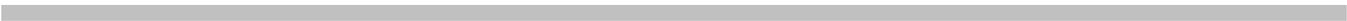


CHAPTER 4
LAND USE



4.0 LAND USE

4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan area is located in a combined rural residential-agricultural region of southwest Placer County. Situated midway between Lincoln and Newcastle in the lower foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the property extends along SR 193 in an unincorporated area of the County.

The 1,955-acre site, as shown in the Project Location Map (Figure 3-1), is approximately four miles north of Interstate 80. The project site borders the east side of Sierra College Boulevard from north of English Colony Way up to the junction with SR 193. Portions of the site lie just north of the Lincoln and Rocklin city limits. To the southeast is the rural community of Penryn; the Town of Loomis lies to the south.

4.1.1 Existing Land Uses

Project Site

The site, which ranges in elevation from 300 to 950 feet above mean sea level, is comprised of varying topography transitioning from steep canyons through deep ravines to a flat ridgetop. The land is rural in character and has been used for cattle and sheep grazing for more than 100 years. A 40-acre portion of the property was once cultivated as a fruit orchard, but there is no longer evidence of its existence.

Presently, the entire 1,955-acre parcel remains undeveloped and is being leased back to the Bickford family for cattle grazing by Southwest Diversified, Inc. The grazing is done between March and August, with some livestock staying on the property all year. The upcoming Spring herd is expected to include approximately 200 cow/calf pairs (Anders, 1998). No portion of the land is under cultivation at this time. Existing land uses are shown in Figure 4-1.

The County has issued a 10-year conditional use permit to Bitterroot Restorations on an 9-acre parcel at the northwestern corner of the site for operation of a wholesale native plant nursery. The operation, which began operations in spring 1999 (Anders, 2000), includes a modular office unit, a greenhouse, post and roof shed and 250 × 280-foot plant container area.

Vehicle access to the site is provided via Clark Tunnel Road, which bisects the Plan Area in its middle portion from north to south. The Union Pacific Railroad extends along the project's southern boundary and passes beneath Boulder Ridge through the 1600-foot-long Clark Tunnel.

Two canals maintained by PCWA traverse the site, originating off-site from the east. Incoming flow from the Lower Fiddler Green Canal splits into the 10-mile Caperton Canal (a 6.5 mile-length extends through the site) and the 8-mile Antelope Canal (a small portion traverses the southern portion of the site). The canals provide irrigation water to the northeast portion of this site as well as to other down-gradient users. The property does not have any irrigated pasture at this time.

A 300-foot high antenna tower is located near the eastern boundary of the property at a topographic high point. The tower site, which is leased by a cable company and shared with public agencies, is to be dedicated to Placer County for public use.

The Placer County General Plan designates the majority of the 1,955 acres as Rural Residential (RR) with minimum lot areas of 1-10 acres; a small area is designated Agriculture/Timberland with 10-acre minimum lot areas; parcels within the project area are zoned Farm (F-B-X) with 10- and 20-acre minimum parcel sizes, or Farm with a Development Reserve combining district (F-DR-B-X) with 10-acre and 20-acre minimum parcel sizes.

Surrounding Land Uses

Land uses surrounding the project site are primarily rural residential and agricultural in nature. Figure 4-1 depicts land uses which are in close proximity to the site.

A 10-acre NAPOTS parcel surrounded entirely by the project site on the northwestern portion contains an occupied residence and several outbuildings. This parcel and land farther west contains large parcels of varying sizes with agricultural and residential uses that are designated Agriculture/Timberland with 10-acre minimum lot areas.

Unincorporated land north of the project site, along SR 193, is designated Agriculture/Timberland with 10-acre minimum lot areas (west) or Rural Residential with 1-10 acre minimum lot areas (east). Small “ranchettes” and hobby farms predominate with dry and irrigated pastures for grazing by cows, llamas, goats and sheep. Land to the northeast which is used for agricultural production, primarily orchards of apples, Christmas trees, peaches, persimmons, kiwi, Mandarin oranges and plums, and including one vineyard, is mixed with 1- to 5-acre residential parcels. Grazing occurs on the slopes of the ravine adjacent to Clark Tunnel Road, south of SR 193. The site of a former turkey farm is located approximately one mile northwest of the property along SR 193.

Adjacent land extending east of the site, characterized by mostly agricultural land (orchards, grazing) interspersed with rural residences, is designated Rural Residential (RR) with 1-10 acre minimum lot areas.

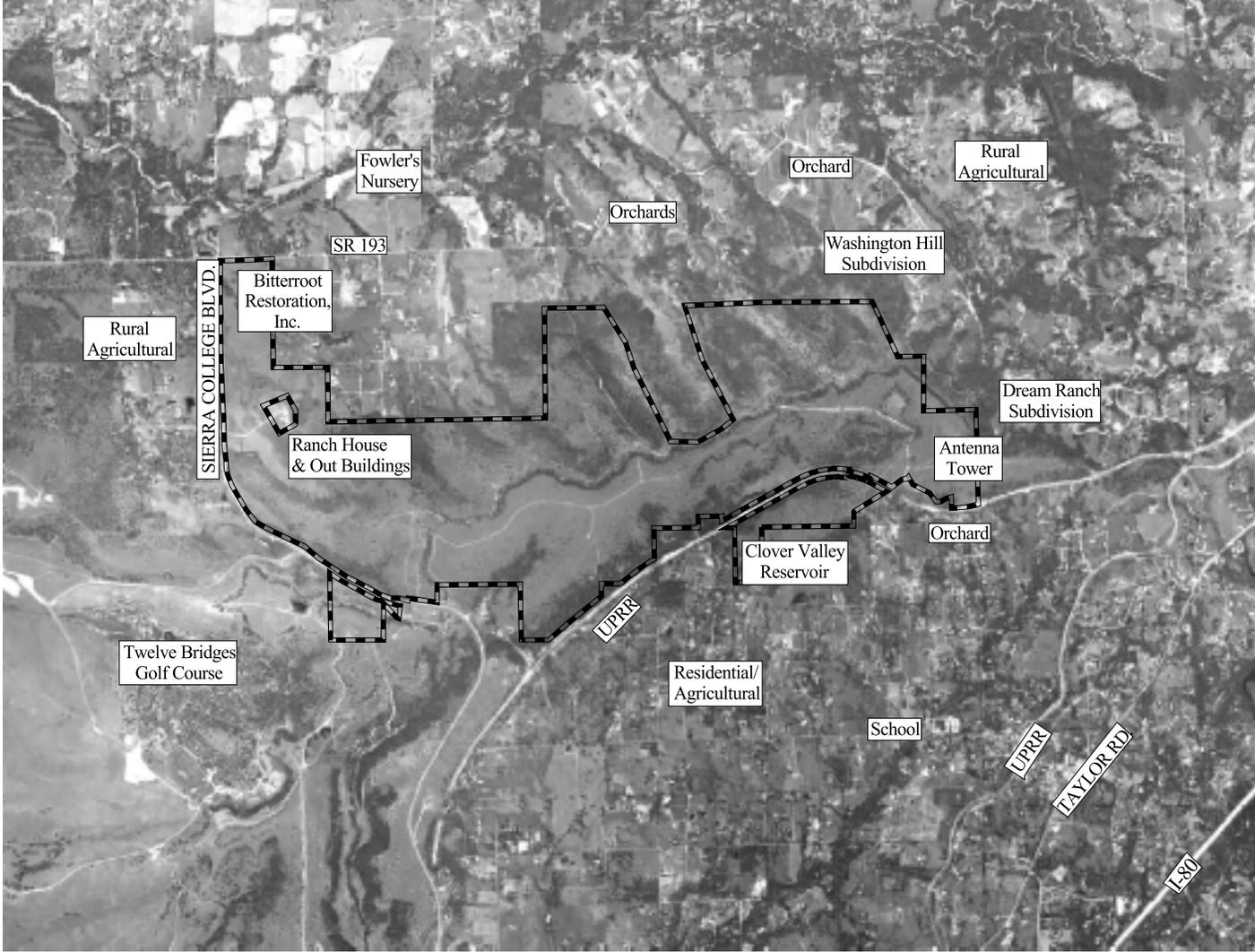
Clover Valley Reservoir and Clover Valley Creek are located near the site’s southern boundary. The unincorporated area south of the site consists of mostly single-family rural residences and small-scale agricultural operations. This land carries a General Plan designation of Rural Residential (RR) with 1-10 acre minimum lot areas. Farther east and south is land governed by the Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan (HB/P CP). Properties near the project site are designated by the HB/P CP as Rural Residential (RR) with 2.3-4.6 acre minimum lot areas.

Unincorporated land to the southwest of the proposed project, across Sierra College Boulevard, is designated Agriculture/Timberland 10-acre minimum. Directly across Sierra College Boulevard from Bickford Ranch within the boundaries of the City of Lincoln, the 4,500-acre Twelve Bridges Specific Plan Area extends west from Sierra College Boulevard to Highway 65. This master-planned community has been approved for very low-to-high-density single- and multi-family residential (including an “active-adult community”), commercial space, business and professional offices, schools, parks and a 300-acre golf course. The site is partially developed with the golf course, clubhouse and 300 occupied units at Del Webb’s Sun City.

The area immediately south of Bickford Ranch on the west side of Sierra College Boulevard falls within the Rocklin city limits. The master-planned Clover Valley Lakes has been approved for low- and medium-density residential development with limited retail commercial uses, parks and open space. With map approval still pending, construction is expected to be within one year (Schaer, 1998).

4.1.2 Land Ownership

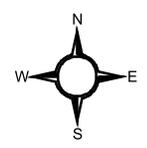
The 1,955-acre Bickford Ranch property was owned by the Bickford family for over 100 years—from 1882 until its sale to Chee S. Yaw, a land investor, who subsequently sold the property to Wickland Oil in 1989. Southwest Bickford Holdings L.L.C. acquired the property in November 1996 and currently owns the entire project site.



Study Area with Project Site Boundary

Legend

 Proposed Project Site Boundary



EXISTING LAND USE

1999
Job No. 21305-002-038

Bickford Ranch Specific Plan ER
Placer County, California



4.1.3 Agricultural Lands

Farmland Classification

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Resource Conservation Service Important Farmland Map designates the entire 1,955-acre site as Farmland of Local Importance (L), with limited water availability. Due to its predominantly Class VI and VII soils (shallow and stony with rock outcroppings), the land does not meet the criteria for Prime Farmland (P), Farmland of Statewide Importance (S) or Unique Farmland (U) in western Placer County. The vast majority of soils in the surrounding area fall within this same classification.

The nearest soils with a different classification are located adjacent to SR 193 and north of the highway. Land in this area has been designated by the Resource Conservation Service as Farmland of Statewide Importance (S). These soils possess a good combination of physical and chemical features for the production of agricultural cash crops. Another small area in this same location is classified as Unique Farmland (U), which is land of lesser quality soils used for production of the State's leading agricultural crops.

Williamson Act Land

Agricultural lands in this region fall under the provisions of the California Land Conservation Act (CLCA). Under this Act is the Williamson Act which allows agricultural landowners to contract with local governments for 10-year terms to restrict land uses to agriculture in return for reduced property tax assessments.

The project site's Williamson Act contract expired on January 1, 1996 and is no longer restricted to agricultural production. Several owners of agricultural lands in the immediate area have filed for non-renewal status of their contracted farmlands—approximately 313 acres covered by six Williamson Act contracts are scheduled to be removed from production between 1999 and 2004. An additional 536 acres in close proximity to the site are under contracts for which no non-renewal requests have been filed (Ivaldi, 1998). Refer to Figure 4-2 for General Plan land use designations within the Bickford Ranch area.

Agricultural Production

Statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture show that in 1992, Placer County's cattle and calves operations averaged 6.0 acres per head as compared with 12.3 acres per head on Bickford Ranch. Comparison figures are shown in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1
Project Comparison of Cow/Calf Operations in Placer County

Cattle & Calves	Irrigated/Dry Pasture	Number of Head
Placer County ¹	200,000 ²	33,500
Bickford Ranch	836/1,121	2,000 ³

Notes:

¹ The McCarty Company's *Bickford Ranch Agricultural Assessment*, 1993

² An exact breakdown between irrigated and non-irrigated acreages Countywide is not available. UC Cooperative Extension indicated that a large percentage of pasture is non-irrigated pasture (Lowery, 1999).

³ Estimate based on multipliers used in *Bickford Ranch Agricultural Assessment*.

The above figures show that cattle and calf production on the project site represents 0.47 percent of the cattle and calves operations in Placer County.

4.1.4 Land Development Trends

While agricultural and rural residential uses continue to dominate east and north of the project site, an influx of major residential developer interests to south Placer County has produced dramatic changes in land use patterns over the last two decades. Substantial planning and development continue in the areas south and west of Bickford Ranch. Anticipated and planned land uses around the project site are briefly described to assess growth relationships between this project and future development within the region.

The 4,868-acre Twelve Bridges master-planned community, which lies south and west of the project between Sierra College Boulevard and SR 65, is home to the 300-acre championship Twelve Bridges Golf Course which was constructed in 1995. The first phase of the residential development (Del Webb) is under construction and includes 5,300 residential units, as well as a community center and commercial uses. The second phase of residential development, which proposes 4,775 dwelling units, is scheduled to begin construction within one year (Skillings, 1998).

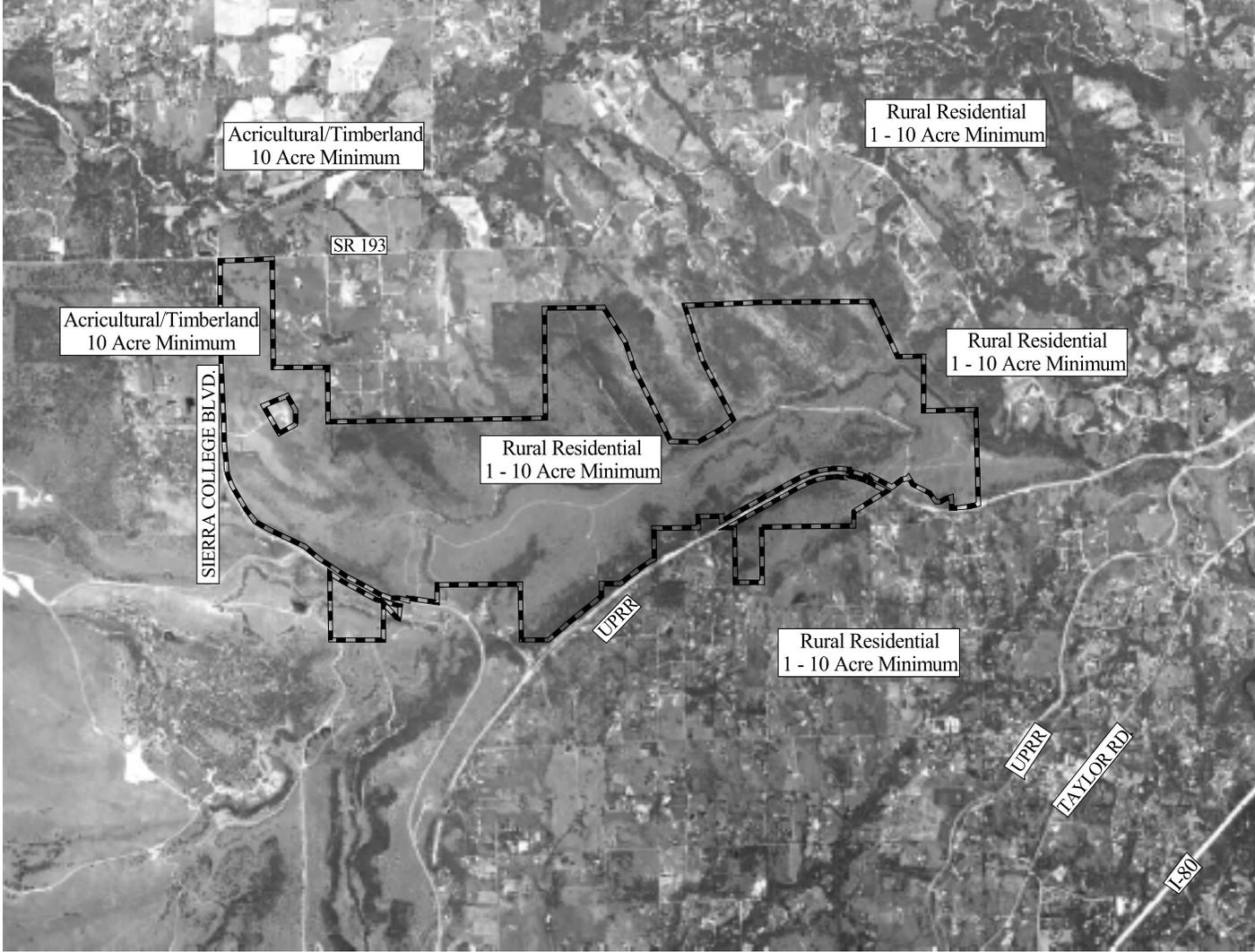
Unincorporated land south of the project site, west of Sierra College Boulevard, is dotted with large residences on large rural lots. Farther south, within the Rocklin city limits, a 645-acre parcel is scheduled for development under the Clover Valley Lakes Master Plan. This development, which has been approved by the City, proposes to construct 975 low- and medium-density residential units with limited retail commercial uses, parks and open space (Schaer, 1998).

The land along SR 193 east of the project site remains primarily agricultural and rural residential. However, Placer County has approved the new Tealbrook public golf course which is currently under construction, located approximately one mile west of Sierra College Boulevard on SR 193.

During the update of the Placer County General Plan, applications for proposed new development areas were accepted by the County. Placer County Planning Department ranked each area of proposed development according to the types of potential impacts that could occur if that area were developed. Development of Bickford Ranch was identified by Placer County, during this ranking, as one of the areas of least impact. The designation of potential areas for urban growth, such as Bickford Ranch, further satisfied the Board of Supervisors' objective to provide opportunities for development in distinct new communities in order to relieve growth pressures on existing communities.

4.1.5 Proposed Land Uses

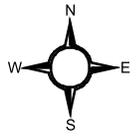
Bickford Ranch is proposed as a mixed-use development to include residential development ranging from medium density (5,000-7,400 square feet) to rural estates (3.5-10 acres). The Applicant proposes to develop the site with the maximum 1,950 dwelling units (as allowed under Appendix C, Placer County General Plan, Crawford, Multari & Starr et al., 1994a), construct a golf course, and construct an 8-acre village commercial center for retail and commercial uses. The proposed land uses would substantially conform to the site's natural form and environmental attributes. A portion of the natural open space around the perimeter of the site would be preserved. The small-lot residential communities of the project are placed in the middle and along level portions of the property on Boulder Ridge. The design allows for natural open space and buffers to be maintained between the developed areas of the project and surrounding properties.



Study Area with Project Site Boundary

Legend

 Proposed Project Site Boundary



GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS

1999
Job No. 21305-002-038

Bickford Ranch Specific Plan EIR
Placer County, California



4.2 REGULATORY SETTING

California planning law dictates that all land use decisions must be consistent with the implementing jurisdiction's adopted General Plan. The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan must be consistent with Placer County's adopted general plan and zoning ordinance. In addition, neighboring jurisdictions and community Plan Areas must be considered and a determination made regarding how the Specific Plan conforms to the policy directions and development patterns of these affected areas.

4.2.1 Placer County

General Plan

Since the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area does not fall within the boundaries of any of the County's community plans, the proposed project is governed by the goals and policies set forth in the *Placer County General Plan* (Crawford, Multari & Starr et al., 1994a). The General Plan contains goals, policies and objectives to which the project must adhere, as must all projects. In addition, the Plan specifically addresses one of the County's designated Mixed Use Specific Plan Area—the "Boulder Ridge area [which is] to be known as the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area."

Placer County considered several land use proposals for new development areas during the preparation of the Placer County General Plan. The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area was selected as one of the new development areas of least impact in the General Plan. Standards and conditions contained in the Issues and Options Report prepared in conjunction with the General Plan outline the specific requirements for development and potential new growth areas within the County. Those standards, applicable to Bickford Ranch, include requirements that new development occur within existing cities, community plan areas, or under a specific plan; and ensure current residents do not subsidize the costs of new growth; new development provides all costs of new infrastructure; new development pay the full operating costs of government services required for the development; and that agricultural areas be protected. In addition, specific to new growth areas such as Bickford Ranch, the following standards were included: new population centers shall achieve a jobs/housing balance; transit services shall be funded to provide services to new growth areas; land use buffers and greenbelts shall be established as these areas develop, which may include ranchette-type zoning minimum parcel sizes; a range of housing types and balanced complement of land uses shall be included in these population centers; and that these new population centers would be regulated by specific plans and development agreements.

In keeping with these standards, the Board of Supervisors directed that prior to the development of the Project Area at a density greater than the underlying zoning, the preparation and adoption of a specific plan would be required. Further, to implement these standards, Appendix C of the General Plan was prepared containing the development standards for the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area. Appendix C of the General Plan permits the project site to be developed as a planned residential development that may consist of a mix of land uses. Specifically, development standards allow a maximum of 1,950 dwelling units and up to 14 acres of commercial uses; they require the set-aside of open space areas and include slopes of Boulder Ridge, drainageways, corridors along canals and major roadways. Appendix C further specifies buffers required for agriculture and sensitive habitats, requires construction and dedication of a park-and-ride lot, and provides urban design standards. Placer County's General Plan policies relating to land use are identified in the General Plan Consistency discussion in Section 4.3.

Zoning Ordinance

The *Placer County Zoning Ordinance (PCZO)* dictates land uses and development densities within unincorporated areas of Placer County. Zoning designations are required to be consistent with the

County's General Plan. The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Development Standards implements the Specific Plan and serve as the regulatory tool to guide development of the project site and this would be adopted as ordinance. This would replace portions of the zoning ordinance normally controlling land uses on the project site.

Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan

The *Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan* (1994) boundaries encompass a 25-square-mile area in close proximity to Bickford Ranch. Much of the HB/PCP's northern boundary is coterminous with the southern boundary of the project site. Over the past few decades, the land use pattern within the Community Plan (CP) area has been changing from rural-agricultural to residential development on small acreages. The CP assumes that the primary demand for land use will be for large-lot single-family residential units. Higher densities may occur where public utilities are readily available. The Plan directs development of infrastructure to occur "in such a way that additional pressure for the urbanization of surrounding rural areas is not created," acknowledging that "financial pressure, proximity of urban uses, and/or the establishment of incompatible uses [can] hinder the continued rural use of adjoining lands."

4.2.2 City of Lincoln

The City of Lincoln boundaries are located west of the project site, where the City encompasses the Twelve Bridges community. Twelve Bridges is a planned community for over 10,000 residential units. The City of Lincoln's Sphere of Influence (SOI) also extends along the south side of SR 193 up to Sierra College Boulevard and the project site. The City's General Plan designates the 975 acres within this part of its SOI for agricultural uses (Skillings, 1998). The City has no plans for annexation of this land or changes in designation to intensified land uses.

4.2.3 City of Rocklin

The City of Rocklin is located approximately four miles south of the project site; the northernmost portion of the City's SOI abuts a southern "leg" of Bickford Ranch in the Clover Valley area. Rocklin's General Plan designates land uses within this area of its SOI for low-density residential development. The City has no plans for annexation or changes to this land use designation (Finning, 1998).

4.3 IMPACTS

This section identifies and discusses the environmental impacts resulting from the proposed project, and suggests mitigation measures to reduce the levels of impact. A detailed discussion of mitigation measures is included in Section 4.4.

Potential significant impacts associated with land use have been evaluated using the following criteria:

- Extent of change in land uses which would conflict with public policy or result in significant environmental impacts as defined by CEQA;
- Compatibility with surrounding land uses (current and planned);
- Type and extent of conversion from agricultural to suburban uses; and
- Consistency with local and regional land use plans and policies.

4.3.1 Land Use Conversion

IMPACT L-1:	Conversion of land use from agricultural and open space to residential, recreational and commercial uses
SIGNIFICANCE:	Significant
MITIGATION	
Proposed:	None
Recommended:	None
RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANCE:	Significant

Development of the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan area would convert approximately $\pm 1,955$ acres of agricultural land and open space to residential, recreational and commercial uses. The change in land use is provided for in the General Plan, and specifically addressed in Appendix C. The physical change in land use is considered significant and unavoidable, as concluded in the Placer Countywide General Plan Final EIR (PCGP FEIR [Crawford, Multari & Starr et al., 1994b]). This is due to the quantity and scale of change relative to existing and adjacent land uses. The PCGP FEIR determined that no mitigation measures are available to reduce the adverse impact resulting from the conversion of land uses to a less than significant level.

4.3.2 Land Use Density and Compatibility With Surrounding Uses

The PCGP FEIR assesses the land use compatibility implications of the General Plan's policies. Land uses were designated so as to cluster uses which are compatible, related, mutually supportive and similar with regard to traffic generation and need for public facilities. The PCGP FEIR acknowledges that "in some cases, land use or circulation patterns, the timing of development on properties with different owners, environmental constraints or other factors prevent new land use patterns from providing a 'gradation' of uses to ensure compatibility." A specific example cited in the FEIR, which is also considered in this report, is the potential incompatibility of planned residential developments with adjacent agricultural uses. Implementation of General Plan policies and agricultural buffers are used to mitigate land use compatibility conflicts.

Potential land use compatibility impacts associated with the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Project have been identified through the NOP and scoping processes for this EIR. Potential impacts, which are discussed below, include possible conflicts between proposed land uses/densities and surrounding rural residential and agricultural land uses.

Rural Residential Land

IMPACT L-2:	Change in interface of development with surrounding land uses
SIGNIFICANCE:	Less Than Significant
MITIGATION	
Proposed:	Mitigation Measure L-A (Design project elements to buffer the project from adjacent uses)
Recommended:	None
RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANCE:	Less Than Significant

As described in Section 4.1.1, the project site is surrounded by predominantly rural residential land uses at lower densities than are proposed for Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Project. The General Plan has provided for development of the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area at higher densities assuming compliance with the development standards outlined in Appendix C of the General Plan.

Appendix C of the General Plan specifies the general locations of open space areas and requires the use of buffer zones between development and agricultural uses or sensitive habitats. In addition, higher density development is to be concentrated in the Plan Area's interior while rural residential densities are designated for land which abuts the buffer zones or open space areas. This pattern of land use gradation is intended to ensure compatibility between the Plan Area and adjacent lands.

The project's design elements, in accordance with Appendix C of the General Plan, include common open space, natural open space easements and wetland preservation easements. These buffer zones, along with the larger lots at the edge, provide for separation from nearby residences. The proposed project's density would shift the character of the project site from rural to more suburban in character. However, the overall effects of the density increase are minimized through its design as a planned residential community with larger areas of open space rather than if it were developed as a conventional lot-and-block subdivision.

Mostly large, rural-sized lots ranging from 0.9 to 10.0 acres extend around the perimeter of the project site; several of these lots include undevelopable open space easements. Some smaller lots, ranging from 0.3 to 0.7 acres, abut agricultural lands in the north central portion of the site and rural residential lands on the east end. Buffer zones, including the Bickford Ranch Park, natural open space areas, and the golf course provide additional separation from adjacent rural residences to the south and west. Additional buffer is provided by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks along the site's southern boundary. These buffer areas combine to reduce the effects of the increased residential density, as prescribed by Appendix C of the General Plan, to a less than significant impact.

Social issues of land use compatibility (e.g., quality-of-life and monetary values) are based on personal preferences and are subjective in nature. These intangibles are an important part of land use discussions, but they do not constitute land use compatibility impacts as defined by CEQA. Although the anticipated growth associated with the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan will generate project-related impacts, the planned residential development has been specifically considered in the Placer County General Plan. The increase in density would result in more structures, residents, vehicle trips, and ambient noise than if the project were developed at a density similar to what currently exists around the project site. The resultant traffic, noise, drainage and biological impacts are discussed in other chapters of this Draft EIR.

Agricultural Lands

IMPACT L-3:	Compatibility with surrounding agricultural uses
SIGNIFICANCE:	Less Than Significant
MITIGATION	
Proposed:	Mitigation Measure L-A (Design project elements to buffer the project from adjacent uses)
Recommended:	None
RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANCE:	Less Than Significant

One land use compatibility issue pertains to the location of agricultural lands and natural habitat/forage adjacent to residential and commercial uses. Although not mutually exclusive, these dissimilar uses were evaluated as to their potential effect on each other. Certain agricultural practices could be incompatible with the neighboring residential developments in Bickford Ranch: noise from machinery, pesticide spraying, dust from plowing, and small field fires are some of the factors which could negatively affect new residents. Conversely, residential and commercial occupants could have negative impacts on agricultural production through increased activity, fire hazards or the dumping of wastes and litter on adjacent properties.

The General Plan requires that the project establish buffer zones to separate the proposed urban uses (particularly residential) from surrounding lands designated Agriculture/Timberland where agricultural activities would create problems for nearby residential and other sensitive land uses. The restrictions applicable to this project are shown in Table 4-2 below.

**Table 4-2
Minimum Agriculture Buffer Zone Widths**

Agricultural Use	Buffer Zone Width	
	Residential Exclusion Area ¹	Buffer Width Range ²
Irrigated Orchards	300 feet	300 to 800 feet
Rangeland/Pasture	50 feet	50 to 200 feet

Notes:

¹ Residential structures prohibited; non-habitable accessory structures permitted.

² Required buffer dependent on site- or project-specific characteristics as determined through the Specific Plan.

Source: Placer County General Plan (Crawford, Multari & Starr et al., 1994a)

Although only a portion of the area surrounding the project site falls within the Agriculture/Timberland land use designation, the entire project was assessed to determine the adequacy of buffer areas adjacent to agricultural lands. The project design, as shown in Figure 3-4 (Master Lotting Plan), incorporates substantial buffers in the form of open space easements and large residential lots to conform with the County's agriculture buffer requirements.

Sierra College Boulevard serves as the primary buffer between the project's western edge and agricultural lands farther west. As described earlier in this section, the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, combined with 10+-acre parcels on the southern project boundary, provide additional buffer from the few nearby orchards. While portions of the Ridges community surround agricultural preserves (Williamson Act lands), the common open space, open space easements and large lot sizes (with building pads sited outside the restricted 300-foot minimum distance) provide ample buffer zones for these areas. The predominant agricultural use adjacent to lots within the Meadows community is grazing. A common open space lot is proposed in this area exceeding the 50-foot minimum buffer prescribed in the General Plan. With most of the project area amply separated from nearby orchards and grazing land, there are a few lots in the Ridges community which lie just outside the 300-foot minimum distance from nearby orchards. These design features result in a less than significant impact on compatibility with surrounding agricultural uses.

4.3.3 Conversion of Agricultural Lands

IMPACT L-4:	Conversion of land from agricultural to residential, recreational and commercial uses
SIGNIFICANCE:	Less Than Significant
MITIGATION:	None Warranted

The primary impact of development on the proposed site would be converting 1,955 acres of land from agricultural to residential, recreational and commercial uses. The land is not currently under cultivation. However, the current lessees will continue to use the land for grazing as long as it is available.

A land use conflict exists between the present and proposed uses. Development of the site would remove grazing land and potentially viable farmland from production. However, this impact on the environment is not considered significant pursuant to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

According to Appendix G, projects involving conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural uses are generally considered to have a significant impact on the environment. The California Department of Conservation's Placer County Important Farmland Map does not classify the Bickford Ranch site as Prime Agricultural Land, but as Farmland of Local Importance. USDA Resource Conservation Service's Soil Survey indicates that the land within the 1,955-acre project site contains Class VI and VII soils, which include soils that have severe limitations and reduce the choice of plants, or which require very careful management, or both. Therefore, the removal of this land from agricultural use will not significantly reduce crop production in the region. The removal of 1,955-acre dry rangeland (which constitutes slightly less than one percent of Placer County's dry range acreage, would result in a 0.47 percent decrease in the County's cattle and calf operations.

4.3.4 General Plan Consistency

The function of a General Plan is to provide guidance to the development and management of land within the Plan area. The General Plan summarizes its policies and implementation strategies as they relate to the County's goals and objectives.

Appendix C of the Placer County General Plan contains the Development Standards for the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area as approved by the Placer County Board of Supervisors. It is the intention of the County that the proposed project be consistent with these Standards. First, all policies in Appendix C are evaluated. Then, the applicable land use policies in the rest of the General Plan are evaluated below.

Appendix C of the General Plan serves as the County's guidelines for the development of Bickford Ranch. It contains the stated Board of Supervisor's policy for urban growth within the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area. Appendix C is printed in its entirety below, and a determination of the proposed project's consistency is made. Following each specific requirement is a determination of the proposed project's consistency with that requirement. The proposed project is consistent with Appendix C, except for Development Standard (6)(a), identified below.

Appendix C, Placer County General Plan Development Standards - Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area

The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area could be developed as a planned residential development on $\pm 1,950$ acres located north of the Town of Loomis, west of Newcastle and southeast of the City of Lincoln. This area is proposed as a "recreation and residential development that may consist of a mix of land uses including estate size lots of ± 5 -10 acres to higher density development of 6-10 units per acre. Golf courses as well as other recreation amenities may also be included.

Any development considered within this area shall be subject to the specific plan requirements of the zoning ordinance and the following development standards.

- a. Residential uses: A maximum of 1,950 dwelling units, although this number may not be realized due to site constraints, inclusion of buffers, and other factors that may limit available developable land.

Consistent.

The property owners are proposing a Specific Plan for 1,950 dwelling units.

- b. Commercial uses: A maximum of 14 acres of commercial uses, with typical land uses allowed as listed in Part I for the General Commercial land use designation.

Consistent.

The property owners are proposing ±8 acres of commercial uses within the Specific Plan.

- c. Open space: Any development proposal for this area shall set aside significant open space areas and include the slopes of Boulder Ridge, drainage ways, corridors along canals and major roadways.

Consistent.

The property owners are proposing ±476.8 acres of natural open space areas. Open space is predominantly located in the steeply-sloped areas of The Ridges community north of Bickford Ranch Road and along the southern property boundary. These areas encompass slopes, wetlands and drainageways and provide an open space corridor along Bickford Ranch Road. An additional ±368 acres is proposed for parks and the golf course.

- d. Required buffers: Development within the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area shall incorporate the following buffer zones, according to the standards for buffer zones in Part I, page 23:

- Agriculture/Timberland

Consistent.

The proposed project has incorporated a variety of buffers on the perimeter of the project site. These include larger lot sizes, natural open space areas, open space easements within specific lots, wetlands preservation easements within specific lots, recreational uses and the use of roadways along the perimeter.

Specific agricultural uses vary but predominantly include pasture and orchards. Required buffer areas for pasture area are a minimum of 50' and a minimum of 300' for irrigated orchards. The minimum buffer area is met throughout the project.

- Sensitive Habitat

Consistent.

The proposed project includes those setbacks as described in Part I of the Placer County General Plan Policy Document. These setbacks include 50 feet from the centerline of intermittent streams, 50 feet from the edge of riparian vegetation, and 100 feet from the centerline of perennial streams. Setbacks are to be implemented within common open space and through protective easements on private rural residential lots.

- e. Transit: A park-and-ride lot should be constructed and dedicated near the entrance for residents and visitors.

Consistent.

The property owners are proposing development of a park-and-ride lot with project development.

- f. Urban design standards: Development within the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area shall be planned and designed to comply with the following standards:

- (1) Urban form. The specific plan shall provide for up to two mixed use, pedestrian-oriented villages. Village areas should be surrounded by buffer lands, and/or medium density and estate-sized single family residential development. Each village should contain all public facilities and services necessary for its development. The planning and design in the specific plan should give particular attention to the Visual and Scenic Resource policies and Development Form and Design policies of this General Plan (pages 41 and 47, respectively).

Consistent.

The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan is a planned residential community developed around two village areas. The communities include a variety of residential densities and amenities. Specific policies applicable to the proposed project from the Visual and Scenic Resource and Development Form and Design sections of the General Plan are discussed below.

- (2) Village core areas. Mixed use commercial areas should include service and neighborhood commercial uses, professional services, public, quasi-public, and institutional facilities, and high density residential uses.

Consistent.

The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan includes a Village Center area at the intersection of Bickford Ranch Road and Lower Ranch Road. The 7.3-acre center is to include “a typical concentration and mix of retail uses to meet the daily shopping and service needs of the proposed project residents.”

- (3) Public gathering areas. Village core areas shall be enhanced by incorporating outdoor public gathering areas into their design. Such areas are intended to facilitate social interaction by area residents and employees.

Consistent.

The Village Commercial Center includes an outdoor gathering area next to the outdoor plaza. In addition, the Heritage Ridge Clubhouse/Recreational Center will include a 20,000 square foot building to house a variety of activities for use by the residents of the community.

- (4) Community open space areas. Each village should contain a green to be located adjacent to, or integrated into, the village core area. Community parks should be located adjacent to major open space and roadway corridors. Community parks and/or golf course may serve as buffer areas between conflicting land uses (see the standards for Land Use Buffer Zones in Part I, page 23) within or adjacent to the specific Plan Area. All developed and undeveloped park areas should be linked by a system of greenways and parkways containing pedestrian and bicycle paths separated from vehicular traffic.

Consistent.

A community park is planned adjacent to the village core area and along roadway corridors. A natural open space corridor is planned along Bickford Road, which would link the 56.8-acre Bickford Ranch Park proposed along Sierra College Boulevard with the 3.7-acre Tower Park proposed on the east side of the site. The bike paths would be on-road Class II bicycle paths. The pedestrian paths would be separated from vehicular and bicycle traffic. Additional hiking and equestrian trails would link open space areas.

- (5) Pedestrian-oriented design. Village areas shall be planned and designed to be pedestrian, bicycle, and transit accessible. Design elements that accommodate pedestrians and cyclists should be precedent over elements that primarily accommodate automobiles.

Consistent.

Planned communities will be accessible to pedestrians, bicycles and public transit.

- (6) Residential uses. Residential areas shall consist of the following three types:
- (a) Village Residential. These areas shall be located within walking distance of a village commercial core area. The housing should consist of high-density single-family (with or without carriage or secondary dwelling units) and multi-family units.

Consistent.

Multi-family units are proposed.

- (b) Single-Family Residential. These areas should surround village residential areas at densities consistent with suburban residential development (e.g., 4 to 7 dwellings per acre). Subdivision design should provide opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access to village core areas. Physical separation of single-family residential areas by such means as sound walls, berms, and major roads shall be discouraged. Single-family residential areas should be incorporated into their village so that both village residential and single-family residential areas function as a single unit and are not separated by physical or design characteristics.

Consistent.

As described above, residential densities around the village center range from 1.2 to 7 dwelling units per acre. This mix of residential densities continues throughout most of the Ridges community and all of the Heritage Ridge community. The village core area is located within the western one-third of the project site; some distance from much of the residential development. Physical separation of developments on the project site is inevitable due to site constraints, primarily topography. Pedestrian and bicycle trails from all areas within the proposed project will have access to the village center. A mix of open fencing and privacy fencing is proposed on lots adjacent to the village core area. Residents of the Heritage Ridge community will have a more centrally located community center for their use in social and recreational pursuits.

- (c) Rural Residential. These areas should be located adjacent to buffer zone areas or open space areas within the specific Plan Area. Rural land uses shall only be considered in areas where residential land use is consistent with the standards in Part I for buffers (page 23). Rural residential densities of 0.2 dwellings per acre or more shall be allowed only when public sewer and water facilities are provided.

Consistent.

183 lots are proposed which are classified as Rural Estate (3.5 to 10 ac.), Rural Residential (2.0 to 3.4 ac.) or Country Residential (0.9 to 1.9 ac.). These lots are predominantly located within the Meadows community or on the ridges north of Bickford Ranch Road. These lots will act as buffers to adjacent rural residential uses.

4.0 Land Use

- (7) Open Space corridors. Existing and proposed linear open space corridors should be developed as a pedestrian, equestrian, and/or bicycle trail system. Existing corridors include, but are not limited to, stream and riparian areas, power line easements, existing public trails, and existing public roads and bridges that may be ultimately abandoned.

Consistent.

Open space corridors are planned along both Bickford Ranch and Lower Ranch Roads and include pedestrian, equestrian and bike trails. These pedestrian/equestrian trails along the roads will connect with others throughout the project site.

- (8) Roadway corridors. Collector and arterial roads shall be designed as landscaped corridors, including separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities placed within landscaped or native open space corridors and landscape berms and medians.

Consistent.

Landscaped corridors are planned along both Bickford Ranch and Lower Ranch Roads. A landscaped median is also proposed on Bickford Ranch Road from Sierra College Boulevard to the main entrance to the Heritage Ridge community. Bicycle trails are proposed as Class II trails within the paved roadway widths adjacent to the travel lane. Pedestrian paths are separated from the vehicular and bicycle traffic.

g. Special Planning Issues to be Addressed:

- (1) Possible provision of a public golf course site.

The proposed project includes a golf course currently planned for public use. It is possible that the future owners (Heritage Ridge Homeowners Association) will restrict public use.

- (2) Resolution of fire and school district boundaries.

Resolution of fire and school district boundaries is continuing.

- (3) Public access to communications antenna.

The communications antenna is located within a public facility lot. A road is planned to provide access to the antenna site.

Consideration of the way in which the development in this area may assist in providing affordable agricultural water to agricultural land in the surrounding areas. The Caperton Canal runs along Boulder Ridge on the project site, and provides raw water to several local agricultural users, as well as to the Sunset Water Treatment Plant. The previous owner of the property made several improvements to the Caperton Canal that reduced water leakage. Further proposed improvements including potential realignment, encasement or installation of siphon(s) would be funded by the Applicant, and could result in some additional water availability beyond that already achieved.

IMPACT L-5: (Deleted)

MITIGATION: (Deleted)



Placer County General Plan Policies

Although the County has several area-specific community plans which narrow the focus to a particular region of the County, the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan remains under the broad jurisdiction of the Placer County General Plan. The following section presents an assessment of the Plan's policies which are relevant to the project site and a determination of the project's consistency with those policies.

For land use, the proposed project is consistent with Placer County General Plan policies, except for policy 1.B.9 identified below.

General Land Use

- 1.A.2 The County shall permit only low-intensity forms of development in areas with sensitive environmental resources or where natural or human-caused hazards are likely to pose a significant threat to health, safety, or property.

Consistent.

Appendix C of the Placer County General Plan recognizes that the "Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area could be developed as a planned residential development." The Appendix sets forth requirements must be incorporated into the Specific Plan and a maximum density of 1,950 dwelling units for the project site. The proposed project is a planned residential development of 1,950 residential units. Project design avoids or protects sensitive environmental resources, where possible.

Residential Land Use

- 1.B.1 The County shall promote the concentration of new residential development in higher-density residential areas located along major transportation corridors and transit routes.

Consistent.

The project site is located adjacent to SR 193 and will receive access from Sierra College Boulevard. Planned residential developments are located south and west of the proposed project.

- 1.B.3 The County shall encourage the planning and design of new residential subdivisions to emulate the best characteristics (e.g., form, scale, and general character) of existing, nearby neighborhoods.

Consistent.

The proposed project is generally consistent with the form, scale and general character of the development standards outlined within the General Plan for this area. Planned perimeter lots within the proposed project are single family residential and generally larger, in keeping with surrounding lot sizes.

- 1.B.5 The County shall require residential project design to reflect and consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a result, the maximum density specified by General Plan designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized.

Consistent.

Required development standards for the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area are outlined in Appendix C of the PCGP. The proposed project is generally consistent with these standards.

- 1.B.6 The County shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.

Consistent.

The proposed project is a planned residential development as designated in the Placer County General Plan; a variety of lot densities and accessory uses are proposed.

- 1.B.8 The County shall require residential subdivisions to be designed to provide well-connected internal and external street and pedestrian systems.

Consistent.

The proposed project includes an internal circulation system which facilitates access throughout the project site, including pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle trails. Main project entry points on Sierra College Boulevard are sited to avoid potential traffic conflicts.

- 1.B.9 The County shall discourage the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area.

Inconsistent. See Impact L-6 below.

- 1.B.10 The County shall require that all residential development provide private and/or public open spaces in order to insure that each parcel contributes to the adequate provision of light, air, and open space.

Consistent.

Required development standards for the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area are outlined in Appendix C of the PCGP. The proposed project is generally consistent with these standards.

Mixed Use Specific Plan Area

- 1.C.1 Potentially large areas redesignated for increased densities as part of this General Plan shall be considered through the specific plan process. The Boulder Ridge area is one such area and it has been designated as Rural-Residential in the land use diagram. This area, to be known as the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Area, shall be subject to the development standards outlined in Appendix C.

Please refer to the Appendix C consistency analysis above.

Recreation Land Use

- 1.G.3 The County shall continue to require the development of new recreational facilities as new residential development occurs.

Consistent.

A golf course, Bickford Ranch Park, Tower Park, clubhouse/recreational center, and many miles of trails or paths are included in the proposed project design features.

Agricultural Land Use

- 1.H.5 The County shall require development within or adjacent to designated agricultural areas to incorporate design, construction, and maintenance techniques that protect agriculture and minimize conflicts with adjacent agricultural uses.

Consistent.

The proposed project incorporates the use of agricultural buffers and easements adjacent to existing adjacent agricultural uses.

- 1.H.6 The County shall require new non-agricultural development immediately adjacent to agricultural lands to be designed to provide a buffer in the form of a setback of sufficient distance to avoid land use conflicts between the agricultural uses and the non-agricultural uses. Such setback or buffer areas shall be established by recorded easement or other instrument, subject to the approval of County Counsel. A method and mechanism (e.g., a homeowners association or easement dedication to a non-profit organization or public entity) for guaranteeing the maintenance of this land in a safe and orderly manner shall be also established at the time of development approval.

Consistent.

Project design includes a buffer area and larger parcel sizes around the perimeter of the project site in areas adjacent to agricultural activities. This buffer area is consistent with the buffer standards established in Table 1-4 of the Placer County General Plan. The private common open space areas will be owned and maintained by the proposed Homeowners Association and the public common open space areas will be owned and maintained by the County through a CSA. Some of the buffers are in the form of easements within a few large individual lots. The buffers on these lots will be maintained by the individual homeowner.

Open Space, Habitat, and Wildlife Resources

- 1.I.1 The County shall require that significant natural, open space, and cultural resources be identified in advance of development and incorporated into site-specific development project design. The Planned Residential Developments (PDs) and the Commercial Planned Development (CPD) provisions of the *Zoning Ordinance* can be used to allow flexibility for this integration with valuable site features.

Consistent.

A cultural resources survey and biological evaluation of the site have been prepared. The proposed project design incorporates or avoids identified natural and cultural resources.

- 1.I.2 The County shall require that development be planned and designed to avoid areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature (e.g., areas of rare or endangered plant species, riparian areas). Alternatively, where avoidance is infeasible or where equal or greater ecological benefits can be obtained through off-site mitigation, the County shall allow project proponents to contribute to off-site mitigation efforts in lieu of on-site mitigation.

Consistent.

The proposed project design includes ±528.9 acres of natural open space, containing both wetland preservation and open space easements. Where avoidance of wetland areas is infeasible, the property owners propose to replace wetlands off-site at an approved wetlands mitigation banking facility at a ratio in keeping with Placer County's no-net-loss policy.

Development Form and Design

- 1.O.4 The County shall require that new rural and suburban development be designed to preserve and maintain the rural character and quality of the county.

Consistent.

The proposed project is generally consistent with the development standards outlined within Appendix C of General Plan for this area. The proposed project is a mixed density, single family residential development similar to much of Placer County. Specific design features of the proposed project will be required to comply with the Placer County Rural Design Guidelines.

- 1.O.5 The County shall require that new development at entrances to rural communities be designed to include elements such as signage, landscaping, and appropriate architectural detailing to help establish distinct identities for such communities.

Consistent.

The Bickford Ranch Design Guidelines contain several design concepts including project entrance features, signage, landscaping, stacked rock walls and wood fencing.

- 1.O.7 The County shall require that mixed-use areas include community focal points to serve as gathering and/or destination points. Examples of focal points include civic centers, parks, fountains, monuments, and street vistas. On-site natural features, such as wetlands and streams, can also function as focal points.

Consistent.

The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan describes several community focal points including a 56.8-acre Bickford Ranch Park and the 3.7-acre Tower Park. The Heritage Ridge development also includes a private golf course and community center facilities.

- 1.O.8 The County shall, where appropriate, require new development to provide activity pockets along public sidewalks as pedestrian amenities, including such features as benches, sitting ledges, and mini-parks.

Consistent.

Benches along pedestrian corridors and within park area are planned. Additional “activity pocket” are unknown at this time.

Land Use Conflicts

- 7.B.1 The County shall identify and maintain clear boundaries between urban/suburban and agricultural areas and require land use buffers between such uses where feasible. These buffers shall occur on the parcel for which the development permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmland.

Consistent.

Project design includes a buffer area and larger parcel sizes around the perimeter of the project site in areas adjacent to agricultural activities. This buffer area is consistent with the buffer standards established in Table 1-4 of the Placer County General Plan.

7.B.3 The County shall consider fencing subdivided lands adjoining agricultural uses as a potential mitigation measure to reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural uses. Factors to be considered in implementing such a measure include:

- (a) The type of agricultural operation (i.e., livestock, orchard, timber, row crops);
- (b) The size of the lots to be created;
- (c) The presence or lack of fences in the area;
- (d) Existing natural barriers that prevent trespass; and
- (e) Passage of wildlife.

Consistent.

The Bickford Ranch Design Guidelines includes perimeter fencing adjacent to agricultural areas. Either boundary security fencing of open wire with metal posts or open view fencing of lodge pole post and rails with wire or tubular steel rail and pickets.

IMPACT L-6:	Inconsistency with General Plan policy 1.B.9 discouraging development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects
SIGNIFICANCE:	Significant
MITIGATION	
Proposed:	None
Recommended:	Mitigation Measure L-C (Limit construction of gates)
RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANCE:	Less Than Significant

The proposed project includes a variety of design features, including areas of open fencing, limits of the location of walls and fencing, and design and height restrictions on fencing and walls to maintain viewsheds and encourage a sense of community. The Bickford Ranch Design Guidelines include vehicular access gates at numerous locations and will be modified to reflect the current proposal of 21 vehicular gates. These gates (twenty-one are indicated) do not promote a sense of community and encourage the development of isolated neighborhoods. These gates should be removed, where practicable, to achieve the intent of this policy.

The Placer County Rural Design Guidelines, adopted July 8, 1997, are implemented in review of residential subdivisions, such as those within the Plan area. The Guidelines contain specific language that states “gated subdivisions or communities are not appropriate in areas where these guidelines apply” (Subdivision Entrance Features, Implementation Technique B15).

Mitigation Measure L-C requires that locations where vehicular access gates will be prohibited will be identified by the Placer County Planning Department and recorded on the Tentative Map for the proposed project. With the implementation of this mitigation measure, the proposed project would not be inconsistent with policy 1.B.9 and this impact would be less than significant.

4.3.5 General Plan Inconsistency

Section 4.3.4 above identifies relevant Placer County General Plan policies addressing land use, and makes a determination as to the proposed project’s consistency with each policy. Each subsequent

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chapter addressing a particular resource area contains a similar section that addresses policies relevant to the resource and the proposed project.

The proposed project is inconsistent or potentially inconsistent with eight policies in the Placer County General Plan, including one policy in Appendix C of the Plan. These policies are identified in Table 4-3 below. Mitigation measures are identified to change the determinations of inconsistency to that of consistency in all cases. Where a mitigation measure identified elsewhere in this Draft EIR would result in the proposed project becoming consistent with a policy, that mitigation measure is identified. Table 4-3 also identifies the relevant resource chapter of this Draft EIR where a discussion of each policy inconsistency can be found.

Please note that many of the policies and standards in the Site Development and Grading Guidelines proposed by the Applicant contain permissive (i.e., should) rather than mandatory (i.e., shall) language. Therefore, a determination of policy inconsistency results as implementation of the policy cannot be guaranteed.

**Table 4-3
List of Inconsistencies with Placer County General Plan Policies
(Before Mitigation)**

Policy Number	Policy Text	Mitigation Measures	Location of Discussion of Inconsistency
1.B.9	The County shall discourage the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area.	L-C	Section 4.3.4
2.A.11	All new housing projects of 100 or more units on land that has received an increase in allowable density through a . . . specific plan shall be required to provide at least 10 percent of the units to be affordable to low income households. . . In cases where the County determines that is that it is impractical for the developer to actually construct the units on site, the County may as an alternative allow the dedication of land sufficient to accommodate at least 10 percent of the units for low-income households and/or the payment of an in-lieu fee.	PH-A, PH-B	Section 5.3.4
3.A.2	Streets and roads shall be dedicated, widened, and constructed according to the roadway design and access standards generally defined in Section I of the General Plan Policy Document.	T-R	Section 7.3.13
1.K.6.d	The County shall require that new development on hillsides employ design, construction, and maintenance techniques that (a) avoid locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes; (b) incorporate design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas; (c) maintains the character and visual quality of the area; and (d) maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.	V-A, V-B, V-C, V-D, V-H, V-I, V-J, V-K	Section 15.3.5
1.K.1	The County shall require that new development in scenic areas (e.g., river canyons, lake water sheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines and steep slopes) is planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction, and maintenance techniques that: (a) avoid locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes; (b) incorporate design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas; and (c) maintains the character and visual quality of the area.	V-A, V-B, V-C, V-D, V-H, V-I, V-J, V-K	Section 15.3.3

**Table 4-3
List of Inconsistencies with Placer County General Plan Policies
(Before Mitigation)**

Policy Number	Policy Text	Mitigation Measures	Location of Discussion of Inconsistency
1.O.3	The County shall require that all new development be designed to be compatible with the scale and character of the area. Structures, especially those outside of the village, urban, and commercial centers, should be designed and located so that: (a) they do not silhouette against the sky above ridgelines or hilltops; (b) roof lines and vertical architectural features blend with and do not detract from the natural background or ridge outline; (c) they fit the natural terrain: and (d) they utilize building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape (e.g., avoid high contrasts).	V-A, V-B, V-C, V-D, V-H, V-I, V-J, V-K	Section 15.3.3
1.K.6	The County shall require that new development on hillsides employ design, construction, and maintenance techniques that: (a) ensure that development near or on portions of hillsides do not cause or worsen natural hazards such as erosion, sedimentation, fire, or water quality concerns; (b) include erosion and sediment control measures including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas; (c) minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides, and flooding; and (d) maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.	V-A, V-B, V-C, V-D, V-H, V-I, V-J, V-K	15.3.4

4.4 MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure L-A: Design project elements to buffer the project from adjacent uses

Mitigation Measure L-A applies to Impacts L-2 and L-3.

The Applicant's proposed Specific Plan includes a variety of design elements to reduce incompatibility of the proposed project with surrounding residential and agricultural land uses. These elements include concentration of higher density development within the plan's interior, placement of rural residential densities along land that abuts buffer zones or open space, provision of buffer zones, common open space, natural open space easements, and wetland preservation easements to provide separation from nearby residences.

Mitigation Measure L-B: (deleted)

Mitigation Measure L-C: Limit construction of gates

Mitigation Measure L-C applies to Impact L-6.

To promote a sense of community and be consistent with General Plan policy 1.B.9, the Applicant will limit the construction of walls, fences, and vehicular access gates. The final plan for walls, fences within the Heritage Ridge area and along roadways and other features constructed by the Applicant, and gates will be approved by the Placer County Planning Department. Locations where walls, fences, and gates will be prohibited will be identified on the Tentative Map and incorporated into the proposed project's CC&Rs. Access control gates (or any entry feature that has the appearance of a gated entry) are not appropriate on property zoned for one acre or larger lots, located in rural residential/agricultural areas, and that limit through access between neighborhoods.