

MEMORANDUM
Office of the
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
County of Placer

TO: The Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer
By Mary Herdegen, Senior Management Analyst *mk*
DATE: December 5, 2006
SUBJECT: Request Approval of Placer County's 2007 Legislative/Regulatory Platform

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt the 2007 Legislative/Regulatory Platform (Attachment 1) for Placer County; direct staff to pursue action items; direct the CEO to support or oppose legislation in accordance with the Platform. Authorize staff to coordinate an advocacy program to support the goals and objectives of the 2007 platform.

BACKGROUND:

The Congress and State Legislature will reconvene in January 2007, and it is appropriate for your Board to consider a legislative program that advocates issues and matters of importance to the County. In keeping with past practices, a proposed Legislative/Regulatory Platform has been prepared for consideration by your Board. All department heads, as well as our legislative advocates, were invited to participate in the planning process.

The proposed platform is again composed of three parts. Part One outlines the County's overall legislative principles for 2007. Parts Two and Three list specific state and federal proposals, all of which are consistent with the County's general principles.

Significant effort is required to educate key lawmakers on County priorities and our legislative agenda. It is also important to note the planning and funding horizons vary with each legislative proposal. For example, in some cases a minor technical revision may be recommended to correct existing statute and can move quickly through the legislative process. Other times, proposals may take a year or more to develop, or we may even be unsuccessful in identifying a legislative sponsor to carry, or securing support for, a particular proposal. In still other cases, there may be competing projects or interests that prevent us from advancing certain priorities during the legislative session.

Through the leadership and efforts of the Board of Supervisors, Placer County achieved several Federal and State accomplishments in 2006. At the federal level, pending House appropriations include: \$2 million in continued funding for the Sub Regional Wastewater and Treatment Facility, \$500,000 for the Waterga Road Bridge Replacement Project, and \$800,000 in continued funding for the Children's Health Center/Emergency Shelter. We also anticipate additional funding for the Sheriff's Department's law enforcement communications upgrades.

At the State level, the County secured passage of AB 1859 (Leslie) that allows Placer to continue its successful HHS integrated services pilot program. 2006 also marked the successful passage of AB 1634 that provided for reimbursement of the November 2004 special election costs to counties. This represents a reimbursement of nearly \$390,000 to Placer County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are annual contract advocacy costs of approximately \$300,000 and additional costs for associated staff time. Federal advocacy costs include: \$144,000 for Holland & Knight, LLP, and state advocacy costs of \$46,411 for Peterson Consulting. In addition, staff would intend to extend agreements with other federal and state advocacy firms for specific services. These firms include Van Scoyoc Associates for federal support, and Conservation Strategies Group; The Houston Group; and Platinum Advisors for state support. With approval of the state bond acts in November, these services will be particularly important this year as implementing legislation is developed.

As in past years, the potential for significant cost reductions, and or increased revenue to the County may occur if all, or a portion of, the Legislative/Regulatory Platform is enacted. Funding is included in the County's FY 2006-07 Final Budget and will be included in its FY 2007-08 budget.

TMM/MH

Attachment 1: Placer County 2007 Legislative/Regulatory Platform

cc: California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
National Association of Counties (NACo)
Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC)
Donald Peterson, Peterson Consulting, Inc.
Richard Gold, Holland & Knight LLP
County Department Heads

PLACER COUNTY 2007

LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY PLATFORM



Hidden Falls Regional Park



2006 Ralston Fire



Sub Regional
Wastewater Facility



Sheriff's Patrol - Tahoe

Prepared by the County Executive Office
December 5, 2006

County of Placer

2007 Legislative/Regulatory Platform

Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Bill Santucci, District 1

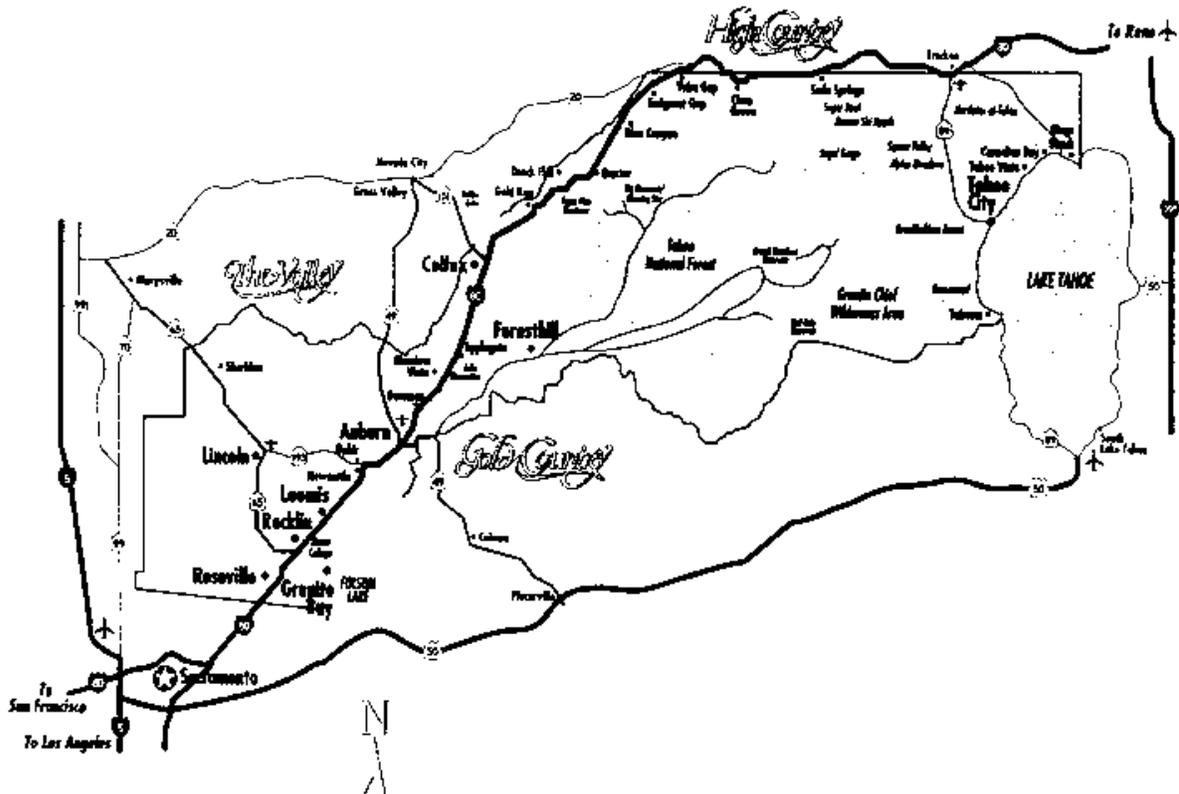
Supervisor Robert Weygandt, District 2

Supervisor Jim Holmes, District 3

Supervisor (vacancy) , District 4

Supervisor Bruce Kranz, District 5

Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer



PLACER COUNTY
2007 LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY PLATFORM

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PLACER COUNTY
2007 LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY PLATFORM
Part One
General Principles

Placer County's Legislative/Regulatory Platform is a statement of the goals and priorities of the Board of Supervisors and establishes the basis for its advocacy efforts with the Executive and Legislative branches of the U.S. Government and the State of California. The Platform contains broad goals and specific legislative proposals of interest and benefit to the County of Placer and its citizens.

1. Support legislation to restore local control and oppose efforts that will hinder or limit the County's ability to self-govern.
2. Encourage and seek legislation that facilitates orderly economic expansion and growth, and increases the opportunity for discretionary revenues and programmatic and financial flexibility for the County.
3. Support State/Local government fiscal restructuring efforts that align program responsibility and revenue sources to assure Placer County the financial independence necessary to provide services to its residents and meet its mandated responsibilities.
4. Oppose federal or state legislation for new or transferred mandated programs that do not contain their own revenue source.
5. Support current or increased levels of state and federal funding for County mandated programs, including capital acquisition costs.
6. Support legislation that provides tax and funding formulas for the equitable distribution of state and federal monies while opposing attempts to decrease, restrict or eliminate County revenue sources.
7. Support the County's authority to assure mutually acceptable tax sharing agreements for annexation, incorporation and redevelopment that protect or enhance the County's ability to provide services to its constituents.

8. Encourage and seek legislation that protects the County's quality of life, its diverse natural resources, and continued preservation of agricultural lands, wildlife habitat and open space.
9. Seek cooperation with the federal and state government, on regulatory and administrative issues affecting the County, to ensure the protection and well being of its citizens.
10. Continue to encourage local agencies and governments to cooperate for the betterment of the community, and encourage and expand voluntary regional solutions to regional problems.

PLACER COUNTY
2007 LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY PLATFORM
Part Two
State Proposals

Agricultural Commissioner

Proposal: Continued Support for the Williamson Act State Subvention.

Passed in 1971, the Williamson Act is a property tax exemption designed to keep agricultural and open space land free of development and give local governments a tool to use in implementing land use planning goals. The Act provides financial recovery to local jurisdictions that approve Williamson Act contracts. Also, support increased county enforcement of the Williamson Act by providing for civil penalties for those who violate the Act's requirements.

Problem: There is continued concern that the State may attempt to discontinue the Williamson Act Program and the local government reimbursement that is currently used to supplement the property tax exemption for contracted Williamson Act lands. Placer County's FY 2005-06 Williamson Act subventions, from the State, was approximately \$65,000.

Proposal: Watershed Funding for Non-point Source Pollution Monitoring for Agricultural Discharges

State funding should be appropriated to develop a science-based water quality-monitoring program based upon a watershed approach. The overall water quality within a watershed is directly related to the activities of all parties within the watershed, not farmers and ranchers exclusively.

Problem: The State's Regional Water Quality Control Board has eliminated the exemption for agricultural discharges and is requiring farmers and ranchers to file for individual discharge permits or be included under the permit of a watershed group. The added regulatory burden for agriculture users is an increased financial burden and ignores the relatively minor effect of many agricultural operations.

Agricultural Commissioner, Cont.

Proposal: Increased Funding for Pesticide Detection and Enforcement, Noxious Weed Management and Wildlife Services Programs

Support legislation or budget proposals that continue to provide increased state funding for County pesticide use enforcement, high-risk pest exclusion, pesticide detection, Pierce's Disease/Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter, noxious weed management, and wildlife services programs.

Problem: These programs are all critical to the County's agricultural industry. In order to maintain the quality of the pesticide regulatory system, it is essential to preserve funding for these programs that are experiencing critical financial shortfalls.

Assessor

Proposal: Provide Funding for the Property Assessment & Revenue for Education Program

Now referred to as the Property Assessment & Revenue for Education Program, restore funding in the State Budget for the issuance of Property Tax Administration Program grants to counties.

Problem: The FY 2005-06 State Budget eliminated funding for the property tax administration program grants. Funded since FY1994-95, these grants had been utilized over the previous 10 years to help counties offset a portion of the costs associated with administering property tax assessments. The elimination of this grant in the FY 2005-06 State Budget represented a funding loss of nearly \$630,000 to Placer County.

Proposal: Revise State Board of Equalization Public Meeting Practices

Support legislation requiring the State Board of Equalization (BOE) to publicly disclose items set for discussion and decision in such detail as to allow participation, and to provide reasonable deadlines for written input. Provide standing for counties and County Assessors at the BOE and in related legal proceedings.

Problem: The current practices of the State BOE include agenda listings and public notice requirements that do not provide either enough information or enough time for interested parties, such as counties, to respond. The BOE has denied standing to counties and County Assessors in its proceedings.

County Executive Office

Proposal: County Fair-Share of State Infrastructure Bonds

In November 2006, state voters approved several billion dollars in bond authority for transportation, housing, flood control, natural resources, and other projects. Placer County should seek a distribution of those funds that will assure its fair share.

Problem: Several of the bond measures will require implementing legislation that has not yet been drafted. Jurisdictions throughout the state will be fiercely competing for this bond funding and the County needs to be prepared to ensure that our interests are protected.

Proposal: Retirement Plan Flexibility

Support legislation that allows counties continued maximum flexibility in establishing and maintaining soundly funded public employee retirement systems and oppose legislation that would limit local authority.

Problem: Over the last several years, changes have been proposed for the public employee retirement system in California. As part of these proposals, restrictions on the options available to local governments have also been suggested. In other words, counties might be precluded from offering tiered retirement plans or establishing specific benefit plans purposely fitted to a particular county. These proposed amendments might also prevent a county from fulfilling locally adopted long range contract obligations and/or funding options for retirement plans. Placer County's flexibility needs to be protected.

Proposal: Support Motion Picture Industry

Support legislative or regulatory efforts that will assist in retaining film and television production in California, specifically those types of productions that traditionally have been shot on location in Placer County.

Problem: Film production in California has dramatically declined over the last 8 years (a \$10 billion loss in 2001 according to the Directors Guild of America) due to effective incentive programs offered by other states and countries. This has resulted in a decrease of economic impact countywide of approximately 50% of production dollars to our area. Until 2003, Placer County averaged \$2 to \$3 million dollars a year in local economic impact from productions shooting here. Since the introduction of incentive programs in other states and countries, the county has seen a reduction in revenues, a statewide trend. Presently, there is no state program or regulation in place to allow California to compete against filming incentives offered elsewhere.

County Executive Office, Cont.

Proposal: Sponsor and/or Support Legislation to Enhance Wildfire Protection/Restoration Efforts and Biomass Utilization

Support budgetary proposals, and legislative and regulatory efforts to enhance wildfire protection/restoration efforts and that promote the use of biomass.

Problem: Wildfires and urban wild fires are an on-going concern for Placer County. Federal lands, particularly those in the Sierra Nevada and Lake Tahoe regions present extreme fire conditions arising from a combination of topography, weather and accumulations of flammable vegetation. Catastrophic fire threatens human life and property and the ability of the forest to regenerate and sustain itself. Federal funding, and regulatory relief, to reduce hazardous fuels, expedite salvaging fire-killed trees and replanting of burned areas on national forests, will increase protection to communities from devastating wildfires and will increase and expedite the healthy restoration of our forests. Additionally, state resources to enhance, expand and promote biomass, as an economic development tool in forest fuel load reduction would further augment fire mitigation efforts. Also, regulatory flexibility relative to Air Pollution Control emission requirements is needed in this area.

Proposal: Reinstate Actual Earnings as the Minimum Temporary Disability Rate Support Workers' Compensation Reform legislation that will reinstate actual earnings, at the time of the injury, as being the basis for determining the temporary disability rate.

Problem: As a result of 2003 legislation, inmates on work release, work furlough, minimum security and trustees; as well as volunteers, jurors, and community service workers, who are not paid by the County and did not have paid employment prior to an injury, are now entitled to the minimum temporary disability rate of \$132 dollars (1/07) per week.

Proposal: Modify Employer-Required Retraining Noticing

Amend the Labor Code to delay employer noticing, to an employee who has sustained a work-related injury, of retraining benefits (Supplemental Job Displacement Voucher) until the employee's actual work restrictions are known.

Problem: Presently, employers are required to advise an employee of retraining benefits before actual work restrictions are known. This advance noticing creates confusion for the employee and unnecessary cost to the employer.

County Executive Office, Cont.

Proposal: Modify Employer Disability Credit for Employees Returned to Work

Amend the Labor Code to allow employers to begin receiving the 15% permanent disability credit when an employee first returns to work from a work-related injury.

Problem: Even though an employee has returned to work, current law does not allow the employer to begin receiving the 15% permanent disability credit until the employee has reached maximum medical improvement and a finding of permanent disability has been made. These findings can take several months or longer to determine, thus penalizing the employer who has returned the employee to work.

Health & Human Services

Proposal: Adequate Funding for Adult Protective Services

Support legislation that will provide for increased funding for Adult Protective Services and that allows for additional flexibility for counties to implement innovative programs.

Problem: In 2000, the State established law regulating a statewide response to elderly and disabled persons suspected of being victims of abuse or neglect. Current funding for these programs is inadequate. Referrals have increased 72% between 2000 and 2006 in Placer County. A recent change in the law also requires financial institutions to become mandatory reporters of suspected abuse, which is further expected to increase county caseloads.

Proposal: Adequate Funding for In-Home Supportive Services

Support legislation or budget proposals that will maintain or increase funding for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), and oppose efforts to impose salary standards on counties or reduce state program funding.

Problem: As required by state law, Placer County established an IHSS program and a Public Authority that provides a registry service for the program that provides critical in-home care for elderly and disabled persons. Placer County's Public Authority negotiated a reasonable wage for county IHSS providers, based on an existing state-county reimbursement formula. There is a concern that there may be state funding reductions that could reduce the care available for eligible disabled and elderly persons who need assistance to remain in their homes independently, or will increase unbudgeted county costs. Placer County currently has a program caseload of 1,500.

Health and Human Services, Cont.

Proposal: Support Mental Health Services for Students with Emotional Disturbances

Support budget proposals or legislation that provides adequate funding for Mental Health Services for students with emotional disturbances, requiring Individual Educational Plans.

Problem: The State and Federal governments, in order to provide mental health assessment and treatment services for this population, mandates these county mental health programs. Counties are required to advance funding for these services and recoup funding through the State's mandate reimbursement process. Placer County currently budgets approximately \$2.0 million annually for these services with significant delays and deferrals in state reimbursement. Program expansion to meet the existing unmet need as well as overall population growth in the county, will require additional funding.

Proposal: Adequate Funding for Child Welfare Services

Support adequate state funding for the Child Welfare Services system in order to meet the federal and state mandates of this program and to provide for social worker caseload reductions. The increased funding should provide for more local flexibility to determine appropriate priorities, expenditures and innovative programs.

Problem: In 2004, counties were required to implement program/system redesign and improvements to meet federal and state requirements. These requirements have been implemented with an inadequate increase in funding. In FY 2006-07, the State provided additional funding for the Child Welfare Services systems improvements, but the program continues to be under-funded.

Proposal: Increased Substance Abuse Funding to Address Critical Local Issues

Support legislation or budget initiatives that increase funding to substance abuse treatment and prevention services.

Problem: Substance abuse funding, although increased for specific programs such as Proposition 36, has not kept pace with the demand for treatment services at the local level. In particular, alcohol and methamphetamine abuse are growing, and are a significant concern in Placer County. Additionally, current substance abuse funding methodologies limit flexibility at the local level.

Health and Human Services, Cont.

Proposal: Realignment Funding (Vehicle License Fees and State Sales Tax Revenue)

Support legislation or budget initiatives that maintains or increases realignment funding to allow counties to provide required mental health programs, and support initiatives that hold counties harmless in their provision of required and necessary services for mental health and that protects discretion of realignment dollars.

Problem: Realignment funding has not kept pace with Placer County's program costs. Implementation of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority, and the potential increases for the IHSS provider wage exacerbate this problem.

Proposal: Catastrophic California Children's Services (CCS) Case Relief

Explore concepts/options of developing a "Risk Pool", or other health insurance options, for CCS underinsured cases- or other underinsured- to relieve counties of unknown and unpredictable fiscal burdens.

Problem: Counties are required to participate in the California Children's Services (CCS) program, both administratively and fiscally. CCS authorizes medical services for children with special health care needs who meet both financial and medical eligibility requirements. At the beginning of the fiscal year, counties are required to appropriate funds to meet their financial CCS obligations. The State matches the County appropriation 1:1. If the County exceeds the match during the fiscal year, no further funds are available; therefore the County becomes responsible for 100% rather than 50% of these costs. An unexpected, and non-reimbursed but mandated catastrophic CCS case could pose a significant financial burden to the County.

Library

Proposal: Continued Public Library Foundation Funding

Support legislation or budget proposals that maintain or increase the FY 2006-07 level of Public Library Foundation (PLF) funding. In FY 2006-07, Placer County will receive approximately \$102,000 in PLF funding.

Problem: For several years, the State had reduced PLF funding. At its highest level of funding (early 2000's), Placer County received approximately \$250,000 annually in PLF funding. This funding is provided to public libraries on a per capita matching basis. Loss or reduction in PLF funding would result in a direct loss in Placer County Library's operating revenue.

Personnel

Proposal: Contracting Agency Contribution Requirements

Allow Placer County to maintain local control to contract with their bargaining groups for County employees and retirees, regarding premium contribution formulas. Allow Placer County to construct a tiered system that could apply to both current employees as well as future employees, or allow Placer County to use the Schools' vesting formula (non-teaching tier system) as provided for under the government code.

Problem: Current law limits public agencies, that contract with CalPERS for health insurance under the Public Employees Medical Care and Hospital Act (PEMCHA), to a limited number of options to pay for the retiree premium contribution. Depending upon the option chosen to pay for the retiree insurance, this can cause an economic hardship to the agency providing benefits.

Planning

Proposal: Funding and Support to Preserve and Enhance Agricultural Lands and Open Space, Restore and Protect Natural Communities and Implement Watershed Protection Efforts

Support legislation that advances the objectives of the *Placer Legacy* program. Implemented by Placer County six years ago, the program seeks to protect open space in the county and to sustain agriculture as a key industry.

Problem: The pressures of urban development have an effect on the amount of land dedicated to open space and agriculture. With an increase in urbanization, more agricultural lands and natural communities will be lost resulting in a decrease in biological diversity, agricultural production, scenic landscapes, outdoor recreational opportunities, and the general open character of the County's landscape. To counterbalance these impacts, the *Placer Legacy* program was established as a proactive, long range, comprehensive strategy for protecting open space and agricultural lands in the County in order to enhance the quality of life and sustain agriculture as a viable part of our area's economy.

Planning, Con't.

Proposal: Funding for the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP) - Phase 1

Problem: Placer County is nearing completion of a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, and Programmatic General Permit/Letter of Permission in order to comply with the state and federal Endangered Species Act and the federal Clean Water Act. Staff is seeking State and Federal funds to offset the ultimate costs that land owners need to pay for mitigation land. State and Federal agencies are desirous of making early investments to allow for the success of programs like the PCCP. In the absence of the PCCP, projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis resulting in less predictable outcomes with little or no land conservation beyond that which is immediately required for mitigation.

Public Safety

Proposal: Appropriations for COPS, Juvenile Justice, and Rural Law Enforcement
Support the continued full funding of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention (JJCPA), Standards in Training for Corrections (STC), the Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction grant, (MIOCR) and the Rural Law Enforcement programs.

Problem: Placer County benefits greatly from State appropriations for these programs. Each year, the Legislative Analyst has recommended that these programs be discontinued.

Proposal: Reprioritize Reimbursement of Probation Costs

Support legislation to amend state law to reprioritize the reimbursement of offender probation costs to a higher priority.

Problem: In 2002, statute established a priority order for payments made by defendants relative to their criminal case. The first three priorities are payment of:

- 1) Restitution to the victim
- 2) 20% state surcharge to fund trial courts
- 3) Fines and penalty assessments

The last mandated priority is payment of other reimbursable costs, which include probation costs.

Public Safety, Con't.

Proposal: Continuation of State Juvenile Camps and Probation Funding (JCPF)

Support legislation and/or budget proposals to maintain and increase State Juvenile Camps and Probation Funding (JCPF). This funding was formerly referred to as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The funding, approximately \$450,000 for Placer County, provides for probation services to minors and their families.

Problem: JCPF funding has been assigned as a State General Fund based revenue with no guarantee of annual funding levels. Loss of this funding may result in the reduction of non-mandated services provided.

Proposal: Funding for a Helicopter Acquisition

Seek funding assistance for both the initial acquisition costs associated with a new Sheriff's helicopter, and the related mission equipment and on-going annual operational expenses.

Problem: The Sheriff's Office currently employs a 35-year-old helicopter with limited lifting capacity and endurance, and no rescue or firefighting capabilities. A new helicopter is needed by the Department to augment their Aviation Program by enhancing existing mission capabilities to the region, as well as incorporate limited firefighting capabilities to assist the U.S. Forest Service and California Department of Forestry.

PLACER COUNTY
2007 LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY PLATFORM
Part Three
Federal Proposals

Proposal: Continued Funding for a Sub Regional Wastewater Treatment and Water Reclamation Facility

Problem: Currently, seven wastewater agencies serve Placer County. These agencies indicate that the population they serve will increase substantially over the next 15 years. Each existing facility faces: 1) Major expansion needs; 2) Increasing stringent federal pollutant permit conditions; and 3) Cost constraints (both capital and operation & maintenance). The regional design will accommodate projected growth well into the future and provide significant environmental benefits to receiving waters throughout the region, including the Bay-Delta ecosystem. This project was authorized in the 2003 Reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act.

Proposal: Continued Funding for a Children's Health Center/Emergency Shelter

Problem: The Children's Health Center/Emergency Shelter is needed in the County for children who are removed from their families for protection from abuse or neglect, or for children who have failed other placements ranging from foster care to intensive high-level group homes. Additionally, the County plans to include a mental health/behavioral health housing area. On-site medical facilities to conduct primary health screenings and examinations for the emergency shelter population as well as selected minor cases that require more sensitive handling will be included. A multi-disciplinary interview center for forensic investigations and a supervised visitation/parent education center are also envisioned. The County recently broke ground on Phase I of the project which we expect to be completed in 2008. Funding is needed to initiate Phase II, construction of a multi-purpose building to provide recreational and enrichment programs for shelter residents who have experienced abuse or neglect. These programs will include nutritional and substance abuse classes.

Proposal: Additional Funding for Law Enforcement Technology and Telecommunication Needs

Problem: Communications equipment currently used by law enforcement and other public safety officials in the County is outdated, unreliable, has limited functionality and interoperability, and is becoming increasingly difficult and costly to maintain. In addition, the current system does not comply with Project 25 (Federal Communications Commission equipment standards providing greater public safety interoperability). Continued federal funding is critical to implement a countywide, multi-site, VHF, Project 25 compliant, digital-trunking network solution to effectively respond to an emergency or terrorist activity that crosses multi-jurisdictional boundaries.

Proposal: Funding for a Helicopter Acquisition

Problem: The Sheriff's Office currently employs a 35-year-old helicopter with limited lifting capacity and endurance, and no rescue or firefighting capabilities. A new helicopter is needed by the Department to augment their Aviation Program by enhancing existing mission capabilities to the region, as well as incorporate limited firefighting capabilities to assist the U.S. Forest Service and California Department of Forestry.

Proposal: Funding for Auburn-Folsom Road Widening

Problem: The construction of Auburn-Folsom Road was a part of the original Federal Folsom Dam Project and was designed as a rural two-lane road. Due to regional growth in the counties of Placer, Sacramento and El Dorado, today it serves as a major arterial route connecting northern Sacramento County and Folsom with South Placer County, Roseville and Rocklin. The current traffic volumes are exceeding the capacity of the road in Placer County. The construction of the new Folsom Dam Bridge and reopening of the relocated Dam Road will also fuel this increase in traffic. The two-mile project section is adjacent to United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) land and will restore trail connectivity to the USBR property and associated trails systems currently hampered due to increasing traffic on Auburn-Folsom Road. Funding, through USBR, is needed to construct the proposed improvements to meet regional growth demands.

Proposal: Continued Funding for Walerga Road at Dry Creek Bridge Replacement

Problem: The Bridge is located on Walerga Road in western Placer County. Walerga Road is a critical arterial roadway that connects Sacramento County to the City of Roseville. Traffic levels are expected to double in the next 10 years. The existing bridge (126 ft./span) was constructed in 1973 and is frequently covered by floodwaters resulting in road closures. These closures have adverse effects on emergency response and traffic patterns. The proposed project, constructed above the flood plain, would provide for four vehicle lanes and shoulders/bike lanes. Federal transportation funding programs, such as HBRR – Highway Bridge Replacement, do not recognize flooding as a reason to support replacement.

Proposal: Funding for the Foresthill Road Slide Repair Project

Problem: Excessive rain from an abnormally wet winter (2005) and spring (2006) caused the soil under the Foresthill Road to become saturated and the engineered fill (that the roadway was constructed on) failed in two locations. In addition, the roadway fill was not compacted to a suitable level or constructed of appropriate material which made the roadway more susceptible to failure. Foresthill Road is a Forest Highway and the only paved access road to the community of Foresthill.

Proposal: Funding for Hazardous Materials Clean Up at DeWitt Center

Problem: The DeWitt Center was constructed in 1943 as a military hospital during World War II. Construction practices at that time included the use of materials such as asbestos and lead paint, and utilized underground tanks for heating and fuel oil. The 200-acre DeWitt property is now owned by the County and has served as a critical resource for county agencies for many years. The property's redevelopment potential to house government, commercial, and light industrial activity is promising. However, extensive renovation activity, including hazardous material cleanup of asbestos and lead paint, would be required before successful redevelopment could be undertaken. Federal assistance would initially be used to abate and/or remediate the hazardous materials currently on site. The FFY05 House Department of Defense Appropriations Report made note of the important environmental cleanup activities at the DeWitt Center and said that it "expects the Army to provide adequate funding to complete cleanup requirements at this site in a timely manner."

Proposal: Continue Support for Reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act of 2000

Problem: The Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act (HR 2389) was enacted in 2000 to provide rural counties with a predictable level of funding for schools and roads for federal fiscal years 2001 through 2006, in order to offset the effect of decreased revenues to counties from declining timber harvests and other income generating activities on federal lands. New enabling legislation is required to continue this program in 2007 and beyond.

Proposal: Sponsor and/or Support Legislation to Enhance Wildfire Protection/Restoration Efforts and Biomass Utilization

Problem: Wildfires and urban wild fires are an on-going concern for Placer County. Federal lands, particularly those in the Sierra Nevada and Lake Tahoe regions present extreme fire conditions arising from a combination of topography, weather and accumulations of flammable vegetation. Catastrophic fire threatens human life and property and the ability of the forest to regenerate and sustain itself. Federal funding, and regulatory relief, to reduce hazardous fuels, expedite salvaging fire-killed trees and replanting of burned areas on national forests, will increase protection to communities from devastating wildfires and will increase and expedite the healthy restoration of our forests. Additionally, federal resources to enhance, expand and promote biomass, as an economic development tool in forest fuel load reduction would further augment fire mitigation efforts. Also, regulatory flexibility relative to Air Pollution Control emission requirements is needed in this area.

Proposal: Funding for Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Corridor

Problem: The Kings Beach commercial area is located at the northerly entrance to the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Tahoe basin is a national treasure that is threatened by its popularity and the effects of the built environment, particularly its famed water clarity. Federal financial assistance, in conjunction with state and local funding, is needed to provide water quality treatment facilities, pedestrian/bicycle paths and other streetscape amenities to improve the water quality of Lake Tahoe and revitalize the historical commercial core of Kings Beach.

Proposal: Funding and Support to Preserve and Enhance Agricultural Lands and Open Space, Restore and Protect Natural Communities, and Implement Watershed Protection Efforts

Problem: Placer County continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in California. The pressures of urban development have an effect on the amount of land dedicated to open space and agriculture production. With an increase in urbanization, more open space and agricultural land will be lost resulting in a decrease in biological diversity, agricultural production, scenic landscapes, outdoor recreational opportunities, and the general open character of the County's landscape. To counterbalance these impacts, the *Placer Legacy* program was established in 2000 as a proactive, long range, comprehensive strategy for protecting open space and agricultural lands in the County. Federal assistance would be used to expand public outreach, education, and to complete land acquisitions and easements from willing sellers. Federal funding would, also, be used to continue the development of a clearinghouse of local land use and natural resources data into a computer-based geographic information system (GIS) for use by a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders.

Proposal: Funding for the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP) – Phase I

Problem: Placer County is nearing completion of a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, and Programmatic General Permit/Letter of Permission in order to comply with the state and federal Endangered Species Act and the federal Clean Water Act. Staff is seeking State and Federal funds to offset the ultimate costs that land owners need to pay for mitigation land. State and Federal agencies are desirous of making early investments to allow for the success of programs like the PCCP. In the absence of the PCCP, projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis resulting in less predictable outcomes with little or no land conservation beyond that which is immediately required for mitigation.

Proposal: Extend Research & Development Credit

Problem: The Research and Development Tax Credit expired on December 31, 2005. Continued research and development is a critical component to the leadership and competitiveness of America's manufacturers. Countries overseas have recognized the value of research and development and are implementing aggressive tax policies to attract these vital investments.