

**County of San Diego General Plan**

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PINE VALLEY  
COMMUNITY PLAN

# CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that this Plan, consisting of text and exhibits, is the Pine Valley Community Plan and is a part of the San Diego County General Plan, and that it was considered by the San Diego County Planning Commission on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of October 2016, and adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 2016.

Attest:   
MARK WARDLAW, Director  
Planning & Development Services

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# Community Background

## a. History

The Pine Valley Planning Area covers about 92,685 acres (Refer to Figure 1). The vast majority of this acreage, or almost 98 percent, is dedicated in the Cleveland National Forest as either publicly owned open space or privately owned agricultural lands. Indian reservation lands equate to about a half of a percent. Residential land uses in the Planning Area make up approximately one percent and commercial uses make up less than a tenth of a percent. These percentages clearly illustrate the inherently rural nature of the Planning Area and its limited potential for further development. Nestled in an area well-known for its intrinsic natural beauty are the three unique and rustic hamlets of Guatay, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley. These communities offer residents and visitors the opportunity to experience rural village community character and lifestyle unchanged by the intrusion of suburban development.

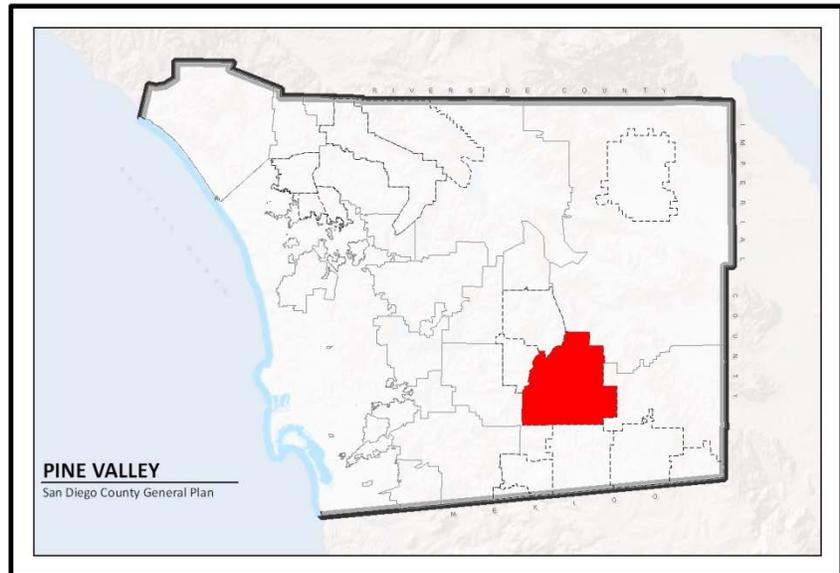


Figure 1: Pine Valley Community Plan Area

### Guatay

Located about 40 miles east of San Diego at an elevation of 4,000 feet, Guatay is a very small rural community centered along winding two-lane Historic Highway 80 at the crest of a historic Cuyamaca Mountains pass. The area was originally the seasonal home and gathering place for the proud Kumeyaay people who referred to it as the "big house" or "ceremonial house." The first settlers arrived in the late 1860's, and the area became known as Farley Flats. The community's name change came about in 1917, when the Guatay post office was established. By the 1930s, Guatay had become a popular resort destination for vacationers from San Diego and Imperial counties, who built small rustic recreational cabins constructed from natural materials. Although most were built on private lands, several recreational cabins

were also built under permit on United States Forest Service land. Approximately 80 years later, some of these stone and wood cabins now serve as primary residences.



Guatay's artist galleries bring visitors to the area.

specializing in native and drought tolerant plants was established. With only a handful of businesses in the community, most residents commute to work outside of the region.

All existing residential and commercial properties are totally dependent on groundwater. Most of the 700 or so Guatay residents live in small quaint homes, hidden by mature oak trees, on parcels that vary from a quarter-acre to larger than ten acres in size. A concentrated portion of the community's residential area is made up of two mobile home parks located on 26 acre and 42 acre sites. Septic fields serve for wastewater treatment for all uses. Rancho Samagatuma is a 2,600 acre ranch and agricultural open space preserve along the north side of Highway 80. The Rancho was originally owned by a family that raised thoroughbred horses and other livestock. Although the ownership of the ranch has changed hands over a span of 60 years, it remains a working livestock ranch that provides much needed undisturbed wildlife habitat. The community appreciates elements that contribute to Guatay's slower-paced rural lifestyle, such as its mix of dispersed residences and compact commercial core, and the absence of urban amenities like sidewalks and street lighting. Guatay residents, hikers, bikers, and equestrians regularly use the wide shoulders along Highway 80. An abundance of native vegetation including oaks, cypress, manzanita, and mountain lilacs contribute to the rural ambiance and provide year-round color. Only a few individual parcels remain. Uncertain groundwater resources and an extended period of drought will not support future planned unit developments.

The village of Guatay is situated between Descanso to the west and Pine Valley to the east. The only access to Interstate 8 (I-8) is via State Road 79 (SR-79) through Descanso or via Historic Highway 80 through Pine Valley. Guatay's very small commercial core includes a tiny country store, a well-drilling business, a vehicle towing business, two unique artist galleries, and two small community churches. Recently, a nursery

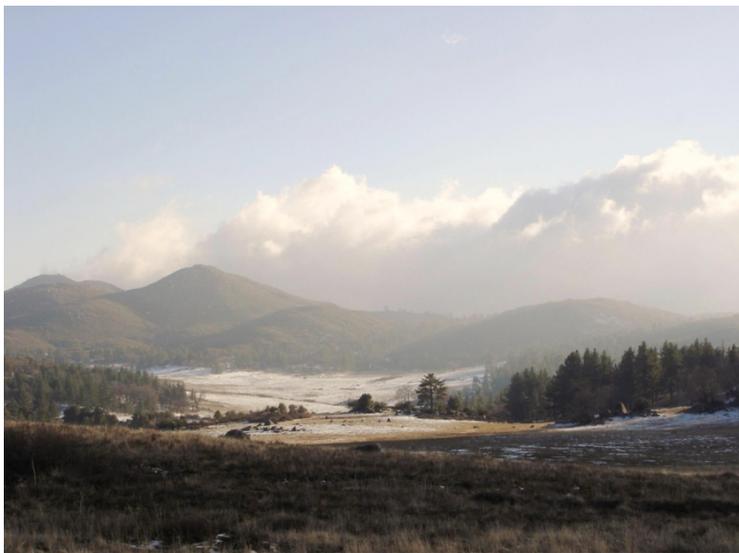
## Mount Laguna

Located 60 miles east of San Diego at an elevation of nearly 6,000 feet, Mount Laguna is a mountain village set within the hollows and hillsides atop the crest of the Laguna Mountains. The community is surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest and the Laguna Recreation Area. Established in 1908, the Cleveland National Forest conserves forest resources, woodlands, and watersheds, provides recreational opportunities for the public, and preserves open spaces in the Laguna Mountains. The Descanso District of the Cleveland National Forest centers on the Laguna Recreation Area. This area is a favorite recreational and vacation destination for San



An incredible view from Garnet Peak in Mount Laguna.

Diego and Imperial County residents as well as visitors from Arizona, Mexico, and from around the world. The Laguna Recreation Area serves nearly a half million visitors per year, and offers scenic and tranquil open spaces, forested campgrounds, a myriad of hiking and equestrian trails, and spectacular views of forested mountains, alpine meadows, and high desert. The eastern escarpment along the crest of the Laguna Mountains overlooks the Anza-Borrego desert nearly a mile below.



Crouch Valley provides seasonal cattle grazing.

Visitors to the Laguna Recreation Area may choose from a range of camping experiences including the U.S. Forest Service Burnt Rancheria, Horse Heaven, Laguna, El Prado and Wooded Hills developed campgrounds, along with other primitive camping areas. The Pacific Crest National Trail rises up the south flank of the Laguna Mountains and courses along the range crest before diving down into the upper Anza-

Borrego Desert to the northeast. Mount Laguna is an important staging point for through-hikers and day hikers using this Trail. Occasionally during the peak summer and winter seasons, the volume of visitors to the Laguna Recreation Area greatly exceeds allocated resources to safely and efficiently accommodate them.

The Cleveland National Forest is checker-boarded with large private agricultural parcels that are used for commercial cattle ranches in Crouch Valley, Rodeo Grounds, Kitchen Valley, Laguna Meadow, and Rattlesnake Valley. These ranches predate the establishment of the National Forest and remain as largely undeveloped agricultural lands to help preserve open meadow spaces of the Laguna Mountains. Recently, the ranchland of Rattlesnake valley was deeded largely in whole to the California State parks system. During spring and summer, picturesque alpine meadows continue to be used for cattle grazing in consonance with the historic character of the Laguna Mountains.

Mount Laguna, as a community, was developed in the 1910s to help augment the Laguna Recreation Area, and was first developed with its central lodge, restaurant, and recreational cabins set into the forest. The community grew, with the introduction of U.S. Air Force (USAF) Mount Laguna Station into a small but bustling 1950s town with thriving commercial and residential cores. At that time, the town even had its own school and two service stations. Since the closure of the base in 1981, the community has settled back into a quaint, tranquil, and rural community preserving its deep historic roots. Mount Laguna remains tourism-oriented and supports visitors to the Laguna Recreation Area.

Mount Laguna supports only four commercial enterprises set along Sunrise Highway. The original historic lodge with its small essential store, motel, and cabins on land leased from the Forest Service, remains vital as a popular visitor destination. The Mount Laguna U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Post Office, located in the lodge building, is considered the center of the community. A Forest Service Visitors Center and a restaurant with cabins are also on Forest Service land leases. Additionally, a privately-owned restaurant with a compact RV park makes up the rest of the community's commercial core. The Department of Public Works (DPW) Mount Laguna Road Maintenance Station is strategically located at the cul-de-sac of the only paved road crossing the highway. The former community chapel and retreat campus is located on leased Forest Service land at the northern end of the community and is being considered for use as a community and events center. The Red-Tailed Roost Forest Service Volunteer Activity Center re-occupies the historic school building at the southern edge of town. A State-owned facility on land leased from the U.S. Forest Service south of Mount Laguna shelters the San Diego State University (SDSU) Astronomical Observatory, which benefits from the dark skies in the Central Mountain Region.

Approximately 173 seasonal recreational residences, leased under agreements with the U.S. Forest Service, are scattered over four different National Forest cabin tracts extending away from the highway. Some of these cabins front along the highway,

but most are located along graded roads winding over hillsides and through the hollows west of the highway. Most of these cabins date from the 1930s to the 1950s, and permits for new residences and further developments have been frozen by the Forest Service. These cabins are intended for seasonal use only, not as year-round permanent residences, and are closely overseen by the Alpine District Office of the Cleveland National Forest. An active cabin-owners organization represents the cabin owners in their relations with the Forest Service. Only a few privately-owned parcels provide land for permanent year-round residences in the community. The highest density of these land parcels are 26 quarter-acre to third-acre sized plots developed in the 1960s, with all but four of these parcels fully developed with year-round permanent single family residences. Clustered cabins dot an adjacent eight acre single land parcel. Morris Ranch is a second, fully developed tract of 16 larger and less dense privately owned parcels. Several other isolated private parcels are located deeper in the forest away from town and the highway. All residences and businesses are dependent on individual septic systems.

Stephenson Peak, just north of town center, is the base for the Mount Laguna Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Station. The adjacent defunct United States Air Force (USAF) Mount Laguna Station, with its deteriorating abandoned structures, has been at the center of several recurring proposals by USFS for facility reuse or rehabilitation. All proposals for any new use of this facility have been defeated under discretionary processes required by the federal government, and during each process the community has made its desire well known to have the facility fully razed and the property returned to native state.

All development in the Laguna Mountains has been defined and shaped by unique natural settings, desire to preserve habitat, limitations due to topography and climate, and the area's total dependence on limited groundwater supply. With these numerous innate environmental restrictions, further development of the community of Mount Laguna and surrounding private lands is not feasible.

### Pine Valley

Surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest, this unique mountain village is located approximately 45 miles east of San Diego at an elevation ranging from 3,200 to 3,700 feet. Here residents of all ages treasure their close proximity to oak and pine woodland glens, fields of grasslands and chaparral, and seasonal creeks. Scattered throughout the valley are granite bedrock morteros and pottery artifacts dating from Kumeyaay habitation. Large open parcels, where early homesteaders once grazed cattle and other livestock in the 1890s, remain as the community's central meadow. In 2008, most of the community was hidden away in the forested rolling foothills surrounding this open area.

Scenic, tree-lined, two-lane Historic Highway 80 constitutes the main street of town, and links Pine Valley with Guatay, via a historic bridge. Highway 80 was once the only means of travel from San Diego to the Imperial Valley and points beyond, until the construction of I-8. Now a country road bypassed by the Interstate, Highway 80 provides Pine Valley with the only major means of access



Looking down on Pine Valley's central meadow. Note residences are almost completely hidden by trees.

and egress from the community. The annual Pine Valley Days parade has marched along Highway 80 for the last 38 years.

Pine Valley's early businesses were built adjacent to this roadway, and the area remains the site of the village commercial core. Only one business, a landmark 1924 restaurant, is still operating in its original building and may be eligible for historic designation by the County's Historic Site Board. Also located within the immediate village core are some individually-owned efficiency units which reoccupy the site of a former motel. These efficiency units and commercial businesses are among a finite group of properties connected to the limited capacity sewage ponds located in the meadow. The vast majority of the valley is dependent on individual septic systems.



A quaint stone cabin, part of the Pine Creek Recreational Tract.

Other commercial businesses along this corridor include two restaurants and a coffee shop, a community church, a small market, a gas station/mini mart, a small automobile repair shop, two real estate offices, a dentist office, a veterinarian, a small motel, a women's fitness center, and two schools. One of these restaurants is part of a list connected with State Vehicle Code Document, Title 13, Chapter 6 Hazardous Materials, Article 2.5 Inhalation Hazard shipments: Routes and Stopping Places.

This restaurant provides for truck drivers transporting these types of materials with a

safe place to park their vehicles, eat, and rest at a location near a fire station and away from residences. Federal and County facilities include a U.S. Post Office, County branch library, a County regional park, and a County of San Diego Sheriff's Substation. The community's mutual water company and fire station are also located in the central commercial core. Pine Valley's central clubhouse, dating from the late 1950s, serves today as the town's centerpiece for community activities, de facto town hall and an emergency evacuation center.

Two large equestrian facilities are located well outside village center along Highway 80. Also located in the Cleveland National Forest at the west end of the valley are 37 recreational cabins under permit and management by the Forest Service as secondary recreational residences. The Pine Valley Bible Conference Center, located off Pine Creek Road, is the former site of a depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps



Pine Valley's central meadow area as seen in 2008.

(CCC) Forestry camp. Many of the original buildings built and used by the CCC camp have been incorporated into the conference facility. Some other private entities lie beyond the community, including a private duck hunting club near the Glen Cliff area and a San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) satellite facility near Buckman Springs.

Some land within the valley is still used for agricultural purposes: cattle grazing and equestrian facilities. Residents board their horses at two conveniently located equestrian facilities and enjoy riding on miles of scenic local and national trails. In 2008, large acreages, such as the Tulloch Ranch and the Corte Madera Ranch Corporation, remained as working ranches and agricultural preserves under the Williamson Act. This type of land use is compatible with community character and helps to define the rural nature of the valley. Therefore, it is very important to the Planning Area that these agricultural uses continue to thrive.

It was the natural beauty of this picturesque, wooded area that drew visitors to ride horses in the mountain meadows and to fish in the once plentiful year-round waters of Pine Valley Creek. Some bought property along curving, tree-lined country lanes, where they built quaint cabins and rock houses. Most of these circa 1920-1940 cabins were originally secondary residences for Imperial Valley farmers trying to

escape the intense summer heat. Vacation homes were also established for well-to-do city dwellers looking for respite from urban life. Well-maintained and now occupied as primary residences, they are still heated by fireplace or wood-burning stoves nearly eighty years later. The continued preservation of these early residences with their sprinkling of graceful vintage lamp posts is vital to community character. These elements contribute to the rustic ambiance and old-world charm of this small village. With exteriors primarily finished in stone and wood, and painted in earth-tones, these unique, individually constructed dwellings complement their rural settings. Since groundwater and conservation habitat are community concerns, manicured landscaping is the exception within the area.

Much of the central area of Pine Valley has already been developed; there are some large open parcels with difficult terrain that lie outside the mutual water company boundaries. These parcels, which do not have water rights, include a combined 171 acres located to the east of the Rancheros area and a 17 acre parcel adjacent to the I-8 exchange at Pine Valley Road. Other open lands consist of a 108 acre parcel and a 38 acre parcel in the central meadow area which are part of the water district. There are a total of 40 water hookups authorized for these two parcels. A 35 acre parcel, located on the west side of Highway 80 adjacent to an existing equestrian center, has no water hookup planned. Zoning designations for these parcels are currently under review by the County. There are also a few other small undeveloped residential parcels scattered around the area.



Area trails draw many visitors.

Pine Valley is special because of its rustic charm and unique character. Conservation subdivisions or tract housing developments with sidewalks, curbs, and suburban street patterns do not fit the rustic character. Gated or walled developments would preempt the existing friendly, small town feel and many mobile homes are inconsistent with the village character. This mountain community would also be a poor choice for high density housing due to its very limited infrastructure and employment opportunities as well as its lack of social services and public transportation.

This mountain community attracts residents of all ages and ethnic groups, who chose Pine Valley for its unique character, accessibility to a variety of outdoor activities, open space, and close proximity to the Cleveland National Forest. Due to limited employment options and non-existent social services, this area consistently experiences an excess in residential housing capacity and an extremely high

property turnover rate. These factors would also affect new residential development. More importantly, without careful scrutiny and planning, additional residential or commercial development may strain natural resources and irreplaceably jeopardize the natural beauty and charm of this small mountain village and provide a negative impact to sensitive wildlife habitat.

## **b. Relationship to Adjoining Communities**

The Descanso Subregional Planning Area adjoins Pine Valley along Guatay's western boundary. With similar rustic charm and land use issues, such as groundwater availability and solid waste disposal, Descanso is approached via Historic Highway 80 and State Highway 79. Guatay's kindergarten through 6th grade students attend the Descanso Elementary School instead of Pine Valley Elementary. Mount Laguna's students attend Pine Valley Elementary. Students in grades 7-12 from the communities of Campo, Lake Morena, Jacumba, Boulevard, Potrero, Descanso, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley, all attend the Mountain Empire Junior and Senior High schools located in Pine Valley. The Mountain Empire Unified School District covers the largest geographic area of any other school district in California.

Descanso, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley all have independent fire protection districts and fire safe councils. The Pine Valley Fire Protection District also provides fire and emergency response for the communities of Guatay and Corte Madera. The Descanso, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley fire stations provide mutual aid to each other when needed. These communities share the same law enforcement resources at the Pine Valley Sheriff's Substation.

The community of Cuyamaca, located to the northwest of Mount Laguna, is similarly impacted by the thousands of recreational visitors that flood park lands during winter snows and impede movement on rural roads. Since these two tiny communities have their own very limited infrastructure and do not fall within the same school district, there is little mutual aid overlap.

The Campo/Lake Moreno Planning Area, which borders the southeast section of the Pine Valley Planning Area, is also a groundwater dependent area. Future residential or commercial development in Campo may affect safety of travel on the two-lane Buckman Springs Road and Old Highway 80. The Pine Valley Fire Protection District provides emergency mutual aid response to the Campo and Lake Morena Fire Districts when needed.

## **c. Environmental Setting**

Pine Valley lies in the foothills along the western face of the Laguna Mountains at an elevation of about 3,700 feet. The neighboring community of Guatay lies immediately to the west at 4,000 feet. The community of Mount Laguna is located to the northeast at about 6,000 feet. These three communities are all surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest and share similar wildlife, vegetation, and environs. This landscape is a surviving remnant of vast forested areas that once covered most of southern California and have been impacted with development of our built up environment. Unique to San Diego County, the Central Mountain Region lies in the Pseudo Montane microclimate zone, which accounts for the mix of oak, pine, sage and chaparral habitat. Jeffrey and Coulter pines, as well as Coast Live, Black, and Engelmann Oaks, provide a welcome canopy for these mountain communities.

Temperatures vary from summertime highs of above 100 degrees F to wintertime lows of near zero degrees F. Pine Valley and Guatay experience about six to eight dustings of snow per winter season, several heavy enough to require snow plows. The Laguna Mountains receive more frequent snowfall, in amounts sufficient enough to result in the closure of Sunrise Highway and limit access to the Mount Laguna community a few times each winter.

However, decreased precipitation and resulting lowered groundwater levels resulting from climate changes, and insect infestations, are creating habitat stress and accelerating the debilitation of mature woodlands. These factors greatly multiply the potential wildfire threat to this Planning Area. As a result of recent wildfires that destroyed habitats in vast tracts elsewhere in the County, the Central Mountain Region holds some of the last large isolated islands of mature and naturally forested habitat surviving in San Diego County. This habitat supports a variety of native and introduced species such as deer, bobcats, foxes, coyotes, raptors, wild turkeys, and an enormous variety of migratory birds.



In 2008, Pine Valley Creek is a seasonal creek that frequently dries up.

Together with the Cuyamaca Mountains and the escarpment foothills, the Laguna Mountains are home to the few rare mountain lions remaining in the wilds of San Diego County. Perhaps the County's most precious and unique biological resource, it is essential to preserve and protect the forests, open spaces, and watersheds of the Laguna Mountains for future generations.

The village core of Pine Valley is anchored by a large open meadow, which is central to the historical identity of the community. Much of the land within this central

meadow area is included in the 100 year flood plain. The meadow area is bisected by seasonal Pine Valley Creek, which runs in the winter and spring with runoff from the Laguna Mountains snows and ceases to flow in the summer months. The creek bed and surrounding area is home to the endangered Arroyo toad and Least Bell's vireo. Immediately adjacent to the meadow is another large open parcel, the Pine Valley Bible Conference Center. These properties comprise an essentially pristine open area highly prized by the valley residents.

Pine Valley's open meadow, the grass-covered fields near Corte Madera Lake, and the surrounds of Guatay and Mount Laguna are areas frequented by wildlife from rabbits, snakes, and coyotes; to mule deer, turkeys, and mountain lions. Raccoons, skunks, opossums, and gray tree squirrels are abundant. Acorn woodpeckers, stellar jays, mountain chickadees, oak titmouse, grosbeaks, and many other bird species are familiar sights. Granary pines and oaks, woodpeckers' storage silos drilled with holes and stuffed with acorns, dot the landscape. Native shrubs, such as manzanita, elderberry, wild lilac, basketbush, and big basin sage, carpet the valley, foothills, and mountains.

Guatay is surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest and is home to large coast live oak trees, mature pines, chaparral, manzanita, and wild lilacs that perfume the air in spring. Deer, cougars, bobcats, foxes, coyotes, wild turkeys, raptors, and many other birds find refuge in Guatay's open space areas near seasonal mountain creeks. Guatay Mountain, which rises 800 feet above the small hamlet, has a large stand of old growth Tecate cypress, which is classified as a threatened species at high risk of extinction in the wild.

These mountain communities are unspoiled by heavy emissions, congestion, noise, or light pollution. In a region that is entirely dependent on a limited quantity of groundwater, it is important that septic systems, sewage treatment facilities and commercial land uses do not cause harm to precious aquifers. Within this rural Planning Area, residents and visitors savor its clean mountain air, serene views, and quiet solitude. Maintaining those qualities is essential, not only to local community sentiment, but to the continued viability of the wildlife and vegetation. A sparse backcountry population also supports needed dark skies. The Pine Valley Planning Area is a unique jewel in a county rapidly losing its grasp on pristine open space. Preservation of open space is essential, not only to area residents, but also to the thousands of city visitors who seek respite in parks, forests, and meadows lands.

## d. Existing Circulation and Mobility

A highly scenic road network serves the Central Mountain Region. Comprised of the Sunrise Highway SR1, State Road 79, Old Highway 80, and Buckman Springs Road, these byways consist of narrow, winding, tree-lined two-lane state highways and local county roads that pass through the heart of the Cleveland National Forest. This network has helped maintain the rural nature of the three main communities in the Pine Valley Planning Area. However, access and egress from these communities is limited to three interchanges with I-8 at Japatul Valley Road, Pine Valley Road, and Sunrise Highway. The sole access from the north is via rural and winding Highway 79. The area's circulation plan is shown in Figure M-A-3 in the Mobility Element of the San Diego County General Plan.

The viewshed from our backcountry roads and highways provides the economic lifeblood to our small mountain businesses, and is an important reason people choose to live and recreate in the area. During the weekends, it is a common sight to see groups of vintage cars, motorcyclists, and bicyclists, along with mountain bikers traveling along our scenic highways. These visitors come to experience our quaint, village atmosphere, to enjoy the natural panoramic views of the Cleveland National Forest and to escape the noise and congestion of urban life. The fragile visual corridor flanking our country roads is one of our most important community assets, and is extremely worthy of continued protection.

The popularity of regional recreational travel coupled with population growth is reflected by an increased volume of traffic on the area's roads. Old Highway 80, completed in 1926, runs through the rustic town centers of Guatay and Pine Valley. Designated both a scenic and a historic highway, it provides a historic link between these villages via a graceful, concrete bridge that spans Pine Valley Creek and adds a timeless feel to this area. Pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians share the slow tempo of the rural Highway 80 corridor without the need for traffic signals. However, when I-8 is closed due to traffic hazards, this closure and shift of traffic to the area's rural roads negatively impacts ease and safety of travel on these local roads. The three points of access between I-8



Built in 1926, the Pine Valley Bridge as seen in 2008.

and Highway 80 limits traffic return to the Interstate and forces increased traffic through Guatay and Pine Valley. Winter snows that bring in thousands of visitors to the Subregion frequently result in major traffic congestion and a total gridlock of the local residential circulation network due in part to limited access and egress along I-8.

A single rural road, Sunrise Highway, allows vehicular travel through the Laguna Mountains. Designated as a National Scenic Byway, it is the only paved road that connects Mount Laguna to the rest of San Diego County. Sunrise Highway winds from I-8 through the Laguna Mountains and the Alpine portion of Anza Borrego State Park, before leading onward to scenic Highway 79 and the villages of Cuyamaca and Julian. Sunrise Highway crosses National Forest lands for 16 of its 24 miles; four miles fall within the Anza Borrego Desert State Park, and four miles cross private land. This route offers educational and interpretive opportunities that promote land and resource conservation efforts to the thousands of urban visitors who travel through the Mount Laguna area. Along this scenic byway are turnouts and road signage highlighting pristine views of majestic forests, meandering creeks, snow covered mountains, and desert overlooks. Rising from 3,500 feet to 6,000 feet, the Highway offers scenic motoring along with recreational opportunities for bicyclists. With its course winding through many cuts, maintenance of the highway is constant ongoing work for DPW Mount Laguna Road Maintenance Station. This essential road station is responsible for keeping Sunrise Highway safely open during wintertime snows. Highway and public safety is overseen by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Border Patrol, California Highway Patrol, and the County Sheriff's Department.

During the height of the summer and fall tourist seasons, weekend automobile, motorcycle, and bicycle traffic along Sunrise Highway often creates unsafe conditions along this narrow winding road. During wintertime, compromised road conditions, traffic volume, and visitor unfamiliarity with the effects of adverse weather gravely impact road safety and mobility along Sunrise Highway.



Winter snows close Sunrise Highway.

Winter snows may even result in road closure. The volume of snow play visitors can easily overwhelm the capacity of the Laguna Recreation Area. Visitor traffic control at the I-8 and Sunrise Highway interchange sometimes creates a bottleneck that overflows into Pine Valley.

As population centers expand and collide with the rural backcountry landscapes, the need to guide developments within scenic corridors becomes imperative. Scenic vistas are changed by vegetation removal, roadway grading, the extension of overhead utilities (telephone and electrical transmission lines), and highway signage or billboards. The ravages of recent wildfires, decimating insect infestations, and prolonged drought conditions have destroyed many acres of mature forest woodlands and diminished some of the area's natural beauty. Therefore, it is critical that further viewshed reduction be prevented and mitigated, wherever possible. The criteria for identifying viewshed corridors within the Planning Area are based on topography, and scenic value. All future development on lands visible from scenic view corridors must be designed, landscaped, graded, sized, and setback in a manner that maintains harmony with the natural scenic setting. Roadways can have significant design, location, and environmental impacts on community character. Therefore, any future local or state road improvement projects must include a detailed environmental review that addresses potential impacts to the wildlife habitat and they must provide mitigation of negative impact to this backcountry viewshed. New roadway designs must also respect the historic development pattern of existing rural backcountry roads.

Existing residential roads within the Planning Area were designed to follow contours around natural features such as creeks, mature trees, and rock outcroppings. These roads lack the grid patterns of streets associated with suburban centers. As the majority of roads within village cores have extremely narrow or even non-existent shoulders, bicycle lanes offer a margin of safety, separating pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Many residents and area visitors enjoy recreational cycling in designated bike lanes along Highway 80. The construction of the proposed bike corridors along Sunrise Highway is very important for safety and public enjoyment of this National Scenic Byway. See Figure M-A-3 in the Mobility Element of the San Diego County General Plan for the region's bicycle network.

Traffic safety is a major concern in Guatay. Due to its layout along Highway 80, its natural topography



Community trails support an outdoor lifestyle.

and the large percentage of homes with young children, traffic speeding through the community creates a significant hazard. This problem becomes even more dangerous during school bus operation times, to the point that community volunteers have tried to help slow down traffic.

Equestrian activities have enjoyed a long history in the Planning Area, including organized horse shows, endurance rides, and independent trail rides. Pine Valley has identified and adopted a system of non-motorized community trails and pathways across private and public lands that provide mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers with critical trail linkage to the many scenic trails located on forestry lands. This community trails plan is an integral part of the much larger San Diego County Trails Plan. Due to the Planning Area's remote location and low population density, public transportation via the County's bus system is extremely limited. In 2008, bus transportation consisted of a single morning pickup and a single afternoon return on Mondays and Fridays only. As a result, residents and visitors primarily rely on private vehicles to travel to and from the Planning Area. With gas prices on the rise, many families are choosing to reside in suburban areas which are closer to places of employment and county services and these factors may preclude additional residential or commercial development within the Pine Valley Planning Area.

## **e. Existing Community Facilities and Infrastructure**

### Water Systems

The Pine Valley Planning Area lies well outside of any municipal or County Water Authority district. Therefore, it is not economically feasible to expect that imported water will ever become a reality for the area. This means the area will remain totally dependent on existing scarce groundwater resources provided by local water companies and individual wells now and in the future.

Groundwater is the single most important natural resource that must be protected and conserved. The County is experiencing a severe drought that may be part of a projected 30 year drought cycle. The cumulative effects of this ongoing drought, increased water demands by residents, and possibly even global warming have visibly diminished water flow through our seasonal and year-round creek systems. That in turn has reduced the recharge of groundwater reservoirs.

The County of San Diego developed a draft groundwater study in 2008 as part of the General Plan Update. Several key findings from this study apply to the Pine Valley Planning Area. The first states a basic assumption that no imported water is, or will likely be, available for the foreseeable future to this area. This is due to a lack of

infrastructure, the limited availability of water in the desert southwest, the cost of providing these services, and the political approval needed to extend the County Water Authority boundaries further to the east.

In another finding, the groundwater modeling analysis conducted for the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board as part of their groundwater study has indicated that under-soil conditions are conducive for successful leach fields, and that 90 to 99 percent of leachate from leach fields will eventually reach the water table. Since the vast majority of all parcels within the Planning Area are on septic systems, a substantial portion of domestic water use indoors will end up as recharge to the area's watershed via the septic systems.

For this reason, large undeveloped open areas such as Pine Valley's central meadow, the alpine ponds of the Laguna Mountains, Crouch Valley, Corte Madera Ranch, Rancho Samagatuma Ranch, and even local private lakes play a key role in watershed collection. These critical resource conservation areas must be protected from future land development and private exploitation. Additionally, the private export of groundwater resources for commercial sale and individual benefit should be prohibited throughout the Planning Area. The continued demand for an adequate supply of clean water by local residents, businesses and area visitors as well as the requirement to have sufficient quantities of water to meet the area's wildfire protection needs are critical limiting factors that impact future development in the Planning Area.

### Guatay

Guatay is completely groundwater dependent on a 975 acre watershed at the high eastern rim of the Descanso watershed. It receives a small fraction of its groundwater from the Descanso watershed basin, the Monument watershed, or the Barrett Lake watershed. According to a San Diego County hydrologist, the majority of the groundwater in the region comes from Guatay Mountain to the south and the mountains to the north. All wells in the area are underlain by fractured bedrock. There are several local water production systems that operate and supply the community's residences and businesses.

The first is located at the Heavenly Oaks Mobile Home Park, located on the south side of Highway 80. This water production system consists of three wells; two of which are currently used for water consumption. Water from two of the wells has a high iron count, and one has a slightly elevated uranium count, though all meet state health standards for human consumption. In 2008, the output from these two production wells was 11 gallons per minute, and 26 gallons per minute. Both feed a 140,000 gallon storage tank that provides water to 95 hookups within the park and eight hookups for nearby private residences. Historically, this water system has

provided an adequate supply for its users and water restrictions have never been imposed.

The Pine Valley Trailer Park water system has 80 hookups supplied by two wells. One well is 800 feet deep with an output of 25 gallons per minute. The other well is 450 feet deep with an output of 15 gallons per minute and is primarily placed in standby. A 67,000 gallon water storage tank is part of the park's water system, which supports their use of 25,000 gallons per day.

A third small water production company, the Guatay Mutual Benefit Corporation (GMBC), was formed in 1949. This corporation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, with an elected governing board and each member has an equal share interest in the corporation. The maximum water hookups total 35 metered connections with 20 vacant parcels having potential for future water connections. Five of these connections serve local businesses and all water connections with one exception are located on the north side of Old Highway 80. This water production system is supplied by two wells with varied output of three gallons per minute to 18 gallons per minute based on the season and annual rainfall totals. These wells feed a 215,000 gallon storage tank.

Over the years, the GMBC has had several issues with the availability and quality of its water. In 2005, the County conducted a review of groundwater resources within the Guatay watershed as part of the application process for a Tentative Parcel Map which would have added three more parcels to the water company's jurisdictional boundary. Based on the uncertainty of water resources, the County denied the application and the project was closed. In 2007, and again in 2008, the GMBC experienced water demands that exceeded water production and voluntary conservation measures were implemented. As a result, GMBC customers were asked to conserve their water consumption until after the rains and replenishment of the aquifer.

In 2008, the GMBC drilled a new well over 1,000 feet deep that produced just five gallons per minute upon the original drawdown test. This well was later determined to have an elevated level of uranium exceeding the MCL legal limits for human consumption. This means that water from this well cannot be used unless uranium levels fall within acceptable standards. The only options are both rather costly: either build a water treatment facility or drill another well. Since this company is a non-profit organization that is dependent upon grants to finance significant capital improvements, potential funding for either option is unknown.

The County's 2008 Groundwater Study identified five potential groundwater dependent problem areas and Guatay is among them. From 1992 to 1998, the County monitored three wells within the Guatay watershed area and recorded water

levels that varied from 2.5 feet to greater than 380 feet. This huge fluctuation in the water table depth between dry and wet weather seasons is of grave concern and has sent up a red flag to the County's groundwater geologist. Based upon the water level records from these wells, it may be concluded that the fractured rock aquifer that underlies this area has little to no residuum and has a low storage capacity that is subject to rapid declines in water table elevation and groundwater availability. A low capacity aquifer that has parcels of less than four acres pumping groundwater from a relatively small area at the top of a watershed divide can be significantly impacted by extended drought conditions.

Also included in this groundwater study were the County's 2002 and 2004 water level readings from a Guatay well that was recorded as dry, with water levels deeper than 380 feet below the ground surface. Although this documented water table decline appears to have recovered during the well-above average rainfall levels received in 2004-2005, large fluctuations of this kind are indicative of a scarcity of reliable groundwater resources and place a limit on any additional development.

### Mount Laguna

Mount Laguna is totally dependent on limited groundwater with each basin aquifers providing each of the major water providers. Mount Laguna is served by four separate small water providers and numerous private and governmentally-operated wells providing potable water to distinct sections of this community. The largest provider is the Mount Laguna Improvement Association cooperative water system, which serves the seasonal recreational residences in the National Forest cabin tracts. Privately owned Stuart Water Company serves the Mount Laguna Lodge, two privately-owned commercial properties, a County road maintenance station, and all of the permanent residences on privately owned land parcels around the center of the community. The SDSU Astronomical Observatory has its own independent water system. Al-Bahr Shrine Camp maintains the fourth water system on its leased land.

Over a dozen additional individual privately-owned wells are located on the Morris Ranch area properties, isolated private ranches, the commercial Crouch Valley and Laguna Ranches, and the remote Laguna Reservation. At least four small well-water systems are operated by the U.S. Forest Service for their campgrounds and Camp Ole Fire Station. An impaired older well-water system that served the now-defunct Mount Laguna USAF Station continues for the Stephenson Peak FAA Station.

The largest water storage capacity at some 170,000 gallons in three reservoirs is in the Improvement Association system, but that system's water pumping rate has significantly declined in recent decades. The Shrine Camp maintains the second largest 100,000 gallon storage capacity in its two reservoirs, with a stable pumping rate. The number of water service connections for National Forest cabin tracts and

at the Shrine Camp lease have been frozen and no new connections are to be permitted. Stuart Water Company's capacity is 74,000 gallons in combined reservoirs, with a stable pumping rate. Except for four future planned service connections, all permitted connections within the Stuart Water system are utilized. The Observatory's small single-reservoir system, with its stable refill rate, serves only the research station for its potable and structural fire suppression needs.

Each of the properties with individual wells must maintain a storage capacity of at least 5,000 gallons. The Crouch Ranch commercial water production storage capacity remains at some 100,000 gallons.

All water supply systems in the Mount Laguna area are primarily dependent on electrical power. Separate independent permanent emergency standby generators provide back-up power for the Observatory's water system, Stuart Water system, and the Shrine Camp water system. These three systems have been designated by the Mount Laguna Community Wildfire Protection Plan as strategic water providers in the event of a wildfire, earthquake, or other natural disaster.

The Laguna Mountains aquifer system is a unique etch basin groundwater resource. A number of these aquifers are interrelated with the whole complex centering on the Laguna Meadow aquifer. Laguna Meadow aquifer was historically stable, with the volume of groundwater held expressed on its surface at Lake of the Woods. Amounts of natural recharge collection have been reflected at seasonal Little Laguna Lake and a small seasonal pond at the upper Laguna arm. The Laguna Meadow Aquifer was historically bounded with overflow occurring only at natural springs along the lower exposure of the aquifer. However, one of these natural springs above Crouch Valley has been intercepted by a commercial water mining operation that draws its water via a horizontal bore from the lower end of the aquifer.

### Pine Valley

The Pine Valley Mutual Water Company (PVMWC) serves as the drinking water source for the vast majority of the community. Using groundwater from 10 production wells located throughout the service area, the company provides water for an estimated 1,500 permanent residents and up to 2,500 seasonal users. Seven of the wells are located either adjacent to or within the village boundaries. The other three wells: No. 4, No. 6 and No. 7 are located in the central meadow near Pine Valley Creek. All wells produce water from the fractured rock system of the Descanso Hydrologic sub-area and the Sweetwater Hydrologic Unit. Approximately 25 privately owned wells are located within the same aquifer and share the same groundwater resources. Several other smaller water production systems are located at the Pine Valley Bible Conference Center, at Corte Madera Ranch, and elsewhere.

Two of the wells: No. 2 and No. 8 have been placed in an inactive or standby status, a precaution directed by the California Department of Health Services to prevent future contamination by a MTBE leak from obsolete, underground fuel tanks located near the post office. The site of an additional Pine Valley well (No. 11) has recently been drilled.

The PVMWC holds a valid domestic water permit authorized by the California Department of Health Services and provides water services to approximately 550 developed acres. There were 691 metered connections in 2008, and most of these service connections are for private residences. However, the PVMWC also provides water to the commercial properties within the village core: a gas station, motel, some restaurants, a small business center, Pine Valley Elementary School, and a few others, which include the County Regional Park, the valley's biggest water user.

In 1992, based on the uncertainty of groundwater recharge, California's Department of Health Services recommended a maximum cap of 790 metered connections to ensure that water demand does not exceed finite groundwater resources. Based on historical weather data, the County is experiencing a projected drought period that may last as long as 30 years and these extended drought conditions will most certainly negatively impact groundwater recharge. Therefore, the connection of these additional water meters must be supported by a water study that uses actual measured or recorded hydrological data to determine groundwater recharge. Within the PVMWC District, water production varies seasonally and annually from a minimum of 600 gallons per minute to a maximum of 1000 gallons per minute. The water system which provides water for both domestic and fire protection purposes also contains four steel water storage tanks that range in size from 300,000 to 500,000 gallons. These tanks give Pine Valley a total water storage capacity of 1,757,000 gallons for the three pressure zones. During periods when electrical power is not available, the PVMWC has one 100KW emergency generator located on a trailer that can be used to provide the necessary power to keep one well in operation. Under long-standing mutual agreements additional emergency generators will be provided by outside agencies when needed.

### Power Systems

Although adequate electrical power is supplied to the Planning Area via the SDG&E Glenn Cliff sub-station, area residents are concerned about the wildfire risks posed by existing non-encased transmission lines during periods of strong wind events. Historically, these winds have caused electrical power lines to surge and snap, and this creates an unacceptable risk due to the Planning Area's remote location, limited firefighting resources, and the abundance of natural fuels. Recently, the utility has proposed to de-energize their power grid in times of extreme high wind or wildfire

danger. This policy will negatively impact current residents and businesses, as well as serve as a detractor for people who may be thinking about residing in the Pine Valley Planning Area. Residents are also concerned about the utility's proposed plans that could result in the construction of additional high voltage transmission lines and towers that would irrevocably mar the area's viewshed.

### Liquid Waste Disposal

Within the Pine Valley Planning Area, residential liquid waste disposal is primarily accomplished by septic systems and leach fields. However, within the village core of Pine Valley, commercial properties and public agencies, such as the County Park, County library, and a very few residences within the village core, use the above ground percolation basins for waste water removal. These basins are located adjacent to the County Park and are called the Pine Valley Water Pollution Control Facility (PVWPCF).

The PVWPCF consists of percolation basins and 3 groundwater monitoring wells. It has been has operated since 1994, by the County DPW in conformance with all Regional Water Quality Control Board permit requirements. It has a permitted capacity of 40,000 gallons per day based on a 30 day average. In 2008, there are 52 customers that are connected and some limited additional storage capacity may exist. If so, the Pine Valley Elementary School should have a PVWPCF connection priority.

### Public Schools

Within the village core of Pine Valley, there are two public schools which serve the communities of Mount Laguna and Pine Valley. The Pine Valley Academy is a charter school that serves students in grades 7-12 and is operated through the Julian Charter School. The Pine Valley (PV) Elementary School is operated by the Mountain Empire School District and serves students in grades K-6. In 2008, its Academic Performance Index (API) scores were some of the highest in the County.

The PV Elementary School has been an integral part of the community since it was originally opened as a one-room schoolhouse teaching local children in grades K-8 on its current 2+ acre site in the mid-1930s. The property on which it stands was donated to the town by an early developer with the stipulation that if it ceased to be used as a public school, the property would revert back to the developer's estate. Like so many other small schools within the Mountain Empire School District, student enrollment in 2008 has continued its downward trend. The District is looking for ways to cut operating costs and is considering school closures. Residents very strongly believe that this facility should remain open so that the community does not

lose the school property and is working with the District to find ways to save this school site.

### Pine Valley Branch Library

The Pine Valley Library is located along Highway 80, at the outer fringe of the village core on a very small parcel of land that does not support further library expansion. Built in the mid-1990s, this 2,500 square foot facility includes a small attached community room. The library directly supports the residents of Guatay, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley. It also supports two Pine Valley schools, which do not have their own facility libraries. Residents from many other backcountry communities use the Pine Valley Library as well.

In 2008, the library's existing parking area is already extremely inadequate and unable to accommodate patron parking. This parking issue is further complicated as County Park visitors frequently park in the library's small parking lot. Since the library has only four computers, patrons must often wait to use them. Because the library itself is tiny, its available selection of reference books and books in circulation is insufficient for the community's needs. The community room, which is used to support the wide variety of programs sponsored by the County library, is also too small. Additionally the library's lack of evening hours of operation does not support the community's needs.

### Recreational Parks and Facilities

Pine Valley County Park is located along Highway 80 on a 17 acre site. It has three large group picnic areas that may be reserved, including an area with a serving station and another with a pavilion. There are also a children's and tot lot play areas and a water feature play area, basketball court, shuffleboard court, horseshoe pits, tennis court and two baseball fields and a large grass field for soccer and badminton. A short trail along the creek bed provides a nice area for walking dogs. Historically, this regional day use picnic park has attracted people from neighboring Imperial County, Arizona, and Baja California, primarily on summer weekends. Schools and community groups utilize the sports field daily during the summer and fall. Local students also utilize the park during lunch periods and after school. Residents enjoy the new playground areas with the water feature and small dog trail on a daily basis. With the park's recent loss of 15 mature oak trees, many of the existing picnic areas are no longer shaded and there is an immediate need for permanent covers or structures that could provide shade.

## **f. Public Safety**

### Sheriff Department Facilities

The only San Diego County Sheriff's facility within the Planning Area is the Pine Valley Sheriff Substation; located on Old Highway 80 on the west side of Pine Valley Park. This substation was built in 2014 and is 4,100 square feet in size. It shares a beat with another sheriff's substation located in the town of Boulevard. Together, their combined beat extends as far south as Mountain Empire High School on Buckman Springs Road; as far north as mile marker 33 on Sunrise Highway in Mount Laguna; as far east as the Imperial Valley line just past Jacumba; and as far west as Descanso. A deputy is either on duty at each facility or driving the beat from 7 a.m. until just after midnight. After the hours of 12:30 a.m. until 7 a.m., the deputy on duty is home with a beeper. Due to the huge area that these substations cover, and whether the deputy is dispatched from the facility or at home, emergency response times can vary significantly.

### Detention Facilities

The Pine Valley Planning Area has only one remote detention facility, La Cima Honor Camp, jointly operated by the County Probation Department and CALFIRE. The facility is located in a remote valley along Sunrise Highway north of Mount Laguna. The Honor Camp trustees are trained to fight wildfires and serve as additional firefighters assisting CALFIRE.

### Fire Protection Resources

#### Pine Valley Fire Protection District

The Pine Valley Fire Protection District, in conjunction with CALFIRE, is an all-risk department providing emergency service to the communities of Buckman Springs, Corte Madera, Guatay, and Pine Valley. The District responds to medical aid, fires, hazardous materials incidents, traffic accidents, and public assist non-emergency calls.

Pine Valley Fire Station #44 was built in 1974 on the original district station location from the 1940's. Originally designed for volunteer firefighters, the existing fire station includes two (2) sleeping rooms and three (3) single loaded apparatus bays. As of 2016, the County is proposing to demolish the 6,900 square foot facility and to design and construct a new two-story Pine Valley Fire Station of approximately 14,000 square feet with expanded sleeping rooms, and three (3) double loaded apparatus bays with associated equipment storage and maintenance areas. Other amenities will include administrative offices, a conference/training room, a

kitchen/dining area, an exercise and day room. The County will purchase property adjacent to the existing station for the construction of the larger facility, parking, and apparatus circulation. Station staffing is provided by a contract partnership between the District and CALFIRE. The current contract provides a minimum of two paid CALFIRE personnel at the station at all times. Pine Valley Reserve and Volunteer firefighters augment this staffing so that at least three people are on duty at any given time. With the addition of the CALFIRE personnel, the average response time to any given area within the District is about five minutes.

Since the District is located some distance from urban medical facilities, Air-Evacuation transport is often called upon to transport emergency patients. These calls range from traffic accident victims to critical medical emergencies to time sensitive injuries. Air evacuation helicopters are typically landed in the open meadow behind the Pine Valley Post Office or the Pine Valley County Park. Although not prepared landing pads, these locations are a real advantage due to the close proximity of the fire station. With an aging population and accidents along I-8, Highway 80, and Sunrise Highway, more than 70 percent of the District's responses are medical calls.

Most medical calls require the assistance of an Advanced Life Support (ALS) paramedic-staffed ambulance, which transports patients and provides them with more advanced care while en route to a hospital. The nearest ALS ambulance is located in Alpine, approximately 12 miles away. If that ALS unit is committed to another call in the area, then another ambulance from even a further distance is dispatched to the medical call in this area. The average response time for these ALS units may be as long as twenty minutes, a period of time that is essential in caring for and treating critical emergency medical patients. Since there are only three ALS units in this part of San Diego County, it is not uncommon that all three ALS units are committed to over-lapping emergencies. This means more frequent use of Air-Evacuation transport for patients that could have been easily transported by ground ambulances.

### Mount Laguna Fire Protection Resources

The Mount Laguna Volunteer Fire Department Station provides essential emergency services and structure fire suppression for Mount Laguna and also assists with emergency response along most of Sunrise Highway with mutual aid from Pine Valley Fire Protection District. Forest Service Camp Ole Fire Station is responsible for wildland fire suppression and is a staging point for wildfire operations in the Cleveland National Forest. La Cima Honor Camp, located on state parklands, is dedicated to wildlands maintenance and wildfire suppression.

### Fire Safe Councils.

State-sponsored all-volunteer Fire Safe Councils have become a means to implement fuel management policies. Both the Pine Valley Fire Safe Council and Mount Laguna Fire Safe Council work in collaboration with California State and San Diego County Fire Safe Councils, the Forest Service, and State, County, and local fire protection agencies. The Councils work to help residents reduce and manage brush and to create defensible space around structures in their communities. The Fire Safe Councils arrange activities, such as brush removal and chipping work, in Guatay, Pine Valley, Corte Madera, and Mount Laguna. Fire Safe Councils also work to heighten local public awareness about the dangers of wildfires and the need for defensible space.

## **g. Trends and Future Projections**

### Land Use and Community Character

Left unchecked, population growth and migration trends will increasingly impact the less-developed areas of the Central Mountain Region. The perceived need to increase housing stock, expand suburban tract developments, and to permit the intrusion of higher housing densities into rural areas must be balanced by the real need for resource conservation. In the face of climate change, primarily a long-standing period of drought and its impact on groundwater recharge, conservation of limited groundwater resources in an area totally dependent on these resources will direct any future development. The Pine Valley Planning Group Area population, which currently stands at approximately 2,438, is projected to rise to nearly 2,870 residents. This potential increase of almost 18 percent could impose a negative impact on the community character and quality of life of residents in this small village. Development impacts the availability of clean groundwater. Therefore, all development must address ways to conserve this precious resource and ensure that man-made contamination does not affect finite groundwater resources. Developments must also minimize harm to the existing natural settings which provide vital wildlife habitat and corridors. Earthwork and grading must not be allowed to change patterns of natural water drainage. Nor should above ground utilities be allowed to mar the natural beauty of the area's viewshed. Some of these potential impacts may be mitigated through the preservation of natural terrain and watersheds, protection of existing mature woodlands, use of drought-tolerant landscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and the use of natural finishes on housing exteriors.

Local employment opportunities in the Planning Area are expected to remain very limited. Alternative modes of employment, such as virtual office networks and cyberspace-based workplaces, may provide additional employment opportunities. The future availability of a region-wide high-speed internet capacity would help

develop and support this workforce. The current lack of public transit negatively impacts the Planning Area's economic vitality by affecting the costs of commuting. A public transit system is desired to serve the area.

### Infrastructure and Community Facilities

#### Power Systems

Public utility infrastructure must serve community needs. Unreliability of electrical power due to unplanned or planned utility outages during wind events do not contribute to the vitality of the Planning Area. Shutdowns of the electrical power grid by the power provider will negatively affect residents dependent on wells and heating of residences in this mountain micro-clime. Local businesses with their small customer base cannot afford the loss of income imposed by a loss of power. Protection of utility infrastructure by undergrounding and the use of shielded cables on concrete power poles must be considered as a means to increase reliability, while helping to decrease wildfire risks. Photovoltaic power, solar power, and alternative energy sources must also be explored and encouraged to help meet local power needs.

#### Pine Valley Elementary School

Having a local community elementary school is an important element that attracts a stable family population. There is a continued community need to keep Pine Valley Elementary school open, in spite of a trend in declining enrollment. The community is working with the school district to explore options for expanding the educational services that are offered at this campus. These include opening a preschool on the site and offering more after school activities. Another option would possibly include a division of the school population with the Descanso Elementary School based on grades served. A possible relocation of the Pine Valley Library to a site nearby the school facility would greatly benefit Pine Valley Elementary school.

#### Pine Valley County Library

The local library branch will continue to be a center for enrichment and education for the Planning Area's changing population. However, the small difficult site of the present library building prevents any future upgrade or expansion of this facility. The library needs to be relocated to a site that would allow the necessary room for needed expansion. Ideally, this larger site should support joint use with the elementary school. It would accommodate the availability of a more comprehensive book and reference material selection and one that offers expanded computer resources. A larger community meeting room would help to support the wide variety of programs sponsored by the library.

## Pine Valley County Park and Facilities

Vehicular parking capacity within Pine Valley Regional Park is impacted during peak use periods and there is a need for additional parking capacity. An equestrian parking and staging area would be an asset in a community where a trails system is important. The future addition of these proposed facilities necessitate expanding park acreage.

Currently there is a five year plan to upgrade the existing baseball fields to a modern regulation size ball field and to add a new regulation size soccer field. Both fields would use artificial turf and additional sanitary facilities would be added. The implementation of this plan is dependent on the County to acquire sufficient funding for this project. These plans will also necessitate the displacement and relocation of one of the large picnic areas. The construction of sanitary facilities near the existing tot lot and children's play area, as well as an upgrade of the current irrigation system and the addition of new native plant landscape areas for interpretation and educational purposes, would also benefit park users. Additional facilities, such as a skate park area, a room for computer gaming, and some other compatible indoor games, such as table tennis, would provide much-needed youth recreational opportunities.

## Medical Facilities

There is a scarcity of medical facilities and personnel in the Planning Area. With an aging population and a desire for many seniors to age in place, there is a current need for a medical clinic to accommodate the population.

## Public Safety Resources

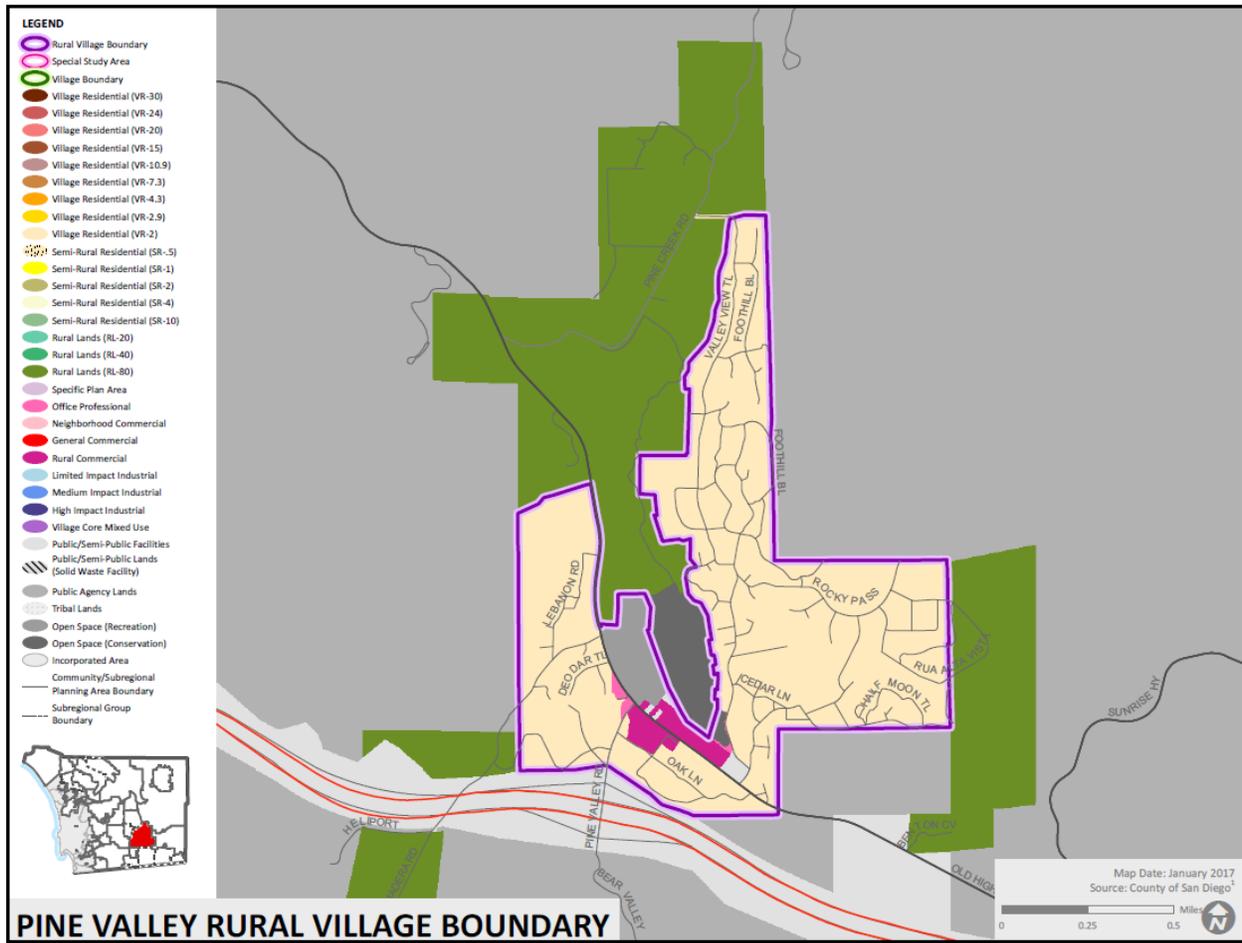
Public safety improvements are needed to provide adequate services for an increasing population.

Due to the meager road infrastructure that serves the region, there is a need for a comprehensive plan that addresses traffic management during a regional emergency or other crisis. This plan should be managed and quickly implemented by State and County public safety agencies to ensure the safe evacuation of entire communities in the event of a natural disaster such as a large wildfire. Provisions of this plan would also manage traffic, parking, access, and egress along the affected road systems during natural events, such as snowstorms.

# Goals, Policies, and Implementation

# 1. Land Use (LU)

## 1.1 Village/Rural Village Boundaries



San Diego County General Plan

Figure 2

## 1.2 Land Use Diagram

The Land Use Diagram is included as Figure LU-A-3.3 in the County General Plan Land Use Maps Appendix.

## 1.3 Community Character

The Pine Valley Community Planning Group Area (referred to as the Planning Area in the remainder of the document) encompasses three unique rural communities: Guatay, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley. All are set within the natural scenic beauty of the Cleveland National Forest where they share a close

proximity to expansive and unspoiled natural resources that provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife. The area also provides a highly valued recreational resource for thousands of visitors.

Residences within the Planning Area are unique, one-of-a-kind dwellings which are almost hidden from view on large wooded lots. Some of these residences were built nearly 80 years ago using locally obtained natural materials such as stone and wood. Newer homes have followed similar construction patterns using earth colors to unobtrusively blend into their natural settings and minimize impacts on scenic vistas. Narrow winding two-lane country roads found in each community reflect the natural topography. These roads are shared by pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists without the need for urban amenities such as sidewalks, curbs, and traffic signal lights. Large cattle-dotted agricultural acreages also add to the Planning Area's character.

**Issue LU 1.1** The quaint, rural old-world character of the Pine Valley Planning Area is threatened by development that does not mirror the existing pattern of residential and agricultural land uses.

**Goal LU 1.1** Preservation of the area's intrinsic rural community character.

**Policy LU 1.1.1** The Pine Valley Community Planning Group (PVCPG) may act as a Design Review Board to ensure that residential and commercial development reflects existing architectural styles and use building materials aesthetically compatible with community character.

**Conservation Subdivision Program Recommendations by PVCPG:  
Policy LU 1.1.2:**

- The intent of the Conservation Subdivision Program is to encourage residential subdivision design that improves the preservation of sensitive environmental resources and community character. Conservation subdivision design results in numerous benefits, including the preservation of local biodiversity, retention of existing agriculture/farmland, increased watershed protection, improved recreational opportunities, reduced infrastructure costs, and improved fire protection for residential developments. This program is mandatory when subdividing property with General Plan residential land use designations of Semi-Rural 10 and Rural Lands 20, 40, and 80.
- Require conservation subdivisions to comply with the ordinances of the program.

- Require conservation subdivisions to provide a diverse range of building scale and design and avoid the appearance of uniformity through the use of different exterior finishes.
- Prohibit grid-like street patterns and avoid the use of sidewalks to mirror the built environment.
- Within a local mutual water district, require that conservation subdivision parcels vary in size. This will provide sufficient area for individual septic systems and allow homeowners the option of keeping a leisure animal. Equestrian activities are closely associated with community character.

**Policy LU 1.1.3** Discourage gated developments, which block viewsheds, pedestrian and wildlife corridors, and are incompatible with the open, small, rural town ambience.

**Policy LU 1.1.4** Encourage the preservation of the Planning Area's agricultural lands for equestrian facilities and cattle grazing operations. These uses reflect the historical character of the area, and provide highly desirable open space and resource conservation areas.

**Policy LU 1.1.5** If located on steep slopes, orient residential structures such that their greatest horizontal axis or axes are parallel to the predominant natural contours of the site.

**Policy LU 1.1.6** Encourage roof forms that are stepped or otherwise articulated so as to avoid long unbroken roof lines, provided that it does not preclude technology for solar photovoltaic systems.

**Policy LU 1.1.7** Minimize reflective surfaces on all structures including water tanks by painting complementary earth colors on exteriors or visually screening with landscaping. This will help to mitigate their impact in natural settings.

**Policy LU 1.1.8** Encourage building surfaces over 24 feet in length to have a change of plane or other architectural treatment to relieve strong horizontal lines and provide visual interest.

**Policy LU 1.1.9** Encourage new development to incorporate local native, fire resistant, and drought tolerant plants in landscaping plans. This will ensure compatibility with community appearance and support local water conservation efforts.

**Policy LU 1.1.10** Encourage single family homes to utilize alternative energy sources and other green technology that are compatible with

community character to maximize energy efficiency and conserve resources.

**Policy LU 1.1.11** Per General Plan Policy, COS-11.7, require undergrounding of traditional utilities, such as telephone, cable, and power, to preserve scenic vistas and reduce wildfire danger.

**Policy LU 1.1.12** Require development to minimize impacts to sensitive habitats and resource conservation areas.

**Policy LU 1.1.13** Assign and maintain land use designations which are consistent with the Planning Area's environmental constraints such as terrain, habitat, and water resource limitations.

**Policy LU 1.1.14** Restrict the placement of commercial development and civic infrastructure to village boundaries.

**Policy LU 1.1.15** Maintain and enhance open spaces to buffer communities, protect natural resources, and foster agricultural land uses. Open spaces complement the rural nature of the Planning Area.

**Implementation Program LU 1.1.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue LU 1.2** New commercial franchise businesses threaten ambiance provided by unique, locally-owned shops and small restaurants in the Planning Area. Franchise businesses are to be discouraged as they conflict with the old world charm of the built environment and duplication of commercial uses is to be avoided.

**Goal LU 1.2** The establishment of locally-owned and operated commercial enterprises that strengthen and sustain the vitality of rural village cores.

**Policy LU 1.2.1** Maintain a desirable blend of unique shops and restaurants that provide residents and visitors with necessary small-scale services that are tailored specifically to each rural village and that offer expanded local employment opportunities.

**Policy LU 1.2.2** Require commercial development to be compatible with surrounding uses in site layout, design, scale, and circulation patterns. This will necessitate the use of landscaped or open space buffers adjacent to sensitive ecological or residential areas.

**Policy LU 1.2.3** Require commercial businesses that use historic buildings to respect the integrity of structure facades and interiors, whenever feasible.

**Policy LU 1.2.4** Prohibit commercial signage within rural village cores that is internally lighted, flashes, blinks, revolves or is in motion, and limit signage height so that it does not exceed the highest portion of the building.

**Policy LU 1.2.5** Require commercial businesses within rural village cores to minimize noise, light, air pollution impacts, unpleasant odors, or aesthetic impairment, as they would be a detriment to existing community character.

**Implementation Program LU 1.2.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue LU 1.3** Property boundary fences, landscape walls, and driveway entrances must be compatible with rural community character.

**Goal LU 1.3** Fencing, walls, and driveways compatible with historic rural patterns.

**Policy LU 1.3.1** Encourage visually non-restrictive fencing (wood, wrought iron etc.) along boundaries separating properties or facing private or public roads.

**Policy LU 1.3.2** Require the use of natural features and materials to soften, buffer, and delineate boundaries, such as planters, shrubbery, low hedges, smaller trees, native and indigenous specimen trees, boulders, and rock formations, whenever feasible.

**Policy LU 1.3.3** Encourage the use of native and drought-tolerant shrubs and trees along boundary fences and walls.

**Policy LU 1.3.4** Discourage fencing that uses brightly colored plastic materials or reed materials within village boundaries, whenever feasible.

**Policy LU 1.3.5** Discourage solid gated driveways and gates that use large diameter tubing, whenever feasible. If driveway gates are necessary, gates should be visually non-restrictive fencing.

**Policy LU 1.3.6** Require that driveways and private roads follow land contours with minimal earthwork, native vegetation removal, or habitat disturbance to the extent feasible.

**Policy LU 1.3.7** Restrict development with extensive impervious driveways or excessive parking areas that decrease storm water recharge and add to runoff.

**Implementation Program LU 1.3.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue LU 1.4** Landscaping and earthwork should respect and conform to natural landforms. It should not adversely impact or damage the natural environment and visual scenic quality of the surrounding area.

**Goal LU 1.4** Earthwork compatible with the natural habitat and character of the Planning Area.

**Policy LU 1.4.1** Limit grading of building pads, driveways, and private roads to be consistent with the existing natural topography.

**Policy LU 1.4.2** Restrict fill and cut slopes to the absolute minimum necessary, and require that they be rounded, rolling, contoured, and blended into natural existing terrain. Shear, straight plane, or angular cut or fill slopes are strongly discouraged.

**POLICY LU 1.4.3** Require manufactured slopes to have established vegetation upon completion of grading. Living, permanent, appropriately irrigated landscaping is a condition of grading permits.

**POLICY LU 1.4.4** Prohibit new home sites on significant or prominent mountain tops, ridgelines, summits, or promontories.

**Implementation Program LU 1.4.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue LU 1.5** Non-native landscaping requires more intensive watering. Groundwater resources can be conserved through native drought-tolerant landscaping.

**Goal LU 1.5** Native drought-tolerant landscaping and re-vegetation.

**Policy LU 1.5.1** Ensure that landscaping on hillsides and ridgelines do not significantly alter natural landform silhouette and it is composed primarily of indigenous, drought-tolerant plants.

**Policy LU 1.5.2** Prohibit invasive plant species on properties under "D," "B," and "G" designators.

**Policy LU 1.5.3** Require the incorporation of natural features and materials in landscape plans such as boulder and rock formations, native and indigenous specimen trees, and native shrubbery.

**Policy LU 1.5.4** Encourage retention of native significant specimen trees as landscaping features, consistent with the development and maintenance of defensible space.

**Policy LU 1.5.5** Encourage use of integrated pest and disease management and organic pest and disease management practices to minimize possible hazards to the environment. All pesticide use and application shall comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.

**Implementation Program LU 1.5.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

## 1.4 Community Growth Policy

The Pine Valley Planning Area is located some distance from access to the public infrastructure which is an integral part of urban life. In an area that is totally reliant on private and community wells, which have been impacted by many years of drought and the effects of global warming, conservation-minded residents are gravely concerned that unchecked future growth will negatively affect the sustainability of the region's uncertain and diminishing groundwater resources. A restriction on the future growth within the Planning Area is necessary to prevent irreversible depletion of groundwater resources.

Accordingly, any new growth in the Planning Area must be gradual and modest in nature. It cannot be allowed to destroy the exceptional natural beauty of the region nor jeopardize the area's historic community character. "Cookie cutter" subdivisions are completely inconsistent with the Planning Area's built environment and run contrary to the vast majority of existing residences tucked away into the natural topographic contours of the land. Conservation subdivision design will be scrutinized to ensure that it reflects the rural characteristics of the Planning Area, with a diversity of architecture, building orientations and setbacks, and lot sizes and shapes.

**Issue LU 2.1** Outside of rural commercial zones, multi-unit development including condominiums, apartments, and planned unit developments are inconsistent with the existing rural, historic development pattern.

**Goal LU 2.1** New development that is compatible with the built environment.

**Policy LU 2.1.1** Require development to reflect the Planning Area's rustic rural character and established land use patterns of single family residences shielded within the terrain and vegetation.

**Policy LU 2.1.2** Require development to adhere to scale and density transitions from rural village cores to outlying residences by decreases in building size, bulk, and height, enhanced architectural articulation, and increased setbacks, buffers, and landscaping.

**Policy LU 2.1.3** Second or accessory units, also known as granny flats or efficiency units, should only be permitted where there are adequate services available to support such uses and should be designed to appear as a seamless expansion of the primary single-family residence or as an accessory structure (such as a barn), so that it is not apparent that there is a second unit on the property.

**Implementation Program LU 2.1.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue LU 2.2** The continued sustainability of the Planning Area's natural resources and the lack of adequate infrastructure limit future development in the Planning Area.

**Goal LU 2.2** Sustainable rural communities in the Pine Valley Planning Area.

**Policy LU 2.2.1** Require development to provide associated improvements to the Planning Area's transportation, fire, and social services infrastructure so that the existing level service is not impaired.

**Implementation Program LU 2.2.1** PDS, fire protection districts, and PVCPG.

## 1.5 Community Conservation and Protection

The Pine Valley Planning Area is entirely surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest, an area treasured for its forested mountains, grass-covered meadows, and innate natural beauty. A diversity of wildlife including several endangered species of plants, birds, and reptiles share this unique environment with a sparse human population. Unspoiled by heavy emissions, congestion, noise, and light pollution, the panoramic beauty of the area is shared annually with thousands of visitors who come to the area to experience clear mountain air and enjoy a wide variety of recreational activities such as hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. This pristine biological resource area must be rigorously protected so that it can continue to be enjoyed by future generations. Encroaching development and further urbanization is a very real threat to this wonderful environment and therefore, land use densities must remain very low.

The three small rural communities of Guatay, Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley are located well outside the boundaries of any municipal water districts, and are thusly, entirely dependent on finite natural resources. After more than 30 years of drought conditions, and the prospects of even drier conditions associated with global warming patterns, the Planning Area's residents have grave concerns about the sustainability of groundwater resources for the existing population. Creeks that once carried an abundance of water year-round are now bone dry for much of the year. The extended drought has also wreaked havoc on the

survivability of ancient stands of oak and pine – setting the stage for opportunistic pest infestations that have killed hundreds of these drought-stressed trees. The environmental evidence is clear – local aquifers are already under pressure. Therefore, new development with its increased water demands must be limited.

Another conservation issue is the possible contamination of local aquifers in a Pine Valley resource conservation area if development requires an expansion of the above ground sewage ponds or if leisure animal waste is improperly managed.

**Issue LU 3.1** Development pressures in conjunction with a long-standing drought have resulted in a greater groundwater demand than recharge within the Planning Area. These effects are already being felt on the surrounding natural environment.

**Goal LU 3.1** The continued viability of groundwater resources that support community and private wells and a healthy natural environment.

**Policy LU 3.1.1** Require discretionary development actions to update the water study of the groundwater basin for the Planning Area if an unprecedented drought situation beyond those already experienced is in effect or for subsequent General Plan Amendments.

**Policy LU 3.1.2** For discretionary projects in the County’s jurisdiction, prohibit the mining and exporting of groundwater. Projects that would adversely impact groundwater supply should not be permitted, or should be fully mitigated if allowed.

**Implementation Program LU 3.1.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPCG.

**Issue LU 3.2** The Planning Area’s watershed quality is threatened by contamination.

**Goal LU 3.2** The effective use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to preserve the quality of local watersheds.

**Policy LU 3.2.1** Restrict the location of animal enclosures near creeks or other waterways within the Planning Area.

**Policy LU 3.2.2** Prohibit future expansion of the existing sewer ponds located in the central meadow area of Pine Valley's rural village core unless necessary for public health, safety, or welfare purposes or otherwise required to implement General Plan Policies LU-14.1 – 14.5. Not only are these ponds unsightly but they are co-located in a resource conservation area with several community wells.

### **Implementation Program LU 3.2.1 PDS, DPW, DEH, and PVCPG.**

**Issue LU 3.3** Floodplains, wildlife corridors, resource conservation areas, and other environmentally and culturally sensitive areas are threatened by development.

**Goal LU 3.3** The protection of the Planning Area's natural environment.

**Policy LU 3.3.1** Prohibit development from altering or impeding the natural flow of drainage through valleys, floodplains, canyons and creeks, to the extent feasible.

**Policy LU 3.3.2** Prohibit permanent removal of native vegetation along creeks and riparian areas and protect these sensitive wildlife corridors with open space easements to ensure continued access for wildlife, residents, and visitors.

**Policy LU 3.3.3** Protect healthy mature trees from encroachment by new driveways, roads, and structures, and provide on-site mitigation (replanting) if removal cannot be avoided.

### **Implementation Program LU 3.3.1 PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.**

## **1.6 Areas of Change: Development Infill and Intensification**

Due to the Pine Valley Planning Area's unique setting within the Cleveland National Forest, its lack of infrastructure, limited sewer capacity, finite groundwater resources, and major infill or intensification projects are not feasible. Additionally, the vast majority of the land within the Planning Area has already been developed.

## **1.7 Community Facilities**

Because the Planning Area lies well outside of the boundaries of any urban center, there is a definite need to be self-sufficient in terms of community facilities. These facilities include a County Branch library, two public schools, a regional park, a sheriff's substation, a community center, and fire protection facilities. (See Chapter 3 for regional park issues, goals, and policies. See Chapter 4 for law enforcement and fire protection issues, goals, and policies.)

**Issue LU 5.1** The Planning Area must provide access to local educational facilities to preserve the vitality of the area and to continue to attract families as residents.

**Goal LU 5.1** Preservation and establishment of local public educational services and facilities that serve grades K-12 as well as adult education.

**Policy LU 5.1.1** Encourage the retention of the Pine Valley Elementary School site as an integral part of the Planning Area's education program.

**Implementation Program LU 5.1.1** PDS and PVCPG.

**Issue LU 5.2** County Branch Library facility is inadequate and its current site has no room for expansion.

**Goal LU 5.2** The expansion of the County Branch library in Pine Valley.

**Policy LU 5.2.1** Seek funding to construct a larger library facility with improved computer resources that is consistent with local community character at a location that would support joint use for local schools and the community at large.

**Implementation Program LU 5.2.1** PDS and PVCPG.

The Pine Valley Community Center or Clubhouse is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that serves the community as a meeting and senior center. During the 2003 wildfires, it served as a temporary evacuation center/shelter and a staging facility for emergency crews. It also serves as an American Red Cross Care Center when extreme fire danger conditions result in the shutdown of the electrical power grid by the electrical provider.

**Issue LU 5.3** The Pine Valley Community Center receives no financial support for needed safety-related facility upgrades and large scale maintenance projects.

**Goal LU 5.3** Financial support for the Community Center.

**Policy LU 5.3.1** Seek funding to purchase and install an emergency generator system in the Pine Valley Community Center for use during extended power outages and other emergencies. This would enable the center to serve as a temporary shelter for displaced residents and travelers or as a staging facility for emergency crews.

**Implementation Program LU 5.3.1** PDS, PVCPG, and community.

## 2. Circulation and Mobility (CM)

### 2.1 Integrated Mobility and Access

The Pine Valley Planning Area is served by a road network that consists of two-lane State highways and local County roads and connectors which pass through scenic corridors. Primary access to the Planning Area from the east and west is via I-8 with interchanges at: Japatul Valley Road; Pine Valley Road; Sunrise Highway, and Buckman Springs Road. In the rural village centers of Guatay and Pine Valley, two-lane Historic Highway 80 with its historic 1926 bridge serves as "main street" for these communities. Sunrise Highway, a federally designated Scenic Byway, provides access to the tiny rural village of Mount Laguna.

Under non-emergency conditions, the circulation element safely accommodates routine traffic volumes. However, with the significant increase of recreational traffic, travel on some of the Planning Area's twisting two-lane roads frequently becomes congested with slow-moving vehicles and bicyclists. The construction of additional turnouts and bicycle lanes along Sunrise Highway would help alleviate this. Peak recreational periods of travel to winter snow events and emergency situations like major traffic accidents close down sections of I-8 and can produce a complete circulation gridlock of Planning Area roadways.

**Issue CM 1.1** Safety of travel throughout the Pine Valley Planning Area is impacted when traffic accidents close the I-8 corridor and vehicles are re-routed onto Old Highway 80. Also, local roadways can become severely congested during peak recreational travel periods when winter snows and icy conditions close Sunrise Highway.

**Goal CM 1.1** Adequate traffic management of the Planning Area's roadways.

**Policy CM 1.1.1** Prepare Planning Area contingency plans that will maintain traffic flow when snow and icy road conditions or traffic accidents on I-8 and Old Highway 80 impact and/or close traffic circulation throughout the region.

**Implementation Program CM 1.1.1** PDS, DPW, law enforcement, and PVCPCG.

**Issue CM 1.2** Sunrise Highway, a narrow winding two-lane road which serves as the major access to the Mount Laguna Recreation Area, lacks sufficient vehicle turnouts for roadway safety.

**Goal CM 1.2** Additional vehicular turnouts along Sunrise Highway.

**Policy CM 1.2.1** Support the addition of more frequent turnouts to improve vehicular safety; a notable shortage of turnouts is apparent north of the visitor center starting at mile marker 23.5.

**Policy CM 1.2.2** Encourage the widening of Sunrise Highway to meet County standards.

**Implementation Program CM 1.2.1** PDS, DPW, law enforcement, and PVCPG.

## 2.2 Local Road Network

Resident and visitor travel within the Planning Area consists of narrow two-lane State and County roadways that detour around natural land features to minimize the impact on the area's intrinsic natural beauty. For the most part, this system of highways and local collectors provide for safety of travel. However, an exception to this is the intersection of Historic Highway 80 and Pine Creek Road in Pine Valley, where the right turn onto Pine Creek Road exceeds 115 degrees.

With the Planning Area's very small population centers, modern street amenities, such as traffic signal lights, concrete sidewalks, and curbs, are not needed and do not fit the existing community character. These amenities could also jeopardize equestrian friendly travel through village centers.

**Issue CM 2.1** Grid streets with gutters, concrete sidewalks, and curbs associated with new development are at odds with existing Planning Area character and may limit equestrian use. New roads may also negatively affect the natural environment: seasonal creeks, riparian areas, mature native trees, and 100-year floodplains.

**Goal CM 2.1** New roads in consonance with the Planning Area's existing road patterns that minimally impact sensitive natural resources.

**Policy CM 2.1.1** Require new roadways to follow natural land contours and minimize grading to avoid erosion, obstructions of panoramic meadow, ridgeline and hillside views, and impacts to mature native trees, seasonal creeks, riparian areas, natural water courses, and floodplains.

**Policy CM 2.1.2** Require development to reflect and incorporate existing residential road patterns by limiting the use of concrete sidewalks and curbs, except where needed for health and safety, as they do not fit the historic community character.

**Policy CM 2.1.3** Require development to provide adequate parking on-site and not in required front setbacks or road shoulders.

**Policy CM 2.1.4** Prohibit future land uses that would significantly increase the volume of traffic on local rural roads and ensure development provides adequate ingress and egress routes during emergency situations.

**Policy CM 2.1.5** Use mountable asphalt berms, unpaved parkway strips, and decomposed granite in lieu of sidewalks and curbs. Support the installation of traffic signs instead of traffic signal lights in rural village centers if the normal volume of traffic requires the signage for safety.

**Policy CM 2.1.6** Establish a vegetation management plan for the shoulders of local roadways to improve sight visibility for drivers and accommodate safe passage of pedestrians and equestrians.

**Implementation Program CM 2.1.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue CM 2.2** Existing infrastructure such as road overpasses or bridges are subject to deterioration due to aging, weather exposure, and ongoing use. Historical infrastructure serving local road systems, such as the 1926 Pine Valley Bridge on Historic Highway 80, should be preserved and maintained as safe traffic elements.

**Goal CM 2.2** The preservation of historic infrastructure.

**Policy CM 2.2.1** Maintain the Pine Valley Bridge as both a viable traffic element and a historic structure.

**Implementation Program CM 2.2.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

## 2.3 Fire Access/Egress Routes

Primary access and egress for the Pine Valley Planning Area (also including the neighboring community of Descanso) is via I-8 and fed almost exclusively by Old Highway 80, a two-lane light collector road. Eastbound and westbound access to I-8, east or west, occurs at Japatul Valley Road, Pine Valley Road, Sunrise Highway, and Buckman Springs Road. With often only one local road as the primary artery for the more heavily populated residential areas, the safe evacuation of residents, recreationists from Mount Laguna, and the livestock typical to the area is gravely impacted. Access by emergency vehicles is also affected.

**Issue CM 3.1** Existing road infrastructure may be overwhelmed in the event of an emergency evacuation.

**Goal CM 3.1** An appropriate Planning Area emergency access and egress traffic management plan.

**Policy CM 3.1.1** Require new subdivisions to provide independent evacuation and access routes to separate collector roads.

**Policy CM 3.1.2** Establish a comprehensive emergency evacuation traffic plan which addresses safety of travel.

**Implementation Program CM 3.1.1** PDS, State and local fire and sheriff departments, U.S.F.S., fire protection agencies, and PVCPG.

**Issue CM 3.2** Overgrown vegetation in the road shoulders of freeway exits and in the medians along the I-8 corridor from Japatul Valley Road to Kitchen Creek Road present an unacceptable fire hazard.

**Goal CM 3.2** Vegetation management that mitigates the danger of wildfires and vehicle fires along the I-8 corridor.

**Policy CM 3.2.1** Implement a vegetation management plan along the I-8 corridor from Japatul Valley Road to Kitchen Creek Road that reduces chaparral in the medians and road shoulders.

**Implementation Program CM 3.2.1** PDS, U.S.F.S, fire protection agencies, and PVCPG.

## 2.4 Local Transit

Due to the Pine Valley Planning Area's somewhat remote location, small population centers, and minimal public transportation services, residents and visitors travel primarily by private vehicles.

**Issue CM 4.1** Public transportation service to centers of population within the Pine Valley Planning Area is extremely limited. This results in the overwhelming use of individual vehicles, which contributes to increased emissions.

**Goal CM 4.1** Increased access to public transportation service.

**Policy CM 4.1.1** Work with MTS and SANDAG to explore the feasibility of an affordable monthly rural bus pass that would reduce single driver trips.

**Policy CM 4.1.2** Seek funding through grants and other sources to provide commuters with a daily bus service from village centers to urban

areas. Include a cost sharing system for this bus service utilizing casino shuttles.

**Policy CM 4.1.3** Support installation of bus shelters to provide respite from inclement weather, which are architecturally designed in consonance with local community character.

**Implementation Program CM 4.1.1** MTSA, SANDAG, CalTrans, U.S.F.S., and PVCPG.

## 2.5 Pedestrian

Quiet country streets and local trails transverse the community and safely intersect with village centers. They are both historically and currently used by residents and visitors for bicycle, equestrian, and foot traffic.

**Issue CM 5.1** New development may restrict the historic flow of pedestrian and equestrian movement through village cores and access to the nearby national forest trails system.

**Goal CM 5.1** A system of interconnected public access trails and pathways that provide opportunities for safe active recreation and appreciation for the Planning Area's natural environment.

**Policy CM 5.1.1** Support a local trails and pathways system in accordance with the San Diego County Trails Plan.

**Policy CM 5.1.2** Require development to provide dedicated community trail easements and pathways so pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists may continue to enjoy recreational access and walk-ability through rural village cores to forestry trails.

**Implementation Program CM 5.1.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

## 2.6 Bicycle and Trails

Area residents and thousands of recreational visitors utilize the Planning Area to cycle, ride horses, and hike the abundance of national forest trails. Old Highway 80, Sunrise Highway, and Buckman Springs Road offer the unparalleled opportunity to savor quiet tree-lined country roads and panoramic views. Competitive bicyclists frequent the Sunrise Highway for training.

**Issue CM 6.1** Bicyclists currently share narrow winding two-lane highways with higher speed vehicles.

**Goal CM 6.1** Bicycle safety along Sunrise Highway.

**Policy CM 6.1.1** Investigate funding sources to construct dedicated bicycle lanes along Sunrise Highway from the I-8 interchange north to Highway 79, as feasible.

**Implementation Program CM 6.1.1** CalTrans, DPW, PDS, U.S.F.S., and PVCPG.

## 2.7 Aviation

**Issue CM 7.1** Due to the Planning Area's remote location from any medical facilities, emergency medical transport by helicopter is often required to save the lives of residents, visitors, and motorists traveling along the I-8 corridor. As the demand for these services continues to escalate in part due to an aging population, a dedicated helicopter landing spot is needed near the Pine Valley Fire Station and I-8. Currently, helicopter medical evacuation operations are conducted in an open field located on private land in Pine Valley's central meadow area adjacent to the fire and sheriff facilities.

**Goal CM 7.1** A helicopter landing site that meets the safety and medical evacuation needs of the Planning Area.

**Policy CM 7.1.1** Seek funding and explore the feasibility of acquiring land or secure a long-term lease for a helicopter landing spot adjacent to the Pine Valley Fire Station and County Sheriff's Substation.

**Implementation Program CM 7.1.1** PDS, Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services, and PVCPG.

## 2.8 Trip Reduction Strategies

Given the lack of mass transit options that currently exist for Planning Area residents and visitors, travel to and from the area is accomplished primarily by private automobile in single driver trips.

**Issue CM 8.1** The predominance of single driver automobile travel within the Planning Area negatively impacts traffic congestion and air quality.

**Goal CM 8.1** Viable transportation alternatives to single driver trips.

**Policy CM 8.1.1** Encourage the development of a ride share/park and ride facility near Pine Valley at the Sunrise Highway and I-8 interchange and a carpool program for residents.

**Implementation Program CM 8.1.1** PDS, CalTrans, and PVCPG.

## **2.9 Parking**

**Issue CM 9.1** Overgrown vegetation within public road shoulders/County right-of-way creates both visibility and physical obstructions for pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

**Goal CM 9.1** Improved public right-of-way clearance and the reduction of visual obstructions within public roadway shoulders.

**Policy CM 9.1.1** Implement a vegetation management plan to maintain a visually cleared corridor along road shoulders/County right-of-way.

**Implementation Program CM 9.1.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

**Issue CM 9.2** Proposed development may route additional traffic into or through an existing parking area adjacent to the U.S. Post Office in Pine Valley, a State designated Hazardous Waste temporary parking area, and stopping place for trucks, as per Code of California Regulations, Title 13, Division 2, Chapter 6 § 1157.18.

**Goal CM 9.2** The restriction of additional traffic through an existing parking area.

**Policy CM 9.2.1** Require development to provide for alternative egress to preclude an increase of vehicular traffic through this State designated parking area and stopping place for trucks carrying hazardous waste.

**Implementation Program CM 9.2.1** PDS, DPW, State and Federal agencies, and PVCPG.

## **2.10 Infrastructure and Utilities**

### **a. Water**

The Pine Valley Planning Area lies well outside the County Water Authority and must rely on finite groundwater resources to sustain area residences, small businesses, and limited agricultural enterprises. Because imported water service is neither available nor planned for in the future, this mandates the area's complete dependence on local aquifers. As a result, water is the single most limiting resource after 30 years of drought, along with the potential prospect of future global warming conditions. Since all development has an impact on groundwater resources, the impacts of future on

groundwater resources must be evaluated to determine if sufficient resources are available.

Groundwater supply and quality is totally dependent on stormwater recharge through natural percolation in seasonal watercourses, etch basin boundaries, recharge basins and meadows, and from natural recharge from septic system leaching. Historically, the area's natural undisturbed watercourses have in large part been protected as sensitive habitats, and so have also been protected from stormwater pollution. Existing development within the Planning Area has traditionally been located outside of natural flood zones, flood-prone recharge basins and meadows, and along the permeable boundaries of natural etch basins.

**Issue CM 10.1** 30 years of drought conditions are affecting groundwater recharge and its ability to support both existing development and the natural environment.

**Goal CM 10.1** The protection and conservation of the Planning Area's groundwater.

**Policy CM 10.1.1** Prohibit development that would adversely impact groundwater supply and quality. Disallow or fully mitigate any new development that would negatively affect groundwater supply and reserves, impact groundwater dependent vegetation, contravene existing water rights, or degrade water purity.(See also County General Plan policies LU-8.2 and COS-5.5.)

**Policy CM 10.1.2** Require development to preserve groundwater recharge basins/meadows as natural open space easements.

**Policy CM 10.1.3** Require development to initiate effective permanent post-construction Best Management Practices to minimize ongoing groundwater pollution.

**Policy CM 10.1.4** Require development to incorporate Low Impact Development techniques so as to not further disrupt natural groundwater recharge along etch basin boundaries.

**Implementation Program CM 10.1.1** PDS, DHS, and PVCPG.

## **b. Sewer/Septic**

The vast majority of the Planning Area's residences are served by individual septic systems. Designed and located to not adversely impact groundwater quality, these septic systems effectively interact with groundwater leaching

and allow groundwater recharge through natural percolation and purification. Only a small fraction of commercial enterprises within the Pine Valley core are served by a limited capacity Pine Valley Sanitation District.

**Issue CM 10.2** Expansion of the Pine Valley Sanitation District's above ground sewage ponds would amplify an existing visual blight near the village center, could potentially harm water quality of local aquifers, and could induce growth in this resource conservation area.

**Goal CM 10.2** Minimized adverse impacts from the Pine Valley Sanitation District facilities.

**Policy CM 10.2.1** Maintain the Pine Valley Sanitation District at its current capacity without expansion, unless necessary for public health, safety, or welfare purposes or otherwise required to implement General Plan policies LU-14.1 – 14.5.



Left: Fence in foreground separates the Pine Valley County Park from Sanitation District.

**Policy CM 10.2.2** Require the Pine Valley Sanitation District to mitigate the visual unsightliness of the sanitation ponds through the use of native plants as landscaping and water hyacinths to visually screen ponds from view.

**Implementation Program CM 10.2.1** PDS, DPW, DHS, and PVCPG.

**Issue CM 10.3** Septic system density in clustered subdivisions may negatively impact groundwater resources.

**Goal CM 10.3** The protection of surface and groundwater quality.

**Policy CM 10.3.1** Require development to locate individual septic systems in areas with the least potential to impact groundwater resources. Prohibit clustering of septic systems that would adversely impact groundwater resources.

**Implementation Program CM 10.3.1** PDS, DPW, DHS, and PVCPG.

### **c. Storm Drainage (See COS 1.5.)**

### **d. Energy (Natural Gas and Electricity)**

**Issue CM 10.4** Electrical infrastructure and facilities are generally inconsistent with rural character in terms of scale, bulk, visual character, and noise generation. Adverse impacts must be locally mitigated through proper siting, buffering, and screening when it is necessary to construct this type of infrastructure within the Planning Area.

**Goal CM 10.4** The regulation of large scale energy infrastructure so that impacts are mitigated.

**Policy CM 10.4.1** Restrict the location of large-scale energy infrastructure, such as regional electrical substations, high-tension overhead power lines, natural gas tank farms and distribution depots and commercial alternative energy production facilities, such as commercial solar photovoltaic array fields and wind farms as incompatible uses within scenic corridors.

**Policy CM 10.4.2** Encourage undergrounding of electrical, cable and telephone distribution, and transmission lines when roads are resurfaced or replaced, as feasible.

**Implementation Program CM 10.4.1** PDS and PVCPG.

### **e. Landfill**

Currently there are no dedicated solid waste landfills or facilities that dispose or recycle toxic wastes in the Pine Valley Planning Area. Since these facilities are inherent sources of pollution through leakage or spills, this type of land use is incompatible in a groundwater dependent area. As identified in the Solid Waste section of the County General Plan Land Use Element, there would be no need for additional landfills in the County, including those currently proposed, if the State recycling mandate of 75 percent is met.

**Issue CM 10.5** There is an ongoing problem with illegal dumping and waste disposal on private and publicly-owned land throughout the Planning Area.

**Goal CM 10.5** The effective regulation of landfills, solid waste disposal, and illegal dumping.

**Policy CM 10.5.1** Require any landfill and solid waste management facilities proposed within the Planning Area to comply with the following:

- Provide justification demonstrating that additional landfill capacity is necessary per County Integrated Waste Management Plan requirements; and
- Site facilities in such a manner as to protect public health and safety, the environment, and provide for environmental justice concerns.
- Ensure that all solid waste management facilities are evaluated under all applicable siting criteria.

**Policy CM 10.5.2** Encourage recycling by the Planning Area’s commercial entities and residences to reduce solid waste disposal and meet or exceed the State’s mandate of 75 percent.

**Policy CM 10.5.3** Require commercial refuse enclosures to be compatible with community character.

**Policy CM 10.5.4** Enforce regulations against illegal dumping or waste disposal.

**Implementation Program CM 10.5.1** PDS, DPW, DHS, and PVCPG.

## **f. Telecommunications**

Existing telecommunications facilities on lands under County jurisdiction are clustered near the Nello Greer Bridge along I-8. While the need for effective telecommunication facilities is recognized, there is also concern that facilities will proliferate in other locations affording sight-of-sight communications and will create visual blight.

**Issue CM 10.6** Proliferation of telecommunications facilities can create visual blight along scenic corridors within the Planning Area.

**Goal CM 10.6** The design and management of telecommunication facilities that minimizes visual and other impacts within the Pine Valley Planning Area.

**Policy CM 10.6.1** Develop a Planning Area telecommunications master plan that promotes collocation of new systems at existing facility locations.

**Policy CM 10.6.2** Require service providers to downsize facilities as technology advances and use the latest technology on new facilities.

**Policy CM 10.6.3** Assess the viability of existing facilities within permit boundary at all permit applications, permit modifications, and renewals.

Require all unused facilities to be removed, site restored, or retrofitted for reuse.

**Policy CM 10.6.4** Configure arrays or dishes as close to the ground as feasible and screen structures, array/dish bases, and fencing with native vegetation while maintaining defensible spaces.

**Policy CM 10.6.5** Configure service roads to minimize erosion and visual impact.

**Implementation Program CM 10.6.1** PDS, DPW, and PVCPG.

## 3. Conservation and Open Space (COS)

### 3.1 Resource Conservation and Management

#### a. Agricultural Soils and Production

Agricultural uses in the Planning Area include cattle grazing, small scale animal husbandry, and dry land oat/hay farming. These uses have minimal impact on the area's groundwater supply and they contribute to maintenance of open space, enhance the area's rural character, and provide a positive effect on the local economy.

**Issue COS 1.1** Agricultural land uses should be encouraged, as supported by the local climate and by limited availability of water as an alternative to more intensive land uses.

**Goal COS 1.1** Agricultural land uses that promote and conserve open space.

**Policy COS 1.1.1** Support the continuation of the County's agricultural open space preserve program through the Williamson Act.

**Policy COS 1.1.2** Require new large scale industrial agricultural operations such as producers of poultry, swine, beef and corresponding feed lots to locally mitigate any adverse impacts.

**Implementation Program COS 1.1.1** San Diego County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures, PDS, and PVCPG.

**b. Plant and Animal Habitats and Wildlife Corridors (e.g., woodlands, grasslands, riparian corridors, etc.)**

A rich diversity of wildlife and vegetation thrive in the Planning Area's coniferous forests, high montane meadows, native grasslands, Diegan sage scrub, oak woodlands, chaparral, riparian woodlands, vernal pools, creeks, streams, ponds, and other wetlands. As confirmed by the County's Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), numerous rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species are found within the Planning Area.

**Issue COS 1.2** The conversion of rural lands by development will negatively impact endangered, threatened, or sensitive species and habitat.

**Goal COS 1.2** The protection of the natural landscape and indigenous wildlife.

**Policy COS 1.2.1** Require development to avoid endangered, threatened, special status, and sensitive species to the maximum extent feasible or provide adequate mitigation, preferably on-site or within the Planning Area.

**Policy COS 1.2.2** Protect riparian habitat by limiting development near creeks, streams, and ponds, and prohibit channelization or damming of the same.

**Policy COS 1.2.3** Require development to limit clearing of native vegetation to that required for building pads, roads, driveways, and wildfire protection.

**Implementation Program COS 1.2.1** PDS, County Environmental Review, and PVCPG.

**Issue COS 1.3** Open space corridors of sufficient size are necessary to maintain biological diversity and functional access for wildlife to and from water, food, and breeding areas, and to prevent the creation of biological islands.

**Goal COS 1.3** Conservation of open space and wildlife corridors.

**Policy COS 1.3.1** Require subdivision projects to include biological studies that specifically address wildlife movement corridors and areas of wildlife concentration.

**Policy COS 1.3.2** Require development to protect corridors and linkages for wildlife movement and dispersal through dedicated open

space. These easements shall be of sufficient width to accommodate the natural topography and the type of wildlife using the corridor plus a buffer on either side, where feasible.

**Policy COS 1.3.3** Identify all wildlife riparian and ridgeline corridors on a Planning Area Master Corridor Map.

**Implementation Program COS 1.3.1** PDS, County Environmental Review, and PVCPG.

### **c. Scenic Resources and Highways**

Surrounded by National Forest lands and claiming six of the ten highest peaks in the County, the Planning Area offers stunning views of mountains, meadows, chaparral covered hills, oak and pine woodlands, and riparian canyons. Its undeveloped visual resources contribute greatly to its value as a recreational destination. With urban development stopping at the border of the Cleveland National Forest, it also offers a glimpse of rural America that is rapidly disappearing.

Visual corridors within the Planning Area include Old Highway 80, which has been designated as a National Historic Highway and a County Scenic Highway, Sunrise Highway also designated a County Scenic Highway and a National Scenic Byway, and Buckman Springs Road, which is a County Scenic Highway.

**Issue COS 1.4** Scenic corridors, cultural areas, and environmentally significant areas such as resource conservation areas require special protection.

**Goal COS 1.4** The prevention of visual blight and conservation of visual resources along scenic corridors.

**Policy COS 1.4.1** Require development projects to incorporate natural scenic geological formations and native drought tolerant plants.

**Policy COS 1.4.2** Require development to preserve hillsides, ridges, and horizons, while minimizing the use of manufactured slopes and fill areas.

**Policy COS 1.4.3** Require development to minimize points of vehicular ingress/egress to Historic Highway 80 and Sunrise Highway by requiring multiple properties to use consolidated entries consistent with public safety.

**Policy COS 1.4.4** Prohibit billboards and other large scale advertising and signage within the Planning Area.

**Policy COS 1.4.5** Identify, preserve, and protect culturally sensitive areas.

**Implementation Program COS 1.4.1** PDS and PVCPG.

#### **d. Surface, Groundwater, and Watersheds**

Due to the Planning Area's total dependence on finite groundwater resources, natural systems which promote recharge of aquifers and prevent flooding should be undisturbed whenever possible. Stormwater runoff may cause pollution and erosion and have a negative effect on water quality. Since water is the Planning Area's most precious resource, it must be conserved and protected from adverse impacts.

**Issue COS 1.5** Both new development and redevelopment can adversely impact the quality and quantity of groundwater resources, as well as natural surface water habitat.

**Goal COS 1.5** Site design strategies that respect the natural habitat, minimize the quantity of runoff, and improve the quality of stormwater.

**Policy COS 1.5.1** Require development to protect wetlands, streams, and other bodies of water and their natural watersheds.

**Policy COS 1.5.2** Require development to maximize water conservation by using native, drought-tolerant landscaping.

**Policy COS 1.5.3** Restrict the establishment of commercial development associated with high water usage like additional hotels, motels, or golf courses, etc. and large scale water intensive agriculture as incompatible uses in a groundwater dependent Planning Area.

**Policy COS 1.5.4** Require development to avoid construction of artificial drainage control in favor of undisturbed watercourses that promote natural recharge of groundwater.

**Policy COS 1.5.5** Require development to protect all natural, undisturbed watercourses and recharge basins/meadows as sensitive habitats.

**Policy COS 1.5.6** Require impervious areas in development to direct flow away from natural watercourses until such flow can be mitigated through siltation and pollution management.

**Implementation Program COS 1.5.1** County of San Diego Municipal Storm Water Permit, County of San Diego Low Impact Development Handbook, PDS, DHS, and PVCPG.

## **e. Mineral Resources**

Significant sand and rock deposits and quartz outcroppings are valuable as aesthetic resources. However, the noise, dust, blasting, and commercial truck traffic associated with mining operations make them incompatible with the overall resource conservation goals of the Planning Area.

**Issue COS 1.6** Unregulated mining of mineral resources would impact significant visual resources and critical wildlife habitat.

**Goal COS 1.6** The protection of significant visual resources and critical habitat from unregulated mining operations.

**Policy COS 1.6.1** Prohibit mining operations from adversely impacting sensitive, threatened, or endangered species or habitat.

**Policy COS 1.6.2** Prohibit mining operations from adversely impacting scenic corridors and areas.

**Policy COS 1.6.3** Require mining operations to fully mitigate adverse impacts to existing residential development from heavy truck traffic, frequent blasting, noise, and dust.

**Implementation Program COS 1.6.1** PDS, California State Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), and PVCPG.

## **f. Air Quality**

Visitors and residents enjoy the Planning Area's clean mountain air, smog-free skies, aromatic forests, and pungent sage.

**Issue COS 1.7** The Planning Area's wonderful air quality should be protected from both noxious odors and harmful emissions.

**Goal COS 1.7** The preservation of clean air that supports a healthy human population and natural environment.

**Policy COS 1.7.1** Require development to minimize the potential impacts from land uses that may emit pollution or odors on residential or other land uses sensitive to such emissions.

**Policy COS 1.7.2** Require projects or operations that generate potentially significant levels of air pollutants, such as construction projects or agricultural cultivation, to incorporate best available air quality mitigation in project design.

**Implementation Program COS 1.7.1** PDS, APCD, and PVCPG.

## **g. Water and Energy**

Water and energy conservation are critical aspects of rural life within the Pine Valley Planning Area. With uncertain and finite groundwater resources, residents must be frugal with their water use.

**Issue COS 1.8** The Planning Area is completely groundwater dependent and has been subject to prolonged periods of drought.

**Goal COS 1.8** Conservation and protection of surface and groundwater resources.

**Policy COS 1.8.1** Implement land use policies, such as Low Impact Development (LID), to complement water conservation efforts that promote natural groundwater recharge along etch basin boundaries.

**Policy COS 1.8.2** Encourage landscaping techniques for water conservation by reducing water use and waste and runoff such as water reclamation for irrigation purposes.

**Policy COS 1.8.3** Preserve groundwater recharge basins and meadows within natural open space easements.

**Policy COS 1.8.4** Prohibit extraction and export of groundwater for commercial sale.

**Implementation Program COS 1.8.1** PDS, DEH, and PVCPG.

**Issue COS 1.9** The Planning Area is amenable to alternative energy sources and other green technology that support energy conservation.

**Goal COS 1.9** Land use development design and construction techniques that reduce energy consumption of non-renewable resources, while minimizing impacts to natural resources.

**Policy COS 1.9.1** Encourage energy-efficient design in residential and commercial buildings such as rooftop solar photovoltaic and solar thermal arrays.

**Policy COS 1.9.2** Configure rooftop solar photovoltaic and solar thermal arrays to minimize visual impacts. Retrofit arrays to conform with existing roof lines. Rooftop arrays must comply with State Fire Marshal Guidelines.

**Policy COS 1.9.3** Locate rooftop arrays below ridgelines.

**Implementation Program COS 1.9.1 PDS and PVCPG.**

**Issue COS 1.10** Alternative energy production facilities must be planned to complement the scenic environment or they will fragment neighborhoods, ranch lands, and scenic corridors.

**Goal COS 1.10** Alternative energy production facilities that are located and designed to reduce consumption of nonrenewable energy resources while harmonizing with the natural and built environment in the Planning Area.

**Policy COS 1.10.1** Require alternative energy production facilities, such as commercial wind farms and solar photovoltaic array fields, to be located and designed such that they are compatible with existing uses, environmental factors, and scenic resources.

**Policy COS 1.10.2** Require commercial solar photovoltaic arrays to be located and designed as close to the ground, as feasible, and to minimize visual impacts.

**Policy COS 1.10.3** Require structures, arrays, and fencing facilities to be screened with native vegetation while maintaining safe clear defensible spaces for the life of the facility.

**Policy COS 1.10.4** Locate and improve service roads to minimize erosion and visual impacts.

**Policy COS 1.10.5** Prohibit energy production facilities that will result in unmitigated noise pollution and ultrasonic vibrations, which create human discomfort and can affect the health of residents, livestock, and wildlife.

**Implementation Program COS 1.10.1 PDS and PVCPG.**

## 3.2 Parks and Recreation

Historically, the Pine Valley County Park has provided park users with the opportunity to enjoy a variety of outdoor activities on a well-maintained and tree shaded 17 acre site. The vast majority of the park's visitors come from out-of-area, many of which are international users. The park also accommodates school field trips and local community-wide events such as the annual Pine Valley Day Celebration and various types of youth sports competitions.

In 2009, aggressive insect attacks resulted in a devastating die-off of most of the park's native 200+ year old oak trees. A County plan to significantly upgrade the park's ball fields has been developed but has not been funded. This plan includes the construction of two additional ADA accessible restrooms near the new regulation size soccer field and baseball field. Both would utilize water-saving artificial turf. Other park needs include more vehicle parking, a native plant interpretive area, an irrigation system upgrade, an equestrian staging area, larger park office, and a multi-purpose room.

### a. Park Needs, Locations, and Facilities

**Issue COS 2.1** Existing park facilities are inadequate to meet the recreational needs of the Planning Area and the thousands of annual out-of-area park visitors.

**Goal COS 2.1** A Regional County Day Use Park that supports recreational needs.

**Policy COS 2.1.1** Support water efficiency improvements/upgrades to the existing irrigation system, including the potential to rely on captured rainwater or other reclaimed water sources.

**Policy COS 2.1.2** Support the installation of earth-colored permanent shade structures over group picnic areas.

**Policy COS 2.1.3** Support the construction of new tot-lot play area restroom facilities.

**Policy COS 2.1.4** Support the installation of ball field improvements and their associated restroom facilities.

**Policy COS 2.1.5** Support the construction of a new multi-purpose room and a larger park ranger office.

**Policy COS 2.1.6** Support the replacement of dead trees with native, drought-tolerant, and insect resistive species such as cedars.

**Policy COS 2.1.7** Support the development of a separate access equestrian staging area.

**Implementation Program COS 2.1.1** PDS, DPR, and PVCPG.

## **b. Park Acquisition, Development, and Improvements**

**Issue COS 2.2** Additional acreage is necessary to accommodate park expansion.

**Goal COS 2.2** Improved park services and capabilities.

**Policy COS 2.2.1** Consider the utilization of the adjacent County owned property along Old Highway 80 to expand the park's recreational opportunities. These could include the addition of a native plant educational and interpretive area, an equestrian staging area, and increased parking capacity.

**Implementation Program COS 2.2.1** PDS, DPR, and PVCPG.

## **c. Park Compatibility with Adjoining Land Uses**

**Issue COS 2.4** The County Park can be a source of crowd-generated random noise, from sports activities and loud music from outdoor parties.

**Goal COS 2.4** Reduction of County Park crowd-generated noise levels.

**Policy COS 2.4.1** Consider planting additional trees along the backside of the County Park to buffer and mitigate undesirable park generated noise.

**Implementation Program COS 2.4.1** PDS and PVCPG.

## **d. Opportunities for the Joint Use of Schools and Other Public Facilities for Park and Recreational Uses**

**Issue COS 2.5** Existing Planning Area local school sites include the Pine Valley Elementary School and the Pine Valley Academy, which have extremely limited recreational use areas (playground facilities and activity areas).

**Goal COS 2.5** Continued joint use of the County Park facilities to mitigate deficit school recreational opportunities.

**Policy COS 2.5.1** Support the prioritization of associated school recreational events at the County Park.

**Implementation Program COS 2.5.1** PDS, DPR, school district, and PVCPG.

## **e. Commercial Recreation Facilities**

Given the rural character of the Planning Area, its close proximity to scenic natural resources in the Cleveland National Forest, and finite groundwater, commercial recreation activities such as golf courses, and additional off road parks, etc. are incompatible uses.

**Issue COS 2.6** Commercial recreation facilities can add unwanted nighttime lighting, extensive water usage, and nuisance noise.

**Goal COS 2.6** Commercial recreation facilities compatible with community character.

**Policy COS 2.6.1** Require commercial recreation facilities to adhere to Dark Skies standards and policies, minimize noise and dust impacts, and minimize the use of groundwater resources. (See also General Plan Land Use policy LU-8.2)

**Implementation Program COS 2.6.1** PDS and PVCPG.

## **3.3 Community Open Space Plan**

The Pine Valley Planning Area is home to 11 resource conservation areas and multiple endangered species of flora and fauna. It is completely surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest and is one of the most scenic areas in the County. Prized for both its scenic vistas and recreational opportunities, the area represents rare and limited examples of the habitat that once comprised Southern California before development. (See Appendix 1 for a description of the Planning Area's resource conservation areas).

**Issue COS 3.1** Encroaching suburbanization and new development threatens to destroy vital natural habitat and endangered species, as well as its intrinsic natural scenic beauty. Left unchecked, future development will limit recreational opportunities, deplete natural resources, and forever change the Planning Area's unique rural quality.

**Goal COS 3.1** The preservation of sensitive wildlife habitat, visual and natural resources, and the prevention of further urbanization of a rural way of life.

**Policy COS 3.1.1** Protect and preserve the central Pine Valley Meadow area by maintaining densities that respect the unique resources of the area and maximizing opportunities to preserve open space.

**Implementation Program COS 3.1.1** PDS and PVCPG.

### 3.4 Dark Skies

**Issue COS 4.1** Excessive outdoor lighting can brighten rural skies, obliterating the exquisite astronomical view innate to an open rural area. In the absence of regional and local controls, light pollution levels can be expected to continually increase.

**Goal COS 4.1** The preservation of dark skies in support of astronomical research at the Mount Laguna Observatory and as a Planning Area natural resource.

**Policy COS 4.1.1** Support the Planning Area's designation as a Dark Skies region and require development to limit lighting to what is necessary for safety and security.

**Policy COS 4.1.2** Encourage the use of technological advances (such as motion sensitive night lighting systems) to reduce existing and future light pollution sources.

**Policy COS 4.1.3** Require Planning Area road and construction plans to include re-vegetative elements for plants and trees in locations which will mitigate light pollution.

**Policy COS 4.1.4** Encourage forestation of existing roads, structures, and grading sites in order to block associated light pollution.

**Policy COS 4.1.5** Require that flood lighting be screened and diffused to direct the light path downward, both away from the sky and from shining directly on the property of adjacent land owners.

**Implementation Program COS 4.1.1** PDS, PVCPG, Light Pollution Code, Zoning Ordinance standards, and guidelines for determining significance requirements: Dark Skies and Glare 7/30/2007.



## 4. Safety (S)

### 4.1 Hazards/Risk Avoidance and Mitigation

#### a. Seismic and Geologic Risks (faulting, earthquake shaking, liquefaction, landslide, and other)

Though the Pine Valley Planning Area is not centered over a major earthquake fault, in 1894, the effects of a substantial quake (magnitude 6+) along the Laguna Salada Fault zone were felt. This historic quake caused several local underground springs to stop flowing. More recently, minor shaking has been felt as a result of quakes centered near the Imperial Valley.

**Issue S 1.1** The Planning Area's groundwater resources and electrical power availability may be negatively impacted by a strong earthquake.

**Goal S 1.1** Emergency and preventative procedures that reduce damage from geologic hazards.

**Policy S 1.1.1** Encourage local water companies to maintain sufficient water storage capacity to ensure emergency and residential water needs are met.

**Implementation Programs S 1.1.1** PDS, PVCPG, and local water companies.

#### b. Flooding

The Pine Valley Planning Area is located in a mountainous area where the effects of orographic lifting can produce rainfall amounts that exceed most of the County. Heavy monsoonal summer rains on bone-dry soil may contribute to the potential danger of flash flooding along the designated 100-year floodplain that lies within the central meadow area of Pine Valley and elsewhere in the Planning Area. Any new development must be located outside floodplains.

**Issue S 1.2** Development within Pine Valley's 100-year floodplain is subject to the dangers of flash flooding.

**Goal S 1.2** The protection of lives and property from uncontrolled flooding while protecting natural floodplain values.

**Policy S 1.2.1** Limit grading to the naturally occurring topography and restrict development within the designated 100-year floodplain and fringe area, to the extent feasible, to protect natural land characteristics such as aquifer recharge.

**Policy S 1.2.2** Discourage the removal of existing native vegetation within designated floodplains to minimize erosion.

**Policy S 1.2.3** Require setbacks and buffers from the floodplain fringe to protect floodplains and watercourses, while minimizing the need for disruptive flood control measures, whenever feasible.

**Policy S 1.2.4** Require development to maintain floodways in their natural state unless they pose a potential threat to public safety.

**Implementation Programs S 1.2.1** PDS, County Flood Control, and PVCPG.

### **c. Wildland Fire/Urban Fire**

The Pine Valley Planning Area is entirely surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest in an area that has not burned since the 1970 Laguna fire. A long-standing drought and aggressive insect attacks have killed or weakened thousands of oak and pine trees. Chaparral is very thick and tinder is dry during fire season. The area is also subject to very strong Santa Ana winds. In 2009, the cumulative effects of these factors led to the Planning Area's identification as one of the most dangerous wildfire-prone areas within the County's comprehensive Vegetation Management Plan. Due to the Planning Area's potential wildfire danger, some insurance companies will no longer write homeowners policies or have cancelled existing policies for long-term area residents.

**Issue S 1.3** Extreme wildfire danger due to forest management practices, long-standing drought, and insect attacks on native tree populations present an unacceptable level of wildfire risk to humans and property.

**Goal S 1.3** The minimized loss of life and property from wildfires.

**Policy S 1.3.1** Seek funds to identify and construct firebreaks of sufficient size that will help protect the Planning Area from wind-driven Santa Ana wildfires and provide firefighters with standoff capabilities.

**Policy S 1.3.2** Coordinate with CalTrans and the U.S. Forest Service to clear combustible vegetation along the I-8 corridor and along other local access roads to provide safe evacuation routes during wildfires.

**Policy S 1.3.3** Support community-based fire safety education programs, such as local Fire Safe Councils, which provide community chipping days and assist seniors/disabled residents with maintaining defensible space as feasible.

**Implementation Program S 1.3.1** PDS, PVCPG, fire agencies, U.S. Forest Service, SDG&E, and Fire Safe Councils.

#### **d. Toxic and Hazardous Materials (See CM 10.5.)**

### **4.2 Emergency Preparedness and Response**

**Issue S 2.1** Residents must work together with local fire agencies to assist in making their communities fire safe.

**Goal S 2.1** Fire safety awareness within the Planning Area.

**Policy S 2.1.1** Support community self-help groups like Fire Safe Councils and community emergency response teams (CERT) that promote fire safety awareness and emergency preparedness to residents.

**Implementation Program S 2.1.1** PDS, fire agencies, and PVCPG.

**Issue S 2.2** The Pine Valley Sheriff Substation is responsible for patrolling a huge area and deputy staffing levels do not accommodate 24 hour coverage at the substation.

**Goal S 2.2** Enhanced law enforcement presence in the Planning Area.

**Policy S 2.2.1** Consider an increase in the number of deputies assigned to the Pine Valley Sheriff's Substation that would accommodate 24 hour staffing at the substation.

**Implementation Program S 2.2.1** PDS, PVCPG, and County law enforcement.

### **4.3 Sexually Violent Predators (SVPs)**

**Issue S 3.1** Sexually violent predators are being placed into rural villages with limited law enforcement resources and limited medical services – often in close proximity to schools and residential neighborhoods.

**Goal S 3.1** A safe community for Planning Area families.

**Recommendation S 3.1.1** The Pine Valley CPG strongly discourages the placement of SVPs in rural communities due to limited law enforcement resources and medical services in the area.

**Implementation Program S 3.1.1** PDS, law enforcement, and PVCPG.

## 5. Noise (N)

### 5.1 Noise Sources

Ambient noise sources for the Pine Valley Planning Area originate primarily from major traffic corridors adjacent to communities. These sources include I-8 along the southern border of Pine Valley, Historic Highway 80 where it passes as the main street of Pine Valley and Guatay, Pine Boulevard and Valley View Trail through Pine Valley's residential neighborhoods, Pine Creek Road along the west side of Pine Valley, and Sunrise Highway where it winds through the community of Mount Laguna. The natural hilly and wooded topography of the area helps to buffer and mitigate traffic associated noise levels.

Nuisance noise sources are random and include the use of loud vehicles along residential neighborhood roads, off-road vehicles such as motorcycles in unimproved areas of Pine Valley, the intrusion of loud music coming from weekend activities at Pine Valley County Park, use of power tools such as chainsaws, chippers, and log splitters, and habitual barking dogs. Other sources include noise originating from the Fire Department facilities of Pine Valley and Mount Laguna, emergency helicopters occasionally landing at Pine Valley meadow, and off-road vehicles staging at the south end of Pine Valley Road. Current lower density residential development and interstitial wooded habitat in Guatay, Pine Valley, and Mount Laguna allow remaining natural wooded habitat to help mitigate neighborhood nuisance noise.

**Issue N 5.1** Ambient environmental noise affects the quality of life in the Planning Area.

**Goal N 5.1** Natural noise buffers to mitigate traffic or other nuisance noise sources.

**Policy N 5.1.1** Require development to maintain and augment the remaining wooded habitat within residential neighborhoods as a means of mitigating random noise sources.

**Policy N 5.1.2** Preserve and maintain the natural wooded habitat and rolling hill topography between Pine Valley and I-8 and historic Highway 80 and Sunrise Highway as a means for noise mitigation.

**Policy N 5.1.3** Support enforcement of the County's Noise Ordinance as a tool for the abatement and mitigation of random noises such as loud vehicles, music, barking dogs, and use of off-road vehicles I and adjacent to residences.

**Implementation Program N 5.1.1** PDS, law enforcement, and PVCPG.

## 6. Specific Plans and Special Study Areas

There are no Specific Plans or Special Study Areas within the Pine Valley Planning Area.

# SECTION B: APPENDICES

# Appendix A1 Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs)

## **#146--Corte Madera Ranch**

Corte Madera Ranch is a relatively undisturbed area south of I-8 in the Pine Valley Community Planning Group Area. As it is in the western foothills of the Cuyamaca Mountains, it is in a transition zone between lower and higher-elevation plant communities. Examples of almost all the ecosystems found within the Central Mountain Sub-region are found in this one area, including: Diegan sage scrub, chaparral, Oak woodland, grassland, vernal pools, moist meadow, oaks, riparian woodland, and coniferous forest. Other resources include gabbros soils, extensive archaeological resources, and geologic features (Corte Madera Mt.). Corte Madera Lake is also an important migratory bird habitat. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

## **#147-- Guatay Mountain**

Located just north of I-8 near S-79, Guatay Mountain, with its steep slopes rising to a pinnacle, is a visual landmark to the communities of Guatay and Descanso. Believed to be held in reverence by the early Native Americans of the area, the mountain is covered almost exclusively by gabbro soils, a strong indicator of endemic plant species. In fact, Guatay Mountain is one of only four places where the Tecate Cypress (*Cupressus guadalupensis* ssp. *forbesii*) is found. Any development project proposed in this area should undergo a spring biological survey. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

## **#148 -- Samagatuma Valley**

This RCA is found predominantly on the Samagatuma Ranch. Though other resources are present, including Oak woodland, Riparian woodland, and steep slopes, this RCA has been created primarily because of the presence of gabbro soils, a strong indicator of endemic plant species. Any development project proposed in this area should undergo a spring biological survey. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

## **#150 -- Crouch Valley**

High in the Laguna Mountains, Crouch Valley is the first large meadow one sees when approaching the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area from the south. Its vast grassland/meadow is currently used for cattle grazing, but it is also important biologically as one of the few alpine meadows left in San Diego County. The Valley is also important visually, as it serves as a gateway to the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area, and is easily visible from the Sunrise Highway, a National Scenic By-Way and County Scenic Highway. Furthermore, it acts as the watershed for the Cottonwood Creek and Scove Canyon, which furnishes water for Pine Valley and other communities

downstream. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

### **#151 -- Thing Valley**

On the eastern-most edge of the Central Mountain Sub-region, Thing Valley is an example of a desert/chaparral transition zone, displaying elements of plant communities found in both ecosystems (oak woodlands, grasslands, and desert wash). Steep slopes also occur here. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

### **#152 -- Pine Valley**

Much of the present, open character of Pine Valley derives from the fact that most residences are hidden among trees, with the central montane meadow serving as open space. This not only provides clear views of the mountains beyond, but gives Pine Valley the appearance of being much smaller than it actually is. Any development in the meadow should take this factor into consideration, and should minimize impacts to this character. Any development on the slopes of the valley should minimize grading and be of a scale, form, and color that will enable it to blend into the background. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

Additionally, this Valley acts as a watershed for Pine Valley and Pine Valley Creek. Several wells owned by the Pine Valley Municipal Water District are located in the meadow. Any development must not impact water quantity or quality. Wetland indicator plant species are found on portions of the central meadow. The area is also a feeding ground for many raptors, and the northern parts of it contain one of the western-most examples of Great Basin sage scrub habitat in the County.

### **#153 -- Pine Creek Wilderness Area**

The boundary of this 13,000 acre RCA coincides with that of the U.S. Forest Service's Pine Creek Wilderness Area. Resources are the watershed, oak and riparian woodland, steep slopes, Diegan sage scrub, archaeological sites, and wilderness.

### **#154 -- Buckman Springs Meadow**

On the southeastern-most boundary of the Central Mountain Sub-region, the Buckman Springs RCA is an important visual resource for travelers on I-8. In addition to its agricultural use (cattle grazing), the meadow is an important habitat for raptors, reptiles, deer, birds, and other animals. Any development should be sensitive to both the visual and biological importance of this resource. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

### **#155 -- Laguna Meadow**

In biological terms, the Laguna is equally important as the Cuyamaca meadows. As is the case at Cuyamaca meadow, about 15 sensitive, rare, or endangered plant species can be found at the Laguna meadow – many differ from those found at Cuyamaca.

Additionally, the meadow is the centerpiece of the Cleveland National Forest's Laguna Mountain Recreation Area, a major recreation resource for San Diego County.

**#156 -- Mt. Laguna Coniferous Forest**

Very little acreage of undeveloped coniferous habitat exists in San Diego County. Most has been developed with resorts, homes, or summer cabins. Only on portions of Mt. Laguna and in an area to the northwest of Middle Peak can undisturbed tracts of this plant community be found. Any additional development of this forested area should protect wildlife habitat and corridors. Residential densities should be sparse. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.

**#159 -- Rancho Las Bancas**

Like Roberts' Ranch, Rancho Las Bancas is also a richly diverse area containing Riparian and Oak woodland (both Coast Live and Engleman oaks), moist meadows, non-native grasslands (with remnants of some native species), and chaparral. This diversity of habitat supports a diverse flora and fauna. Any development should be sensitive of this diversity and supply ample open space easements, including wildlife corridors. Care should be given to minimize visual impacts from the National Forest and I-8. The integrity of the Forest, and especially the adjacent Pine Creek Wilderness area and Guatay Mountain should also be respected. Wildlife corridors and the biodiversity of the Cleveland National Forest shall be protected and preserved.