



Open Space, Recreation, Biodiversity and Habitat: An 'Our County' Workshop

September 17, 2018

The Team

Consultant Team



Topic and data collection and analysis leadership and stakeholder engagement co-leadership



Stakeholder engagement
co-leadership



Topic expert: **open space**



Topic expert: **housing and economy
and workforce development**
SE support



Advisors



Topic expert: **health and
wellbeing**



Topic expert:
transportation



Topic expert: **air quality**

Los Angeles County Chief Sustainability Office



The Chief Sustainability Office provides comprehensive and coordinated policy support and guidance for the Board of Supervisors, County departments, the unincorporated areas, and the region to make our communities healthier, more liveable, economically stronger, more equitable, more resilient, and more sustainable.

The Plan

The County's Aims

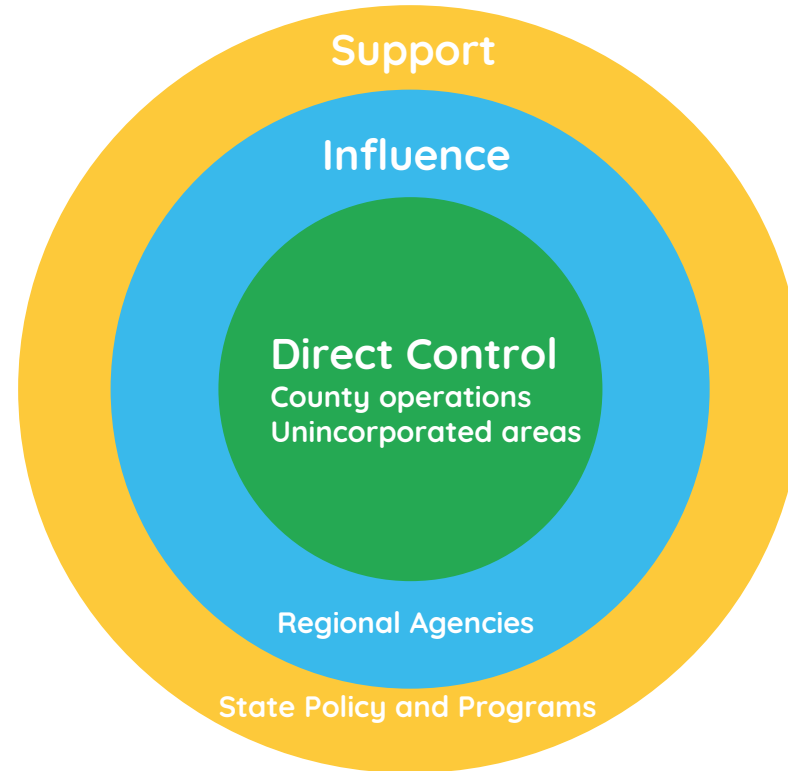
The plan should be:

- Aspirational, Comprehensive, Long-Term, Regional, Actionable

The task:

- Develop a comprehensive framework for County and City sustainability initiatives
- Serve as template for local cities when preparing sustainability/climate action plans
- Prepare the region to be competitive for funding

The County's Sphere of Influence



Countywide Sustainability Plan Framework

- Water
- Energy
- Climate
- Air Quality
- Land Use and Transportation
- Open Space, Recreation and Habitat/Biodiversity
- Resource Recovery and Waste Management
- Public Health and Well-Being
- Economy and Workforce Development
- Housing



**Equity &
Resilience
woven
throughout**

Organizing Principles



Nurturing Healthy Communities



Cultivating a Just Economy



Fostering a Healthy Relationship with the Environment



Making It Happen

Stakeholder Process and Today's Agenda

Stakeholder Engagement Equity Statement



Equity

Goal

Reduce disparities across geographies due to race, class, gender, and other social differences

Strategy

Commit resources to include those often left out of policy and planning discussions

Indicators

Distributional	Actions that repair current and historical imbalances
Procedural	Participatory decisionmaking with vulnerable communities
Transformational	Strategies securing future benefits for at-risk populations

Stakeholder Engagement Plan



Stakeholder Engagement Timeline



Nonprofit Stakeholder Engagement First 3 Workshops



Water
June 28, 2018



66 individuals
55 NGOs

Energy
July 20, 2018



48 individuals
37 NGOs

Transportation
July 27, 2018



55 individuals
42 NGOs

**131 individuals representing
88 nonprofit organizations**

Today's Team Leaders



Stakeholder Engagement

- Liberty Hill: Michele Prichard & Ben Russak
- UCLA: Ari Simon

Data & Analysis and Topic Teams

- UCLA: Stephanie Pincetl & Sean Kennedy
- BuroHappold: Christopher Rhie

Community-Based Anchor Organizations



- Supervisor District 1 (Solis): **East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice**
- Supervisor District 2 (Ridley-Thomas): **Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education**
- Supervisor District 3 (Kuehl): **Pacoima Beautiful**
- Supervisor District 4 (Hahn): **Communities for a Better Environment**
- Supervisor District 5 (Barger): **Day One**

Today's Agenda



10:10 **Our County Landscapes & Ecosystems Opportunities** (Sean Kennedy)

10:30 **Group Discussion**

10:40 **Cross-Cutting Topic Sessions (2 rounds)**

- Public Health and Wellbeing, Air Quality & Resilience
- Housing & Land Use
- Economy & Workforce Development

12:00 **Reconvene & Report Back followed by Lunch**

1:00 **Focus Groups (2 rounds)**

- Parks, Beaches, Recreation & Access
- Natural & Urban Biodiversity & Habitats, & Climate Resilience
- Land Use (Infill-Exurban-Agriculture) and Displacement
- Multi-Benefit Projects: Green Infrastructure/Landscaping/Jobs/Community Benefits
- The LA River

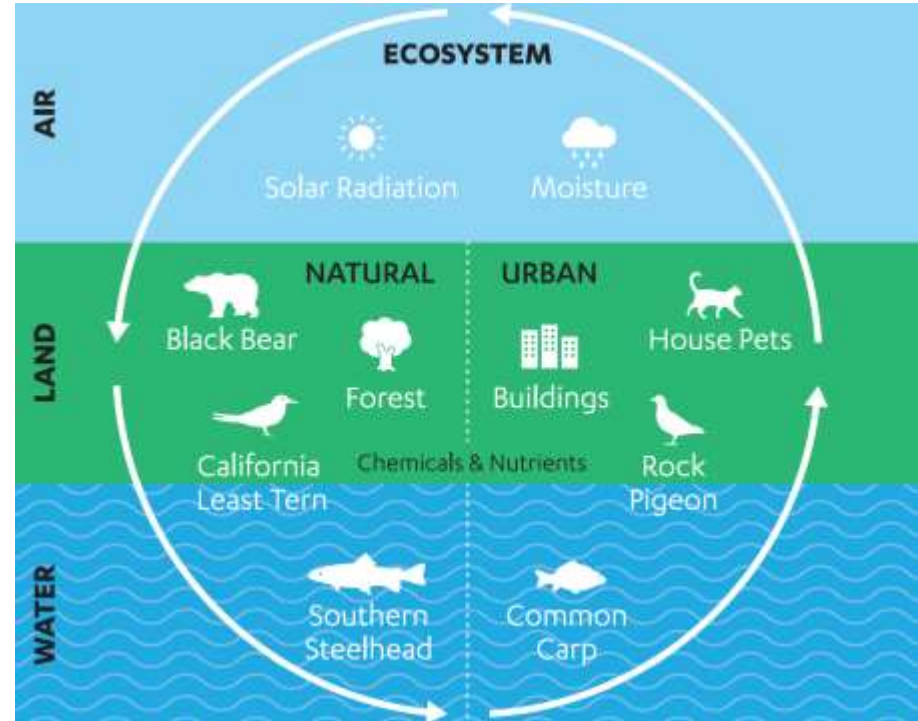
2:40 **Reconvene & Report Back, Dot Voting on Strategies**

3:15 **Wrap Up and Evaluations**

LA County Landscapes & Ecosystems Overview

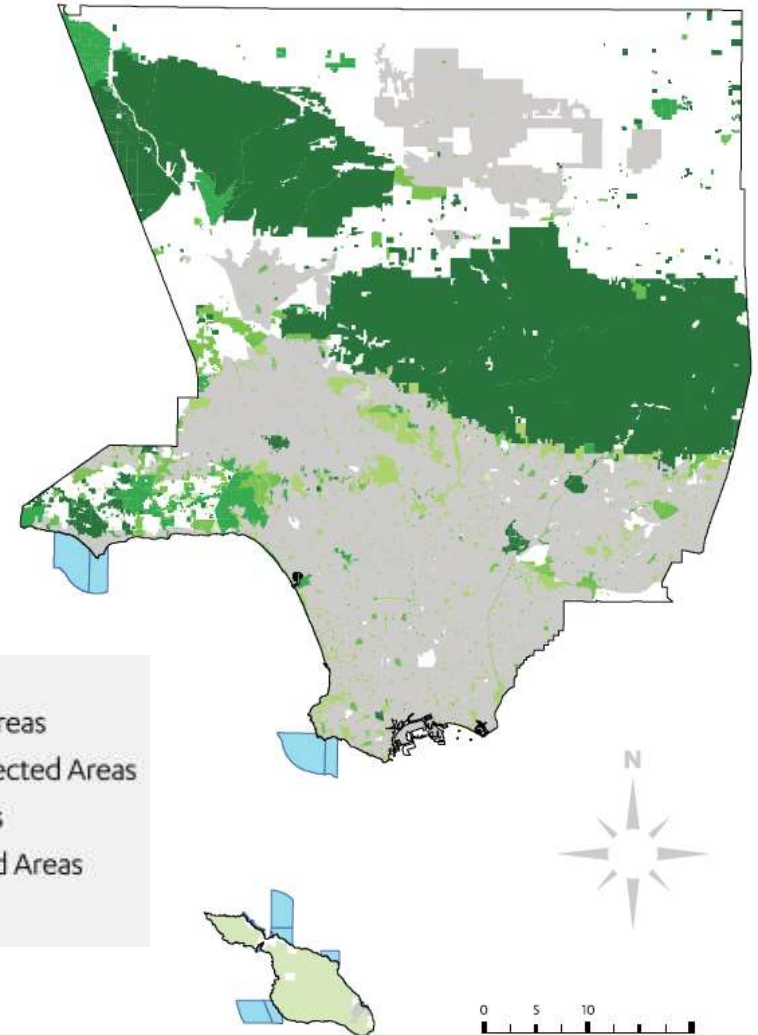
Landscapes and Ecosystems of the L.A. region










- Urban ecosystems are dynamic combinations of natural, social, and constructed features
- L.A. County's landscapes comprise social and ecological features and serve multiple functions:
 - Recreation
 - Habitat
 - Agriculture
 - Water filtration
 - Flood control



Protected Areas

- Protected public lands account for 34% of the total L.A. County area (886,443 acres)
- 41,807 acres of marine protected areas
- Mostly limited to mountainous areas and pockets along the coast



Key	
 LA County Boundary	 County Protected Areas
 Marine Protected Areas	 Special District Protected Areas
 Federal Protected Areas	 City Protected Areas
 State Protected Areas	 Non Profit Protected Areas
	 Urban Areas

Parks and Beaches

Parks

- Parks have been linked to a range of social, environmental, and economic benefits
- The L.A. County Department of Parks & Recreation Park Needs Assessment found that more than 50% of L.A. County's population lives in areas of high or very high park need
- Access to open space extends beyond availability and proximity
 - Need to re-imagine conventional notions of open space, as well as potential trade-offs



3.3 ACRES
Local Parks &
Regional Recreation Parks
per 1,000 people

Los Angeles County General Plan standard is 4.0 acres per 1,000



86.2 ACRES
Regional Open Space &
Natural Areas
per 1,000 people

Los Angeles County General Plan standard is 6.0 acres per 1,000

Source: L.A. County DPR Park Needs Assessment

Parks and Beaches

Beaches

- Over 50 million residents and visitors enjoy swimming, surfing, and other water recreation at L.A. County's beaches every year
- Lack of public transportation, affordable parking, and affordable lodging present significant barriers to beach access
- Maintaining high levels of water quality is vital for public safety and enjoyment of these iconic landscapes



Source: Heal the Bay, 2018

Working Lands

- Farms, ranches, forests, and other extractive land uses support economic activity and land-based livelihoods across L.A. County
- In 2013, the value of agricultural production across L.A. County exceeded \$200m
- Solar facilities and groundwater recharge basins are the main contributors to the conversion of agricultural land to urban land in L.A. County
- Conversions from non-irrigated land uses and other land to urban land between 2014-2016 were primarily due to the construction of new homes and businesses and solar facilities

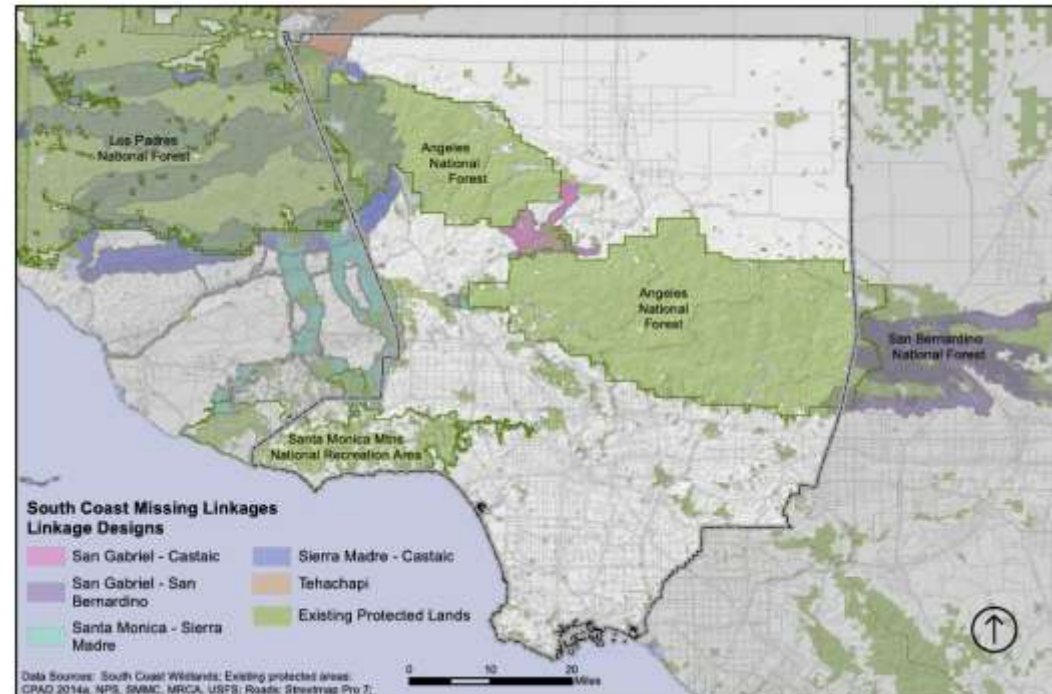


Lancaster Dry Farm Ranch, Lancaster CA
Source: sPower

Biodiversity and Habitat

Biodiversity

- **Significant Ecological Areas (SEA)** are officially designated areas intended to conserve genetic and physical diversity
- **Habitat linkages** are critical to maintaining healthy populations of many species yet are largely absent outside protected areas



Source: National Park Service, 2014

Habitat loss and restoration

- L.A. County has lost 73% of its total **tidal wetland** area from 1850 to the present, from 8,181 acres to 2,229 acres
 - State purchases play a key role in wetland protection and restoration
- **Kelp forests** provide habitat and protection for hundreds of species of fishes and invertebrates
 - Restoration efforts along the Palos Verdes Peninsula have reduced sea urchin population density to allow the recovery of giant kelp



Source: The Bay Foundation: Kelp Forest Restoration

Changing Landscapes: the Future of L.A. County



- **Urban development**
 - Trade-offs between housing and habitat fragmentation
- **Climate change**
 - Hotter temperatures, reduced snowmelt, and increased wildfire risk likely to affect human health and biodiversity
- **‘Green gentrification’**
 - L.A. River: potential trade-offs between urban greening and displacement
 - **Whose river will it be?**



The G2 parcel at Taylor Yard was acquired by the City of Los Angeles to develop a new park and restore lost riparian ecosystems on the Los Angeles River in an area once dominated by industry. Source: CityLab

The Role of the County in Landscapes & Ecosystems



- Over 100 public entities manage landscapes and ecosystems across L.A. County
 - federal, state, regional, county, city park departments; special recreation and park districts; water agencies; utilities; land conservation organizations
- **L.A. County Department of Regional Planning**
 - performs all land use planning functions for unincorporated L.A. County
- **L.A. County Department of Parks and Recreation**
 - manages over 70,000 acres of parkland (local and regional parks, arboreta and botanic gardens, wildlife sanctuaries, golf courses, and multi-use trails)
- **Department of Beaches and Harbors**
 - responsible for the operation and maintenance of all County owned and operated beaches
- Municipal parks in L.A. County are managed by their respective city departments and agencies

A Sampling of Local and Regional Landscapes and Ecosystems Policies



Los Angeles County	Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks and Beaches Measure (2016) implements an annual parcel tax of 1.5 cents per square foot of development, which will generate approximately \$94 million a year to be used on local parks, beaches, and open space areas.
Los Angeles County	Cal FIRE Funded Park Inventory granted funds to L.A. County to determine overall health and spatial needs for twenty-eight County parks.
City of Los Angeles	L.A. City Biodiversity Motion (2017) set biodiversity goals for the Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation by implementing the Singapore Index of Cities' Biodiversity.
California	California Environmental Quality Act requires California local and state agencies to analyze and disclose, and consider the environmental impacts of proposed discretionary project approvals, before approving a project.
California	California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act (2018) reallocates \$100,000,000 of funds to finance programs affecting drought, water, parks, climate, coastal protection, and outdoor access for all.

Key Terms



Vision

A core value or values at the heart of the plan – the “why”

Goals

Broad, aspirational statement of what we want to achieve

Strategies

Approach or approaches that we take to achieve a goal (strategies may support multiple goals)

Actions

Specific policy, program, or tool we take to achieve a strategy

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Indicators

Quantitative measures used to assess performance on a regular basis

Targets

Levels of performance that are sustainable

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Today's Focus

Goals



- A. Ensure the region's landscapes and ecosystems meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- B. Increase and enhance native biodiversity, habitat, and connectivity.
- C. Ensure parks, open space and natural areas benefit human and ecosystem health in the context of a changing climate.
- D. Ensure parks, open spaces, and natural areas are resilient in the face of drought, wildfire, climate change, and gaps in maintenance.
- E. Create and manage the built environment's nature based infrastructure to optimize multiple benefits and ecosystem services.
- F. Ensure all residents have access to parks, beaches and other recreational open space.
- G. Improve ecological literacy.

Department of Regional Planning

SEA Ordinance Update



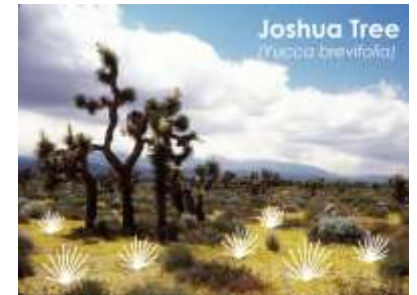
Public Hearing: 9/26/18 at 9:00 a.m.

Public Comment Period: 8/27 - 9/26/18

Send comments to sea@planning.lacounty.gov

Documents available for review at:

planning.lacounty.gov/sea





OurCountyLA.org