

FREEWAY ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM



IMPACTED CITIES

All 34 Orange County cities and the County of Orange

AT A GLANCE

FUNDING: Approximately \$300 million available from Measure M2 (over 30 years)

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) Mitigation and Resource Protection Program (Mitigation Program) provides for comprehensive environmental mitigation for the impacts from freeway improvements. A master agreement between OCTA, Caltrans and state and federal resource agencies was executed in January 2010. This offers higher-value environmental benefits such as habitat protection, connectivity and resource preservation in exchange for streamlined project approvals for the 13 Measure M2 freeway projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Environmental Oversight Committee (EOC) is comprised of 12 members. The EOC is responsible for making recommendations to the OCTA Board of Directors on the allocation of funds to monitor the implementation of the Mitigation Program.

LAND PRESERVATION

The Mitigation Program allocates funds to acquire land and fund habitat restoration projects. Acquired properties are purchased and permanently preserved as open space. Funded restoration projects restore preserved open space lands to their native habitat and include the removal of invasive plant species.

In November 2010, the Board allocated \$42 million to purchase open space in Orange County during the first round of funding. To date, OCTA has acquired more than 1300 acres in Brea, Laguna Beach, Silverado Canyon, and Trabuco Canyon. Approximately \$2 million remains for additional acquisitions during this current round of funding.

Since 2010, a total of 11 restoration projects have been funded throughout Orange County. Approximately \$10 million has been allocated to restore about 400 acres of open space land.

CONSERVATION PLAN

In 2016, OCTA completed the Final Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP), which is a state and federal process to protect threatened and endangered species. The Conservation Plan ensures OCTA's wilderness preserves will remain forever protected from development. It also requires OCTA to provide funding for the long term management of the properties.

In conjunction with the NCCP/HCP, Resource Management Plans (RMP) are being developed for each acquired Preserve. These plans will outline how the Preserves are protected, how they will be managed, and also will address public access.

The NCCP/HCP is anticipated to be finalized by spring 2016. The Trabuco Canyon and Silverado Canyon RMPs will be finalized by late 2017, and the RMPs for the Hayashi and Aliso Canyon Preserves are anticipated to be released for a 90-day public review period in 2017.

Fact sheet as of 12/16/16

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Orange County Transportation Authority

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