

7 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section considers the potential adverse effects to biological resources that could result from implementation of the proposed Placer County Government Center (PCGC) Master Plan Update Project (PCGC Master Plan Update or project), including the specific effects associated with construction of the proposed Health and Human Services building and Multifamily Residential project located at 1st Street and B Avenue, as described in Chapter 3, Project Description. It describes the existing biological resources within the project site, identifies associated regulatory requirements, evaluates potential impacts, and identifies mitigation measures where necessary to reduce or avoid significant impacts.

Information referenced for this chapter includes a Biological Resources Assessment of the project site and a preliminary Jurisdictional Delineation, both prepared by Dudek in 2016; a Tree Inventory Memorandum and a biological constraints analysis for a potential offsite sewer line improvement, both prepared by Dudek in 2018; and biological reports prepared for the PCGC campus between 2001 and 2003. The Dudek reports are provided in Appendix C to this environmental impact report (EIR).

None of the comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation for this EIR address biological resources. The Notice of Preparation and comments received in response to it are provided in Appendix A.

7.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Dudek biologists conducted a field survey of the approximately 198-acre project site in July 2016, which included mapping vegetation communities and land cover types, identifying wetlands and other potentially jurisdictional waters, and determined the potential for special-status species to occur within the project site. The project site is mostly developed, but there are several undeveloped lots that are currently kept mowed or disked. Vegetation consists mostly of a mixture of non-native vegetation composed of annual grasses and weedy dicots, deciduous and evergreen tree species, and ornamental plantings and landscaping scattered throughout the site. There is a canal that runs north to south along the eastern boundary of the site that delivers water from the Ophir Canal. The canal transitions from above ground to below ground south of the project site (Appendix C).

Topography and Soils

The project site is generally level; elevations range from approximately 1,380 feet above mean sea level to 1,425 feet above mean sea level throughout the site. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA 2016), three soil types are mapped within the project site: Auburn silt loam, 2% to 15% slopes; xerorthents, cut and fill areas; and Auburn-Rock outcrop complex, 2% to 30% slopes. Auburn silt loam soils are well-drained residuum weathered

from metamorphic rock. Xerorthents consist of mechanically removed and mixed soil material in which horizons are no longer discernable. These soils are typically well-drained. Auburn-Rock outcrop complex soils are found on rocky side slopes of metamorphic rock foothills and are shallow and well drained (Appendix C).

Vegetation Communities

Vegetation communities are areas that support a similar and somewhat predictable composition of plants. The vegetation communities, or land cover types, across the approximately 200-acre project site range in condition from highly disturbed to relatively undisturbed. Figure 7-1, Vegetation Communities, depicts a map of the vegetation communities observed on the site during the July 2016 surveys. As described in the Biological Resources Assessment, four land cover types were mapped within the site. The majority of the site is considered developed/disturbed and consists of paved roads, parking areas, and buildings that make up the Placer County Government Center. Patches of native and non-native annual grassland that include native and non-native weedy species (ruderal vegetation) occur throughout the center and eastern portion of the site. The remaining acreage consists primarily of blue oak woodland and developed/disturbed habitat. Three detention basins, one canal, two ephemeral drainages, two freshwater emergent wetlands, five seasonal wetlands, a vegetated swale and a small pond also exist within the site boundary. The area surrounding the pond provides a relatively small amount of riparian habitat. The vegetation communities observed within the site are described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Annual Grassland

Annual grassland is present throughout approximately 17.36 acres of the site (Appendix C). Annual grassland within the site is dominated by a dense to sparse cover of annual, non-native grasses and forbs. Common species include brome (*Bromus* spp.), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), wild oat (*Avena fatua*), barley (*Hordeum* spp.), filarees (*Erodium* spp.), and others. However, native species can also be present in this grassland, including bulbs, legumes, and some grasses, such as desert fescue (*Festuca microstachys*). Ruderal species are also often present in grasslands, especially along the margins of grasslands and in areas that have been historically disturbed. All of the grass species are dormant during the dry summer months.

Dominant species observed on site during the July 2016 survey within the annual grassland community included wild oat, ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*). Several other native and non-native species were also present, including black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) and yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*).

Annual grassland provides cover, nursery, and foraging habitat for several species of reptiles, birds, and small mammals. During the 2002 biological surveys, species observed included ring-

necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), California quail (*Callipepla californica*), killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), several species of sparrows, and black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*). In addition, white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) were observed foraging. Mule deer tracks (*Odocoileus hemionus*), raccoon tracks (*Procyon lotor*), and several unidentified small rodents were also evident in these areas (NFA/URS 2002).

Blue Oak Woodland Alliance

Blue oak woodland alliance includes at least 50% canopy coverage by blue oak, with other hardwoods and conifers intermixed. The tree canopy is intermittent to continuous, and the shrub layer is sparse to intermittent. This association is found in valley bottoms, foothills, and rocky outcrops, where the soils are shallow and moderately to excessively drained. It is typically found at elevations ranging from 300 to 6,200 feet (Appendix C). During the field survey, this association was observed on southwestern, northeastern and eastern portions of the project site, totaling approximately 25.05 acres.

Of special note is a blue oak that is estimated to be between 250 and 300 years in age (NFA/URS 2002), located within the proposed open space area west of the Animal Services Center. In some areas, other tree species, including incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), cypress (*Cupressus* sp.), juniper (*Juniperus* sp.), and other conifers, have been introduced into the blue oak alliance. Understory species consist primarily of buckbrush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), whiteleaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos viscida*), coyotebrush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and a mixture of grasses and forbs similar to those in annual grassland or ruderal areas.

Much of the oak woodland on the project site has been disturbed in the past, either through tree and vegetation removal or dumping of debris and concrete rubble. In some of these areas, the oaks are mature and the disturbance has primarily affected the understory. In the 2002 surveys, it was noted that in the southwest corner of the PCGC campus, the oaks were small and shrubby, as many emerged from piles of debris (NFA/URS 2002). However, with the tree growth that has occurred since 2002, the oak trees in this portion of the project site are now more mature (Appendix C).

Oak woodland habitat typically provides foraging, breeding, and cover habitat for many species of wildlife, as well as roosting and foraging habitat for some species of bats; however, the site is within an area that has been surrounded by development and experiences frequent human disturbance, therefore, occurrences of wildlife are likely reduced and restricted to species that are adapted to life in proximity to human development.

Oak acorns are a critical food source for many animals, including western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), mule deer, turkey, acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), raccoon, and deer mice (*Peromyscus* sp.). Oak foliage and the shrubby understory provides foraging and cover habitat for many species of birds, such as bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), brown creeper (*Certhia americana*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), and western wood peewee (*Contopus sordidulus*). Many animal species rely on oaks to provide shade, shelter, and breeding sites. Woodpeckers excavate nest-holes in snags (dead trees) or in dead oak limbs. These holes are frequently used by other hole-nesting species. Many birds that forage in grasslands and ruderal areas during the day use the oaks as roosting sites, resting in the trees at night (Appendix C).

During the 2002 surveys, red-shouldered and red-tailed hawks and a white-tailed kite were observed roosting in the larger oaks and foraging in nearby ruderal areas. These species could nest here, but no nests were observed (NFA/URS 2002). Further, the trees provide protection from the weather; many birds spend the hottest part of the summer days in the shade of the oak canopies.

Riparian

Riparian areas are described as the interface between land and a fresh water feature, such as a stream, river, or wetland. They are generally characterized by a composition of tree and plant species that flourish in regularly saturated soils, such as cottonwood (*Populus* sp.), willow (*Salix* sp.), and sedges (*Carex* sp.). They are ecologically diverse and can contain wet meadows, a brushy understory, and a sparse or dense tree canopy. Because of this, they often support a wide range of flora and fauna. Approximately 6.35 acres within the project site are characterized as riparian (Appendix C).

Riparian habitat within the project site occur around the boundary of the wetland and pond areas and are dominated by Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), but also include interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), willows, cottonwoods, pyracantha (*Pyracantha* sp.), and autumn willowweed (*Epilobium brachycarpum*). A commonly introduced species within riparian habitat is tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) (Appendix C).

Riparian habitat provides cover, foraging, and breeding habitat for many wildlife species, including yellow-rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronata*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), Anna's hummingbird, song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), warbling vireo (*Vireo gilvus*), Brewer's blackbird, red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), California quail, California scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), western brush rabbit (*Sylvilagus bachmani*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and raccoon. An extended wet

period contributes to a higher density of vegetation in riparian areas, which increases food and cover resources for wildlife. (Appendix C).

Developed/Disturbed Areas

Developed/disturbed areas are those dominated by built structures or areas frequently managed by mowing, disking, or other means. Within the project site, approximately 143.38 acres of developed/disturbed areas consist of roadways, government buildings, parking lots, empty lots, and storage areas. Vegetation in these areas is sparse to absent, consisting primarily of cultivated plants in planters.

Ornamental landscaping is included in the developed/disturbed land cover type, and occurs in approximately 5.18 acres of the northern portion of the site. It generally consists of landscaped turf grass that has been planted with ornamental tree species such as silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), fruitless mulberry (*Morus alba*), California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and Chinese tallow tree (*Triadica sebifera*) for shade and aesthetic purposes.

An earthen channel canal runs north to south along the majority of 1st Street which is located in the eastern portion of the project site, within the developed/disturbed land cover type. The canal flows above ground from Bell Road along 1st Street to Professional Drive, where it transitions underground until reemerging just south of Willow Creek Drive. NID refers to this portion of the canal as the Ophir Canal and the segment between Professional Drive and Atwood Road as the Kemper Canal. Once it resurfaces it travels around the existing detention basin before shifting westerly to follow the alignment of 1st Street to Atwood Road. On the south side of Atwood Road, the canal is piped. The canal is approximately 1,832 linear feet. As discussed in the Jurisdictional Delineation for the project site (Appendix C) and in Impact 7-3, this feature is not considered a Water of the U.S.; however, there is a potential that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may determine it to be jurisdictional.

Aquatic Habitat and Waters of the United States

The project site drains into two watersheds. The northeastern portion of the site drains into the Rock Creek watershed, and the remainder of the site drains to the North Ravine watershed. The headwaters of the North Ravine along the western part of the site drains into the freshwater pond in this portion of the site (which is further described below) and then continues to the south. A smaller drainage occurs in the center of the site and drains into a culvert that flows under the Main Jail facility, south under Atwood Road, and into North Ravine. Precipitation that falls on the site either surface flows into the two drainages, is conveyed through stormwater drainage systems associated with the existing on-site development, or flows laterally underground along shallow bedrock to the drainages. Hydrology is discussed in detail in Chapter 15, Hydrology and Water Quality, of this EIR.

According to the preliminary Jurisdictional Delineation for the project site (Appendix C), wetland features within the project site include two ephemeral drainages, several seasonal wetlands, three detention basins, one freshwater pond, and two freshwater emergent wetlands, totaling 6.70 acres of wetlands and 231 linear feet of other waters of the United States. Figure 7-2, Jurisdictional Delineation, depicts the results of the wetland delineation. Potentially jurisdictional waters of the U.S. and State mapped within the project site are described in more detail below.

Ephemeral Drainage

There are two ephemeral drainages (ED) on the project site: ED-01 and ED-02. ED-01 is approximately 162 linear feet. This largely unvegetated channel collects water during storm events and transports it off site. At the time of the August 2016 field survey, this feature was completely dry. This feature likely drains into a permanent waterway downstream, and is therefore considered a potentially jurisdictional water of the U.S. (Appendix C).

ED-02 is approximately 69 linear feet and is very similar to ED-01. The channel is unvegetated, and at the time of the August 2016 field survey, this feature was completely dry. This ephemeral drainage enters a seasonal wetland and then a culvert that then transports water underground. ED-02 likely drains into a permanent waterway downstream, and is therefore considered a potentially jurisdictional water of the U.S. (Appendix C).

Vegetated Swale

One vegetated swale, approximately 107 linear feet in length, was observed in the center of the site. Plant species identified along the swale included Italian rye grass (*Festuca perennis*), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), seaside barley (*Hordeum marinum*), and smooth cat's ear (*Hypochaeris glabra*). This swale likely collects water during rain events for short periods of time that are not long enough to support hydrophitic vegetation, or hydric soils; therefore, this feature is likely not jurisdictional (Appendix C).

Seasonal Wetlands

Five seasonal wetlands were identified within the project site, totaling approximately 0.24 acre. One is located in the northeastern portion of the site, and the other four are located within a previously developed lot near the center of the project site. The substrate in the four seasonal wetlands near the center of the site is extremely rocky soil that appears to have acted as an impermeable layer, causing the seasonal wetlands to develop similar hydrology to vernal pools, which are considered special aquatic sites; therefore, these seasonal wetlands are also considered potentially jurisdictional. During the August 2016 field survey, Dudek biologists observed that

one of the seasonal wetlands located near the center of the site had a biotic crust of copepod carapaces, and another had a layer of dried filamentous algae (Appendix C).

Two freshwater emergent wetlands were also identified within the project site. Freshwater emergent wetlands are areas that maintain hydrophilic plants and contain shallow fresh water for at least part of the year. One is located north of the freshwater pond, northeast of the western terminus of B Avenue, and is approximately 148 linear feet. This wetland drains directly into the freshwater pond through a large culvert. Species observed in the vicinity during the August 2016 field survey included willow, Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*), floating primrose-willow (*Ludwigia peploides*), and common rush (*Juncus effusus*). Because this wetland drains directly into the freshwater pond, it is considered potentially jurisdictional (Appendix C). The second freshwater wetland is located directly south of the freshwater pond, and is approximately 0.43 acre. The margin of this wetland is heavily forested and dominated by broadleaf cattail. The wetland appears to drain south into other wetlands identified by the National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2016a). Due to the high likelihood of connectivity to traditional navigable waters, this wetland is considered a potentially jurisdictional water of the U.S. (Appendix C).

Freshwater Pond

A freshwater pond is located in the western portion of the project site, south of B Avenue. The pond is bounded on the south and west by blue oak woodland and annual grassland, on the north by two emergency residential shelters, the County's animal shelter, a privately operated wildlife rescue center, and B Avenue, and on the east by a county maintenance yard and the Placer County Juvenile Detention Center. The surface area of the pond is approximately 2.95 acres, and water was present at the time of the field survey in August 2016. Species observed around the pond included willow, Fremont cottonwood, broadleaf cattail, floating primrose-willow, and common rush. This pond appears to drain south into other freshwater wetlands, and eventually into riverine habitat. Due to the high likelihood of connectivity to traditional navigable waters, this pond is considered a potentially jurisdictional water of the U.S. (Appendix C).

Detention Basins

Three detention basins totaling approximately 3.09 acres were identified within the project site. The first is located adjacent to 1st Street on the eastern side of the site and is approximately 0.18 acre; water is released through a culvert in the center of the basin. Vegetation surrounding the basin is dominated by species similar to those described previously for annual grassland, and vegetation deeper in the basin, near the outlet, includes broadleaf cattail, willow, and Fremont cottonwood (Appendix C). This basin is not mapped as a wetland feature in the National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2016a).

The second basin is 1.47 acres and is located in the southeastern portion of the site, south of Willow Creek Road and east of 1st Street. This detention basin has an outlet that connects directly into the adjacent canal. The basin is dominated by Italian rye grass, and species identified in the outlet included Fremont cottonwood, coyotebrush, valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), and interior live oak. This location is characterized as a freshwater pond by the National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2016a); however, during the August 2016 field survey and follow-up field survey in June 2018, the location was not flooded and it functioned as a detention basin and not a freshwater pond (Appendix C).

The third basin totals 0.63 acre and is located directly west of the second detention basin on the west side of 1st Street. As the time of the August 2016 field survey, this detention basin was dominated by California annual grassland, with a single Fremont cottonwood in the center of the basin. There is a drain in the center of this basin that likely drains directly into the adjacent canal. This location is characterized as a freshwater pond by the National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2016a); however, during the August 2016 field survey and follow-up field survey in June 2018, the location was not flooded and it functioned as a detention basin and not a freshwater pond (Appendix C).

Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Linkages

Wildlife corridors are linear features that connect large patches of natural open space and provide avenues for animal movement. Habitat linkages are small patches that join larger blocks of habitat and help reduce the adverse effects of habitat fragmentation; they may be continuous habitat or discrete habitat islands that function as stepping stones for wildlife dispersal.

Because the project site is a non-linear feature and is bounded by roads and development, it has little value as a potential wildlife corridor or habitat linkage; however, it could potentially be used by mule deer and small urban-adapted mammals, such as raccoon and black-tailed jackrabbit, for daily, local movement.

Special-Status Plant and Wildlife Species

For the purpose of this EIR, special-status plant and animal species are defined as those species that fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Officially listed or proposed for listing under the state and/or federal Endangered Species Acts.
- State or federal candidate for possible listing.

- Species meeting the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in Section 15380 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
- Protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.
- Species considered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to be a Species of Special Concern.

The potential occurrence of special-status plant and animal species on the project site was initially evaluated by developing a list of special-status species that are known to or have the potential to occur in the project vicinity. This list was primarily developed through a literature search using the following sources: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation Trust Resource Report (USFWS 2016b as cited in Appendix C), CDFW’s California Natural Diversity Database (CDFW 2016 as cited in Appendix C), and the California Native Plant Society’s online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants (CNPS 2016 as cited in Appendix C). Historical aerial photography was used to determine areas of the site that could potentially contain jurisdictional waters of the United States or waters of the state (Google Earth 2016).

Species that have potential to occur within the project site due to the availability of suitable habitat or soils, or the project site is within the species range, are discussed further below and are listed in Table 7-1. For a full list of species identified during the literature and database review, please refer to Appendix C.

Table 7-1
Special-Status Plant and Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring on the Project Site

| Common Name Scientific Name | Federal Status; State Status | Habitat Associations | Potential to Occur in the Project Area |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Invertebrates</i> | | | |
| Vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> | Threatened; None | The vernal pool fairy shrimp is adapted to seasonally inundated features and occur primarily in vernal pools, seasonal wetlands that fill with water during fall and winter rains and dry up in spring and summer. Typically the majority of pools in any vernal pool complex are not inhabited by the species at any one time. Different pools within or between complexes may provide habitat for the | Low potential to occur. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present within the project area, although it is regularly disturbed by disking and mowing. |

Table 7-1
Special-Status Plant and Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring on the Project Site

| Common Name Scientific Name | Federal Status; State Status | Habitat Associations | Potential to Occur in the Project Area |
|--|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | | fairy shrimp in alternative years, as climatic conditions vary. | |
| Vernal pool tadpole shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardii</i> | Endangered; None | This species is associated with low-alkalinity seasonal pools in unplowed grasslands. The vernal pool tadpole shrimp is found only in ephemeral freshwater habitats, including alkaline pools, clay flats, vernal lakes, vernal pools, vernal swales, and other seasonal wetlands in California. Suitable vernal pools and seasonal swales are generally underlain by hardpan or sandstone. This species inhabits freshwater habitats containing clear to highly turbid water, with water temperatures ranging from 50 to 84 degrees Fahrenheit and pH ranging from 6.2 to 8.5. | Low potential to occur. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present within the project area, although it is regularly disturbed by disking and mowing. |
| Amphibians | | | |
| California red-legged frog <i>Rana draytonii</i> | Threatened; SSC | California red-legged frogs occur in different habitats depending on their life stage, the season, and weather conditions. Breeding habitat includes coastal lagoons, marshes, springs, permanent and semi-permanent natural ponds, and ponded and backwater portions of streams. These frogs also breed in artificial impoundments including stock ponds, irrigation ponds, and siltation ponds. Creeks and ponds with dense growths of woody riparian vegetation, especially willows (<i>Salix</i> spp.) are preferred, although the absence of vegetation at an aquatic site does not rule out the possibility of occupancy. Adult frogs prefer dense, shrubby or emergent riparian vegetation near deep [≥ 2 to 3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m)], still or slow moving water, especially where dense stands of overhanging willow and an intermixed fringe of | Low potential to occur. Low quality suitable habitat for this species is present within or adjacent to the project area. |

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Special-Status Plant and Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring on the Project Site**

| Common Name Scientific Name | Federal Status; State Status | Habitat Associations | Potential to Occur in the Project Area |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | | cattail (<i>Typha</i> sp.) occur adjacent to open water. | |
| Birds | | | |
| California black rail <i>Lateralus jamaicensis coturniculus</i> | None; Threatened, FP | Freshwater marshes along the margins of ponds, lakes, and water impoundments; also herb dominated wetlands on sloped ground associated with springs, canal leaks, seepage from impoundments, and agricultural irrigation. Needs water depths of about 1 inch that does not fluctuate during the year and dense vegetation for nesting habitat. | Moderate potential to occur. Suitable habitat for this species is present within the pond on the western edge of the project area. |
| Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> | None; SSC | Loggerhead shrike is a year-round resident in most areas of California that contain grasslands, open areas, orchards and areas with scattered trees. Feeds on small vertebrates and invertebrates, impales prey on thorns or barbed wire. | Moderate potential to occur. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat exists on the project site in small patches. |
| Mammals | | | |
| Townsend's big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> | None; Candidate Threatened, SSC | Found throughout most of western North America. Hibernates in caves and mines near entrances, as well as buildings. Forages in forested habitats, along open edges. | Moderate potential to occur. Suitable roosting and foraging habitat exists within the project site. |
| Plants | | | |
| Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop <i>Gratiola heterosepala</i> | None; Endangered 1B.2 | Annual herb found in marshes and swamps (lake margins), vernal pools. Clay soils. Blooms April-August. Elevation 30-5,400 feet. | Low potential to occur. Marginally suitable habitat exists near the pond on the west side of the project area, although there are no known occurrences in the Auburn quad. |

SSC= California Species of Special Concern

FP= California Fully Protected Species

CRPR 1B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere

.2 Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)

Source: Appendix C

Special-Status Plants

Results of the database searches included five special-status plant species that have potential to occur in the vicinity of the project site. All but one of the special-status plant species were removed from consideration because suitable habitat is not present on the site, or because the project site is outside of the species' known range. Suitable habitat for Bogg's lake hedge-hyssop (*Gratiola heterosepala*) occurs around the pond in the western portion of the site, although no known occurrences of this species exist in the Auburn U.S. Geological Survey quadrant (Appendix C); therefore, there is a low potential for this species to be found on site. No special-status plants were observed during the July 2016 field survey, and no special-status plant species are expected to be present within the project site due to the generally disturbed nature and past management practices (e.g., mowing, disking) on the site.

Special-Status Wildlife

Results of the database searches revealed 12 special-status wildlife species or species proposed for listing as rare, threatened, or endangered by either CDFW or USFWS. Of these, 6 were removed from consideration due to lack of suitable habitat within or adjacent to the project site, including valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*), steelhead-Central Valley Distinct Population Segment (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*), and fisher (*Pekania pennanti*). No elderberry bushes or streams occur on site; therefore, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, Delta smelt, and steelhead are not be expected to occur. In addition, the site lacks suitable aquatic foraging habitat for bald eagle, cliff habitat for bank swallow, and dense conifer forest for fisher.

Three special-status species have moderate potential to occur on the project site and include loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), and California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*). There is foraging and nesting habitat for loggerhead shrike throughout the site, and Townsend's big-eared bat could use the buildings throughout the site for roosting, and the entire site for foraging. California black rail could use the pond on the western portion of the site. These species are described in more detail below.

Three special-status species have a low potential to occur on the site: vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*), and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*). The jurisdictional delineation determined that there are no vernal pools on site (Appendix C). However, the seasonal wetlands created by the demolition of past buildings near the center of the project site have a hardpan layer that creates conditions that could be suitable for vernal pool tadpole shrimp and vernal pool fairy shrimp when inundated,

although site management practices (e.g., mowing, disking) and the level of disturbance in these areas likely precludes these species from occurring on site.

California red-legged frog surveys were conducted for the property on the south side of Atwood Road in 2003 and for the project site in 2004 and 2005. No California red-legged frogs were observed during these surveys (County of Placer 2003), and there are no occurrence records of California red-legged frog in the vicinity of the site. However, California red-legged frog could potentially use the pond in the western portion of the site, although it is of low quality for this species. Because the project site and surrounding areas are relatively developed, and because no California red-legged frogs have been encountered on the site or adjacent to the site, it is unlikely that California red-legged frog occurs on the site.

All raptor species found in California are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5. Two raptor species were observed flying over the site or perched during the July 2016 field survey: turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*) and red-shouldered hawk. There is an abundance of trees on the site that could be used for nesting by a variety of raptor species and other native bird species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Most bird species likely to nest on the site could also use the entire site for foraging.

Loggerhead Shrike

Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) is considered a species of special concern by CDFW. Loggerhead shrike nests in small trees and shrubs in woodland and savannah vegetation communities, and forages in open habitats, including agricultural lands throughout California. It requires tall perches such as shrubs, trees, or fences for hunting, territorial advertisement, and pair maintenance. The nesting season ranges from March through June. Loggerhead shrike is a year-round resident in much of California (Appendix C).

Suitable habitat for loggerhead shrike is present on site within the oak woodland habitat; however, this species was not observed during surveys conducted in spring 2002, spring 2003, or summer 2016 (Appendix C, County of Placer 2003).

Townsend's Big-Eared Bat

Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) is considered a species of special concern by CDFW. It is found in all but subalpine and alpine habitats and roosts in caves, mines, and buildings, and is most abundant in moist habitats. Although suitable roosting habitat occurs within existing buildings on site, this species is extremely sensitive to human disturbance, which likely precludes this species from occurring on the site. Bats have been documented roosting in buildings on the site; however, surveys to determine species have not been conducted (Appendix C).

California Black Rail

California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*) is a state-listed threatened species that inhabits salt, fresh, and brackish water marshes. In freshwater habitats, their preference is for dense bulrushes and cattails. They require marshes with relatively stable water levels that provide adequate vegetative cover from predators and conceal nest sites. Nests are typically concealed in dense vegetation consisting of pickleweed (*Salicornia* sp.) and tall grasses. Several scattered populations of California black rail have been documented from Butte County to southern Nevada County in the Sierra foothills. California black rail could be present in the pond on the western portion of the project site (Appendix C).

Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp

Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) is a federally threatened species that lives exclusively in vernal pools and is endemic to Oregon and California. In winter, when vernal pools become inundated in winter, fairy shrimp hatch from eggs buried the previous season within the soil. Fairy shrimp live approximately two months, and adult females lay drought-resistant eggs that embed into the soil as the vernal pool dries. Fairy shrimp rely on algae, bacteria, protozoa, rotifers, and detritus for food, and are often eaten by birds, tadpoles, and other animals (Appendix C).

Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp

Vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*) is a federally endangered species that lives in vernal pools and other seasonally inundated waters; it is endemic to California. In winter, aquatic habitat becomes inundated, vernal pool tadpole shrimp hatch from eggs buried within the soil, typically within 3 weeks. Similar to vernal pool fairy shrimp, adult females lay drought-resistant eggs that embed in the soil as the vernal pool dries. Vernal pool tadpole shrimp are omnivores, can be cannibalistic, and are prey to birds and amphibians (Appendix C).

Offsite Improvements

As discussed in Chapter 3, Project Description, Chapter 10, Transportation, and Chapter 18, Utilities and Service Systems, implementation of the proposed PCGC Master Plan Update may require off-site improvements to transportation and sewage conveyance infrastructure. The potential transportation improvement is widening a segment of SR 49. This improvement is anticipated to be completed by a previously approved project, Auburn Creekside Center. However, in the event that this project does not proceed, construction of this improvement may become a responsibility of Placer County and/or applicants for private development within the PCGC property. This improvement consists of constructing a third northbound lane on SR 49 on a portion of the segment between Bell Road and Education Street. As documented in the Auburn

Creekside Center Draft EIR (County of Placer 2016), the portion of the Auburn Creekside Center property that would be disturbed during construction of the SR 49 widening supports riparian vegetation (Figure 6-2). The length of the segment the Auburn Creekside Center project is expected to construct is approximately 275 feet. Assuming an area of disturbance that extends no more than 25 feet in width, construction of the third northbound lane and associated right-of-way improvements could affect approximately 6,875 square feet (0.16 acre) of riparian vegetation. No wetlands or waters of the U.S. have been identified in this area (County of Placer 2016 Figure 6-3). On page 6-5, the Auburn Creekside Center Draft EIR describes the riparian woodland within the project site as supporting a diverse range of wildlife and “a plant community composed of Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), and willows (*Salix* sp.). Other herbaceous species growing within the riparian corridor include rice cutgrass, Douglas’ sagewort, Baltic rush, dallisgrass, nutsedge, smartweed, cattail, and spikerush. The tree species that occur within the on-site riparian woodland include willow, white alder, cottonwood, live oak, and valley oak.” Special status species that this habitat could support include white tailed kite and migratory birds (Table 6-3, page 6-19), however there are no trees within the potential area of disturbance for the widening of SR 49 (County of Placer 2016 Figure 6-2).

Similarly, the previously approved Timberline Senior Housing project, located north of the PCGC property, at Richardson Drive and Bell Road, is responsible for upsizing several segments of the existing DeWitt Trunk sewer line. However, in the event that the Timberline project does not complete these improvements prior to construction of the Health and Human Services building, construction of these improvements would become the responsibility of Placer County. Dudek completed a biological constraints analysis of the 0.75-mile portion of the DeWitt Trunk sewer line that requires upsizing, which is located approximately one mile north of the PCGC property and 0.5 mile west of SR 49. All of the sewer line upgrade locations are within paved roads, except for the segment of pipeline that runs parallel to Meadow Glen Road in the northern portion of the project alignment, and the segment off of Sherwood Way that runs along Rock Creek in the approximate center of the alignment (Appendix C). These two segments are within private property in vegetated areas of homeowners’ yards.

The biological constraints analysis found that the majority of the alignment is within a developed/disturbed area that consists of paved roads, residences, and other buildings within private property. These areas are either void of vegetation or landscaped with ornamental plant species. Patches of non-native annual grasses and non-native weedy species (ruderal vegetation) occur along some roadsides and in some of the yards along the alignment.

The remaining portion of the alignment consists of blue oak woodland. This association was observed along Meadow Glen Road in the northern portion of the alignment, in the center of the alignment along Sherwood Road and Rock Creek, and in the southern portion of the alignment

near the intersection of Deer Ridge Lane and Dry Creek Road where Rock Creek passes under Deer Ridge Lane. Rock Creek is the only natural aquatic feature that occurs adjacent to the alignment, and riparian vegetation such as willow (*Salix* sp.) and alder (*Alnus* sp.) occurs along the banks of the creek. This feature is not expected to be within the area of disturbance for the sewer line upsizing. The study area for this sewer line improvement does not have potential to support any special status wildlife other than common raptors and migratory birds. The study area does not have potential to support any special status plant species.

7.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Federal Endangered Species Act

The federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), as United States Code (USC) Title 16, Section 1533, gives joint authority to list a species as threatened or endangered to the Secretary of the Interior (represented by USFWS) and the Secretary of Commerce (represented by the National Marine Fisheries Service). FESA prohibits the “take” of species (including animals and plants) listed by USFWS as endangered or threatened in areas under federal jurisdiction. Under FESA, “take” is defined to include harassing, harming (including significantly modifying or degrading habitat), pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collecting wildlife species, or any attempt to engage in such conduct. Actions that cause the take of endangered or threatened species can result in civil or criminal penalties.

FESA guidelines prohibit any federal action, including funding or the issuance of permits for projects that would jeopardize the existence of a threatened or endangered wildlife or plant species. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) must consult with USFWS to determine if the issuance of a permit for fill in wetlands would jeopardize any threatened or endangered species that may be affected by a proposed project. In the context of a development project, FESA would be triggered if the project would result in the take of a threatened or endangered species, or if issuance of a Section 404 permit or other federal agency action could jeopardize a listed species or adversely affect designated critical habitat.

Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 703 et seq.) regulates and prohibits taking, killing, possessing, harming, or trading in migratory birds. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act addresses whole birds, parts of birds, and bird nests and eggs. In the United States, USFWS enforces this international treaty for the conservation and management of bird species that migrate through one or more countries.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

The objective of the Clean Water Act, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters of the United States (33 CFR 328.3(a)). Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) prohibits the discharge of any pollutant into waters of the United States. USACE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulate the discharge of dredge and fill material into waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. USACE will typically exert jurisdiction over that portion of the project site that contains waters of the United States and adjacent or isolated wetlands. This jurisdiction includes approximately the bank-to-bank portion of a creek along its entire length up to the ordinary high water mark, and adjacent wetland areas that would either be directly or indirectly adversely affected by a proposed project. Permit applicants must demonstrate that they have attempted to avoid or minimize impacts on the resource; however, if no further minimization of impacts is possible, the applicant is required to mitigate remaining impacts on all federally regulated waters of the United States. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) are responsible for the protection of water quality.

State

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code identify measures to ensure that state-listed species and their habitats are conserved, protected, restored, and enhanced. CESA requires permits from CDFW for activities that could result in the take of a state-listed threatened or endangered species. Section 86 of the California Fish and Game Code defines “take” as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.” As an implementation measure, CESA directs agencies to consult with CDFW regarding projects or actions that could affect listed species. To authorize an incidental take, the impacts of the take must be minimized and fully mitigated. Issuance of incidental take permits may not jeopardize the continued existence of a state-listed species. For species listed as threatened or endangered under FESA, CDFW may rely on a federal incidental take statement or permit to authorize an incidental take under CESA.

Mitigating impacts on state-listed species involves avoidance, minimization, and compensation (listed in order of preference). Unavoidable impacts on state-listed species are typically addressed in a detailed mitigation plan prepared in accordance with CDFW guidelines. CDFW exercises authority over mitigation projects involving state-listed species, including those resulting from CEQA mitigation requirements.

California Fully Protected Species and Species of Special Concern

The classification of “fully protected” was CDFW’s initial effort to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that are rare or face possible extinction. California Fish and Game Code Section 5515 (fish), Section 5050 (amphibians and reptiles), Section 3511 (birds), and Section 4700 (mammals) dealing with “fully protected” species state that these species may not be taken or possessed at any time, and no provisions in the code or any other law may be construed to authorize permits for the take of fully protected species. Species of Special Concern are broadly defined as animals not listed under FESA or CESA, but that are nonetheless of concern to CDFW because they are declining at a rate that could result in listing, or they historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. This classification intends to elicit special consideration for these animals by CDFW, land managers, consulting biologists, and others. Additionally, this classification intends to stimulate collection of additional information on the biology, distribution, and status of poorly known at-risk species, and focus research and management attention on them.

California Fish and Game Code Section 3503

Birds of prey are protected in California under the Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5 (1992). Under Section 3503.5, it is “unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the order Falconiformes (diurnal birds of prey) or Strigiformes (owls) or to take, possess, or destroy any nest or egg of any bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.” CDFW considers disturbance during the breeding season that results in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings or otherwise leads to nest abandonment a “taking.”

California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600–1616

Under Sections 1600–1616 of the California Fish and Game Code, CDFW regulates activities that would substantially alter the flow, bed, channel, or bank of streams and lakes. Such activities require a 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFW. The California Code of Regulations (CCR) defines a stream as “a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life. This includes watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation” (14 CCR 1.72). The term “stream” includes rivers, creeks, ephemeral streams, dry washes, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, and other means of water conveyance if they support aquatic life, riparian vegetation, or stream-dependent terrestrial wildlife. Removal of riparian vegetation also requires a Section 1602 Lake and Stream Alteration Agreement from CDFW.

Sensitive Natural Communities

California Fish and Game Code Section 1940 requires CDFW to develop and maintain a vegetation mapping standard for the state. More than half of the vegetation communities in the state have been mapped through the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program.

Natural vegetation communities are evaluated by CDFW and are assigned global (G) and state (S) ranks based on rarity of and threats to these vegetation communities in California. Natural communities with ranks of S1–S3 are considered Sensitive Natural Communities to be addressed in the environmental review processes of CEQA and its equivalents. Sensitive natural communities are defined by CDFW as vegetation alliances with state ranks of S1–S3 (S1: critically imperiled; S2: imperiled; S3: vulnerable), as identified in the List of Vegetation Alliances and Associations (CDFG 2010) and subsequent updates. Additionally, all vegetation associations within the alliances with ranks of S1–S3 are considered sensitive habitats. CEQA requires that impacts to sensitive natural communities be evaluated and mitigated to the extent feasible.

Sensitive natural communities are communities that have a limited distribution and are often vulnerable to the environmental effects of projects. These communities may or may not contain special-status species or their habitats. For purposes of this assessment, sensitive natural communities are considered to include vegetation communities listed in CDFW’s California Natural Diversity Database and communities listed in the Natural Communities List with a rarity rank of S1 (critically imperiled), S2 (imperiled), or S3 (vulnerable).

State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB administers Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, which requires that an applicant for a Section 404 permit first obtain a certification, or waiver thereof, that the project will not violate applicable state water quality standards. The SWRCB delegates authority to either grant certification or waive the requirement for certification to nine RWQCBs, including, in Placer County, the Central Valley RWQCB. The SWRCB protects all waters of the state, but has special responsibility for isolated wetlands and headwaters. These water bodies have high resource value but are vulnerable to filling and may lack regulation by other programs. Projects that require a USACE permit or fall under other federal jurisdiction and have the potential to impact waters of the state are required to comply with the terms of the Water Quality Certification Program. If a proposed project does not require a federal license or permit, but would involve activities that may result in a discharge of harmful substances to waters of the state, the RWQCBs have the option to regulate such activities under the Porter-Cologne Act in the form of Waste Discharge Requirements or Certification of Waste Discharge Requirements.

Senate Bill 1334: Oak Woodlands

Senate Bill 1334 added oak woodland conservation regulations to CEQA under Section 21083.4 of the Public Resources Code. When a county is evaluating a project that is subject to CEQA, this law requires the county to determine if the project would result in a significant effect to oak woodlands. Where a significant effect would occur, the county must consider several mitigation alternatives: (1) conserving oak trees through the use of conservation easements, (2) planting and maintaining an appropriate number of trees either onsite or in restoration of former oak woodlands (tree planting can account for no more than 50% of the mitigation requirements), (3) contributing funds to an Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund for the purpose of purchasing conservation easements, or (4) other mitigation measures developed by the county. The requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21083.4 are met in Placer County by implementing mitigation measures to compensate for removal of native oak trees as required by the Chapter 12.16 of the County Code. Mitigation measures required to compensate for impacts to oak woodlands include redesigning a project to avoid impacts, planting of replacement trees, and contribution of funds into the County’s Tree Preservation Fund. These requirements are discussed in greater detail in the Local Regulations subsection. California Environmental Quality Act

Although threatened and endangered species are protected by specific federal and state statutes, CEQA Guidelines Section 15380(b) provides that a species not listed on the federal or state list of protected species may be considered rare or endangered if the species can be shown to meet certain criteria. These criteria have been modeled after the definition in FESA and the section of the California Fish and Game Code dealing with rare or endangered plants and animals, and allow a public agency to undertake a review to determine if a significant effect on a species that has not yet been listed by either USFWS or CDFW (i.e., species of concern) would occur. Whether a species is rare, threatened, or endangered can be legally significant because, under CEQA Guidelines Section 15065, an agency must find an impact to be significant if a project would “substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species.” Thus, CEQA provides an agency with the ability to protect a species from a project’s potential impacts until the respective government agencies have an opportunity to designate the species as protected, if warranted.

Local Regulations

Placer County Tree Preservation Ordinance

Placer County has enacted a tree preservation ordinance that requires County approval prior to the removal of landmark or preserved trees, groves of native trees, native tree corridors, or significant stands of native tree habitats. Placer County’s tree ordinance (County of Placer

2018a) also prohibits the removal of trees from riparian areas without analysis of environmental impacts and the implementation of mitigation measures. For each tree identified for removal or that would have disturbance to its dripline, the replacement requirement is calculated based on an-inch-for-an-inch replacement of the removed tree, and may require a minimum 15-gallon size tree. The total of replacement trees may be required to have a combined diameter of the trees removed. The ordinance requires that a minimum of 50% of replacement trees be of a similar native tree. County policy requires that any protected trees 24 inches or greater dbh that could be impacted by project activity be mitigated above and beyond the standard acreage payment. Oaks of this size are considered “Significant Trees” due to the length of time required for them to reach their size.

When tree removal is proposed to occur within an oak woodland vegetation community and a project would impact 2 acres or more of oak woodland, Placer County requires that an oak woodland delineation be prepared depicting the boundary of the oak woodland and identifying individual oaks within the woodland that are 24 inches or greater dbh and oak clumps with a circumference at ground level of at least 72 inches. The County requires that mitigation for loss of 2 acres or more of oak woodland consist of replanting, restoration, conservation, and/or payment into the County’s oak woodland conservation fund, with a mitigation ratio of 2 acres of mitigation for every 1 acre of impact.

Auburn/Bowman Community Plan

The Environmental Resources Management Element of the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan contains policies relating to biological resources within Placer County. Those policies applicable to the PCGC Master Plan Update are listed below (County of Placer 1999):

Goals III.B.2

1. Provide for the grouping or clustering of residential buildings where this type of development will maximize the opportunity to preserve significant natural resources, natural beauty, or open space without generally increasing the intensity of development otherwise possible.

Goals IV.B.4.a

2. Preserve outstanding areas of native vegetation and trees, natural topographic features, wildlife habitats and corridors, and riparian corridors.
3. Conserve significant grassland and wooded areas as essential economic, natural, and aesthetic resources.

4. Protect, restore, and enhance threatened and endangered species and the habitat which supports those species.

Policy IV.B.4.b.1 Conserve vegetative resources due to their importance for wildlife habitat, watershed protection, climate moderation, erosion control, and for their many other values.

Policy IV.B.4.b.2 Conserve the natural landscape, including minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation, as an important consideration in the design of any subdivision or land development project.

Policy IV.B.4.b.3 Require field studies as part of “major” project review or where the habitat of special status species is known to exist in order to document the possible occurrence of special status plant species and provide a method of protecting, monitoring, replacing or otherwise mitigating the impacts of development in and around these sensitive habitats.

Policy IV.B.4.b.4 Support the “no net loss” policy for wetland areas administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game [now California Department of Fish and Wildlife]. Coordination with these agencies at all levels of project review shall continue to ensure that their concerns are adequately addressed. Review the success of this policy every five years and make changes as appropriate.

Policy IV.B.4.b.5 Identify, protect, and enhance riparian corridors and vegetation; encourage preservation and maintenance of these area in as natural a state as possible.

Policy IV.B.4.b.7 Provide mitigation where impacts to stream environment zones or wetland areas are unavoidable. Measures shall include but not be limited to the identification of vegetation impacted; the preparation of revegetation plans; and the specific monitoring of plantings to assure that successful mitigation/revegetation has occurred.

Policy IV.B.4.b.9 Use native and compatible non-native species, especially drought resistant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling

landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of discretionary permits.

Policy IV.B.4.b.10 Conserve representative areas of undisturbed oak woodlands and valley grasslands that have significant value as wildlife habitat.

Policy IV.B.4.b.11 Preserve and protect landmark trees and major groves of native trees.

Goals IV.B.5.a

1. Conserve the quality of habitats which support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at sustainable levels.
2. Protect, restore and enhance habitats for native animals and protect threatened and endangered, and special status species.

Policy IV.B.5.b.2 Identify and protect important spawning grounds, migratory routes, waterfowl resting areas, oak woodlands, wildlife corridors, and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations.

Policy IV.B.5.b.4 Recognize that stream channels, riparian corridors, natural drainages and the high quality of waters therein, are important as regional wildlife and fishery corridors.

Policy IV.B.5.b.9 Give special consideration to the habitats of rare, threatened, endangered, and/or other special status species in the Plan area. Federal and State agencies, as well as other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats.

Policy IV.B.5.b.10 Require field studies as part of “major” project review or where the habitat of special status species has been identified. These studies shall document the possible occurrence of special status wildlife species and, provide a method for their protection, monitoring, replacement, or for otherwise mitigating development near their sensitive habitat.

Goals IV.C.1

1. Protect and preserve open spaces vital for wildlife habitat and/or which contain major or unique ecological significance.
2. Protect the natural beauty and minimize disturbance of natural terrain and vegetation.
3. Provide open space to shape and guide development and to enhance community identity.
4. Conserve visual resources of the community, including important vistas and wooded areas.

Policy IV.C.2.c. Preserve and enhance natural landforms, native vegetation, and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible.

Policy IV.C.2.f. In the design and construction of new development, preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible: high erosion hazard areas; areas subject to landslide or with severe slope stability problems; areas with high fire risk; scenic and trail corridors; streams and other areas subject to flooding from a 100-year storm; streamside vegetation; wetlands; significant stands of vegetation; wildlife corridors; and any areas of special ecological significance.

Policy IV.C.2.r Develop the recreational and open space potential of all water features, including reservoirs, natural streams and other waterways.

Placer County General Plan

The Natural Resources section of the Placer County General Plan contains policies relating to biological resources within Placer County. The policies relating to biological resources that are applicable to the proposed project are listed below (County of Placer 2013):

Goal 1.I To establish and maintain interconnected greenbelts and open spaces for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife and for the community's enjoyment.

Policy 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 Developments (CPD) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance can be used to allow flexibility for this integration with valuable site features.

Policy 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.

Goal 6.A To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County’s streams, creeks and groundwater.

Policy 6.A.1 The County shall require the provision of sensitive habitat buffers which shall, at a minimum, be measured as follows: 100 feet from the centerline of perennial streams, 50 feet from centerline of intermittent streams, and 50 feet from the edge of sensitive habitats to be protected including riparian zones, wetlands, old growth woodlands, and the habitat of rare, threatened or endangered species (see discussion of sensitive habitat buffers in Part I of this Policy Document). Based on more detailed information supplied as a part of the review for a specific project, the County may determine that such setbacks are not applicable in a particular instance or should be modified based on the new information provided. The County may, however, allow exceptions, such as in the following cases:

- a. Reasonable use of the property would otherwise be denied;
- b. The location is necessary to avoid or mitigate hazards to the public;
- c. The location is necessary for the repair of roads, bridges, trails, or similar infrastructure; or
- d. The location is necessary for the construction of new roads, bridges, trails, or similar infrastructure where the County determines there is no feasible alternative and the project has minimized environmental impacts through project design and infrastructure placement.

Policy 6.A.6 The County shall require development projects to comply with the municipal and construction stormwater permit requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase I and II programs and the State General Municipal and Construction permits. Municipal requirements affecting project design and construction practices are enacted through the County’s Stormwater Quality Ordinance. Separate construction permits may be required by and obtained through the State Water Resources Control Board.

Policy 6.A.9 The County shall require that natural watercourses are integrated into new development in such a way that they are accessible to the public and provide a positive visual element.

Policy 6.A.10 The County shall discourage grading activities during the rainy season, unless adequately mitigated, to avoid sedimentation of creeks and damage to riparian habitat.

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

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

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

Policy 6.B.3 The County shall discourage direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into wetland areas from outfalls serving nearby urban development. Development shall be designed in such a manner that pollutants and siltation will not significantly adversely affect the value or function of wetlands.

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

Policy 6.B.5 The County shall require development that may affect a wetland to employ avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation techniques. In evaluating the level of compensation to be required with respect to any given project, (a) on-site mitigation shall be preferred to off-site, and in-kind mitigation shall be preferred to out-of-kind; (b) functional replacement ratios may vary to the extent necessary to incorporate a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success associated with the mitigation plan; and (c) acreage replacement ratios may vary depending on the relative functions and values of those wetlands being lost and those being supplied, including compensation for temporal losses. The County shall continue to implement and refine criteria for determining when an alteration to a wetland is considered a less-than-significant impact under CEQA.

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

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

- a. Wetland areas including vernal pools,
- b. Stream environment zones,
- c. Any habitat for rare, threatened or endangered animals or plants,
- d. Critical deer winter ranges (winter and summer), migratory routes and fawning habitat,

- e. Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat, including Blue Oak Woodlands, Valley Foothill Riparian, vernal pool habitat,
- f. Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, non-fragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway,
- g. Important spawning areas for anadromous fish.

Policy 6.C.3 The County shall encourage the control of residual pesticides to prevent potential damage to water quality, vegetation, and wildlife.

Policy 6.C.6 The County shall support preservation of the habitats of rare, threatened, endangered, and/or other special status species. Federal and state agencies, as well as other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats.

Policy 6.C.7 The County shall support the maintenance of suitable habitats for all indigenous species of wildlife, without preference to game or non-game species, through maintenance of habitat diversity.

Policy 6.C.9 The County shall require new private or public developments to preserve and enhance existing riparian habitat unless public safety concerns require removal of habitat for flood control or other essential public purposes (See Policy 6.A.1). In cases where new private or public development results in modification or destruction of riparian habitat, the developers shall be responsible for acquiring, restoring, and enhancing at least an equivalent amount of like habitat within or near the project area.

Policy 6.C.11 Prior to approval of discretionary development permits involving parcels within a significant ecological resource area, the County shall require, as part of the environmental review process, a biotic resources evaluation of the sites by a wildlife biologist, the evaluation shall be based upon field reconnaissance performed at the appropriate time of year to determine the presence or absence of special status, threatened, or endangered species of plants or animals. Such evaluation will consider the potential for significant impact on these resources, and will identify feasible measures to mitigate such impacts or indicate why mitigation is not feasible. In

approving any such discretionary development permit, the decision-making body shall determine the feasibility of the identified mitigation measures.

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

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

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

Policy 6.D.2 The County shall require developers to use native and compatible non-native species, especially drought-resistant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of discretionary permits or for project mitigation.

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

Policy 6.D.7 The County shall support the management of wetland and riparian plant communities for passive recreation, groundwater recharge,

nutrient catchments, and wildlife habitats. Such communities shall be restored or expanded, where possible.

Policy 6.D.8 The County shall require that new development preserve natural woodlands to the maximum extent possible.

Policy 6.D.10 The County shall encourage the planting of native trees, shrubs, and grasslands in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well-adapted plants are maintained.

Policy 6.D.12 The County shall support the retention of heavily vegetated corridors, consistent with Fire Safe Practices, along circulation corridors to preserve their rural character.

Policy 6.D.13 The County shall support the preservation of native trees and the use of native, drought-tolerant plant material in all revegetation/landscaping projects.

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

Goal 6.E To preserve and enhance open space lands to maintain the natural resources of the county.

Policy 6.E.1 The County shall support the preservation and enhancement of natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible. The County shall permanently protect, as open space, areas of natural resource value, including wetlands preserves, riparian corridors, woodlands, and floodplains.

Policy 6.E.2 The County shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible:

- a. High erosion hazard areas;

- b. Scenic and trail corridors;
- c. Streams, riparian vegetation;
- d. Wetlands;
- e. Significant stands of vegetation;
- f. Wildlife corridors; and
- g. Any areas of special ecological significance.

Policy 6.E.3 The County shall support the maintenance of open space and natural areas that are interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity sustain viable populations, accommodate wildlife movement, and sustain ecosystems.

7.3 PROJECT IMPACTS

Significance Criteria

The significance criteria used to evaluate the project's impacts to biological resources are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact related to biological resources would occur if the project would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Impact Analysis

Impact 7-1

| | Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on special status species? | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential</i> |
| Level of Significance: | Potentially Significant | Potentially Significant | Potentially Significant |
| Mitigation Measures: | Mitigation Measures 7a, 7b, 7c, and 7d | Mitigation Measures 7a, 7b, and 7d | Mitigation Measures 7a and 7c |
| Significance after Mitigation: | Less than Significant | Less than Significant | Less than Significant |

PCGC Master Plan Update

The Biological Resources Assessment (Appendix C) prepared for the project determined that five special-status wildlife species have some potential to occur on the project site: loggerhead shrike, Townsend's big-eared bat, California black rail, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. In addition, migratory birds and raptors are considered special-status species, and several individual species of such birds could occur on site. Activities associated with implementation of the PCGC Master Plan Update that could adversely affect these species include building demolition, vegetation removal, grading, and construction within currently undeveloped areas.

Loggerhead shrike

Loggerhead shrike relies on open habitats for foraging, with elevated perches and shrubs or trees for nesting. Therefore, development of an area with trees or woodlands, especially next to open habitat, would negatively impact loggerhead shrike. Therefore, development that could alter or remove the oak woodland habitat on site would negatively impact potential loggerhead shrike habitat. The PCGC Master Plan Update would retain approximately 14 acres of the 25.05 acres of blue oak woodland on site within the open space zoned area in the western portion of the PCGC property. The blue oak woodland areas in the northeast and southeast corners of the site would be removed, as well as up to four acres of blue oak woodland in the southwest corner of the site.

Direct impacts to loggerhead shrike, such as disturbance to nesting birds or take of individual birds, would be considered a significant impact. Mitigation Measure 7a requires that all

construction workers participate in a worker environmental awareness program training conducted by a qualified biologist or an environmentally trained construction manager. The training must instruct workers on the nature and purpose of protective measures, including best management practices and other required mitigation measures. This would help reduce and avoid potential direct and indirect impacts to sensitive biological resources throughout construction.

In addition, Mitigation Measure 7b requires that a pre-construction nesting bird survey be completed to identify any active loggerhead shrike nests in the area to be developed, and requires establishment of a no-construction buffer around any loggerhead shrike nests that are identified on site. The no-construction buffer would be observed until the nest is considered inactive by a qualified biologist. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 7b, impacts to loggerhead shrike would be reduced to **less than significant** and the project would comply with the requirements of the FESA and CESA.

Townsend's Big-Eared Bat

Townsend's big-eared bat uses abandoned buildings, mines, and caves for roosting. Therefore, demolition of abandoned buildings would negatively impact roosting Townsend's big-eared bats. The PCGC Master Plan Update proposes to demolish 46 buildings, and Townsend's big-eared bat could roost in the buildings that are proposed to be demolished. Mitigation Measure 7c requires a pre-demolition roosting bat survey be completed to identify any Townsend's big-eared bat roosts in the area to be developed, and requires establishment of a no-construction buffer around any Townsend's big eared bat roosting or maternity sites that are identified on site. The no-construction buffer would be observed until Townsend's big eared bat have vacated the building. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure 7c, the proposed project would have a **less-than-significant** impact on Townsend's big eared bat and would comply with the requirements of the FESA and CESA.

California Black Rail

California black rail prefers salt and freshwater marshes, and sometimes wet meadows. The pond in the western portion of the site provides potentially suitable habitat for this species. No development is proposed that could alter or remove the pond or its associated riparian vegetation, thus, there would be no potential for an adverse impact to California black rail habitat, and implementation of the PCGC Master Plan Update would have **no impact** to California black rail.

Vernal Pool Species

Vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp could occur within the wetlands on the site. Although the project's jurisdictional delineation determined that there are no vernal pools on site, the seasonal wetlands created after demolition of buildings south of C Street and east of

Richardson Drive contain a hardpan layer that has created conditions that behave in a manner similar to a freshwater vernal pool (Appendix C). This area is proposed for the creation of a parking lot, and the development would remove the seasonal wetlands. Mitigation Measure 7d requires a survey of these wetlands before construction to determine whether vernal pool fairy shrimp and/or vernal pool tadpole shrimp are present, and identifies measures that must be taken to protect these species if present. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 7d, build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update would have a **less-than-significant** impact to vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp because the project would comply with the requirements of the FESA and CESA.

Raptors and Native Nesting Birds

The annual grassland habitat and woodland habitat within the project site could provide nesting and foraging habitat for avian species that are protected under the California Fish and Game Code. The annual grassland within the site provides foraging habitat for raptors and other avian species; however, dominant vegetation species include non-native weeds such as yellow star thistle, ripgut brome, and soft brume (Appendix C). The dense cover and tall stature of this habitat reduce prey availability for raptors. Raptors that are not threatened or endangered are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and as birds of prey. Loss of foraging habitat is not considered a significant impact.

Disturbance to active nests or individual raptors would be a significant impact. As stated previously, the PCGC Master Plan Update would retain approximately 14 acres of the 25.05 acres of blue oak woodland on site within the open space zoned area in the western portion of the PCGC property. The blue oak woodland areas in the northeast and southeast corners of the site would be removed, as well as up to four acres of blue oak woodland in the southwest corner of the site. In addition, construction of either of the two offsite improvements that may be required of the project could result in disturbance to individual raptors and to active nests of white tailed kite or migratory bird species.

To avoid impacts to raptors, white tailed kite and native nesting birds, Mitigation Measure 7a requires all construction workers to participate in a worker environmental awareness program training, as described previously, and Mitigation Measure 7b requires that a pre-construction nesting bird survey be completed and stipulates measures that must be taken to protect any active nests. With implementation of Mitigation Measures 7a and 7b, build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update would have a **less-than-significant** impact on raptors.

Health and Human Services Building

Development of the Health and Human Services building and associated parking lot would require removal of three existing buildings (Buildings 107, 108, and 109) and approximately 6.61 acres of annual grassland, including 0.22 acre of seasonal wetland. Although removal of the annual grassland would not impact any special-status species, building demolition might have a significant adverse impact on Townsend's big-eared bat if any active roosting colonies are disturbed during demolition. Additionally, creation of the parking lot may impact vernal pool fairy shrimp and/or vernal pool tadpole shrimp if these species are present in the seasonal wetlands on the project site. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 7a, 7c, and 7d would reduce these impacts to **less than significant** by ensuring that the project complies with the requirements of the FESA and CESA by requiring environmental awareness training for all construction workers; a survey of buildings prior to demolition; postponement of any actions that would disturb an identified roost until the maternity colonies have dispersed, usually between late August and the end of September; and a survey for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp.

Multifamily Residential Project

Construction of the multifamily residential project would require development of a blue oak woodland area (1.9 acres), a seasonal wetland (0.02 acre) with associated ephemeral drainages (227.67 linear feet), and a detention basin. The vegetation community associated with the detention basin is annual grassland. Although removal of the annual grassland would not impact any special-status species, removal of the blue oak woodland might have a significant adverse impact on loggerhead shrike. Mitigation Measure 7a requires environmental awareness training for all construction workers, and Mitigation Measure 7c requires a pre-construction survey of the habitat and subsequent avoidance of any raptor or native bird nests, including loggerhead shrike nests. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 7a and 7c would reduce this impact to **less than significant** by ensuring that the project complies with the requirements of the FESA and CESA.

| Impact 7-2 | Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community? | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential Project</i> |
| Level of Significance: | Significant | No Impact | Significant |
| Mitigation Measures: | Mitigation Measure 7f | None required | Mitigation Measure 7f |
| Significance after Mitigation: | Less than Significant | No Impact | Less than Significant |

PCGC Master Plan Update

The project site includes two CDFW sensitive natural communities: wetlands and riparian habitat. Additionally, oak woodlands are protected under the Placer County Tree Preservation Ordinance and the Placer County General Plan. All impacts associated with wetlands are discussed in Impact 7-3 while impacts associated with loss of oak trees and oak woodland are evaluated in Impact 7-5.

The PCGC Master Plan Update proposes construction of the Multifamily Residential project in the northeast corner of the PCGC property that would result in the loss of 1.9 acres of blue oak woodland, a mixed-use area in the southeast corner of the PCGC property that would result in the loss of approximately 5.15 acres of blue oak woodland, and a residential area in the southwest corner of the PCGC campus that would result in the loss of up to 4 acres of blue oak woodland. Blue oak woodland is not considered a sensitive natural community; thus, loss of this vegetation community would have **no impact** related to sensitive natural communities. Impacts associated with the loss of blue oak woodland are evaluated under Impact 7-5.

As shown in Figure 7-2, there are 6.34 acres of riparian habitat around the freshwater pond in the western portion of the project site, and a small area of riparian vegetation in the center of DB 01. No development is proposed around the freshwater pond. Installation of stormwater drainage infrastructure approximately 2 feet in elevation above the outlet for DB 01 and approximately 40 feet away from the edge of the riparian vegetation would not impact the riparian vegetation in the center of this basin. As shown in Figure 7-2, the Multifamily Residential project site supports limited riparian habitat associated with ephemeral drainage (ED) 01. As discussed in the following Multifamily Residential Project section, this riparian vegetation would be removed during project construction. Additionally construction of either of the two offsite improvements that may be required of the project could result in disturbance to riparian vegetation. Thus build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update would have a **potentially significant** impact related to the loss of sensitive natural communities. Mitigation Measure 7f requires the project applicant to comply with CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration Program and either 1) confirm that the proposed activities do not result in substantial effects related to the obstruction, diversion, or

introduction of debris into any stream, or 2) provide compensatory mitigation to ensure no significant effects result from stream diversion or modification. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 7f, build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update would have **less-than-significant** impacts to riparian habitat. Impacts associated with the loss of wetlands within this site are evaluated under Impact 7-3.

Health and Human Services Building

Development of the Health and Human Services building and associated parking lot would require the removal of existing buildings, annual grassland, and wetlands, but would not affect any oak woodland or riparian habitat or vegetation. Therefore, the proposed Health and Human Services building would have **no impact** to sensitive natural communities. All impacts to wetlands associated with development of the Health and Human Services building are discussed under Impact 7-3.

Multifamily Residential Project

The Multifamily Residential project located at 1st Street and B Avenue is proposed to be constructed within the blue oak woodland community adjacent to the Ophir Canal. Blue oak woodland is not considered a sensitive natural community; thus, loss of this vegetation community would have **no impact** related to sensitive natural communities. Impacts associated with the loss of blue oak woodland are evaluated under Impact 7-5.

As shown in Figure 7-2, the Multifamily Residential project site supports limited riparian habitat associated with ephemeral drainage (ED) 01. The intermittent riparian zone associated with this drainage supports Gooding's willow (*Salix gooddingii*), Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), and blue oak. This portion of the site would be subject to grading and paving, and, thus, the riparian vegetation in this area would be removed and the Multifamily Residential project would have a **potentially significant** impact related to the loss of sensitive natural communities. Mitigation Measure 7f requires the project applicant to comply with CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration Program and either 1) confirm that the proposed activities do not result in substantial effects related to the obstruction, diversion, or introduction of debris into any stream, or 2) provide compensatory mitigation to ensure no significant effects result from stream diversion or modification. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 7f, construction of the Multifamily Residential project would have **less-than-significant** impacts to riparian habitat. Impacts associated with the loss of wetlands within this site are evaluated under Impact 7-3.

| Impact 7-3 | Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands? | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential Project</i> |
| Level of Significance: | Significant | Significant | Significant |
| Mitigation Measures: | Mitigation Measures 7a, 7f, 7g, and 7h | Mitigation Measures 7a, 7g, and 7h | Mitigation Measures 7a 7g |
| Significance after Mitigation: | Less than Significant | Less than Significant | Less than Significant |

PCGC Master Plan Update

According to the preliminary Jurisdictional Delineation for the project site (Appendix C), potentially jurisdictional features within the project site consist of two ephemeral drainages, several seasonal wetlands, three detention basins, one freshwater pond, and two freshwater emergent wetlands, for a total of 6.70 acres of wetlands and 231 linear feet of other waters of the United States. Table 7-2 identifies the type and size of each feature, and Figure 7-2 presents the wetland delineation map. These features could be adversely affected by the vegetation removal, grading, and construction within these areas anticipated under the PCGC Master Plan Update.

Neither of the two offsite improvements that may be required of the project are expected to result in adverse effects to wetlands or waters of the U.S.

Table 7-2
Potentially Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters within the Project Site

| Feature | Acres | Linear Feet | Impacted? |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Wetlands</i> | | | |
| Seasonal Wetland 01 | 0.02 | N/A | Yes |
| Seasonal Wetland 02 | 0.02 | N/A | Yes |
| Seasonal Wetland 03 | 0.09 | N/A | Yes |
| Seasonal Wetland 04 | 0.09 | N/A | Yes |
| Seasonal Wetland 05 | 0.02 | N/A | Yes |
| Detention Basin 01 | 0.18 | N/A | No |
| Detention Basin 02 | 1.47 | N/A | Yes |
| Detention Basin 03 | 0.63 | N/A | Yes |
| Freshwater Pond | 2.95 | N/A | No |
| Freshwater Emergent Wetland 01 | N/A | 147.75 | No |
| Freshwater Emergent Wetland 02 | 0.43 | N/A | No |
| Total | 5.90 | 147.75 | — |

Table 7-2
Potentially Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters within the Project Site

| Feature | Acres | Linear Feet | Impacted? |
|-----------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Other Waters</i> | | | |
| Ephemeral Drainage 01 | N/A | 161.82 | Yes |
| Ephemeral Drainage 02 | N/A | 68.85 | Yes |
| Total | N/A | 230.67 | — |

Source: Appendix C
N/A = not applicable

Implementation of the PCGC Master Plan Update would result in impacts to 2.34 acres and 230.67 linear feet of the waters of the U.S. These impacts would occur due to construction of buildings, roads, parking, and landscape features. As stated previously and discussed in the Jurisdictional Delineation for the project site (Appendix C), the existing NID canals within the project site are not considered to be waters of the U.S. because they are irrigation and water service facility constructed in uplands and maintained on an ongoing basis. The NID monitors and maintains vegetation growth and debris, regulates water flow through the canal, and has the ability to limit or stop flow (Pers comm. C. Close 2018). Thus, pursuant to 40 CFR 230.3 (o)(2)(iii), this canal is likely not jurisdictional. However, there is a potential that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may determine it to be jurisdictional. If the canal is determined jurisdictional, the project would result in a loss of an additional 1,823 linear feet of waters of the U.S.

In addition, runoff from the project site could lead to siltation and water quality degradation, and construction activities could result in short-term indirect effects that cause wildlife to avoid riparian habitat that provides foraging, nesting, and roosting opportunities. At the time that individual construction projects that would affect wetlands are considered, the County or individual project applicant must obtain a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Central Valley RWQCB, as required under Mitigation Measure 7f. If the canal is determined jurisdictional, no permits would be needed for maintenance or construction activities due to exemptions described in Section 404(f)(1)(C) of the Clean Water Act.

Implementation of the PCGC Master Plan Update would result in significant direct impacts to wetlands and potentially significant indirect impacts to wetlands when construction occurs in proximity to these features. As described in Chapter 3, Project Description, the Nevada Irrigation District requires that the Ophir Canal be encased as part of construction of any land uses adjacent to it. This ensures that indirect impacts to water quality within the canal associated with runoff and siltation are avoided. In addition, indirect impacts would be avoided through implementation of Mitigation Measure 7a, which requires worker environmental awareness training to help persons working within the site identify sensitive habitats and to understand the

use of Best Management Practices to avoid wetland impacts, including water quality degradation. Mitigation Measure 7f requires the appropriate permits be obtained before impacting any jurisdictional feature that is not exempt from mitigation under the Clean Water Act. Mitigation Measure 7g requires the County or individual project applicant to carry out on-site replacement or off-site banking at a minimum replacement ratio of 1:1 for wetland habitat to compensate for direct impacts to wetlands that are not exempt from mitigation under the Clean Water Act. Further, Mitigation Measure 7h would require use of best management practices to protect wetlands within the PCGC campus from any unanticipated indirect impacts.

With implementation of Mitigation Measures 7a, 7f, 7g, and 7h, impacts to federally protected wetlands associated with build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level by ensuring that impacts are reduced to the extent feasible, indirect impacts are avoided, and compensation is provided for those impacts that cannot be avoided.

Health and Human Services Building

Development of the Health and Human Services building and associated parking lot would require the removal of an existing building, a turf area, and removal of 0.22 acre of wetlands in the southwestern portion of the project site. To authorize the project to impact wetlands and waters of the United States, the County must obtain a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Central Valley RWQCB. The project's direct impacts to wetlands would be significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 7g would provide compensation for the direct impacts to wetlands by requiring the project applicant to carry out on-site replacement or off-site banking at a minimum replacement ratio of 1:1 for wetland habitat. This would reduce impacts from construction of the Health and Human Services building to federally protected wetlands to **less than significant**. Since there are no other wetlands in proximity to the Health and Human Services building site, this project has no potential to cause indirect impacts to wetlands.

Multifamily Residential Project

Construction of the Multifamily Residential project located at 1st Street and B Avenue would impact 0.02 acre of seasonal wetlands, 227.67 linear feet of ephemeral drainage, and 0.07 acre of DB 01. Construction of the multifamily residential project would result in the removal of the seasonal wetland and both ephemeral drainages within the site, and would require trenching within the detention basin to install storm drainage infrastructure. If the canal is determined to be jurisdictional feature, this project would result in the loss of an additional 1,823 linear feet of waters of the U.S. To authorize the project to impact wetlands and waters of the United States, the project applicant must obtain a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Central Valley RWQCB. The

project's direct impacts to wetlands would be significant, and the project would have potentially significant indirect impacts to the detention basin and the riparian vegetation near this basin's outlet. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 7g would provide compensation for direct impacts to wetlands that are not exempt from mitigation requirements under the Clean Water Act by requiring the project applicant to carry out on-site replacement or off-site banking at a minimum replacement ratio of 1:1 for wetland habitat. Additionally, implementation of Mitigation Measure 7a, which requires worker environmental awareness training, and Mitigation Measure 7h, which requires use of best management practices for construction proximate to wetlands, would reduce the potential for indirect impacts to wetlands. With implementation of Mitigation Measures 7a, 7g, and 7h, the Multifamily Residential project's impacts to federally protected wetlands would be reduced to **less than significant**.

| Impact 7-4 | Would the project interfere substantially with wildlife movement, migration, or nursery sites? | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential Project</i> |
| Level of Significance: | No Impact | No Impact | No Impact |
| Mitigation Measures: | None required | None required | None required |
| Significance after Mitigation: | No Impact | No Impact | No Impact |

PCGC Master Plan Update

In addition to retention of approximately 650,000 square feet of existing building space, the project would involve construction of approximately 410,000 square feet of new County facilities, 30,000 square feet of community use, and approximately 510,000 square feet of new commercial, office and residential elements. As noted in the Biological Resources Assessment (Appendix C), the project site does not support habitat for wildlife migration or wildlife movement corridors. In addition, the site does not provide habitat that would support substantial nursery sites, other than as discussed for nesting birds and roosting bats in Impact 7-1. The development anticipated under the proposed PCGC Master Plan Update would have **no impact** on wildlife movement, migration, or nursery sites.

Health and Human Services Building

Development of the Health and Human Services building and associated parking lot would require the removal of three existing buildings and annual grassland. The surrounding land is either developed or disturbed, and the site is not adjacent to vegetation communities that support substantial wildlife activity. Construction of the proposed Health and Human Services building would have **no impact** to wildlife movement, migration, or nursery sites.

Multifamily Residential Project

Development of the Multifamily Residential project would require removal of approximately 1.9 acres of blue oak woodland and repaving of an existing parking area. The site is constrained by roads on all sides: Bell Road to the north, B Street to the west and southwest, and Professional Drive to the east and southeast. Commercial and office land uses surround this site. Additionally, the Ophir Canal runs between the project site's western boundary and 1st Street. Existing roadways and development on all sides prevent the existing, undeveloped site from supporting substantial wildlife activity. Construction of the Multifamily Residential project would have **no impact** on wildlife movement, migration, or nursery sites.

| Impact 7-5 | Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential Project</i> |
| Level of Significance: | Potentially Significant | No Impact | Potentially Significant |
| Mitigation Measures: | Mitigation Measure 7e | None required | Mitigation Measure 7e |
| Significance after Mitigation: | Less than Significant | No Impact | Less than Significant |

PCGC Master Plan Update

Demolition, grading, and construction throughout the PCGC campus could result in loss of individual trees and oak woodland vegetation communities. The County regulates the loss of trees through its tree preservation ordinance.

Individual Tree Removal

The project site supports a variety of trees, both native and non-native. The trees that are considered protected trees are defined in the County's tree preservation ordinance (County of Placer 2018a) as native trees that are 6 inches or greater in diameter at breast height or any multiple-stemmed native tree with a total of at least 10 inches diameter at breast height. Adherence to the County's General Plan and Auburn/Bowman Community Plan policies identified in Section 7.2, Regulatory Framework, would ensure that impacts to protected trees would be minimized. A Tree Inventory was prepared as part of the PCGC Master Plan Update to document the overall condition of the trees within the project site, except for those within the oak woodland. Of the 231 trees evaluated, 62 were in excellent health, 115 were in average health, 49 were in fair health, and seven were in poor health (County of Placer 2018b). In addition, Dudek conducted an inventory and assessment of trees within the oak woodland habitat areas that would be affected by build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update (Appendix C). This inventory was

completed to identify if any trees meeting the County’s definition of a significant oak tree (those that are a minimum of 24 inches diameter at breast height) occur within the oak woodlands. A single tree meeting this size requirement was identified in the proposed Multifamily Residential area south of Willow Creek Drive and east of 1st Street.

As build-out of the PCGC Master Plan Update proceeds, many of the existing street trees and landscape trees would be removed to accommodate new development. Most street trees and landscape trees are not subject to the County’s tree preservation ordinance because they are non-native species. Thus removal of these trees would not create a potential impact associated with compliance with County ordinances that protect biological resources. As discussed in Chapter 9, Visual Resources, the proposed Development Standards (County of Placer 2018c) and Design Guidelines (County of Placer 2018d) require each future individual project to plant new street trees and provide landscaping within each project site.

The PCGC Master Plan Update anticipates development to occur in areas that contain oak trees that meet the definition of protected trees as established in the tree preservation ordinance. The PCGC Master Plan Update states identifies five species of oak trees located around the Corporation Yard, in the proposed mixed-use area north of the Corporation Yard, and along the west side of Richardson Drive across from the Finance Administration Building. It is expected that many of the trees in the Corporation Yard and those west of Richardson Drive would be retained onsite, but that the trees within the proposed Mixed-Use area would be removed. The loss of native trees meeting the size requirements in the tree preservation ordinance is considered a potentially significant impact. Under the County’s tree preservation ordinance, the County or individual project applicants for each individual construction project would be required to obtain a tree permit to remove any protected trees. As a condition of the tree permit, the County or individual project applicant would be required to plant new trees on site or elsewhere in the County, relocate healthy trees, preserve trees through establishment of a conservation easement, and/or pay an in-lieu fee to allow the County to plant new trees.

The tree preservation ordinance requires that any replanting be accomplished within the project site or in other areas of the County to the satisfaction of the Planning Department. Compliance with the ordinance requirements for replacement of lost trees would ensure that potential impacts to the loss of this habitat would be reduced to less than significant by providing for replacement and/or compensation for the impacted trees. Requirements to ensure that on-site tree planting, off-site tree planting, conservation, and payment of in-lieu fees consistent with the tree preservation ordinance are identified in Mitigation Measure 7e. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 7e, the impact would be reduced to **less than significant**.

Loss of Oak Woodland

The County also regulates impacts to oak woodlands, consistent with the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21083. Blue oak woodland is a natural community that occurs throughout Placer County. The blue oak woodland vegetation community on site comprises approximately 25.05 acres. As shown in Figure 7-1, this community occurs in the southeastern and northeastern portions of the PCGC property and in the area south and east of the pond located in the western portion of the property. At build-out, the PCGC Master Plan Update would result in removal of up to 11.05 acres of the blue oak woodland habitat. The loss of a portion of the blue oak woodland on the project site would result in a significant impact. To provide compensation for the loss of on-site woodland habitat, Mitigation Measure 7e requires the County or individual project applicants to conduct on-site and/or off-site oak woodland restoration, obtain a conservation easement on existing oak woodland habitat, and/or contribute to the County's woodland conservation fund. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 7e, implementation of the PCGC Master Plan Update would be consistent with the County's tree preservation ordinance, and this impact would be less than significant.

Health and Human Services Building

Development of the Health and Human Services building and associated parking lot would require the removal of existing buildings and annual grassland. It would not affect any trees that are protected under the County's Tree Preservation Ordinance or woodlands. Therefore, the Health and Human Services building would have **no impact** related to consistency with the County's tree preservation ordinance.

Multifamily Residential Project

Construction of the Multifamily Residential project located at 1st Street and B Avenue would result in the loss of approximately 1.9 acres of blue oak woodland. Mitigation Measure 7e would require that the loss of oak woodland be mitigated with oak woodland restoration, obtaining a conservation easement over existing oak woodland, and/or contributions to the County's oak woodland conservation fund. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure 7e, the Multifamily Residential project would be consistent with the County's tree preservation ordinance and this impact would be **less than significant**.

| Impact 7-6 | Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential Project</i> |
| Level of Significance: | No Impact | No Impact | No Impact |
| Mitigation Measures: | None required | None required | None required |
| Significance after Mitigation: | No Impact | No Impact | No Impact |

PCGC Master Plan Update

Placer County is developing the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP) to coordinate and streamline the permitting process by allowing local agencies to issue state and federal permits. The PCCP has not yet been adopted. Under the proposed PCCP land use designations, the PCGC Master Plan Update area would be within the proposed Potential Growth Area and is not identified as a location that could contribute to the County’s attainment of its habitat conservation goals. Therefore, the PCGC Master Plan Update would not be in conflict with the proposed PCCP. Further, if the PCCP is adopted, future land use development within the PCGC campus that requires approval of entitlements would be required to participate in the PCCP through payment of established PCCP fees that would be used to support incidental take coverage and mitigation for effects to waters of the U.S. Thus the project would have **no impact** related to consistency with the PCCP or other habitat conservation plan.

Health and Human Services Building

The Health and Human Services building site would be included in the Potential Growth Area identified in the PCCP. Thus, the Health and Human Services building would have no conflict with the PCCP or any other habitat conservation plan. If the PCCP is adopted prior to granting of land use entitlements for the Health and Human Service building, the County would be required to participate in the PCCP through payment of established PCCP fees to support incidental take coverage and mitigation for effects to waters of the United States. This project would have **no impact** related to consistency with the PCCP or other habitat conservation plan.

Multifamily Residential Project

The Multifamily Residential project at 1st Street and B Avenue would be included in the Potential Growth Area identified in the PCCP. Thus, the Multifamily Residential project would have no conflict with the PCCP or any other habitat conservation plan. If the PCCP is adopted prior to granting of land use entitlements for the Multifamily Residential project, the project

applicant would be required to participate in the PCCP through payment of established PCCP fees to support incidental take coverage and mitigation for effects to waters of the United States. This project would have **no impact** related to consistency with the PCCP or other habitat conservation plan.

Impact 7-7

| | Would the project contribute to loss of special-status species, riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, or trees and oak woodlands protected under the County’s ordinances and policies in the cumulative condition? | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | <i>PCGC Master Plan Update</i> | <i>Health and Human Services Building</i> | <i>Multifamily Residential Project</i> |
| Level of Significance: | No Impact | No Impact | No Impact |
| Mitigation Measures: | None required | None required | None required |
| Significance after Mitigation: | No Impact | No Impact | No Impact |

The geographic area for cumulative biological resource impacts is the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan planning area. The cumulative scenario for this analysis includes continued implementation of the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan and construction of the approved and proposed projects within the planning area as identified in Table 5-1 in Chapter 5, Land Use. Several of the projects identified in Table 5-1 would result in the development of currently vacant land, which would result in the loss of oak woodlands, grassland, and wetland resources.

PCGC Master Plan Update

The PCGC Master Plan Update would involve retention of approximately 650,000 square feet of existing building space, and construction of approximately 410,000 square feet of new County facilities, 30,000 square feet of community use, and approximately 510,000 square feet of commercial, office, and residential elements. As described previously, construction and operation of the PCGC Master Plan Update would result in the loss of habitat that provides foraging and nesting value to special-status species, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, and oak woodlands.

As development continues in the region under the County’s General Plan and the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan, additional loss of biological resources would continue to occur. Pending and future projects within this area would be required to comply with applicable laws, regulations, and policies with regard to biological resources. Compliance with FESA and CESA would ensure that take of endangered species is avoided, or compensation is provided with each individual project; thus, cumulative impacts to endangered species would be less than significant. Compliance with the Clean Water Act and the County’s no net loss policy would ensure that individual projects provide compensation for any loss of wetlands that may result

from development. With each project compensating for this loss through off-site preservation and creation of wetlands, cumulative impacts to federally protected wetlands would also be less than significant. Ongoing development in the region could result in a loss of oak woodland habitat. However, under the County's Oak Woodland Management Plan (County of Placer 2018e), all projects that impact oak woodlands must provide for off-site conservation and restoration of oak woodlands. Implementation of the off-site conservation requirements would ensure that cumulative impacts to oak woodlands would be less than significant. Thus, there would be no significant cumulative impacts to endangered species, federally protected wetlands, or oak woodlands to which the PCGC Master Plan Update, including the Health and Human Services building and the Multifamily Residential project, could contribute. In addition, all projects undertaken within the PCGC Master Plan Update would be required to provide compensation for direct impacts to sensitive habitats, including wetlands, and special status species as required under Mitigation Measures 7a through 7h.

7.5 MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure 7a All construction workers shall receive worker environmental awareness program training conducted by a qualified biologist. Worker environmental awareness program training may also be conducted through a video created by a qualified biologist specifically for this project. Worker environmental awareness program training shall instruct workers to be familiar with special-status species potentially present in the project area and discuss the nature and purpose of protective measures, including best management practices and other required mitigation measures. Personnel shall be instructed to avoid wetlands and waters on the project site that will be fenced prior to construction (as discussed in Mitigation Measure 7h), other than where impacts have been authorized, and to prevent spills, and shall be given contact information for the qualified biologist. A handout will be prepared that includes information on sensitive biological resources occurring or potentially occurring on the site, as well as contact information for the project biologist.

Mitigation Measure 7b Should construction begin during the bird breeding season (February 1 through August 31), a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be performed no sooner than 14 days prior to any groundbreaking activities or tree removal to determine if there are any active nests within the project area (including a 200-foot buffer for raptors). If the construction site remains inactive for more than 1 month during the breeding season and construction would resume during the breeding season, another pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be performed no sooner than 14 days prior to reactivation of construction activities on site. If any active nests are observed during surveys, an avoidance buffer shall

be determined and flagged by the qualified biologist in consultation with CDFW, if warranted, based on species, location, and planned construction activity. These nests shall be avoided until the chicks have fledged and the nests are no longer active, as determined by the qualified biologist. Avoidance could consist of delaying construction in proximity to the nest during the nesting season, or creating a buffer zone between the nest and the activity. Project activities shall be confined to daylight hours to prevent impacts to foraging nocturnal avian species.

Mitigation Measure 7c No sooner than 30 days prior to building demolition, a pre-construction roosting bat survey shall be performed by a qualified biologist (i.e., a biologist with several years' experience performing roosting bat surveys, capable of identifying signs of roosting such as urine stains and guano piles) to determine if roosting bats or maternity colonies exist in any of the structures within the project area. If any active roosts are observed, consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) shall be sought to potentially develop an exclusion plan under the direction of CDFW. If maternity roosts are observed, demolition shall be postponed until the maternity colonies have dispersed, usually between late August and the end of September. Project activities shall be confined to daylight hours to prevent impacts to foraging bats.

Mitigation Measure 7d Prior to issuance of a grading permit or approval of Improvement Plans for any activities within seasonal wetlands 02, 03, 04, or 05, a protocol-level vernal pool branchiopod survey shall be performed by a qualified biologist (i.e., a biologist with several years' experience performing vernal pool surveys, capable of identifying signs of vernal pool fairy shrimp and/or vernal pool tadpole shrimp activity) to determine if vernal pool fairy shrimp and/or vernal pool tadpole shrimp are present on the project site. Alternatively, presence can be assumed. Where vernal pool fairy shrimp and/or vernal pool tadpole shrimp presence is identified or assumed, compensation for the loss of habitat for these species shall be provided at a ratio of 3 acres for every 1 acre affected (3:1). This ratio shall include creation of 1 acre of vernal pool habitat for every 1 acre impacts (1:1), and preservation of 2 acres of vernal pools for every 1 acre impacted (2:1), as described in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) programmatic biological opinion issued to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for small impacts to listed branchiopods (USFWS 1996). Mitigation for impacts to listed branchiopods shall be implemented according to one of the following three options, to be determined and completed prior to impact: participation in a USFWS approved mitigation bank, off-site mitigation at a non-bank location approved by USFWS and subject to preservation in perpetuity such as through a conservation easement, or contribution to the USFWS Species Fund. In the event

that protocol-level surveys demonstrate the absence of listed vernal pool branchiopods, mitigation shall not be required.

Mitigation Measure 7e Prior to issuance of any grading permits or approval of Improvement Plans and removal of vegetation from any blue oak woodland vegetation communities, the County of Placer (County) or individual project applicant shall undertake on-site or off-site oak woodland restoration or creation, and/or contribute to the County’s oak woodland conservation fund, and/or obtain a conservation easement over an off-site property that includes blue oak woodland. In combination, the total amount of blue oak woodland restored, created, and/or protected under a conservation easement shall be twice the size of the amount of blue oak woodland lost to development within the PCGC campus. Any on-site or off-site oak woodland restoration or creation must occur subject to a planting and irrigation plan that is approved by Placer County prior to implementation. Tree planting, obtaining a conservation easement, and/or payment into the County’s oak woodland conservation fund shall occur prior to approval of Improvement Plans for each individual development project.

Mitigation Measure 7f Prior to issuance of any grading permits or approval of improvement plans for activities that would remove riparian habitat, the County of Placer (County) or project applicant shall comply with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600–1616), including notification, submission of all required plans and documents, and payment of required fees to CDFW. The applicant shall either confirm that the proposed activities would not result in substantial effects related to the obstruction, diversion, or introduction of debris into any stream, or shall provide compensatory mitigation to ensure that no significant effects result from stream diversion or modification. Compensatory mitigation shall be provided through creation of like habitat either on site or at a CDFW-approved off-site location.

Mitigation Measure 7g A Clean Water Act Section 404 permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification shall be acquired prior to issuance of a grading permit or approval of improvement plans for any proposed activities that will result in fill or discharges within jurisdictional wetlands.

To compensate for the loss of jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the U.S. that are not exempt from mitigation under the Clean Water Act, the County of Placer (County) or individual project applicant shall (1) restore and/or create wetlands on site; (2) create wetlands at an off-site location acceptable to the resource agencies;

(3) purchase compensatory mitigation credits at an agency-approved mitigation bank; or (4) a combination of 1, 2, or 3. The County or individual project applicant shall develop the mitigation approach in conjunction with the resource agencies during the permitting process. The mitigation requirements shall be in compliance with federal and state Clean Water Act laws, and the Placer County General Plan “no net loss” of wetlands policy (Policy 6.B.1). The final mitigation ratios, design, and implementation shall comply with the terms and conditions of the Section 404 permit issued by the Sacramento District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Mitigation Measure 7h Installation of silt fencing shall be required for any construction activity that occurs within 100 feet of a seasonal wetland or detention basin, other than where direct impacts have been authorized through permits obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Grading and improvement plans for construction of each individual project shall indicate the jurisdictional boundaries of any wetland or waters of the U.S. feature, and shall delineate all construction activity areas for the individual project. Silt fencing shall be installed at least 25 feet from the boundary of any wetland that is not approved for direct impacts. All equipment and vehicles shall be staged outside of waterways. Spill kits shall be available on site to crews working within the construction area, and any spills shall be cleaned up immediately. Silt fencing or fiber rolls (i.e., straw wattles) shall be installed on slopes adjacent to areas where trenching could cause erosion into nearby waterways, or where construction occurs within 25 feet of wetlands or waters of the U.S. The County of Placer shall inspect the silt fence and/or fiber rolls prior to commencement of construction activities for each individual project.

7.6 REFERENCES CITED

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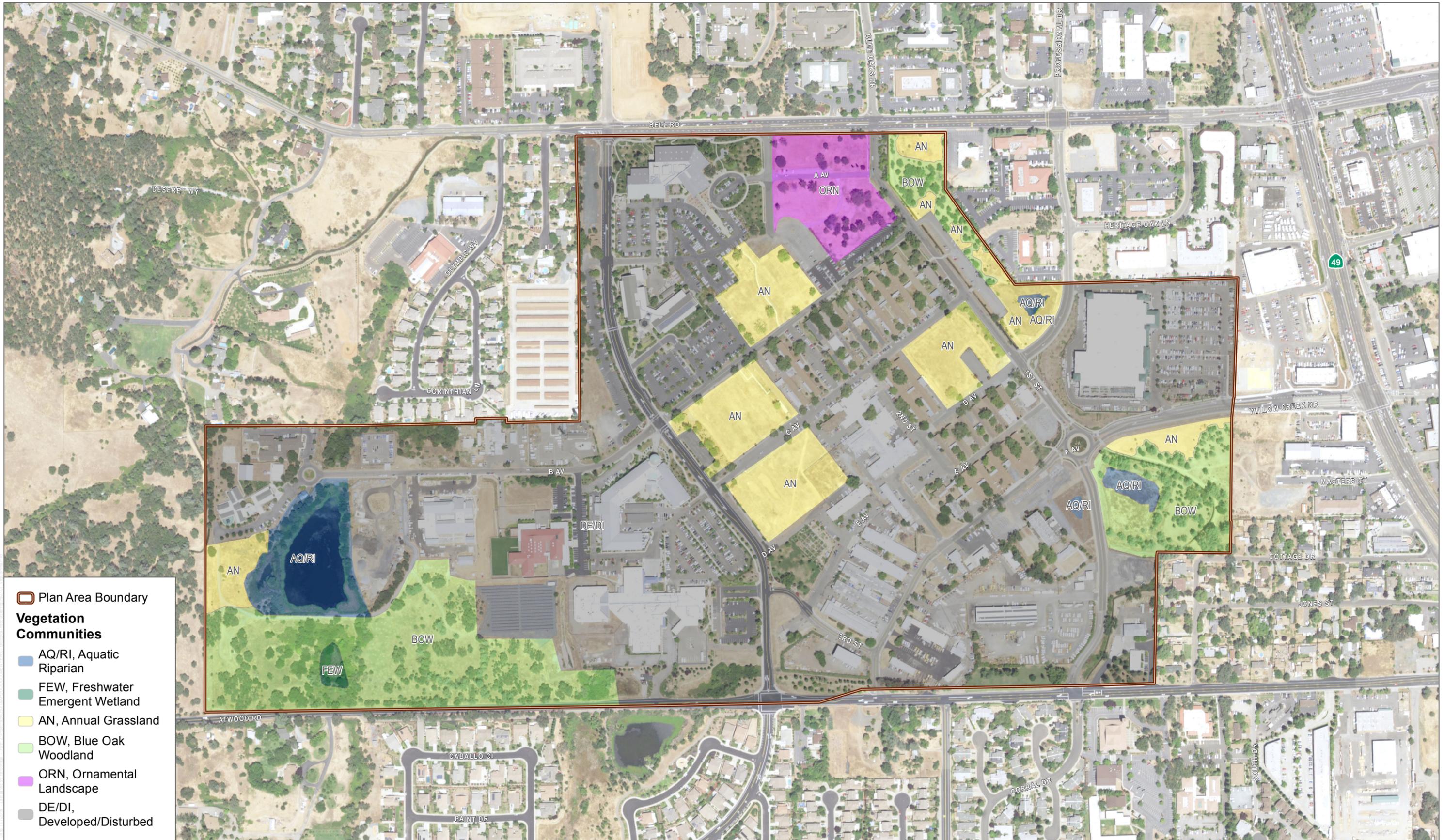
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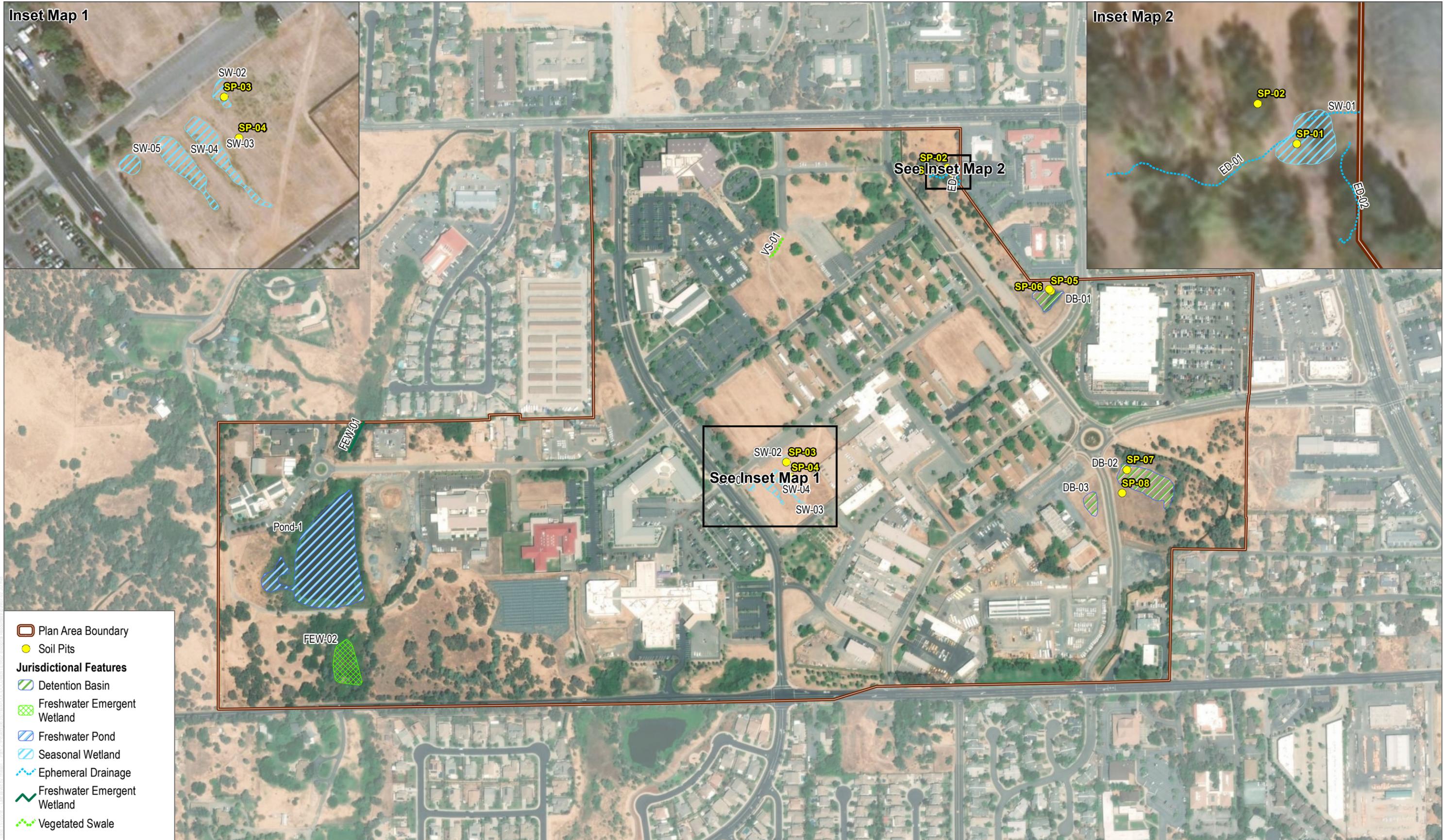
SOURCE: USDA 2016, Placer County 2016



FIGURE 7-1

Vegetation Communities

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SOURCE: ESRI 2018, County of Placer 2016



FIGURE 7-2

Potentially Jurisdictional Features

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