Appendix C PLACER COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSERVATION GOALS, POLICIES & PROGRAMS

The Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program is based upon the goals, policies and programs of the 1994 *Placer County General Plan Policy Document*. The following represents a paraphrased description of the goals, policies and programs related to the Placer Legacy Program. The Board of Supervisors adopted these policies in 1994 when the General Plan was updated. Policy language that provides specific direction that can be incorporated into the Placer Legacy Program. If there is a reference following the policy statement, it refers to the actual policy language contained in the *General Plan Policy Document*

The policies have been arranged by topical area. Each topical heading reflects one of the seven types of open space that the Board of Supervisors described in the Placer Legacy goal statement they adopted in April of 1998.

Agriculture

- Ensure that new development and public works projects do not encourage expansion of urban uses into designated agricultural areas. (1H1)
- Agricultural lands are to be protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses. (7A1)
- Agricultural lands are to be protected from flooding. (7A4)
- Support the use of conservation easements as a tool for agricultural preservation.
- A program should be developed to allow for the purchase and transfer of development rights as a means to preserve and protect agricultural land. (7.2)
- Forest lands are to be conserved for sustained production and for open space and the conservation of other natural resources. (7C1)
- Encourage CDF to prepare an inventory of yew trees and old growth forests in Placer County in order to incorporate these resources into a biological data base for use in future land use planning decisions. (7.7)
- Identify potential impacts on, and the need the preserve of, old growth forests in Placer County. (7.8)

Outdoor Recreation

Five acres of passive park land should be provided for every 1000 persons in the population. (5A1)

- Passive park land can include floodways, riparian corridors, wildlife corridors, greenways associated with rail development, open water, woodland areas, and sensitive habitat areas. (5A4)
- Recreational development is to be distributed and managed according to an area's carrying capacity, with an emphasis on controlling environmental impacts and conflicts between uses and trespass. (5A13)
- Compatible recreation use of riparian areas is to be encouraged where public access is balanced with environmental values and property rights. (5A22)
- The County supports the development of a Countywide trail system that achieves a number of objectives including the protection of open space and natural resources. (5C1)

Scenic and Historic Areas

- Identify, designate and adopt a system of scenic routes (1.4)
- Designate scenic routes in order to preserve outstanding scenic quality within different geographic settings. (1L1)
- Link major points of historical, cultural or recreational interest with scenic routes (1L2)
- Protect and enhance scenic corridors through a number of means including the use of open space easements and land conservation contracts. (1L3)
- Protect historical landmarks and monuments along scenic routes (1L6)
- Preserve or enhance the aesthetic qualities of natural drainage courses in their natural or improved state. (4F10)
- Use, where feasible, incentive programs to assist private property owners in preserving cultural resources. (5D4)
- Consider the use of acquisition programs as a means of preserving significant cultural resources that are not suitable for private development. (5D12)

Plant and Animal Communities

- Permit only low-intensity land uses in areas with sensitive environmental resources. (1A2)
- Development should be planned and designed to avoid areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature. (112)

- Off-site mitigation of impacts on sensitive areas can be permitted when avoidance of impacts is infeasible or where equal or greater ecological benefits can be obtained through off-site mitigation. (112)
- Fish and wildlife habitat is to be protected, restored and enhanced to support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels. (6C)
- Significant ecological resource areas and unique wildlife habitats are to be identified and protected. Such areas include wetlands, streams, sensitive species habitat, deer fawning areas, critical deer winter range, migratory or wildlife movement zones, routes, large areas of non-fragmented habitat, and spawning areas or anadramous fish. (6C1)
- The habitat of all indigenous species is to be maintained without preference to game or non-game species through the maintenance of habitat diversity. (6C7)
- Critical habitat for state managed, important fish and game species, should be identified and protected from incompatible development. (6C14)
- A detailed countywide inventory of ecologically significant resource areas is to be completed. (6.9)
- Maps are to be developed which depict the extent of critical habitat for important fish and game species. (6.10)
- Preserve outstanding areas of natural vegetation including oak woodlands, riparian areas and vernal pools. (6D3)
- Landmark trees and major groves of native trees are to be preserved and protected. (6D4)
- Large and continuous expanses of native vegetation are to be conserved to provide suitable habitat for maintaining abundant and diverse wildlife. (6D5)
- Wetland and riparian areas should be restored, expanded and managed for passive recreation, groundwater recharge, nutrient catchment, and wildlife habitat. (6D7)
- Open space and natural areas that are of sufficient size to protect biodiversity, accommodate wildlife movement and sustain ecosystems are to be maintained. (6E3)
- Preservation and re-establishment of fisheries in rivers and streams is to be supported. (6C8)
- A comprehensive habitat management plan is to be developed to address long-term preservation and maintenance of sufficient natural habitat to support the diversity of plants and wildlife species currently represented in Placer County indefinitely. (6.11)

- A habitat management plan should be prepared which involves a multi-jurisdictional effort involving state and federal agencies, surrounding counties and the six cities of Placer County (6.11)
- A habitat management plan should prioritize important habitat that supports a high diversity and concentrations of special status species. (6.11)
- A habitat management plan should apply sound conservation biological principles with an emphasis on a multi-species habitat conservation. (6.11)
- A habitat management plan should apply sustainable multiple-use land management principles and incorporation of diverse and potentially compatible land use objectives. (6.11)
- A habitat management plan should include a variety of land preservation, acquisition and easement techniques, funding mechanisms, and cooperative agreements. (6.11)
- A habitat management plan should recognize and protect habitat corridors throughout Placer County, the six cities and adjacent counties to provide for wildlife movement, prevent habitat fragmentation and isolation, and to promote individual identity and physical separation between developed communities. (6.11)
- The County seeks to protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's streams, creeks and groundwater. (6A)
- The County encourages the use of natural stormwater drainage systems to preserve and enhance natural features. (4E1)
- Creek corridors should be preserved through setbacks, easements or dedications. (6A4)
- Perennial streams, intermittent streams and sensitive habitats are to be protected through the use of buffers. (6A1)
- Development near riparian corridors should avoid disturbing the vegetation and if avoidance is not possible, mitigate onsite or offsite. (6A3)
- Wetland communities and riparian areas are considered valuable resources. (6B)
- Wetland impacts are to be reduced to a point of no net loss. (6B1)
- Wetland resources include wetlands defined by the Corps of Engineers and by the Fish and Wildlife Service and Department of Fish and Game. (6B1)
- Upland areas adjacent to wetlands and riparian areas are to be conserved when they are critical to the survival and nesting of wetland and riparian species. (6B4)

- Programs should be developed to publicly acquire creek corridors, wetlands, and significant ecological resources as public open space through the fee title purchase or the use of protective easements. (6.5)
- Acquisition of lands for open space purposes should include provisions for maintenance and management in perpetuity. (6.5)
- A resource conservation zone overlay district should be developed and applied to creek corridors, wetlands, and areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature. (6.6)
- Federal and state agencies and resource conservation organizations are encouraged to acquire and manage sensitive species habitat. (6C6)
- Important wildlife corridors and sensitive species habitat should be preserved on private lands with the cooperation and encouragement of the County through fee title acquisition or the use of conservation easements. (6C12)
- An ordinance should be adopted requiring the dedication of open space lands or the payment of fees to provide and maintain open space. (6.14)

Endangered and Special Status Plant and Animal Species

- Habitats of rare, threatened or endangered species shall be preserved. (6C6)
- Federal and state agencies, and other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats. (6C6)
- Conduct a detailed Countywide inventory of a variety of resource areas, including habitats of rare, threatened, endangered, uncommon or special status species. (6.9)
- A list of sensitive species should be prepared and maintained by the County. (6.13)

Separation of Urban Areas

- Distinguish among urban, suburban, and rural areas to identify where development will occur and where public infrastructure will be provided. This pattern shall promote the maintenance of separate and distinct communities. (1A3)
- Maintain agriculturally-designated areas for agricultural uses and direct urban uses to designated urban growth areas and/or cities. (1H1)
- Require non-agricultural development immediately adjacent to agricultural lands to be designed to provide a buffer to avoid land use conflicts. (1H6)
- Encourage infill of urban areas as an alternative to expanding urban boundaries into agricultural areas. (7A8)

- Identify and maintain clear boundaries between urban/suburban areas and agricultural areas. (7B1)
- Require land use buffers between urban/suburban areas and agricultural areas. (7B1)

Public Safety

- Provide protection for agricultural activities from flooding. (7A4)
- In areas susceptible to landslides, alteration of land is to be prohibited which could increase the hazard. (8A5)
- Areas with steep or unstable slopes shall be limited. (8A11)
- Floodplain delineations are to be based upon topographic and flow characteristics under fully developed and unmitigated runoff conditions. (4F4)
- Efforts to acquire easements for drainage and other public uses of floodplains are encouraged. (4E2)
- Manage floodplains for their natural resource values. (4F)
- The 100-year floodplain of all rivers and streams are to be maintained in their natural condition with few exceptions. (4F5)
- Floodwaters should be viewed as a resource for waterfowl habitat, aquifer recharge, agricultural water supply and fishery enhancement. (4F8)
- Prescribed burning techniques should be used to mimic the effects of natural fires. (6D11)
- Limit development in areas of steep or unstable slopes to minimize hazards caused by landslides or liquefaction.
- Maintain maps of potential avalanche hazard areas. (8H1)