Open Space Element Update

Project Scoping and Options

Board of Supervisors August 26, 2025



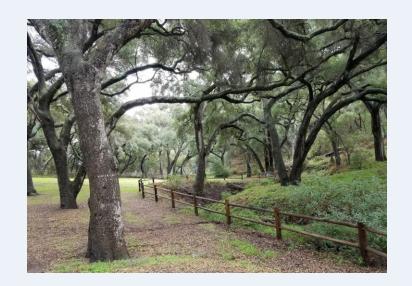
County of Santa Barbara
Planning and Development
Julie Harris

Purpose of Hearing

 Long Range Planning Work Program includes an Open Space Element update pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 1425

P&D is seeking Board direction regarding project scope

Three options for Board's consideration





Senate Bill 1425

- Access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice element
- Climate resilience and other cobenefits of open space, correlated with the safety element
- Rewilding opportunities, correlated with the land use element



Low Option

- Addresses the three key requirements of SB 1425
- Aligns with other County policy planning efforts
 - Environmental Justice Element
 - Recreation Master Plan
 - Climate Adaptation Plan
 - Safety Element Update





Low Option

- Includes general rewrite and modernization
 - Open space categories as required by State Government Code
 - Open space inventory and maps
 - New or updated maps
 - Appealing redesign and format





Moderate Option

- Builds on the low option
 - Identify opportunities to enhance rewilding of existing open spaces on public and conserved lands
 - Identify connections between existing fragmented open space lands on, between, or among public lands and lands managed for conservation or preservation by non-profit organizations or similar entities
 - Identify priorities for future study and planning efforts
 - US 101 Gaviota Pass Wildlife Connectivity Study



High Option

- Builds on low and moderate options
 - Updates the Conservation Element
 - Additional studies, mapping for rewilding and wildlife connectivity
 - Assembly Bill 1889 compliance
 - Consider combining Open Space and Conservation Elements



Estimated Staffing Needs & Consultant Costs

	Low Option	Moderate Option	High Option
	SB 1425-Basic Compliance	Expand Rewilding Efforts on Public and Conserved Lands	Update Conservation Element & AB 1889 Compliance
Staffing	0.8 FTE	1.1 FTE	1.8 FTE
Consultant Total • Planning/Biologist • EIR	\$0 N/A N/A	\$60,000 - \$80,000 \$60,000 - \$80,000 N/A	\$450,000 - 550,000 \$250,000 - 300,000 \$200,000 - 250,000
Budget and Work Program Implications	None Included in FY 2025-2026 LRP Work Program	Some staffing reallocation Reallocation of existing funds for consultant services	Significant reallocation of staffing resources Significant funding for consultant services

Recommended Actions

- Receive and file the Planning and Development report
- Provide direction regarding the scope of the update
- Determine that the Board's actions are not a project and not subject to environmental review

