

## Integrating Human Values into Open Space Management

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There are sound ecological and social reasons for maintaining open space grasslands in areas where human populations are encroaching upon natural landscapes. It is important, however, that open space lands be managed in ways that can account for the multiple values neighbors may hold for open space and for grasslands generally. These values include the obvious scenic and recreational benefits, as well as ecological benefits associated with natural areas, but they may also include economic, scientific, contemplative, or other uses of open space grasslands. Conflicts will inevitably arise when there is such a wide range of values different people can ascribe to the same landscape – for example, when recreation uses reduce opportunities for biodiversity protection – but these conflicts pale in comparison with the controversies that arise if important human values are not considered at all. Addressing these values and managing conflicts will require creative ways to incorporate humans into open space stewardship.