

# FREEWAY ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM



## IMPACTED CITIES

All 34 Orange County cities and the County of Orange

## AT A GLANCE

**FUNDING:** Approximately \$274 million available from OC Go (over 30 years)

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Fact sheet as of 8/22/24

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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

## LAND PRESERVATION

The Mitigation Program allocated funds to acquire land and restore habitat. Properties are acquired and permanently protected as conservation lands (Preserves). Funded habitat restoration projects restore existing conservation lands to their native state.

OCTA has acquired more than 1,300 acres of Preserves in Brea, Laguna Beach, Silverado Canyon, and Trabuco Canyon. A total of 12 restoration projects have been funded throughout Orange County. Approximately \$30 million has been spent on acquisitions and \$10 million on over 350 acres of habitat restoration activities.

## CONSERVATION PLAN

In 2017, OCTA completed the Final Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (Conservation Plan), which is a state and federal process to protect threatened and endangered species. The Conservation Plan ensures OCTA's wilderness preserves will remain forever protected from development. It also requires OCTA to provide funding for the long term management of the properties.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

In conjunction with the Conservation Plan, Resource Management Plans (RMP) were developed for each acquired Preserve. These plans outline how the Preserves are protected, how they will be managed, and also address fire protection.

The RMPs will be reviewed at least every five years and updated as necessary to prioritize management actions based on the changing Preserve needs. At that time, the RMPs would be presented for public review.



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