



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

5.1 Vision

The Oxnard 2030 General Plan sets out a vision to guide future development in the City. The 2002 visioning program includes environmental resources concerns and direction that are incorporated in this chapter, taking into account the 2006 Background Report which presents a detailed description of environmental resource topics (agriculture, biology, hydrology, and so on). Implementation and determination of internal consistency with the remainder of the general plan is presented in Chapter 9.

The vision for the Environmental Resources Chapter is that the City increases its responsible stewardship of the environment in full compliance with state and Federal laws, and strives to exceed in a position of leadership in these areas. The Environmental Resources chapter is closely related to Chapter 2, Sustainable Community, as both chapters address environmental issues. This chapter, however, serves primarily as the compendium of well-established goals and policies that have long been required by State law and routinely included in general plans. An example would be that Chapter 2 includes policies to develop alternative sources of energy and reduce greenhouse gases while this chapter focuses on issues such as preventing oil spills, regulating underground storage tanks, and siting transmission lines. While this chapter's "day-to-day" environmental activities may not seem as

important as the “big picture” of Chapter 2, both chapters should be used in tandem when reviewing environmental issues.

5.2 Key Terms

The following are key terms used in this chapter:

Aquifer. An aquifer is an underground layer of permeable rock, sand, or gravel that contains water, and is sometimes referred to as a water table.

Groundwater Basin. A groundwater basin is an area underlain by permeable materials capable of furnishing a significant supply of groundwater to wells or storing a significant amount of water.

Overdraft. Overdraft is a condition of a groundwater basin or aquifer in which withdrawals exceed inflow (i.e., more water is removed than put back in).

SCAG. The Southern California Association of Governments, the regional planning agency for Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial counties.

Sensitive Natural Community. A sensitive natural community is a plant and/or animal community that is rare in this area, provides important living and breeding for wildlife, are structurally complex, and are special concern to local, state, or federal agencies. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) tracks sensitive natural communities in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) identifies the elimination or substantial degradation of such communities as a significant impact.

Special-Status Species. Special-status species are those plants and animals that, because of their recognized rarity or vulnerability to habitat loss or population decline, are recognized by federal, state, or other agencies. Some of these species receive specific protection that is defined by federal or state endangered species legislation. Others have been designated as "sensitive" on the basis of adopted policies and expertise of state resource agencies or organizations with acknowledged expertise, or policies adopted by local governmental agencies such as counties, cities, and special districts to meet local conservation objectives. These species are referred to collectively as "special status species" in this report.

VCOG. The Ventura County Council of Governments, consisting of the ten cities and the County of Ventura.

View Corridor. A view corridor is a highway, road, or trail that offers travelers a view of landscape or man made features.

Viewshed. A viewshed is the area that can be seen from a given vantage point and viewing direction. A viewshed is composed of foreground items (items closer to the viewer) that are seen in detail, and background items (items at

some distance from the viewer) that frame the view. As a person travels along a roadway (a view corridor), the viewshed changes, with the foreground items changing rapidly and the background items remaining fairly consistent.

Wetlands. Wetlands are ecologically complex habitats that support a variety of both plant and animal life. Examples of wetlands include saltwater or brackish marsh, seasonal wetlands, and vernal pool complexes that have a hydrologic link to other waters.

5.3 Goals and Policies

Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources

Goal ER-1

Protection of natural and cultural resources, agriculture, and open spaces is well integrated with the built environment and human activities and achieves a symbiotic, mutually-beneficial, sustainable relationship.

ER-1.1 *Protect Oxnard's Natural and Cultural Resources*



Protect the City's natural resource areas, fish and wildlife habitat, scenic areas, open space areas, parks, and cultural and historic resources from unnecessary encroachment or harm and if encroachment or harm is necessary, fully mitigate the impacts to the maximum extent feasible.

ER-1.2 *Protect Surrounding Agriculture and Open Space*



Protect open space and agricultural uses around Oxnard through continued adherence to the Guidelines for Orderly Development, Ventura County Greenbelt programs, the Save Open-Space and Agricultural Resources Ordinance, and other programs or policies that may subsequently be adopted such as the SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Biological and Habitat Resources

Goal ER-2

Maintenance and enhancement of natural resources and open space.

ER-2.1 *Restoration of Ormond Beach Wetlands*



Commit to the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Ormond Beach wetlands and Mugu Lagoon.

ER-2.2 *Designation and Protection of Sensitive Habitat Areas*



Evaluate Designation of sensitive habitat areas (Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area in the Coastal Zone – ESHA) as resource protection or open space land uses, including but not limited to: 1) Northshore Project resource

protection area, 2) Santa Clara River estuary and riverbed, 3) Edison Canal and harbor-related habitat areas, and 4) various dune habitat areas.

ER-2.3 *Promote Areas for Open Space*



Reserve, preserve, and promote areas particularly suited for open space/recreational uses. Appropriate public access to these resources shall be preserved, enhanced, restored, and properly controlled.

ER-2.4 *Design Review Process*



Use the environmental and design review process to protect designated sensitive habitat, and promote open space.

Water Habitats

**Goal
ER-3**

Protected, restored, and enhanced of water-related habitats and their associated plant and wildlife species.

ER-3.1 *Preservation of Riparian Habitat*



Require the preservation and enhancement of the riparian habitat along the Santa Clara River, Edison Canal, the McGrath Lake vicinity, and within the Ormond Beach wetlands.

ER-3.2 *Review of Development Proposals*



Review development proposals in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local statutes protecting special-status species and jurisdictional wetlands and be open to requiring greater protection.

ER-3.3 *Request Mitigation Measures from Other Agencies*

Whenever possible, request appropriate feasible County, State, and Federal agency mitigation measures.

ER-3.4 *Reduce Impact on Harbor, Bay, and Ocean Water Ecology*



Condition or comment on any applications received for dredging to control turbidity and prevent interruption with spawning or migratory cycles, condition and conduct harbor and bay development in a manner that will result in the lowest reasonable level of contamination, monitor vessel wastes and report them to the proper agency, and continue to comment on the potential effects on ocean water quality of new development and offshore operations (oil, gas extraction, and LNG terminals) operations within the Santa Barbara Channel.

ER-3.5 *Reduce Construction Silt and Sediment*

Require that construction-related silt and sediment be minimized or prohibited to minimize temporary impacts on biological resources.

Sensitive Habitat Areas

Goal ER-4

Protected, restored, and enhanced sensitive habitat areas.

ER-4.1 *Encourage Protection of Sensitive Habitat*



Identify and encourage protection of sensitive habitat areas, with attention to habitat that may span small parcels.

ER-4.2 *Limiting Activities in Sensitive Areas*



Limit the recreational activities in open space areas with sensitive habitats to those activities that have minimal impact.

ER-4.3 *Designation of Resource Protection Areas*



Designate areas that encompass sensitive habitat areas and provide areas for educational and research purposes.

ER-4.4 *Loss of Sensitive Habitats*



Consider loss of sensitive habitats due to development to be a significant environmental impact. All development that is proposed to disturb or remove sensitive habitat shall demonstrate appropriate feasible mitigation.

ER-4.5 *Planning in Sensitive Areas*



Require careful planning of new development in or near areas that are known to have particular value for biological resources to maintain sensitive vegetation and wildlife habitat.

ER-4.6 *Resource Protection Zoning Policies*

Adopt and/or continue to maintain resource protection zoning designation for sensitive habitats to prevent the encroachment of detrimental land uses.

Water Resources

Goal ER-5

Well managed water supply and wastewater treatment programs that together meet expected demand, prevent groundwater overdraft, and ensure water quality.

NOTE: Long-term water supply and other water-related topics and issues are also addressed in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.

ER-5.1 *Wastewater Treatment*

Treat all wastewater in compliance with approved discharge permits.

ER-5.2 208 Wastewater Control Plan

Support updating the “208” Wastewater Control Plan to control urban and nonurban runoff.

ER-5.3 Reducing Dependence on Groundwater



The City shall maintain a minimal dependence on Basin 4A groundwater consistent with the Groundwater Resource Encroachment and Treatment (GREAT) Program and support the policies of the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency to protect, enhance, and replenish the aquifers underlying the Oxnard Plain.

ER-5.4 Wastewater Monitoring

Monitor all wastewater discharges on a periodic basis to ensure that discharges comply with approved permits.

ER-5.5 Abandoned Water Wells and Transfer of Water Rights

Require immediate capping of abandoned water wells at the time of abandonment and where appropriate and feasible, require and accept transference of water rights to the City.

ER-5.6 208 Groundwater Plan

Adhere to the recommendations of the 208 Plan regarding groundwater extractions.

ER-5.7 Minimizing Paved Surfaces

Require minimization and/or permeability of paved surfaces in new developments and replacement paving, where feasible.

Aesthetic, Scenic, and Landscape Resources

Goal ER-6	Protected and enhanced natural setting and scenic resources.
----------------------	--

ER-6.1 Incorporate Views in New Development

Preserve important public views and viewsheds by ensuring that the scale, bulk and setback of new development does not significantly impede or disrupt them and ensure that important vistas and view corridors are enhanced. Require development to provide physical breaks to allow views into these vistas and view corridors.

ER-6.2 Protect and Enhance Major Scenic Resources

Protect and enhance the scenic resources of the beaches, Channel Island Harbor, windrows, farmland, the Channel Islands, and surrounding mountains.

ER-6.3 *Preserve Views of Small Aesthetic Resources*

Preserve views of significant small-scale plant communities including wetlands, riparian vegetation, man-made water features, and the like wherever possible.

ER-6.4 *Siting of Transmission Lines*

Work with utility companies to avoid transmission lines interfering with scenic views.

ER-6.5 *Control of Lighting and Glare*

Require that all outdoor light fixtures including street lighting, externally illuminated signs, advertising displays, and billboards use low-energy, shielded light fixtures which direct light downward and, where public safety would not be compromised, encourage the use of low-pressure sodium lighting for all outdoor light fixtures.

ER-6.6 *New Development Private Open Space*

Ensure that new development incorporates open space areas that provide community and neighborhood identity, private quality exterior private open space for each housing unit, and minimize conflicting land uses and noise generators.

Roadway Aesthetics**Goal
ER-7**

Improved aesthetic quality of major roadways and entrances.

ER-7.1 *Medians and Parkways*

Ensure that major arterials include landscaped medians and parkways.

ER-7.2 *Design of Sound or Zone Walls*

When sound or zone walls are used, ensure that they are visually interesting and well landscaped.

ER-7.3 *Design of Transportation Related Structures*

Design ramps and flyovers shall include appealing features, designed in concert with surrounding structures where appropriate, and that add to the overall character of the surrounding area, including design features and public art.

Coastal Resources

Goal ER-8

Protected coastal resources as a significant landscape feature to be experienced by residents and visitors.

ER-8.1 *Protect Shoreline*



Protect the shoreline and views to and along the Pacific Ocean, recognizing their value as natural and recreational resources.

ER-8.2 *New Coastal Development*

Design new development along primary access routes to the beach so as to maintain and enhance the scenic quality of such routes.

Enhanced Character

Goal ER-9

Enhanced perceived character and quality of the City of Oxnard.

ER-9.1 *Enhance Historic Character*

Enhance the historic and visual amenities of the City's downtown core and the Henry T. Oxnard historic district.

ER-9.2 *Enhance Neighborhood Diversity*

Enhance neighborhood diversity and reinforce the desirable elements of neighborhood character and quality through incorporation of design guidelines, use of landscape materials, and encouraging new developments to integrate historical and culturally significant elements into proposed projects.

ER-9.3 *Residential Street Lighting*

Provide residential street lighting that is appropriate in appearance, scale, and intensity for residential use.

ER-9.4 *Human Scale Development*

Ensure that all new development emphasizes a human, pedestrian scale and minimizes its effect on the area's sensitive visual resources.



See also the policies under Chapter 3, Community Development

Landscaping and Trees

Goal ER-10

Enhanced landscape quality with an emphasis on landscape practices, management and plant species that are appropriate to Oxnard and its coastal climate.

ER-10.1 Promote Use of Native and Water Wise Plants

Promote the development of a native, drought-tolerant landscape character throughout the City that re-enforces a unified and cohesive landscape character and discourage plants that are invasive or problematic in other ways as determined by the City's landscape architect.

ER-10.2 Develop Tree Management Program and Ordinance

Identify and establish permitting requirements for the removal of significant trees on private and public property, including common areas within condominium projects, by establishing a tree inventory and tree management ordinance. Where removal is permitted, require replacement or transplantation.

ER-10.3 Awareness Program of Importance of Trees

Develop a public awareness program that documents the importance of trees in carbon and GHG reduction, aesthetics, property values, and reduction of energy use for cooling.

Cultural and Historic Resources

Goal ER-11

Identification, protection, and enhancement of the City's archaeological, historical, and paleontological resources.

ER-11.1 Archaeological Resource Surveys

Continue to require a qualified archaeologist to perform a cultural resources study prior to project approval. Inspection for surface evidence of archaeological deposits, and archaeological monitoring during grading should be required in areas where significant cultural resources have been identified or are expected to occur.

ER-11.2 Mitigating the Impact of New Development on Cultural Resources

Ensure that alternatives are considered, including planning construction to avoid archeological sites, deeding archaeological sites into permanent conservation easements, and planning parks, greenspace, or other open space to incorporate archaeological sites in the event that development threatens significant archaeological resources.

ER-11.3 Development Applicants to Conduct Research

Continue to require project applicants to have a qualified archaeologist conduct a record search at the South Central Coast Information Center located at California State University Fullerton and other appropriate historical repositories, conduct field surveys where appropriate, and prepare technical reports, where appropriate, meeting California Office of Historic Preservation Standards (Archaeological Resource Management Reports) prior to project approval.

ER-11.4 Historic Preservation

Support public and private efforts to preserve, rehabilitate, and continue the use of historic structures, sites, and districts. Where applicable, preservation efforts shall confer with the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board and conform to the current Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Building and the California Office of Historic Preservation.

ER-11.5 State Historic Building Code for Adaptive Reuse

Utilize, when possible, the State Historic Building Code for historic properties to encourage adaptive reuse.

ER-11.6 Identification of Archaeological Resources

In the event that archaeological/paleontological resources are discovered during site excavation, continue to require that grading and construction work on the project site is suspended until the significance of the features can be determined by a qualified archaeologist/paleontologist.

ER-11.7 Native American Remains

Continue to comply with State laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials consistent with the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15064.5) if human remains of possible Native American origin are discovered during project construction.

ER-11.8 Historical Resource Inventory

Maintain a historical resource inventory, discourage demolition or alteration of historical buildings unless they are declared unsafe, and strongly encourage rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse.

Agriculture and Soil Resources

Goal ER-12	A viable agricultural industry, maintained and enhanced soil resources, reduced erosion, and improved agricultural productivity.
-----------------------	--

Note: Agriculture-related topics are also included in Chapter 3.

ER-12.1 Sustainable Agricultural Industry

Promote the continuation of existing agricultural operations within the planning area.

ER-12.2 Support County Initiatives

Support right-to-farm policies that promote the viability of agriculture in the County.

ER-12.3 Agricultural Partnerships

Work with local and regional agencies and agricultural conservation/mitigation, and local agricultural interests to promote the viability of local agriculture.

ER-12.4 Agricultural Economic Contribution

Recognize the employment and economic benefits to the community in City reports and in the media.

ER-12.5 Soil Conservation and Transfer

Encourage the conservation of agricultural soils by requiring, if feasible and warranted by expert opinion, the transfer of topsoil from agricultural land being developed for urban uses.

ER-12.6 Best Agricultural Practices

Work with the County Agricultural Commissioner to promote best agricultural practices, especially with regards to irrigation and runoff, on land still being farmed within the City.

ER-12.7 Conservation of Agricultural Open Space

Evaluate using conservation easements, transferable development rights, and/or land banking to establish agricultural and/or open space areas to be managed by either public or private conservation organizations or agencies as a means to supplement and/or substitute for the SOAR ordinance.

ER-12.8 Greenbelt Policies

Continue the commitment of maintaining the Oxnard-Camarillo and Oxnard-Ventura Greenbelts and their associated policies.

ER-12.9 Support Williamson Land Conservation Act Contracts

Encourage the use of Williamson Land Conservation Act contracts and other related agreements and, if necessary, establish the City as an agency authorized to manage Williamson Act contracts.

ER-12.10 Develop an Agriculture Processing and Support Strategic Plan

Develop a long-term strategy for the transportation and processing of locally-grown agricultural products that complements other goals and policies such as the gradual relocation of processing facilities away from the central business district to more optimal locations, use of agricultural waste products for energy production, and development of local markets for local grown products in cooperation with the County Agricultural Commissioner and local

agricultural production, transportation, and processing businesses and organizations.

ER-12.11 Urban / Agricultural Buffer Zones

Ensure adequate buffers between residential and agricultural uses, such as open space, recreational facilities, utility easements, windrows, and parking areas. Adequate fencing should be provided around agricultural areas to prevent vandalism.

ER-12.12 Rerouting Roads and Utilities around Agricultural Areas

Develop new roads and utilities around prime agricultural areas rather than through them, where feasible.

Mineral Resources

Goal ER-13	Well managed extraction of mineral resources that protects the environment and surrounding land uses from adverse effects of extraction operations.
-----------------------	---

ER-13.1 Monitoring Mining Uses

Monitor and comment on the appropriateness of mining activities conducted under the authority of adjacent jurisdictions.

ER-13.2 Reclamation of Mineral Resources

Promote the efficient reclamation of mineral resources areas.

ER-13.3 Compatibility with Existing Land Uses

Ensure that any mining operations produce the least amount of incompatibility with surrounding, existing land uses (i.e., limited hours of operation, pest control, etc.) and adequately mitigate environmental and aesthetic impacts.

ER-13.4 Limiting Special Production Techniques

Require that specialized production techniques, such as slant drilling, limit the land area committed to oil recovery and to extract such resources adjacent to existing development, open space, recreations areas, or sensitive habitat areas.

Air Quality Resources

Goal ER-14

Improved air quality and minimized adverse effects of air pollution on human health and the economy.

Note: Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change and Adaptation topics are included in Chapter 2.

ER-14.1 *Incorporate Ventura County AQMP Mitigations*



Incorporate construction mitigation measures recommended or required by the current Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).

ER-14.2 *Transportation Demand Management(TDM)*



Employ best traffic management practices such as bus turnouts and traffic signal synchronization in order to reduce traffic-related air emissions impacts; require commercial developers to improve public transit service between residential and employment uses or shopping centers, bike lanes and protected bicycle parking areas, and other project features that would reduce the need for automobile trips related to the development; and require Transportation Management Associations (TMA) for projects that may have adverse air quality impacts related to mobile sources and contributions to off-site TDM funds to reduce residual impacts that cannot be mitigated on a project-specific basis.

ER-14.3 *Reducing CO Exposure at Congested Intersections*



Require mitigation measures that consider prohibiting the construction of residences or buildings lacking ventilation systems an appropriate distance established by further site-specific analyses from the affected intersection for new construction at congested intersections with the potential for excessive CO exposure to sensitive receptors.

ER-14.4 *Emission Control Devices*



Require all construction equipment to be maintained and tuned to meet appropriate EPA, CARB, and VCAPCD emissions requirements and when new emission control devices or operational modifications are found to be effective, such devices or operational modifications are required on construction equipment.

ER-14.5 *Reducing Construction Impacts during Smog Season*



Require that the construction period be lengthened to minimize the number of vehicles and equipment operating at the same time during smog season (May through October).

ER-14.6 *Minimizing Dust and Air Emissions through Permitting Requirements*



Continue to require mitigation measures as a condition of obtaining building or use permits to minimize dust and air emissions impacts from construction.

ER-14.7 Mitigation Monitoring



Ensure that projects with identified air quality impacts in their respective EIRs are subject to effective mitigation monitoring as required by AB 3180.

ER-14.8 Regional Cooperation and SB 375



Cooperate with other local, county, regional, and State agencies in implementing air quality plans to achieve State and Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards and to prepare, adopt, and implement the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SB 375).

ER-14.9 Participate in Regional Partnerships



Participate with cities, surrounding counties, and regional agencies such as VCOG and VCTC and SCAG to address cross-jurisdictional and regional transportation and air quality issues.

ER-14.10 Consultation with Ventura County Air Pollution Control District



Consult with the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD) during CEQA review for projects that require air quality impact analysis and ensure that the VCAPCD is on the distribution list for all CEQA documents.

ER-14.11 Support Regional Attainment Plans



Support recommendations to reduce air pollutants found in the VCAPCD local attainment plans and use its regulatory authority to mitigate “point” sources of air pollution (e.g., factories, powerplants, etc.).

ER-14.12 Use VCAPCD Air Quality Assessment Guidelines



Use the VCAPCD Air Quality Assessment Guidelines for determining and mitigating project air quality impacts and related thresholds of significance for use in environmental documents. The City shall continue to cooperate with the VCAPCD in the review of development proposals.

ER-14.13 Co-locate Ancillary Services



Strongly encourage the location of ancillary employee services (including, but not limited to, child care, restaurants, banking facilities, convenience markets) at major employment centers for the purpose of reducing midday vehicle trips.