los Angeles County line east to Interstate 5. Portions of many of the canyons associated with the Santa Susana Mountains and Oat Mountain are also included such as Salt Canyon, Potrero Canyon, Pico Canyon, Towsley Canyon, El Toro Canyon, Sulphur Canyon, Devil Canyon, Ybarra Canyon, Browns Canyon, Bee Canyon, and Mormon Canyon. Several blue-line streams occur within these canyons and support many natural springs. The north slopes of the Santa Susana Mountains are within the Santa Clara River watershed which drains the Los Padres National Forest to the north, the Angeles National Forest to the northeast and east, and the Santa Susana Mountains to the south and southeast. The remainder of the SEA is within the Los Angeles River watershed. The majority of the land in the SEA is natural open space with very sparse disturbances in the form of ranches, oil wells, and unimproved access roads. The SEA consists of east-west and northwest trending primary ridges and north-south trending secondary ridges. The peak of Oat Mountain represents the highest point in the SEA at 3,747 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The open space within the SEA supports a variety of communities but is dominated by chaparral, oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, bigcone spruce-canyon oak woodland, and grasslands. The creeks and canyons support riparian scrub and woodland communities. At its southern end, the SEA includes the eastern portion of the Simi Hills including the east-facing slopes descending from Chatsworth Peak. Chatsworth Reservoir forms a portion of the south boundary and is currently dry except for a small detention basin north of the reservoir.

Vegetation

The plant communities within the Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA are composed of numerous plant species. These plant species are adapted to a Mediterranean climate with a cool, wet season followed by a hot, dry season. Due to the topographic complexity and combination of coastal and desert influences, the SEA supports a wide diversity of plant species.

Plant communities within the SEA were classified using standard methodology and terminology. Most of the communities discussed in this study correspond directly with those listed in Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (1986 and 1992 update). Other communities are named based on dominant species within them and/or commonly used terminology. Descriptions and general locations of each plant community present within the SEA are given below. These include chaparral, coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, coast live oak woodlands, valley oak woodland, mainland cherry forest, non-native grassland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, and disturbed communities.

Chaparral consists of a broad mix of evergreen species and generally occurs below 5,000 feet in Southern California. Dominant species consist of broad-leaved or needle-leafed sclerophyllous (hard-leafed) shrubs, forming a dense, impenetrable cover with little or no understory growth. The understory typically consists of a considerable accumulation of leaf litter. In areas of less dense shrub cover, the understory consists of non-native grasses and other annual forbs. Dominant species include chamise, laurel sumac, hoary-leaved ceanothus, woolly-leaved ceanothus, and toyon. Chaparral is the dominant plant community within the SEA and covers many of the steep slopes and hillsides in the upper elevations.

Coastal sage scrub communities consist of drought-deciduous, low, soft-leaved shrubs and herbs on gentle to steep slopes under 3,000 feet in elevation. Several dominant species may occur within scrub communities, with some areas overwhelmingly dominated by one or two species. Dominant species include California sagebrush, California buckwheat, California bush sunflower, purple sage, and deerweed. Coastal sage scrub is found at the lower elevations within the SEA on drier south-facing slopes, but can also be found on the north-facing slopes and canyon of the Santa Susana Mountains.

Alluvial scrub consists of a mixture of shrubs that colonize sandy-gravelly flood deposited soils within intermittent creeks, arroyos, and drier terraces in large washes. This community intergrades with sage scrub communities and riparian communities and, therefore, occurs adjacent to these communities. Dominant species include Great Basin sagebrush, scalebroom, big saltbush, and squaw bush. Alluvial scrub is predominately found at the northern end of the SEA in Salt Canyon.

Coast live oak woodlands commonly occur along drainages that experience at least a seasonal flow or in other areas under mesic conditions. Soil structure and soil moisture are the most important limiting factors for the survival of oak woodlands; soils must be deep, uncompacted, fertile, well-aerated, and well-drained. This community is dominated by coast live oak. If sufficient groundwater is present, western sycamores, usually associated with riparian habitats, may also occur in the oak woodland. Oak woodlands occupy areas within the canyons and drainages of the SEA.

Valley oak woodland is an open-canopy woodland found on deep, well-drained alluvial soils below 2,000 feet. This community is almost exclusively dominated by valley oak with a grassy understory to form a savannah-like community. This community is located in small pockets in the eastern portion of the SEA.

Mainland cherry forest is not well described but is typically composed of tall stands of hollyleaf cherry on rocky, dry, north-facing slopes. Within the SEA, coast live oak is co-dominant within this community and can be found in canyons in the northern portion of the study area. This community can also be found in association with alluvial scrub in the northwestern portion of the study area as it approaches the Santa Clara River.

Grassland communities consist of low, herbaceous vegetation that are dominated by grasses but generally also harbor native forbs and bulbs as well as naturalized annual forbs. Topographic factors that contribute to grassland presence include gradual slopes or flat areas with deep, well-developed soils in areas below 3,000 above MSL. The species richness of grassland communities is dependent upon a number of land use factors, including intensity and duration of natural or anthropogenic disturbances such as grazing. Heavily grazed grasslands have a lower species richness.

Non-native grassland consists of dominant invasive annual grasses that are primarily of Mediterranean origin. Dominant species found within this community include slender wild oat, wild oat, ripgut brome, and foxtail chess.

Native grassland is often associated with coastal sage scrub and is found in pockets in close proximity to coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland. This community consists of at least 10 percent cover of native purple needlegrass. The remaining vegetative cover is made up of non-native grasses found in annual grassland and a variety of annual, wild flowers such as golden stars and blue-eyed grass. Small patches of native grassland can be found scattered throughout the SEA mostly in openings in coastal sage scrub and mixed with non-native grasslands.

Southern willow scrub is a riparian community occurring within and adjacent to water courses. The vegetation within this community is adapted to seasonal flooding. Southern willow scrub is characterized by dense, broad leafed, winter-deciduous riparian thickets dominated by one or more willow species. Most stands are too dense to allow understory development. The dominant species of this community within the SEA is arroyo willow, red willow, and black willow, with less common associates including mule fat. This community occurs in segments along portions of the intermittent drainages within the SEA.

Southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest consists of an open, broad-leaved, winter-deciduous riparian forest dominated by Fremont cottonwood, black cottonwood, and several willow species including arroyo willow and red willow. This community occupies much of the Santa Clara River adjacent to the northern boundary of the SEA and also occurs within the larger, intermittent and perennial drainages within the SEA.

Disturbed or barren areas either completely lack vegetation or are dominated by ruderal species. Ruderal vegetation typically found on site include non-native grasses and a high proportion of weedy species, including tocalote, telegraph weed, tree tobacco, doveweed, black mustard, and thistle species. Several disturbed areas occur scattered throughout the SEA and take the form of residential developments, highways, fire breaks, dirt access roads, trails, transmission poles, and other similarly disturbed areas.

Wildlife

Wildlife within the SEA is generally diverse and abundant due to the large acreage of natural open space and the diversity of habitat types. While a few wildlife species are entirely dependent on a single vegetative community, the entire mosaic of all the vegetation communities within the area and adjoining areas constitutes a functional ecosystem for a variety of wildlife species. This applies to the SEA and the regional ecosystem.

The analysis of invertebrates in this study is difficult due to the lack of data, although limited studies have been conducted. The SEA is believed to support healthy populations of a diverse assortment of countless invertebrate species. Amphibian populations are generally restricted in semi-arid and arid habitats but may be particularly abundant where riparian areas occur. The SEA is likely to support a variety of amphibians in abundance within wetland areas along the major canyon bottoms and the moister oak woodland areas. Many essential reptilian habitat characteristics such as open habitats that allow free movement and high visibility and small mammal burrows for cover and escape from predators and extreme weather are present within the SEA. These characteristics as well as the variety of habitat types present are likely to support a wide variety of reptilian species.

The scrubland, woodland, riparian, and grassland habitats in the SEA provide foraging and cover habitat for year-round residents, seasonal residents, and migrating song birds. In addition, the SEA encompasses many year-round water sources, abundant raptor foraging, perching, and nesting habitat. The combination of these resources as well as the mosaic of many community types provides for an unusually high diversity of bird species. Several of these species may use this SEA as their only consistent occurrence in the southeastern portion of the county.

Not unlike other taxonomic groups, mammal populations within the SEA are diverse and reflective of the diversity of habitat types. Unlike many other inland hills within the Los Angeles Basin, this SEA is large enough to support relatively stabile large mammal populations despite the urban surroundings.

Wildlife Movement

The Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA includes several important linkages for wildlife movement. The Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains provide a vast open space corridor to foster wildlife movement between the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, San Gabriel Mountains to the east, and Los Padres National Forest to the north. Dense, natural habitat associated with the majority of the study area provides excellent opportunities for concealment and water sources while the grasslands provide an abundance of prey.

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, rare, or otherwise sensitive; this is due to the species' declining or limited distribution or population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Watch lists of such resources are maintained by the CDFG, the USFWS, and special groups such as the CNPS. The following sections indicate the habitats as well as plant and animal species present, or potentially present within the SEA, that has been afforded special recognition.

Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats

This report/description supports several habitat types considered sensitive by resource agencies, namely the CDFG (CNDDB, 2000), because of their scarcity and support of a number of state and federally listed endangered, threatened, and rare vascular plants, as well as several sensitive bird and reptile species. These communities include coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest which occur throughout the area. These communities or closely related designations are considered highest-inventory priority communities by the CDFG, indicating that they are experiencing a decline throughout their range.

Sensitive Species

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing by the USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS. Species which have been recorded within the SEA as well as those reasonably expected to occur include, but are not limited to, Lyon's pentachaeta, Nevin's barberry, Braunton's milk vetch, slender-horned spineflower,

arroyo southwestern toad, California red-legged frog, California condor, Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kite, and southwestern willow flycatcher. The table includes locations of sensitive species observed, recorded in the CNDDB, or reported in previous documentation as observed within or in the immediate vicinity of the SEA.

VALLEY OAKS SAVANNAH SEA

General

The Valley Oaks Savannah SEA is located northeast of the Santa Susana Mountains and west of the Angeles National Forest, approximately 1 mile south of the Santa Clara River and 1 mile north of Pico Canyon. The SEA is bordered on the east by Interstate 5 and is situated between Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway. To the west, the SEA is bordered by the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains which are dominated by chaparral.

Description

The Valley Oaks Savannah SEA is almost completely undisturbed except for a few dirt roads. The majority of the vegetation on the site consists of a valley oaks savannah containing over 1000 trees. Other vegetation on the site includes coastal sage scrub and non-native grasses.

Vegetation

Due to its small size, vegetation within the Valley Oaks Savannah SEA is limited to a few community types. All plant species observed or recorded in previous documentation within the study area are indicated in the Comprehensive Floral & Faunal Compendium of the SEA User Guide. Sensitive plant species occurring or potentially occurring within the SEA are discussed in the Sensitive Biological Resources section of this document.

Plant communities within the SEA were classified using standard methodology and terminology. Most of the communities discussed in this study correspond directly with those listed in Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (1986 and 1992 update). Other communities are named based on dominant species within them and/or commonly used terminology. Descriptions and general locations of the each plant community present within the SEA including coastal sage scrub, valley oak woodland, non-native grassland, and disturbed are given below.

Coastal sage scrub communities consist of drought-deciduous, low, soft-leaved shrubs and herbs on gentle to steep slopes under 3,000 feet in elevation. Several dominant species may occur within scrub communities and some areas may be overwhelmingly dominated by one or two species. Dominant species include California sagebrush, California buckwheat, chaparral mallow, purple sage, coast goldenbush, and California-astor.

Valley oak savannah is an open woodland community dominated by the broad-leaved, winter-deciduous valley oak with scattered coast live oaks in some areas. The oak trees form an open

savannah with an understory that is dominated by California buckwheat and non-native grasses. This community occupies a majority of the site.

Grassland communities consist of low, herbaceous vegetation that are dominated by grasses but generally also harbor native forbs and bulbs as well as naturalized annual forbs. Topographic factors that contribute to grassland presence include gradual slopes or flat areas with deep, well-developed soils in areas below the 3,000-foot elevation. Non-native grassland consists of dominant invasive annual grasses that are primarily of Mediterranean origin. Dominant species found within this community include slender wild oat, wild oat, ripgut brome, and foxtail chess along with scattered coastal sage scrub species. This community type occurs along the western portion of the north boundary of the SEA.

Disturbed or barren areas either completely lack vegetation or are dominated by ruderal species. Ruderal vegetation typically found on site include non-native grasses and a high proportion of weedy species, including tocalote, telegraph weed, tree tobacco, doveweed, black mustard, and thistle species. The primary disturbed area within this SEA is dirt roadways.

Wildlife

The relatively small size of the SEA and the limited variety of vegetation types is unlikely to support a large diversity of wildlife. However, acorns within the valley oak savannah provide a valuable food source for a variety of wildlife. Furthermore, the mature trees are an important source of nesting and roosting habitat for birds and other arboreal vertebrates. While some wildlife species are entirely dependent on a single vegetative community, the mosaic of vegetation communities within adjoining areas constitutes a functional ecosystem for a variety of wildlife species, both within the SEA and as part of the regional ecosystem.

The analysis of invertebrates in this study is severely limited due to the lack of data. However, due to the undisturbed nature of the SEA, it is likely to support healthy populations of many invertebrate species. Amphibians may not be abundant due to the lack of water in the SEA, however, shaded areas within the woodland may be moist enough to allow for a few species to occupy the site. Reptilian diversity within the SEA is highest within patches of coastal sage scrub and may be abundant due the presence of alluvial wash habitat on adjacent property.

The scrubland, woodland, and grassland habitats in and adjacent to the SEA provide foraging and cover habitat for year-round residents, seasonal residents, and migrating songbirds. In addition, the SEA contains abundant raptor foraging, perching, and nesting habitat. Mammal populations within the SEA respond favorably to these habitats. Not unlike other taxonomic groups, mammal populations within the SEA are limited by acreage but are likely to utilize the area frequently.

All wildlife species previously recorded, as well as those expected to occur, within the study area are indicated in the Comprehensive Floral & Faunal Compendium of the SEA User Guide. Sensitive wildlife species occurring or potentially occurring within the SEA are discussed below in the Sensitive Biological Resources section.

Wildlife Movement

Wildlife movement within the Valley Oaks Savannah SEA is limited to local movement of foraging animals. Although the SEA does not support regional corridors itself, adjacent lands to the west and northwest may be important linkages for wildlife movement to and from the Santa Susana Mountains and the Santa Clara River. The location of the SEA, therefore, may be important secondarily as a corridor buffer and/or adjacent foraging grounds.

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, rare, or otherwise principally due to the species' declining or limited population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Watch lists of such resources are maintained by the CDFG, the USFWS, and special groups such as the CNPS. The following sections indicate the habitats as well as plant and animal species present or potentially present within the SEA, have been afforded special recognition.

Sensitive Plant Communities/Habitats

The Valley Oaks Savannah SEA supports two habitat types considered sensitive by resource agencies, namely CDFG, because of either their scarcity or support of a number of state and federally listed endangered, threatened, and rare vascular plants, as well as several sensitive bird and reptile species. These communities are valley oak woodland and coastal sage scrub. These communities or closely related designations are considered highest-inventory priority communities by the CDFG, indicating that they are experiencing a decline throughout their range.

Sensitive Species

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing by USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS (particularly List 1A, 1B, and 2). These sensitive species include, but are not limited to, San Diego coast horned lizard, sharp-shinned hawk, and Cooper’s hawk.

A revised SEA map showing the revisions to the SEA areas is included as **Figure 2.0-4, Significant Ecological Areas.**

(Page H-85)

Available Land Inventory for Housing within the City of Santa Clarita

In evaluating sites suitable for new housing units, potential development constraints such as slopes, ridgelines, fault and flood hazards, environmental resources, access, availability of infrastructure, and other property characteristics were evaluated to ensure that each site can feasibly support the number of potential dwelling units allocated to it. Housing sites were also evaluated based on proximity to public transit and support services for residents, such as neighborhood commercial uses, schools, and parks. Potential residential sites include vacant and underutilized land that is currently zoned for residential or mixed uses, and land within pending specific plans that will be designated for residential uses. The sites identified for new housing are shown on Exhibit H-5.1; they include 24 separate areas which are labeled by number. A brief description of each site suitable for future housing development is provided below, along with its proposed *OVOV* land use designations. Following adoption of the *OVOV* General Plan, the City will need to amend the Unified Development Code and Zoning Map to be consistent with the *OVOV* land use designations.

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Table H-6.3: Residential Development Standards

Standard	Unified Development Code Requirements
Lot size	Allowed lot sizes range from 5,000 to 40,000 sq. ft., except that RE minimum lot size is two gross acres. Lots may be smaller in the SP zone with approved entitlement; the City has allowed lots of 2200 sq. ft. in specific plans.
Lot dimensions	Minimum width: 50 – 100 ft. (cul-de-sac width: 40 ft); May be reduced as part of approved SP.
Setbacks	Side yard: 5 ft. (reverse corner lot 20 ft.) Rear yard: 15 ft. Front yard: 20 ft. Mixed use: 5 ft.-15 ft. setback from property line
Lot coverage	No requirements other than setbacks and open space
Building height	2 stories, 35 ft. in residential zones, except with approval of CUP; 55 feet in mixed use areas, except with approval of CUP.
Dwelling unit size,Floor Area Ratio	No requirements
Open space	Studio: 200 sq. ft. 1 bedroom unit: 300 sq. ft. 2+ bedroom units: 400 sq. ft. Single-family detached or town home: 650 sq. ft. 50% of open space to be in rear yards; Recreational facilities required for multi-family projects; Mixed Use Overlay requires 200 sq. ft./unit of open space.

Standard	Unified Development Code Requirements
Architecture and site design	250cubic. ft. of storage for multi-family unit; 1 trash enclosure for each 10 units; No metal siding for structures; Minimum roof slope 2:12; Screening required for all equipment and utilities; Roof-top equipment prohibited on single-family structures.

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Program H 5.5: Second Units

The City will consider amending the Unified Development Code to allow second dwelling units on individual residential lots with primary dwellings, provided that said lots are between 5,000 square feet and 19,999 square feet in area subject to an Administrative Permit. This action is in addition to the City's existing allowance for second dwelling units on lots of 20,000 square feet or larger, subject to an Administrative Permit.

Timeframe: By December 2010

Responsible Department: Community Development Department

Funding Sources: None required

2.0 ENVIIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Draft EIR, at Section 3.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, determined that implementation of the proposed One Valley One Vision project would result in significant unavoidable impacts relative to Air Quality, Global Climate Change, Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Water Service (outside of CLWA Service Area), Solid Waste and Noise. The Draft EIR also determined that the original project would result in potentially significant impacts to several other environmental categories although these impacts would be reduced to level below significant with mitigation. The following discussion evaluates and compares the potential environmental impacts of the original project with the impacts of the revised project by environmental topic category.

Generally speaking, does not change the project intensity or population projections, nor does it increase the level of any previously identified impacts, and creates no new significant impacts. The City also has determined that, based on the entire record, the modified proposed project will not change the Draft EIR's conclusions regarding potential impacts and the significance of potential impacts, and that the

revised project will have, in general, the same environmental impacts, and the same level of impacts, as those identified in the Draft EIR.

(1) Land Use

Implementation of the revised project description would not substantively change any of the land use designations previously established by the General Plan and General Plan Land Use Map. Additional and changed verbiage to the North Newhall Area regarding development potential was further clarified. Modifications to the OBOB Special Development Areas for the North Newhall Area, as agreed upon by the Placerita Canyon Property owners Association (PCPOA) was included into the General Plan. The Transportation Corridor (TC) classification was included into the Public/Institutional (PI) classification. Information in the commercial land use section regarding FAR's was updated to include missing or revised data. Lastly, additional modifications were added to the Land Use section and the Goals, Policies and Objectives to be consistent with the County of Los Angeles OVOV Plan. No changes to the General Plan or the General Plan Map would result in changes to the density or population projection increases not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to land use planning.

(2) Transportation and Circulation

Changes were made to the Circulation Element either add policies to clarify planning principles or supports efforts to investigate alternative transportation methods. Additional language was added to the Circulation Element for additional access for Castaic and San Francisquito Road extension. Additional policies were added to the Circulation Element as requested by Caltrans. Cross-sections of a Limited Secondary Arterial Highway were added to the standard cross-sections. None of the changes proposed to the General Plan or Circulation Map would create any impacts not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to transportation and circulation.

(3) Air Quality

Under the revised project, development projections would remain consistent with the original project. No changes to the Revised Project Description would result in changes not previously address in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, both the original project and the revised project would result in unavoidably significant exceedances of certain South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) air quality thresholds.

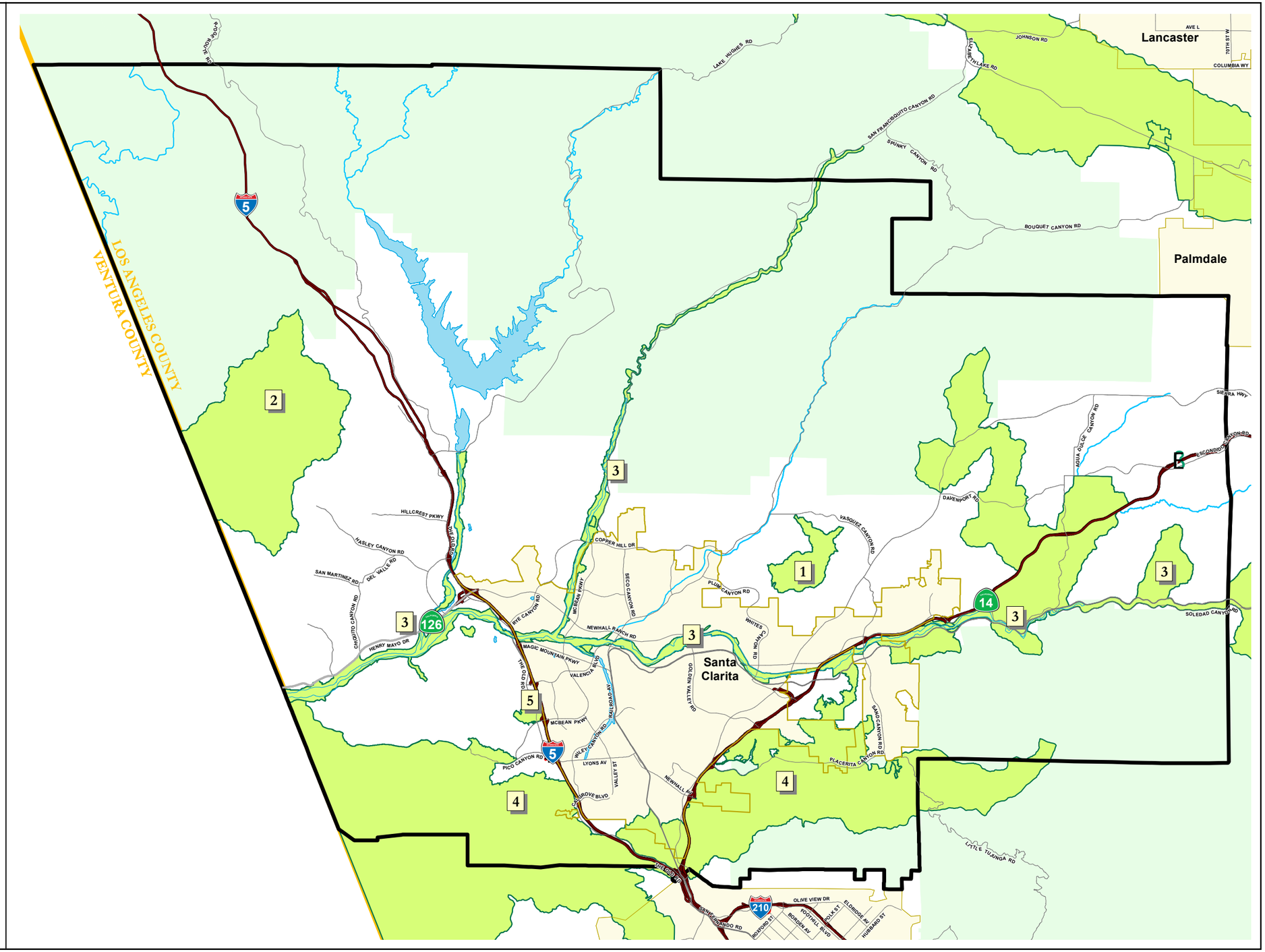
Legend:

- Significant Ecological Area
  - 1 Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools
  - 2 Piru Creek
  - 3 Santa Clara River
  - 4 Santa Susana Mountains/ Simi Hills
  - 5 Valley Oaks Savannah
- OVOV Planning Area
- Incorporated Areas
- Angeles National Forest
- County Boundary
- Waterbody and Perennial Stream

GIS Projection - CA State Plane, Zone 5, NAD83, Feet.

2 1 0 2

APPROXIMATE SCALE IN MILES



SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - Planning, City Boundary - 2010; Los Angeles County: Significant Ecological Areas - 2011; Thomas Bros. - Streets, Hydrology - 2010; OVOV Boundary - LA County and City of Santa Clarita - 2011

FIGURE **2.0-4**

Significant Ecological Areas

(4) Global Warming and Climate Change

Both the original project and the revised project would employ the same PDFs and emission reduction strategies to reduce the overall level of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on the project site, and ensure consistency with AB 32. No changes to the Revised Project Description would result in changes not previously address in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, both the original project and the revised project would result in unavoidably significant exceedances of certain South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) global warming and climate change standards.

(5) Agricultural Resources

Both the original project and the Revised Project maintain the same land use designations over agricultural resources. No changes to the Revised Project Description would result in changes not previously address in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, both the original project and the revised project would result in unavoidably significant impacts to agricultural resources.

(6) Aesthetics

The revised project description does not change any of the proposed land use densities or population projections. Proposed densities of the revised project are not substantively different from the original project. The revised project would result in similar impacts as the original project relative to visual resources as either scenario would modify the existing, undeveloped state of the project site and introduce new sources of light and glare. That being said, impacts would be significant and unavoidable under either scenario.

(7) Biological Resources

The revised project includes updated description of SEA's consistent with the County of Los Angeles OVOV Plan. Proposed densities of the revised project are not substantively different from the original project. The revised project would result in similar impacts as the original project relative to biological resources as either scenario would modify the existing, undeveloped state of various parcels within the Planning Area.

The loss of special-status species and wildlife movement opportunities would remain significant under the Revised Project. Special-status species are dependent on a variety of habitat types, not all of which are necessarily sensitive, such as annual grassland and various common scrub and chaparral types. Consequently, the conversion of all types of currently undeveloped wildlife habitat to residential,

commercial, and industrial uses permitted under the Revised Project and original General Plan would result in impacts on special-status species that would remain significant at the plan level.

Impacts on wildlife movement opportunities would also be significant and unmitigable because of the loss of connectivity for wildlife movement through the OVOV Planning Area; this connectivity, would not be recoverable once the area has been developed for both the original and Revised Project.

(8) Cultural Resources

The Revised Project, updated the Cultural Resources section to be in conformance with the resources identified in the new Historic Preservation Ordinance. The Revised Project does not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources.

(9) Geology, Soils, & Seismicity

Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to geology, soils, & seismicity.

(10) Mineral Resources

Clarification was provided in the Land Use Element concerning mineral resources providing direction to previously mined areas, when open space is not a practical end use. Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to mineral resources.

(11) Human Made Hazards

Implementation of the revised Project not change the level or nature of environmental impacts associated with human-made hazards, as compared to the proposed project.

(12) Hydrology and Water Quality

The Revised Project included additional and revised Objectives that address stormwater and groundwater recharge areas. A new graphic depicting groundwater recharge areas is shown on, **Figure 2.0-3, Groundwater Recharge Areas**. Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed

densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to hydrology and water quality.

(13) Water Service

The revised Project included several revised objectives that address water service issues. Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to water service.

(14) Community Services

Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to community services.

(15) Public Services

In order to better address the impacts of the original and revised project to the five Santa Clarita Valley school districts requested that four additional Goals and Policies be added to the General Plan. Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to schools.

The revised Project clarified that the operations of the libraries in the City of Santa Clarita are in a transition from operations currently coordinated by the County of Los Angeles, soon to be assumed by the City of Santa Clarita.

(16) Parks and Recreation

The revised Project included clarifications in the Parks and Recreation analysis and methodology sections. Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts parks and recreation impacts.

(17) Utilities and Infrastructure

Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. That being said, under either the original project or revised project, solid waste impacts would be unavoidable significant due to the absence of long-term landfill capacity or other disposal alternatives.

No other impacts to utilities and infrastructure would occur with the Revised project when compared to the original project.

(18) Noise

Under either the revised project or the original project, development of the property would involve clearing and grading of the ground surface, installation of utility infrastructure, and the building of the proposed improvements. These activities typically involve the temporary use of heavy equipment, smaller equipment, and motor vehicles, which generate both steady static and episodic noise. This noise would primarily affect the occupants of on-site uses constructed in the earlier phases of the development (assuming that the site is occupied in sections as other portions are still under construction). Individuals who would have an uninterrupted line of sight to the construction noise sources could be exposed to noise levels, which would exceed the City's Noise Ordinance standards during construction. For this reason, the revised project would result in similar impacts to the original project with regard to construction noise.

With respect to operational impacts, under either the revised project or the original project, existing uses would be subject to traffic noise along off-site and internal roadways, as well as noise from day-to-day activities.

Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. That being said, similar to the original project impacts, both construction and operational noise impacts would, nonetheless, remain significant. Therefore, short-term construction noise impacts would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the construction activities. Short-term noise and vibration impacts from the pile driving would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the pile driving. Similar to the original project, the revised project would generate operational noise impacts that would also remain significant and unavoidable.

(19) Population and Housing

Implementation of the Revised Project would not change proposed densities or population projections not previously addressed in the Draft EIR/original project. Consequently, the revised Project Description would not result in significant impacts to population and housing.