

APPENDIX C: GENERAL PLANS AND POLICIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

General Plans and Policies for Environmental Resources

Sacramento County General Plan

Relevant goals and policies from the Sacramento County General Plan that pertain to biological resources proposed for coverage under the HCP are listed below (Sacramento County 2011).

GOAL: Preserve and manage natural habitats and their ecological functions throughout Sacramento County.

Policy CO-58. Ensure no net loss of wetlands, riparian woodlands, and oak woodlands.

Policy CO-59. Ensure mitigation occurs for any loss of or modification to the following types of acreage and habitat function:

- vernal pools,
- wetlands,
- riparian,
- native vegetative habitat, and
- special status species habitat.

Policy CO-60. Mitigation should be directed to lands identified on the Open Space Vision Diagram and associated component maps (please refer to the Open Space Element).

Policy CO-61. Mitigation should be consistent with Sacramento County-adopted habitat conservation plans.

Policy CO-62. Permanently protect land required as mitigation.

Policy CO-63. Vernal pools, wetlands, and streams within identified preserves shall not be drained, excavated, or filled for the purpose of converting the land to another use. If fill or modification is required for Drainage Master Plans, stormwater quality or levee maintenance, creation or restoration of an equal amount must occur within the boundaries of the preserve to achieve no net loss consistent with policy CO-58.

Policy CO-64. Consistent with overall land use policies, the County shall support and facilitate the creation and biological enhancement of large natural preserves or wildlife refuges by other government entities or by private individuals or organizations.

Policy CO-65. Create a network of preserves linked by wildlife corridors of sufficient size to facilitate the movement of species.

Policy CO-66. Mitigation sites shall have a monitoring and management program including an adaptive management component including an established funding mechanism. The programs shall be consistent with Habitat Conservation Plans that have been adopted or are in draft format.

Policy CO-67. Preserves and conservation areas should have an established funding mechanism, and where needed, an acquisition strategy for its operation and management in perpetuity. This includes existing preserves such as the American River Parkway, Dry Creek Parkway, Cosumnes River Preserve and other plans in progress for riparian areas like Laguna Creek.

Policy CO-68. Preserves shall be planned and managed to the extent feasible so as to avoid conflicts with adjacent agricultural activities (Please also refer to the Agricultural Element).

Policy CO-69. Avoid, to the extent possible, the placement of new major infrastructure through preserves unless located along disturbed areas, such as existing roadways.

GOAL: Preserve, enhance and restore special status species habitat in Sacramento County to aid in the recovery of these species.

Policy CO-75. Maintain viable populations of special status species through the protection of habitat in preserves and linked with natural wildlife corridors.

Policy CO-76. Habitat conservation plans shall be adopted by the County to provide a comprehensive strategy to protect and aid in the recovery of special status species.

Policy CO-77. Development of open space acquisition programs within natural areas shall consider whether the area is occupied by special status species.

GOAL: Preserve and enhance self-sustaining vernal pool habitats.

Policy CO-83. Preserve a representative portion of vernal pool resources across their range by protecting vernal pools on various geologic landforms, vernal pools that vary in depth and size, and vernal pool complexes of varying densities; in order to maintain the ecological integrity of a vernal pool ecosystem.

Policy CO-84. Ensure that vernal pool preserves are large enough to protect vernal pool ecosystems that provide intact watersheds and an adequate buffer, have sufficient number and extent of pools to support adequate species populations and a range of vernal pool types.

Policy CO-85. Utilize proper vernal pool restoration techniques as approved by United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Army Corps of Engineers (CORPS).

GOAL: Preserve, protect, and enhance natural open space functions of riparian, stream and river corridors.

Policy CO-87. Encourage private landowners to protect, enhance and restore riparian habitat.

Policy CO-88. Where removal of riparian habitat is necessary for channel maintenance, it will be planned and mitigated so as to minimize unavoidable impacts upon biological resources.

Policy CO-89. Protect, enhance and maintain riparian habitat in Sacramento County.

Policy CO-90. Increase riparian woodland, valley oak riparian woodland and riparian scrub habitat along select waterways within Sacramento County.

Policy CO-91. Discourage introductions of invasive non-native aquatic plants and animals.

Policy CO-92. Enhance and protect shaded riverine aquatic habitat along rivers and streams.

Policy CO-105. Channel modification projects shall be considered for approval by the Board of Supervisors only after conducting a noticed public hearing examining the full range of alternatives, relative costs and benefits, and environmental, economic, and social benefits.

Policy CO-105a. Encourage flood management designs that respect the natural topography and vegetation of waterways while retaining flow and functional integrity. (Added 2016)

Policy CO-106. Realigned or modified channels should retain topographic diversity including maintaining meandering characteristics, varied berm width, naturalized side slope, and varied channel bottom elevation.

Policy CO-107. Maintain and protect natural function of channels in developed, newly developing, and rural areas.

Policy CO-109. Channel modifications should not prevent minimum water flows necessary to protect and enhance fish habitats, native riparian vegetation, water quality, or ground water recharge.

Policy CO-111. Channel modifications shall retain wetland and riparian vegetation whenever possible or otherwise recreate the natural channel consistent with the historical ecological integrity of the stream or river.

Policy CO-112. The use of concrete and impervious materials is discouraged where it is inconsistent with the existing adjacent watercourse and overall ecological function of the stream.

Policy CO-113. Encourage revegetation of native plant species appropriate to natural substrate conditions and avoid introduction of nonindigenous species.

Policy CO-114. Protect stream corridors to enhance water quality, provide public amenities, maintain flood control objectives, preserve and enhance habitat, and offer recreational and educational opportunities.

Policy CO-115. Provide setbacks along stream corridors and stream channels to protect riparian habitat functions.

- A functional setback of at least 100 feet and measured from the outside edge of the stream bank should be retained on each side of a stream corridor that prohibits development or agricultural activity. This buffer is necessary to protect riparian functions by allowing for the filtering of sediment, pesticides, phosphorus and nitrogen, organic matter and other contaminants that are known to degrade water quality. This buffer also provides for the protection of vegetation along the stream bank which provides bank stability, erosion control and flood attenuation.
- A transitional setback of at least 50 feet in width beyond the functional buffer should be retained along all stream corridors. This buffer is necessary to protect hydrogeomorphic functions that regulate water temperature, regulate microclimate, maintain channel complexity and retain hydrologic flow regimes. This buffer also provides corridors to facilitate the movement of wildlife.
- An extended setback of at least 50 feet in width beyond the transitional setback should be retained along all stream corridors. This setback will allow for recreational uses such as bike, pedestrian and/or equestrian trails and will allow for the placement of infrastructure such as water and sewer lines.
- Stormwater discharge ponds or other features used for improving stormwater quality may be located within the extended or transitional setback area. However, in order to protect stream habitat and floodplain value, the width of the setback shall not be based upon the width of the pollutant discharge pond. The ponds shall be landscaped and maintained with vegetation native to the surrounding area. Detention ponds or other features implementing pollutant discharge requirements, other than approved regional stormwater quality practices that are designed and operated to complement the corridor functionally and aesthetically, are prohibited.
- Setback averaging within individual development projects or as otherwise specified in a County-adopted master plan will be permitted except when riparian woodland will be lost. The minimum width of setbacks cannot fall below 50 feet.
- Master drainage plans may provide for other standards that meet the intent of this policy.

Policy CO-118. Development adjacent to waterways should protect the water conveyance of the system, while preserving and enhancing the riparian habitat and its function.

Policy CO-120. Development projects adjacent to rivers and streams shall provide unencumbered maintenance access.

Policy CO-121. No grading, clearing, tree cutting, debris disposal or any other despoiling action shall be allowed in rivers and streams except for normal channel maintenance, restoration activities, and road crossings.

Policy CO-122. River and stream maintenance should allow natural vegetation in and along the channel to assist in removal of nutrients, pollutants, and sediment and to increase bank stabilization, while minimizing impacts on conveyance.

Policy CO-123. The use of native plant species shall be encouraged on revegetation plans.

Policy CO-124. Maintain and manage rivers and streams to encourage special status species.

Policy CO-126. Prohibit obstruction or underground diversion of natural waterways.

Policy CO-127. Protect, preserve, and restore migratory routes for anadromous species.

Policy CO-130. Protect, enhance and restore riparian, in-channel and shaded riverine aquatic habitat for:

- spawning and rearing of fish species, including native and recreational nonnative,
- non-invasive species, where they currently spawn;
- potential areas where natural spawning could be sustainable; and
- supporting other aquatic species

GOAL: Sacramento County vegetative habitats preserved, protected, and enhanced.

Policy CO-133. Prohibit native vegetative habitat mitigation and/or other public plantings onto incompatible substrates i.e., tree planting in vernal pool hardpan.

Policy CO-136. Prohibit the loss of mitigated resource areas.

Policy CO-138. Protect and preserve non-oak native trees along riparian areas if used by Swainson's Hawk, as well as landmark and native oak trees measuring a minimum of 6 inches in diameter or 10 inches aggregate for multi-trunk trees at 4.5 feet above ground.

Policy CO-139. Native trees other than oaks, which cannot be protected through development, shall be replaced with in-kind species in accordance with established tree planting specifications, the combined diameter of which shall equal the combined diameter of the trees removed.

Policy CO-140. For projects involving native oak woodlands, oak savannah or mixed riparian areas, ensure mitigation through either of the following methods:

- An adopted habitat conservation plan.
- Ensure no net loss of canopy area through a combination of the following: (1) preserving the main, central portions of consolidated and isolated groves constituting the existing canopy and (2) provide an area on-site to mitigate any canopy lost. Native oak mitigation area must be a contiguous area on-site which is equal to the size of canopy area lost and shall be adjacent to existing oak canopy to ensure opportunities for regeneration.
- Removal of native oaks shall be compensated with native oak species with a minimum of a one to one dbh replacement.
- A provision for a comparable on-site area for the propagation of oak trees may substitute for replacement tree planting requirements at the discretion of the County Tree Coordinator when removal of a mature oak tree is necessary.
- If the project site is not capable of supporting all the required replacement trees, a sum equivalent to the replacement cost of the number of trees that cannot be accommodated may be paid to the County's Tree Preservation Fund or another appropriate tree preservation fund.
- If on-site mitigation is not possible given site limitation, off-site mitigation may be considered. Such a mitigation area must meet all of the following criteria to preserve, enhance, and maintain a natural woodland habitat in perpetuity, preferably by transfer of title to an appropriate public entity. Protected woodland habitat could be used as a suitable site for replacement tree plantings required by ordinances or other mitigations.
 - Equal or greater in area to the total area that is included within a radius of 30 feet of the dripline of all trees to be removed;
 - Adjacent to protected stream corridor or other preserved natural areas;
 - Supports a significant number of native broadleaf trees; and
 - Offers good potential for continued regeneration of an integrated woodland community.

Policy CO-141. In 15 years, the native oak canopy within on-site mitigation areas shall be 50 percent canopy coverage for valley oak and 30 percent canopy coverage for blue oak and other native oaks.

Policy CO-145. Removal of non-native tree canopy for development shall be mitigated by creation of new tree canopy equivalent to the acreage of non-native tree canopy removed. New tree canopy acreage shall be calculated using the 15-year shade cover values for tree species.

Policy CO-146. If new tree canopy cannot be created onsite to mitigate for the non-native tree canopy removed for new development, project proponents (including public agencies) shall contribute to the Greenprint funding in an amount proportional to the tree canopy of the specific project.

Yolo County General Plan

Relevant goals and policies from the Yolo County General Plan that pertain to biological resources proposed for coverage under the HCP are listed below (Yolo County 2009).

Policy CO-2.1 Consider and maintain the ecological function of landscapes, connecting features, watersheds, and wildlife movement corridors.

Policy CO-2.3 Preserve and enhance those biological communities that contribute to the county's rich biodiversity including blue oak and mixed oak woodlands, native grassland prairies, wetlands, riparian areas, aquatic habitat, agricultural lands, heritage valley oak trees, remnant valley oak groves, and roadside tree rows.

Policy CO-2.4 Coordinate with other regional efforts (e.g., Yolo County HCP/NCCP) to sustain or recover special-status species populations by preserving and enhancing habitats for special-status species.

Policy CO-2.9 Protect riparian areas to maintain and balance wildlife values.

Policy CO-2.14 Ensure no net loss of oak woodlands, alkali sinks, rare soils, vernal pools or geological substrates that support rare endemic species, with the following exception. The limited loss of blue oak woodland and grasslands may be acceptable, where the fragmentation of large forests exceeding 10 acres is avoided, and where losses are mitigated.

Policy CO-2.22 Prohibit development within a minimum of 100 feet from the top of banks for all lakes, perennial ponds, rivers, creeks, sloughs, and perennial streams. A larger setback is preferred. The setback will allow for fire and flood protection, a natural riparian corridor (or wetland vegetation), a planned recreational trail where applicable, and vegetated landscape for stormwater to pass through before it enters the water body. Recreational trails and other features established in the setback should be unpaved and located along the outside of the riparian corridors whenever possible to minimize intrusions and maintain the integrity of the riparian habitat. Exceptions to this action include irrigation pumps, roads and bridges, levees, docks, public boat ramps, and similar uses, so long as these uses are sited and operated in a manner that minimizes impacts to aquatic and riparian features.

Policy CO-2.23 Support efforts to coordinate the removal of non-native, invasive vegetation within watersheds and replacement with native plants.

Policy CO-2.31 Protect wetland ecosystems by minimizing erosion and pollution from grading, especially during grading and construction projects.

Policy CO-2.37 Where applicable in riparian areas, ensure that required state and federal permits/approvals are secured prior to development of approved projects.

Policy CO-2.38 Avoid adverse impacts to wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites (e.g., nest sites, dens, spawning areas, breeding ponds). Preserve the functional value of movement corridors to ensure that essential habitat areas do not become isolated from one another due to the placement of either temporary or permanent barriers within the corridors. Encourage avoidance of nursery sites (e.g., nest sites, dens, spawning areas, breeding ponds) during periods when the sites are actively used and that nursery sites which are used repeatedly over time are preserved to the greatest feasible extent or fully mitigated if they cannot be avoided.

Policy CO-2.42 Projects that would impact Swainson's hawk foraging habitat shall participate in the Agreement Regarding Mitigation for Impacts to Swainson's Hawk Foraging Habitat in Yolo County entered into by the CDFG and the Yolo County HIP/NCCP Joint Powers Agency, or satisfy other subsequent adopted mitigation requirements consistent with applicable local, State, and federal requirements.

Placer County General Plan

Relevant goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan that pertain to biological resources proposed for coverage under the HCP are listed below (Placer County 2013).

Goal 6.B: To protect wetland communities and related riparian areas throughout Placer County as valuable resources.

Policy 6.B.1. The County shall support the "no net loss" policy for wetland areas regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Coordination with these agencies at all levels of project review shall continue to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and the concerns of these agencies are adequately addressed.

Policy 6.B.2. The County shall require new development to mitigate wetland loss in both federal jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands to achieve "no net loss" through any combination of the following, in descending order of desirability: (1) avoidance; (2) where avoidance is not possible, minimization of impacts on the resource; or (3) compensation, including use of a mitigation and conservation banking program that provides the opportunity to mitigate impacts to special status, threatened, and endangered species and/or the habitat which supports these species in wetland and riparian areas. Non-jurisdictional wetlands may include riparian areas that are not federal "waters of the United States" as defined by the Clean Water Act.

Policy 6.B.4. The County shall strive to identify and conserve remaining upland habitat areas adjacent to wetlands and riparian areas that are critical to the survival and nesting of wetland and riparian species.

Policy 6.B.5. The County shall require development that may affect a wetland to employ avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation techniques. In evaluating the

level of compensation to be required with respect to any given project, (a) on-site mitigation shall be preferred to off-site, and in-kind mitigation shall be preferred to out-of-kind; (b) functional replacement ratios may vary to the extent necessary to incorporate a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success associated with the mitigation plan; and (c) acreage replacement ratios may vary depending on the relative functions and values of those wetlands being lost and those being supplied, including compensation for temporal losses. The County shall continue to implement and refine criteria for determining when an alteration to a wetland is considered a less-than-significant impact under CEQA.

Goal 6.C: To protect, restore, and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels.

Policy 6.C.1. The County shall identify and protect significant ecological resource areas and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations. Significant ecological resource areas include the following:

- Wetland areas including vernal pools.
- Stream zones.
- Any habitat for special status, threatened, or endangered animals or plants.
- Critical deer winter ranges (winter and summer), migratory routes and fawning habitat.
- Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat, including blue oak woodlands, valley foothill and montane riparian, valley oak woodlands, annual grasslands, and vernal pool/grassland complexes.
- Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, nonfragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway.
- Important spawning and rearing areas for anadromous fish.

Policy 6.C.6. The County shall support preservation of the habitats of threatened, endangered, and/or other special status species. Where County acquisition and maintenance is not practicable or feasible, federal and state agencies, as well as other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats.

Policy 6.C.10. The County will use the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (WHR) system as a standard descriptive tool and guide for environmental assessment in the absence of a more detailed site-specific system.

Policy 6.C.11. Prior to approval of discretionary development permits involving parcels within a significant ecological resource area, the County shall require, as part of the

environmental review process, a biotic resources evaluation of the sites by a wildlife biologist, the evaluation shall be based upon field reconnaissance performed at the appropriate time of year to determine the presence or absence of special status, threatened, or endangered species of plants or animals. Such evaluation will consider the potential for significant impact on these resources and will identify feasible measures to mitigate such impacts or indicate why mitigation is not feasible. In approving any such discretionary development permit, the decision-making body shall determine the feasibility of the identified mitigation measures.

Significant ecological resource areas shall, at a minimum, include the following:

- Wetland areas including vernal pools.
- Stream zones.
- Any habitat for special status, threatened or endangered animals or plants.
- Critical deer winter ranges (winter and summer), migratory routes and fawning habitat.
- Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat, including blue oak woodlands, valley foothill and montane riparian, valley oak woodlands, annual grasslands, vernal pool/grassland complexes habitat.
- Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, nonfragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway.
- Important spawning and rearing areas for anadromous fish.

Goal 6.D: To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.

Policy 6.D.3. The County shall support the preservation of outstanding areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.

Policy 6.D.4. The County shall ensure that landmark trees and major groves of native trees are preserved and protected. In order to maintain these areas in perpetuity, protected areas shall also include younger vegetation with suitable space for growth and reproduction.

Policy 6.D.5. The County shall establish procedures for identifying and preserving special status, threatened, and endangered plant species that may be adversely affected by public or private development projects.

Policy 6.D.14. The County shall require that new development avoid ecologically-fragile areas (e.g., areas of special status, threatened, or endangered species of plants, and riparian areas). Where feasible, these areas should be protected through public or private acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to ensure protection.

Amador County General Plan

Relevant goals and policies from the Amador County General Plan that pertain to biological resources proposed for coverage under the HCP that occur within Amador County are listed below (Amador County 2016).

Goal OS-3: Protect wildlife habitats, including sensitive environments and aquatic habitats, consistent with State and federal law.

Policy OS-3.1: Encourage preservation of oak woodlands in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21083.4.

Policy OS-3.5: Protect aquatic habitats from the effects of erosion, siltation, and alteration.

Policy OS-3.6: Encourage the use of appropriate native species for reclamation and revegetation components of development projects. Restrict the introduction of invasive exotic species. The County will amend Chapter 15.40 of the County Code (governing grading and erosion control) to include a section addressing the requirement to limit the potential for introduction and spread of invasive species during soil disturbance and construction activities.

Goal OS-4: Protect special status species, including threatened and endangered species, consistent with State and federal law.

Policy OS-4.1: Ensure that new development complies with State and federal laws concerning special status species preservation.

San Joaquin County General Plan

Relevant goals and policies from the San Joaquin County General Plan that pertain to biological resources proposed for coverage under the HCP are listed below (San Joaquin County 2016).

GOAL NCR-2: To preserve and protect wildlife habitat areas for the maintenance and enhancement of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

NCR-2.1 Protect Significant Biological and Ecological Resources. The County shall protect significant biological and ecological resources including wetlands; riparian areas; vernal pools; significant oak woodlands and heritage trees; and rare, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats.

NCR-2.3 San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan. The County shall continue to implement the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan to mitigate biological impacts resulting from open space land conversion.

NCR-2.5 No Net Loss of Wetlands. The County shall not allow development to result in a net loss of riparian or wetland habitat.