

special management areas map

This policy map depicts areas that require special management. Adherence to special criteria for development in these areas is necessary to prevent loss of, or severe damage to life, property, and the natural environment. Development standards for each management area are found in the Land Use Element.*

1. Significant Ecological Areas/ Habitat Management Areas

These areas are ecologically important or fragile land and water areas valuable as plant and animal communities requiring preservation and protection. The specific protective mechanism recommended for each SEA requires individual consideration based upon the nature of the specific resource value, land suitability, the degree of threat from urbanization, location within or adjacent to existing open space and jurisdictional responsibility. The identification and protection of SEAs, however, does not preclude the need to manage and protect all natural streams, riparian habitats, and larger habitat areas such as the San Gabriel, Santa Susana and Santa Monica Mountains.

2. Significant Ecological Area Buffers

Areas that provide additional protection for adjacent SEAs. Biotic communities often are influenced by areas much larger than their own boundaries. In most cases, the boundaries of SEAs have been drawn to include self-contained units. In a few cases, it was necessary to designate buffer zones in adjacent areas where special land use regulations may be appropriate to protect the SEA.

3. Hillside Management Areas

Includes areas where the natural slope is 25% or greater. The intent of this category is to protect the character and natural resource values of hillsides and to manage new residential development so that the risks from fire and flood hazards, water pollution, soil erosion and land slippage will be avoided or mitigated.

4. Potential Agricultural Preserves

Areas shown indicate major contiguous areas where commercial agriculture is either taking place or has a future potential. The intent is to establish voluntary agricultural preserves under the California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) and to discourage the location of uses which would be incompatible with further agricultural productions. Agricultural uses and preserves are not limited by the mapped boundaries.

5. Coastal Zone

An area, as defined by the California Coastal Act of 1976, that extends seaward to the outer limit of State jurisdiction and varies inland as established by the Act. Los Angeles County is responsible for the preparation of a Local Coastal Plan and Program for the Malibu coast, Marina del Rey, El Porto, Los Alamitos and Santa Catalina Island. The intent is to protect and enhance the overall quality of the coastal environment, while providing for increased public access to coastal recreation.

6. Scenic Highways

Officially designated and first priority proposed scenic highways as shown in the Scenic Highway Element. Scenic highways indicate where special land development standards and zoning requirements are recommended. The intent is to protect scenic resources within a highway viewshed.

7. Mineral Resource

Areas where mining is presently occurring, surface operations of major oil and gas fields, and known deposits of rock, sand and gravel. The intent is to encourage the production and conservation of minerals, minimize adverse impacts on the environment, and require that extractive lands be reclaimed to a usable condition.

8. Flood Prone Areas

Areas where potential flood inundation and erosion could occur during major storms. Most major unchannelized streams and rivers are designated as flood prone. The intent is to apply appropriate development controls and mitigation measures to protect against flood hazards and to avoid construction of major new flood control facilities. Further, it is the intent to maintain natural waterflow and preserve streamside vegetation for erosion control.

9. Major Fault Zones

Areas where active and potentially active earthquake faults are located. The highest ground response or damage potential from a seismic event is expected within these zones. The intent is to protect public safety and reduce risks to lives and property.

10. National Forest

Areas where the U.S. Forest Service manages forest lands and resources through programs which provide recreation and multi-use of natural resources, wilderness areas and significant habitat areas. The County regulates private lands. The General Plan discourages development and extension of services to communities not already established in the forest. The intent is the comprehensive management of forest lands and compatible land use regulation of private lands within and adjacent to the forest.

11. Open Space Easement

The area shown as an open space easement includes most of Santa Catalina Island. An open space easement is a cooperative agreement between a landowner and a governmental agency or non-profit conservation groups. It permits regulated public use of private property. The intent is to provide scenic and recreational areas, and to protect natural resources at the least public cost.

Areas eligible for open space easements include national forest private inholdings, significant ecological areas/habitat management areas and buffers, hillside areas with scenic values, coastal zone areas, scenic highway corridors, flood prone areas suitable for recreation or wildlife observation, and seismic areas suitable for recreation or seismic education.

*Due to the scale and generalized nature of this map, special management boundaries will be determined on a site analysis basis as needed, after a review of more detailed mapping and additional environmental data submitted.