

# San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

## Open Space Preservation Policy

*Adopted July 21, 2011*

The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) seeks to promote quality of life for all citizens by preserving and protecting the watershed and natural environment that has given the San Gabriel Valley much of its unique character. Our communities are supportive of policies that promote open space through appropriate use of natural resources and placement of development, as well as preventing illegal activities (dumping and arson) and the spread of invasive species. In order to address these issues and preserve open space in our communities, SGVCOG will abide by the following principles:

- Open spaces are land parcels that can be small to large, found both in undeveloped areas and within urban settings that provide natural and cultural resources
- Open spaces generally should be accessible for passive public use and enjoyment
- Trails should be developed where possible to provide access, including trails for horseback riding, hiking, bicycling, and off-highway vehicles, where appropriate
- Open space should provide recreation and cultural opportunities for all age groups
- Open space should be recognized for its health and economic benefits, and as a tool to assist with local governments' compliance with state and federal mandates
- Concerns of local governments and private property owners should be respected and taken into consideration

With these guiding principles in mind, SGVCOG and local governments shall lead their communities to achieve the goal of open space protection, conservation, enhancement, and acquisition by supporting programs and legislation that will:

- 1) Identify and protect open space for the multi-benefit enhancement of natural resources and enjoyment for the public;
- 2) Plan for growth by incentivizing compact development in some areas that in turn prevent open space development in other areas;
- 3) Develop greenbelts and greenways along and within urban development to limit unsuitable development and provide buffers to wildlife habitat;
- 4) Acquire and preserve open space at high risk of ecological degradation, primarily along the foothills, waterways, flood plains, and within the upper watershed;
- 5) Promote connectivity of wildlife corridors;
- 6) Promote development of diverse and localized recreational opportunities;
- 7) Promote public outreach and interpretation to foster awareness, knowledge and stewardship of open space as a valuable resource; and
- 8) Advocate for state and federal appropriations, funding from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and/or loan programs for open space acquisition, development, restoration, and management.