Chapter 2
Proposed Action and Alternatives

This chapter describes the proposed action, including the PCCP conservation strategy and the conservation measures intended to provide for the protection and conservation of the Covered Species and natural communities addressed by the PCCP. This chapter also describes the regulatory considerations for developing alternatives to the proposed PCCP, summarizes the alternatives screening process, and identifies alternatives eliminated from further consideration as well as those carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS/EIR.

2.1 Approach to Developing Alternatives

2.1.1 Regulatory Framework

NEPA and CEQA

Range of Alternatives

NEPA and CEQA require that an EIS/EIR evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives to a proposed action, including a no action alternative. NEPA and CEQA provide guidance that can be used to define a range of alternatives for consideration in an EIS/EIR.

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations provide that lead agencies "shall rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives, and for alternatives which were eliminated from detailed study, briefly discuss the reasons for their having been eliminated" (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 1502.14[a]). Although the CEQ regulations do not specifically define what constitutes a "reasonable alternative," NEPA guidance documents and NEPA case law indicate that "reasonable alternatives" are those technically and economically feasible project alternatives that are reasonably related to the primary objectives of the project as defined in the purpose and need statement.[1] If there are many possible reasonable alternatives, the guidance and case law clearly permit a focus on a "reasonable range" of project alternatives.[2] Alternatives that

[1] CEQ, *Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations*, Questions 1a, 2a, 2b, 46 Federal Register (FR) 18026 (March 23, 1981); *League of Wilderness Defenders-Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project v. U.S. Forest Service* (9th Cir. 2012) 689 F.3d 1060, 1069 ["[t]he scope of an alternatives analysis depends on the underlying "purpose and need" specified by the agency for the proposed action"]; *Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. v. U. S. Dep't of Transp.* (9th Cir.1994) 42 F.3d 517, 524-525 ["[t]he range of alternatives that must be considered in the EIS need not extend beyond those reasonably related to the purposes of the project"]; *City of Angoon v. Hodel* (9th Cir.1986) 803 F.2d 1016, 1021–1022; see also 40 CFR Part 1502.13 ["[t]he [EIS] shall briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action"]; *City of Carmel-By-The-Sea v. U.S. Dep't of Transp.* (9th Cir.1997) 123 F.3d 1142, 1155 ["Project alternatives derive from an Environmental Impact Statement's 'Purpose and Need' section, which briefly defines 'the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action.' 40 CFR Part 1502.13. The stated goal of a project necessarily dictates the range of 'reasonable' alternatives and an agency cannot define its objectives in unreasonably narrow terms."].

[2] CEQ, *Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations*, Question 1b, 46 FR 18026 (March 23, 1981)*; City of Alexandria v. Slater* (D.C. Cir. 1999) 198 F.3d 862.

cannot reasonably meet the purpose and need of the proposed federal action do not require detailed analysis. Moreover, "reasonable alternatives" include those that are practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint and using common sense, rather than simply being desirable from the standpoint of the applicant.[3]

The range of alternatives under CEQA is similarly governed by the rule of reason. Alternatives under CEQA must meet the basic project objectives (see Chapter 1, *Introduction*, Section 1.3.3), and must be potentially feasible. In determining whether alternatives are feasible, lead agencies are guided by the general definition of feasibility found in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15364: "capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors." In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), the lead agency should consider site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and the proponent's control over alternative sites in determining the range of alternatives to be evaluated in an EIR. An EIR must briefly describe the rationale for selection and rejection of alternatives and the information that the lead agency relied upon in making the selection. It should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reason for their exclusion (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[d][2]).

No Action/No Project Alternative

A no action alternative is required to be considered in an EIS, and a no project alternative is required to be considered in an EIR. A no action/no project alternative allows decision-makers to compare the effects of approving the project to the effects of not approving the project. CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA require an EIS to include evaluation of a no action alternative (40 CFR 1502.14). At the lead agencies' discretion under NEPA, the no action alternative may be described as the future circumstances without the proposed action and can also include predictable actions by persons or entities other than the federal agencies involved in a project action, acting in accordance with current management direction or level of management intensity.

Under CEQA, an EIR is required to analyze the no project alternative. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) indicates that the no project alternative analyzed should include reasonably foreseeable changes in existing conditions and changes that would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

Clean Water Act

Activities that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States require authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or CWA (Section 404). Projects subject to permitting under the CWA must comply with Section 404(b)(1) guidelines (40 CFR, Part 230) for discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. Section 404(b)(1) guidelines require that

[3] CEQ, *Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations*, Question 2a, 46 FR 18026 (March 23, 1981).

> except as provided under Section 404(b)(2), no discharge of dredged or fill material shall be permitted if there is a practicable alternative to the proposed discharge which would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences.

The guidelines consider an alternative practicable "if it is available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes." Practicable alternatives under the guidelines assume that "alternatives that do not involve special aquatic sites are available, unless clearly demonstrated otherwise." The guidelines also assume that "all practicable alternatives to the proposed discharge which do not involve a discharge into a special aquatic site are presumed to have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, unless clearly demonstrated otherwise."

Placer County (also referred to as the *County*) and the City of Lincoln are seeking a Section 404 programmatic general permit (PGP), letter of permission procedure (LOP), and regional general permit (RGP) from USACE for a large portion of the PCCP Covered Activities. If issued, this PGP would streamline the permitting process for certain activities covered under the PCCP that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. The Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) is requesting issuance of an RGP by USACE under Section 404 for a portion of its PCCP Covered Activities. As part of the evaluation to issue a PGP, LOP, or an RGP under Section 404, USACE must follow the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA's) Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, which in part require that USACE document that the Covered Activities would result in no more than minimal effects on waters of the United States and that the permitted action is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA).

Federal Endangered Species Act

Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 10(a)(1)(B) requires applicants for incidental take permits (ITPs) to specify in a habitat conservation plan (HCP) what alternative actions to the incidental take of federally listed threatened and endangered species were considered and the reasons that those alternatives were rejected. The ESA requirement is addressed in Chapter 11 of the Plan, which considers alternatives to take. Alternatives to take typically include alternatives such as not achieving implementation of the general plan and reducing overall development in certain areas.

2.1.2 Alternatives Considered

Ideas for potential alternatives came from a variety of sources, including the PCCP development process, the public scoping process under CEQA and NEPA, and the lead and cooperating agencies. U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI) implementing regulations (43 CFR 46.110) require lead federal agencies to consider the inclusion of a consensus-based alternative. ESA Section 10(a)(2)(B) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 13 and 50 CFR 17) and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS's) *Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook* (December 21, 2016) both require public participation, satisfying the USDOI regulations at 43 CFR 46.110. All alternatives considered by the lead agencies were different conservation plans that varied as described below.

- **Permit term**—permit term of 30 years (instead of the proposed 50 years).
- **Covered Species**—fewer Covered Species (e.g., only species currently listed as threatened or endangered under ESA or the California Endangered Species Act [CESA]).
- **Permit area**—larger permit area (e.g., expanding the Plan Area to apply to all of Placer County).
- **Covered Activities**—reduced development in Placer County and the City of Lincoln and fewer projects covered by each Permit Applicant (i.e., the County, City of Lincoln, South Placer Regional Transportation Authority [SPRTA], and PCWA).
- **Conservation strategy**—changes in the type, location, magnitude, or frequency of implementing certain conservation measures, or considering only the mitigation component of the conservation plan (e.g., HCP/CESA 2081 conservation plan).

Additionally, in anticipation of USACE's use of the EIS/EIR to satisfy its requirements under Section 404(b)(1), conservation plan alternatives with the following variations were considered.

- **No PGP, RGP, or LOP issued by USACE**—the CWA evaluation would consider effects on wetlands and waters on a project-by-project basis using existing permitting mechanisms.
- **No dredge or fill (no Section 404 action)**—development would be allowed but would avoid all dredge or fill of jurisdictional waters and wetlands.
- **Reduced effects on waters of the United States**—potential effects on jurisdictional wetlands and other waters of the United States would be reduced.

2.2 Alternatives Screening

Twelve alternatives were identified that varied by the components described in the previous section. These 12 alternatives, labeled A through L, were screened against a set of criteria using a systematic screening process. Screening occurred in three tiers, with separate criteria used in each tier. Potential alternatives that met the screening criteria in one tier were carried forward to the next tier. Only alternatives that satisfied criteria for all three tiers were carried forward in this EIS/EIR for detailed analysis.

The screening criteria for the EIS/EIR are based on a number of considerations, including (1) legal requirements for adequate discussions of alternatives in the EIS/EIR, as set forth in NEPA and CEQA and the regulations and case law interpreting those statutes; (2) concepts of "potential feasibility" under CEQA and "reasonableness" under NEPA; and (3) CWA Section 404(b)(1) screening criteria.

Under CEQA, alternatives to be included in an EIR, in addition to a no project alternative, must satisfy the following requirements.

- Are potentially feasible.
- Attain most of the basic objectives of the project.
- Avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant impacts of the project.

Placer County, as the CEQA lead agency, may structure its alternatives around a reasonable definition of a fundamental underlying purpose, and it need not study alternatives that cannot achieve the basic project objectives.

USDOI and USFWS, the NEPA lead agency, obtain NEPA guidance from a document issued by the CEQ titled *Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations,* which provides guidance on the most frequently asked questions on 40 CFR 1500–1508. Per 40 CFR 1502.14, the heart of an EIS is the presentation of environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives in comparative form. This same code section instructs lead agencies to "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives." In addition, there must be a discussion of other alternatives that are eliminated from detailed study with a brief discussion of the reasons for eliminating them. The reasonable range of alternatives also includes those that are not within the jurisdiction of the lead agencies. While the U.S. Code does not further define what constitutes a reasonable range of alternatives, the CEQ guidance states that what constitutes a reasonable range depends on the nature of a proposed federal action and the facts of a particular case.[4] When there is potentially a very large number of alternatives, a reasonable range of alternatives covering the full spectrum of reasonable alternatives can be identified for detailed analysis in the NEPA document.

USDOI has adopted additional regulations (43 CFR 46.415[b]) that require an EIS to include, in addition to a no action alternative, alternatives that meet the following requirements.

- Are reasonable.
- Meet the purpose and need of the proposed action.
- Address one or more significant issues related to the proposed action.

Finally, in addition to the requirements for the evaluation of alternatives under NEPA, per the USACE NEPA implementing regulations for the Regulatory Program (33 CFR 325, Appendix B[9][b][5]), the alternatives analysis conducted in an EIS should be thorough enough to use for both the public interest review and the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, where applicable. Under the USACE public interest review, for activities where there are unresolved conflicts as to resource use, USACE must evaluate the practicability of using reasonable alternative locations and methods to accomplish the objective of the proposed structure or work (33 CFR 320.4[a][2][ii]). As explained in Section 2.1.1, *Regulatory Framework*, under the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, USACE must evaluate the practicability of alternatives in light of the overall project purpose (40 CFR 230.10[a]) and must evaluate the following to determine if each alternative is practicable:

- Availability.
- Overall project purpose.
- Costs.
- Logistics.
- Existing technology.
- Adverse effects on the aquatic ecosystem.
- Other significant adverse environmental consequences.

[4] CEQ, *Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations*, Question 1b, 46 FR 18026 (March 23, 1981).

2.2.1 First Tier Screening Criteria

The legal requirements of CEQA and NEPA were considered in the context of the statements of project objectives and purpose (see Chapter 1, Section 1.3, *Purpose and Need*) to develop the following first tier screening criteria.

- Could the potential alternative protect and enhance ecological diversity and function, including aquatic resource functions and values, in the greater portion of western Placer County while allowing appropriate and compatible growth in accordance with applicable laws?

These criteria assume that allowing appropriate and compatible growth in accordance with applicable laws includes allowing sufficient land area for development under the general plans of the City of Lincoln and Placer County. As detailed in Plan Appendix M, sufficient land area was defined as shown in Table 2-5 of the Plan, reprinted below as Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Land Development to Accommodate Growth for the 50-Year Permit Term by 10-Year Period (acres)

	Cumulative Land Area Developed, by 10-Year Period (acres)				
Plan Area Component	Year 10	Year 20	Year 30	Year 40	Year 50
Plan Area A					
A1 Valley PFG[a]	2,027	5,377	10,606	15,683	19,545
A2 Valley Conservation and Rural Development[b]	250	320	400	480	570
A3 Foothills PFG[c]	1,999	3,997	5,996	7,993	9,993
A4 Foothills Conservation and Rural Development[c]	201	403	604	806	1,007
All Plan Area A	**4,477**	**10,097**	**17,606**	**24,962**	**31,115**
Plan Area B[d]					
B1 Permittee Activity in Non-Participating City Jurisdiction	385	395	405	415	425
All Plan Area	**4,862**	**10,492**	**18,011**	**25,377**	**31,540**

Sources**:** Appendix A:Table 2-5.

NPC = non-participating city.
PFG = Potential Future Growth Area.

[a] Area of land development reflecting City of Lincoln and Placer County general and specific plans (see Appendix M, *Growth Scenario Memo*, Table A.1) and a generalized factor of 15 percent additional land development to account for infrastructure, rights-of-way, and public facilities.

[b] Estimates for rural development in the Valley developed by MIG|TRA Environmental Sciences include allowance for public infrastructure.

[c] Foothills growth scenario estimates by Hausrath Economics Group adapted to available land and general plan land use designation by MIG|TRA Environmental Sciences.

[d] Estimate for Plan Area B is an allowance for public infrastructure.

- Could the potential alternative provide comprehensive species, natural community, and ecosystem conservation in the Plan Area?
- Could the potential alternative contribute to the recovery of endangered species in Placer County and northern California?
- Could the potential alternative establish a regional system of habitat reserves to preserve, enhance, restore, manage, and monitor native species and the habitats and ecosystems upon which they depend?
- Could the potential alternative enhance and restore stream and riparian systems outside the habitat reserves to provide additional benefit to native fish and other stream-dwelling species?
- Could the potential alternative allow issuance of permits to the Permit Applicants for lawful incidental take of species listed as threatened or endangered pursuant to ESA and CESA?
- Could the potential alternative streamline and simplify the process for future incidental take authorization of currently nonlisted species that may become listed during the permit term?
- Could the potential alternative standardize avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and compensation requirements of all applicable laws and regulations relating to biological and natural resources within the Plan Area, so that public and private actions will be governed equally and consistently, thus reducing delays, expenses, and regulatory duplication?
- Could the potential alternative provide a less costly, more efficient project review process that would result in greater conservation than the current project-by-project, species-by-species endangered species compliance process?
- Could the potential alternative provide a means for the agencies receiving permits to extend the incidental take authorization to private entities subject to their jurisdiction, bringing endangered species permitting under local control?
- Could the potential alternative provide a streamlined aquatic resource protection and permitting process to provide the basis for streamlined USACE/CWA permitting and 1602 permitting for Covered Activities, as well as provide the basis for CWA Section 404 PGP for Covered Activities and a programmatic certification of the PGP by the Regional Water Quality Control Board under CWA Section 401?

Under the principles of both CEQA and NEPA, for an alternative to be advanced to the next tier of screening, the answer to most or all of these questions had to be *possibly* or *unknown*. If the answers to six or more of the questions were *not likely*, the potential alternative was rejected.

The following were the alternatives screened.

- A. Reduction in Permit Term to 30 Years.
- B. Reduction in Covered Species.
- C. Increase in Permit Area.
- D. Reduced Development/Reduced Impacts to Jurisdictional Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.—Map Alternative 2.
- E. Reduced Development/Reduced Impacts to Jurisdictional Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.—Map Alternative 4.

- F. Reduced Development/Reduced Impacts to Jurisdictional Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.—Map Alternative 6.
- G. Reduced Development/Reduced Impacts to Jurisdictional Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.—Map Alternative 7.
- H. Habitat Conservation Plan/2081 Conservation Plan.
- I. Reserve System Limited to Placer County.
- J. No Programmatic General Permit, Letter of Permission, or Regional General Permit Issued by USACE.
- K. No Fill Alternative.
- L. Expanded Reserve Acquisition Area.

Four alternatives were eliminated from consideration at this first tier as described in Section 2.3, *Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration*.

- H. Habitat Conservation Plan/2081 Conservation Plan (no natural community conservation plan [NCCP]).
- J. No Programmatic General Permit, Letter of Permission, or Regional General Permit Issued by USACE.
- K. No Fill Alternative.
- L. Expanded Reserve Acquisition Area.

2.2.2 Second Tier Screening Criteria

Potential alternatives that advanced to the second tier of screening were evaluated under CEQA using the following question.

- Would the potential alternative avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant environmental effects of the proposed action?

There is no similar requirement under NEPA.

If the answer to the question was *possibly* or *unknown*, the potential alternative was carried forward for third tier screening. If the answer was *no* or *not likely*, then the potential alternative was rejected.

The following alternatives were carried forward to the third tier of screening.

- A. Reduction in Permit Term.
- C. Increase in Permit Area.
- D. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 2.
- E. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 4.
- F. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 6.
- G. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 7.

2.2.3 Third Tier Screening Criteria

The third tier criteria focus on CEQA's concept of feasibility and NEPA's principle of reasonableness. Under CEQA, alternatives evaluated in an EIR should be potentially feasible. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) defines *feasible* as capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors. Under NEPA, an EIS must rigorously explore and objectively evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives that achieve the proposed action's objectives as provided by the purpose and need statement (40 CFR 1502.14[a]; 46 FR 18026).

The range of alternatives should provide a range of options to decision-makers to support informed decision-making. Reasonable alternatives include those that are practical or feasible from a technical or economic standpoint and using common sense, rather than alternatives that are simply desirable from the applicant's perspective. Under both NEPA and CEQA, potential alternatives can be developed using economic considerations, social factors, legal feasibility under species protection laws, and technical factors to inform the general concepts of feasibility under CEQA and reasonableness under NEPA. The Section 404(b)(1) analysis must consider similar issues to those under CEQA and NEPA. These include costs, logistics, existing technology, and overall purpose.

In addition to these CEQA and NEPA considerations, adverse effects on the aquatic environment, including effects on waters of the United States and special aquatic sites, must be evaluated by USACE consistent with the requirements of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines. Third tier criteria include the following issues.

- Would the marginal costs of the potential alternative be so substantial that a reasonably prudent public agency would not proceed with the alternative?
- Would the marginal costs of the potential alternative be so substantial that it would be impractical to proceed with the alternative?
- Would the potential alternative take so long to implement, as compared with the proposed action, that it would not meet the project purpose or objectives within an acceptable time frame?
- Would the potential alternative require technology or physical components that are clearly technically infeasible based on currently available science and engineering for the scope of the potential alternative?
- Would construction, operation, and/or maintenance of the potential alternative violate any federal or state statutes or regulations?
- Would the potential alternative involve an outcome that is clearly undesirable from a policy standpoint in that the outcome could not reflect a reasonable balancing of relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors?
- Would the potential alternative involve a potential increase in adverse effects to the aquatic ecosystem?
- Would the potential alternative involve a potential increase in adverse effects on special aquatic sites?

If the answers to all these questions were *not likely* or *unknown*, the potential alternative is considered in this EIS/EIR. If the answers to any of these questions were *likely* or *yes*, the potential alternative failed the third tier screening and, consequently, is not considered in detail in this EIS/EIR.

Of the alternatives carried forward to the third tier of screening, the following alternatives were identified for consideration in the EIS/EIR:

- A. Reduction in Permit Term
- D. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 2
- E. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 4
- F. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 6
- G. Reduced Development/Reduced Fill—Map Alternative 7

Alternatives D, E, F, and G were combined into one alternative, as described below in Section 2.4.3, *Alternative 3—Reduced Take/Reduced Fill*.

2.3 Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration

Seven alternatives were eliminated from further consideration in the EIS/EIR. The following alternatives were rejected because they would not meet project objectives as identified in detail in the screening analysis.

- H. Habitat Conservation Plan/2081 Conservation Plan (no natural community conservation plan [NCCP])
- J. No Programmatic General Permit, Letter of Permission, or Regional General Permit Issued by USACE
- K. No Fill Alternative
- L. Expanded Reserve Acquisition Area

The following alternatives were rejected because they would not avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant environmental effects of, or potentially address one or more significant issues related to, the proposed action.

- B. Reduction in Covered Species
- I. Reserve System Limited to Placer County

The following alternative was rejected as infeasible, as other jurisdictions in Placer County have not chosen to participate, even given a substantial amount of time to consider participation.

- C. Increase in Permit Area

2.4 Alternatives Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis

The alternatives screening process described in Section 2.2, *Alternatives Screening*, resulted in four alternatives to be further analyzed in this EIS/EIR. Each of these four alternatives is described in detail below and evaluated in subsequent chapters of the EIS/EIR.

- Alternative 1—No Action.
- Alternative 2—Proposed Action.
- Alternative 3—Reduced Take/Reduced Fill.
- Alternative 4—Reduced Permit Term.

2.4.1 Alternative 1—No Action

This EIS/EIR includes an analysis of a no action alternative/no project alternative in accordance with the requirements of NEPA and CEQA, respectively. In this document, the no action/no project alternative is Alternative 1—No Action. The analysis of this alternative allows decision-makers to compare the effects of approving or of not approving the proposed action.

Under Alternative 1, permits would not be issued by USFWS, NMFS, or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for incidental take of the proposed Covered Species through a regional-scale programmatic HCP or NCCP. As a result, Permit Applicants and the private developers within their jurisdictions would remain subject to the take prohibition for federally listed species under ESA and state-listed species under CESA. The Permit Applicants and others with ongoing activities or future actions in the Plan Area that may result in the incidental take of federally listed species would need to apply, on a project-by-project basis, for incidental take authorization from either USFWS or NMFS through ESA Section 7 (when a federal agency is involved) or Section 10 (for nonfederal actions). Similarly, Permit Applicants and others whose ongoing activities or future actions have the potential for incidental take of state-listed species in the Plan Area would apply for incidental take authorization under CESA through a Section 2081(b) permit. In addition, a Section 404 permitting strategy would not be developed by USACE and, as a result, Permit Applicants and private developers within their jurisdictions would follow existing procedures for activities subject to Section 404 CWA.

For this analysis, Alternative 1 would entail the continuation of existing plans, policies, and operations. Based on this assumption, Alternative 1 incorporates programs adopted during the early stages of development of this EIS/EIR, facilities that are permitted or under construction during the early stages of development of this EIS/EIR, and projects that are permitted or are assumed to be constructed by 2035, which encompasses the planning horizon for the general plans and capital improvement plans in the Plan Area.

Under Alternative 1, because the Permit Applicants and private developers would generate environmental documentation and apply for permits on a project-by-project basis, there would be no comprehensive means to coordinate and standardize mitigation and compensation requirements of ESA, Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA), CEQA, NEPA, and the CWA within the Plan Area. This is anticipated to result in a more costly, less equitable, and less efficient project review process that would reap fewer conservation benefits. Conservation planning and

implementation would not happen at a regional scale and therefore would not establish an efficient and effective system of conservation lands to meet the needs of the species covered by the PCCP. Mitigation would not occur in a coordinated fashion, and would likely result in smaller mitigation areas as there would be more onsite mitigation for specific projects. Accordingly, Alternative 1 would not streamline the permitting process or provide local control of the endangered species process. It is not expected to provide species with the benefits of a comprehensive system of conservation lands that would be provided through a coordinated effort to minimize biological effects throughout the Plan Area.

Geographic Area

The geographic area for Alternative 1 is the same as the Plan Area, as described in Chapter 1, Section 1.1.2, *Plan Area*, and Section 2.4.2, *Alternative 2—Proposed Action*.

Typical Activities

Under Alternative 1, various types of activities would continue in the Plan Area consistent with current regulatory practices. While regulatory practices are likely to change over the coming decades, assumptions about future changes to existing regulations (or new regulations) are too speculative. Therefore, it is assumed future regulations would be consistent with existing regulations. The various types of activities assumed to occur under Alternative 1 are described below.

- Urban development would occur within the Valley and Foothills Potential Future Growth Area (PFG) components, described in the Plan as those mapped locations in the Plan Area within which the local agencies anticipate urban development would occur under their respective plans and authorities (components A1 and A3). Included are public projects, private projects, and all aspects of forecasted future growth.
- Rural development would occur in the Valley and Foothills Conservation and Rural Development components, described in the Plan as those mapped locations in the Plan Area within which the local agencies anticipate rural development would occur under their respective plans and authorities (components A2 and A4). Included are public projects and private projects that do not entail a change in zoning or a general plan or community plan land use designation or the granting of permits under existing zoning to allow more intensive uses.
- Regional public programs would continue. These programs provide and sustain the backbone infrastructure that supports public services and development within the Plan Area. Regional public programs involve operations and maintenance (O&M) of existing facilities and construction and O&M for new facilities. Regional public programs include those related to transportation, wastewater, water supply, solid waste management, public parks, and utilities.
- In-stream activities associated with development and public programs would also occur under Alternative 1. These include construction and O&M activities that take place within stream channels, along stream banks, or on adjacent lands within the riparian corridor.
- Ongoing conservation programs administered by Placer County would continue under Alternative 1. These include the Placer Legacy Program, coordinated resource management plans, integrated regional water management plans, and the *Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (which integrates with the *Placer County Strategic Plan for Biomass Utilization Program*).

These typical activities would require consideration of environmental effects on a project-by-project basis. In the absence of a regional conservation plan, these activities would be subject to individual project review under ESA and CESA, which could restrict the activities based on the needs of federally listed and state-listed species.

Typical Species Considered

As described above, compliance with ESA and CESA would continue to be addressed on a project-by-project basis. Projects and activities with potential to take federally listed species would be required to comply with ESA by pursuing a Section 7 consultation. Projects and activities with a potential to take state-listed species would be required to comply with CESA by applying to CDFW for a 2081 Permit. Agencies or private developers within their jurisdictions would be required to prepare the appropriate environmental documents and to comply with any mitigation requirements as identified as part of the project-specific environmental review, as well as any applicable policies contained in the local agencies' general plans and related land use planning documents.

Conservation of species and their habitats through mitigation and compensation under the existing regulatory framework would likely result in a pattern of conservation that is geographically fragmented, intensified to an extent that doesn't match natural conditions and managed by a multitude of reserve managers in a piecemeal fashion. It would be unviable to conserve essential ecological processes under Alternative 1 because there would not be a coordinated system of conservation areas, and the ability to provide linkages through project-by-project mitigation over time may be precluded by continued development. There would be no mechanism to comprehensively provide for species recovery. In addition, there would be no comprehensive adaptive management and monitoring program to ensure successful conservation at a landscape scale. Furthermore, project-by-project permit applications would likely be limited to federally listed and state-listed species, reducing the number of species that would benefit from conservation actions.

Typical Species Mitigation

As a result of federal and state consultation for impacts on listed species and project-by-project CEQA and NEPA review for effects on biological resources, various types of mitigation measures are expected to be required under Alternative 1. These types of mitigation measures are listed below. Non-discretionary agricultural activities and rural development consistent with land use ordinances would not trigger environmental review under CEQA. No mitigation would be required for such actions unless ESA, CESA, or Section 404 permitting were required for the action.

- Avoidance and minimization measures (AMMs) incorporating generally accepted species-specific protocols and/or project-specific measures as negotiated with various wildlife agencies. These typically include preservation and management of onsite habitat. Other avoidance minimization requirements could include preconstruction surveys, construction timing restrictions, setback requirements, use restrictions, or other similar measures.
- Restoration and/or enhancement of onsite habitat, if available and set aside for compensation.
- Compensatory mitigation in offsite areas. Such mitigation could include purchasing credits at a private conservation or mitigation bank; purchasing and restoring large areas of habitat and using those areas to mitigate various project effects in much the same way that a mitigation bank functions; and purchasing and restoring habitat to mitigate individual project effects.

2.4.2 Alternative 2—Proposed Action (Proposed Placer County Conservation Program)

The PCCP is a regional, comprehensive program that would provide a framework to protect, enhance, and restore the natural resources in western Placer County, while streamlining permitting for Covered Activities. Within this framework, the PCCP would achieve conservation goals and comply with state and federal environmental regulations while facilitating planning and permitting for anticipated urban and rural growth and the construction and maintenance of infrastructure needed to serve the county's population. The PCCP includes two integrated programs.

- The *Western Placer County Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan*, also referred to as the Plan, a joint HCP and NCCP that would protect fish, wildlife, and plants, and their habitats and fulfill the requirements of the ESA and NCCPA.
- The *Western Placer County Aquatic Resources Program,* also referred to as CARP, that would protect streams, wetlands, and other water resources and fulfill the requirements of the CWA and analogous state laws and regulations.

The following entities have prepared the PCCP in cooperation with USFWS, NMFS, CDFW, USEPA, and USACE.

- Placer County
- City of Lincoln
- SPRTA
- PCWA

As noted in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, these entities are collectively referred to as the *Permit Applicants*. In addition to the Permit Applicants identified above, other parties may elect to seek coverage under the PCCP. These entities are considered *Participating Special Entities.*[5] The Permit Applicants would vest the responsibility for implementing the Plan to the Placer Conservation Authority (PCA).[6] The PCA would oversee implementation of the Plan on behalf of the Permittees. The PCA, not yet formed, would also be a Permittee, as it would implement conservation actions and because it would be the permitting authority for Participating Special Entities. However, the Permittees would ultimately be responsible for compliance with all the terms and conditions of the state and federal permits.

The PCCP identifies a range of Covered Activities (discussed below), which consist of certain actions undertaken in the Plan Area by or under the authority of the Permit Applicants that may affect Covered Species or covered natural communities. The Plan considers these activities in assessing the total amount of take of Covered Species that would be expected in the Plan Area and in developing the overall PCCP conservation strategy. The proposed action is described below, including the Plan Area, the Covered Activities, the Covered Species, the proposed conservation strategy, and the CARP. For more details on all of these topics, see the Plan.

Under Alternative 2, permits would be issued by USFWS and NMFS under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA and by CDFW under Section 2081(b) for incidental take of the proposed Covered Species

[5] Participating Special Entities are listed in Section 8.9.4 of the Plan.

[6] The role of the PCA is discussed in Section 8.3.2 of the Plan.

through a regional-scale programmatic HCP or NCCP. The USFWS permit would cover take of 11 species; the NMFS permit would cover take of 1 species; and the CDFW permit would cover take of 9 species. The permit durations would be for 50 years. PCA would oversee implementation of the PCCP.

Plan Area

The Plan Area encompasses 269,118 acres, 99% of which is in Placer County. Because the Plan Area encompasses the full geographic extent of the Covered Activities, it includes some areas outside the jurisdiction of the Permit Applicants (Figure 1-1). The Plan Area comprises Plan Area A and Plan Area B, with specific components within each Plan Area (Table 2-2; Figure 2-1); not all Covered Activities are covered in all parts of the Plan Area.

Plan Area A

Plan Area A—which comprises the four components defined below—is the main focus of the PCCP. Plan Area A is where all covered future growth for the Permit Applicants and most of the Covered Activities would take place. Definitions of the components are based on the PCCP Designation Map (Figure 2-2), which designates all of Plan Area A as PFG, Reserve Acquisition Area (RAA), or Existing Reserves and Other Protected Areas (EXR). The RAA and EXR designations are combined in the Conservation and Rural Development designation, with separate Valley and Foothills Conservation and Rural Development designations. The Plan states that the conservation zones include the EXR because the Plan's Reserve System will be building off of the EXR (Appendix A:5-73).

A1—Valley Potential Future Growth Area

Covered Activities in component A1, Valley PFG, consist of all activities undertaken by or under authority of the Permit Applicants as described in Chapter 2 of the Plan. These activities include public projects, private projects, and all aspects of forecasted future growth.

A2—Valley Conservation and Rural Development

Covered Activities in component A2, Valley Conservation and Rural Development, consist of all activities undertaken by or under authority of the Permit Applicants as described in Chapter 2 of the Plan. These activities include public and private projects that do not entail a change in zoning or a general plan or community plan land use designation to allow more intensive uses. A2 would support most of the Valley portion of the PCCP Reserve System.

A3—Foothills Potential Future Growth Area

Covered Activities in component A3, Foothills PFG, consist of all activities undertaken by or under authority of the Permit Applicants as described in Chapter 2 of the Plan. These activities include public and private projects that do not entail a change in zoning or a general plan or community plan land use designation to allow more intensive uses, although the general plan, specific plan, and implementing zoning may be changed over the course of the PCCP permit to allow changes in allowed land use type, increased land use intensity, or increased residential density. Such changes would require additional environmental review.

A4—Foothills Conservation and Rural Development

Covered Activities in component A4, Foothills Conservation and Rural Development, consist of all activities undertaken by or under authority of the Permit Applicants as described in Chapter 2 of the Plan. These activities include public and private projects that do not entail a change in zoning or a general plan or community plan land use designation to allow more intensive uses. A4 would support most of the Foothills portion of the PCCP Reserve System.

Plan Area B

Plan Area B comprises five components where only specific, limited Covered Activities or conservation activities may occur.

B1—Permittee Activity in Non-Participating City Jurisdiction

Covered Activities in component B1, Permittee Activity in Non-participating City Jurisdiction, consist of all public Covered Activities undertaken by the Permit Applicants in the incorporated area and, in some cases, the sphere of influence of the non-participating cities. These activities include construction, operations, or maintenance of PCWA canals and new pipelines, a portion of Placer Parkway, the Interstate (I-) 80/State Route (SR) 65 interchange, and miscellaneous County-owned facilities, as well as possible in-stream conservation actions related to fish passage improvement. Most of B1 is already urban. Coverage is only for activities directly undertaken by a Permit Applicant and does not include urban growth or private projects of any kind.

B2—PCWA Zone 1 Operations and Maintenance

Covered Activities in component B2, PCWA Zone 1 O&M, consist of PCWA Zone 1 O&M for existing facilities east of Auburn and adjacent to Lake Theodore Reservoir. Coverage in B2 does not include new PCWA construction.

B3—Coon Creek Floodplain Conservation

Covered Activities in component B3, Coon Creek Floodplain Conservation, consist of watershed protection and stream restoration activities along the Coon Creek floodplain in a 1,724-acre portion of Sutter County. Coverage in this area may include new acquisition by the PCA, the PCA in partnership with Sutter County, or by an entity such as a nonprofit conservation group acting in concert with the PCA and Sutter County. Coverage does not include any development activities, flood control, or land conversion.

B4—Fish Passage Channel Improvement

Covered Activities in component B4, Fish Passage Channel Improvement, consist of selective in-stream work on a small portion of 33 miles of channels west of Placer County in Sutter County. These Covered Activities would be subject to joint resolutions or agreements between Placer and Sutter Counties and Reclamation District 1001. No PCA acquisition would be associated with this activity. Remediation work would address improvement of fish habitat only, with an emphasis on ensuring fish passage into spawning and rearing areas in Area A. Table 2-2 shows additional detail regarding the channels making up component B4.

B5— Big Gun Conservation Bank

Covered Activities in component B5, Big Gun Conservation Bank, consist of actions pursuant to the conservation strategy for California red-legged frog on the existing Big Gun Conservation Bank in Placer County, east of Auburn near the townsite of Michigan Bluff.

Table 2-2. Plan Area Components

	Plan Area Component	Area (acres)
Plan Area A		
A1	Valley Potential Future Growth Area (Valley PFG)	46,769
A2	Valley Conservation and Rural Development (RAA and EXR)	53,929
	All Valley	100,698
A3	Foothills Potential Future Growth Area (Foothills PFG)	78,897
A4	Foothills Conservation and Rural Development (RAA and EXR)	30,237
	All Foothills	109,134
	All Plan Area A	**209,832**
Plan Area B		
B1	Permittee Activity in Non-participating City Jurisdiction	50,636
B2	PCWA Zone 1 Operations and Maintenance	6,315
B3	Coon Creek Floodplain Conservation	1,724
B4	Fish Passage Channel Improvement	559
B5	Big Gun Conservation Bank	52
Plan Area B4—Fish Passage Channel Improvement Reaches		
	Channel Reach	Length (miles)
	Auburn Ravine	8.1
	Coon Creek	11.2
	Cross Canal	7.7
	East Side Canal	6.0
	Total	**32.9**

Source: Appendix A: Table 2-2.
EXR = Existing Reserves and Other Protected Areas.
PCWA = Placer County Water Agency.
PFG = Potential Future Growth Area.
RAA = Reserve Acquisition Area.

Covered Activities

Throughout the Plan and this EIS/EIR, several terms are used to refer to Covered Activities. The term *project* as used in the Plan usually means a specific, one-time activity, typically a construction project. The individual projects described below serve as examples to illustrate the categories of Covered Activities and to guide the analysis of potential environmental effects associated with their implementation. For example, the Placer Parkway project is one specific instance of a transportation project. It is intended that the Placer Parkway project be a Covered Activity; similarly, future, currently undesignated transportation projects that conform to PCCP requirements would also qualify as Covered Activities under the Plan. The term *operations and maintenance* or *O&M* refers to

the full range of activities associated with the lifecycle of a physical facility, including its use, operation, maintenance, repair, and abandonment at the end of use. The term *Program* refers to the whole of an agency's activities related to a specific purpose including land acquisition, capital projects, and O&M activities.

Most actions undertaken directly by a Permit Applicant (or a Permit Applicant's contractor, agent, or employee) would comply with and be covered by the PCCP and its related permits by complying with the conditions of approval (conditions on Covered Activities) described in Chapter 6 of the Plan and with other relevant PCCP requirements. Mandatory conditions on the Covered Activities are necessary to meet state and federal permit issuance criteria, to help meet the regional conservation goals of the Plan, and to assist Permit Applicants in meeting their funding obligations.

Specific projects seeking permit coverage would follow a formal process for analysis and inclusion as described in Chapter 6 of the Plan. All Covered Activities must incorporate the relevant conditions on Covered Activities in order to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects on Covered Species and natural communities. For projects to be approved for coverage under the Plan, project applicants must demonstrate that conditions have been incorporated or will be incorporated properly into their proposed projects.

A range of Covered Activities addressed by the Plan would take place in the Plan Area. These activities are widespread and varied including urban and rural development, water management, conservation measures, facilities maintenance, and numerous other actions that are undertaken by the Permit Applicants or by individuals or entities under their jurisdiction. The PCCP groups Covered Activities into seven categories based on geographic boundaries or features and program goals as depicted in Figure 2-1 and described below.

1. Valley Potential Future Growth.
2. Valley Conservation and Rural Development.
3. Foothills Potential Future Growth.
4. Foothills Conservation and Rural Development.
5. Regional Public Programs.
6. In-Stream Programs.
7. Conservation Programs.

The first four categories, encompassing future growth and rural development in the Foothills and Valley, are based on mapped boundaries in the general plans of the County and the City of Lincoln that reflect patterns of anticipated urban, suburban, and rural residential expansion. The conservation and rural development categories were also determined by association with large-scale geographic features, vegetative land cover mapping, and underlying species distribution. The final three categories occur throughout the Plan Area and are defined primarily by similar habitat features (as is the case for In-Stream Programs) or programmatic objectives (as is the case for Regional Public Programs and Conservation Programs). The relationship between each Covered Activity category and component(s) of the Plan Area in which it may be implemented is shown in Table 2-3.

Table 2-3. Covered Activity Category by Plan Area Component

	Plan Area A				Plan Area B				
Activity Category	A1 Valley	A2 Valley	A3 Foothills	A4 Foothills	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
1. Valley Potential Future Growth	X								
2. Valley Conservation and Rural Development		X							
3. Foothills Potential Future Growth			X						
4. Foothills Conservation and Rural Development				X					
5. Regional Public Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X			
6. In-Stream Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X			
7. Conservation Programs	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-3.

X = activity covered in this Plan Area component.

The activities identified below describe the different types of activities covered by the Plan. In some cases, specific projects are identified by Chapter 4 of the Plan as examples to illustrate the general category. All Covered Activities discussed below are associated with Plan Area A unless otherwise stated.

Valley Potential Future Growth

This category includes all ground- or habitat-disturbing projects and activities that occur in component A1, Valley PFG. The Valley PFG comprises 46,769 acres consisting of the City of Lincoln, a portion of the adjacent Lincoln sphere of influence, and the unincorporated County area adjacent to the City of Roseville. This category includes rural and urban land uses and the use, construction, demolition, rehabilitation, maintenance, and abandonment of typical public facilities, consistent with the implementation of local general, community, and area plans (collectively referred to as *general plans*); specific plans; and local, state, and federal laws. Acquisition of reserve lands and conservation activities may potentially occur in the Valley PFG, primarily in the Stream System as defined in Chapter 1 of the Plan and where large blocks of high-quality Covered Species habitat can be incorporated into the Reserve System and when such acquisitions meet the avoidance standards of Chapter 6, *Conditions on Covered Activities*, of the Plan.

Activities in the Valley PFG are based on general plan and zoning designations of the County and the City of Lincoln. The general plans, community plans, area plans, specific plans, and associated zoning designations may be changed over the course of the PCCP permit term to accommodate the growth

projections described in Appendix M of the Plan by allowing changes in land use type, increases in land use intensity, and increases in residential density.

Covered urban land uses, including those within the Valley PFG, are summarized in Table 2-4. Ongoing rural and agricultural land uses are summarized in Table 2-5. Public agency programs, even if they also occur in areas beyond the Valley PFG, are described below and are summarized in Table 2-6 as they are covered in the Valley PFG.

Placer County and the City of Lincoln have developed several planning documents that outline strategies and projects in accordance with current general plans and specific plans. To the extent that these plans are consistent with the goals of the PCCP, implementation of these planning documents would be covered. Examples of current planning documents in the Valley PFG include the following.[7]

- *City of Lincoln General Plan.*
- *Placer County General Plan.*
- *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan.*
- *Sunset Industrial Area Plan.*
- *Sheridan Community Plan.*
- *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan.*
- *Regional University Specific Plan.*
- *Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan.*
- *City of Lincoln Bikeways Master Plan, 2001 (and Bikeway Master Plan Update, 2012).*
- *Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan.*

Additional area plans, community plans, specific plans, and updates to comprehensive general plans would be developed over the course of the Plan's permit term.

[7] Many of these documents can be accessed online at www.ci.lincoln.ca.us or www.placer.ca.gov/planning.

Table 2-4. Land Uses Consistent with Urban and Suburban General Plan Designations

Category	Example Projects
Urban Development	Residential, commercial, office/professional, industrial, and public/quasi-public.
Transient Lodging	Hotels/motels and recreational vehicle parks.
Service Uses	Banks and financial services, professional offices, medical services, day care facilities, educational facilities, and business support services.
Public Facilities	New fire stations, police/sheriff stations and substations, community policing centers, communications facilities (including antennae, towers, and equipment facilities), public administration centers, convention centers, theatres, community centers, concert venues, community gardens, and concession buildings.
Recreational Facilities (Public/Private)	Regional parks, neighborhood parks, dog parks, soccer fields, golf courses, indoor and outdoor sports centers, recreational centers, trails, golf courses, racetracks, campgrounds, and associated infrastructure including roads, bridges, parking areas, and restrooms.[a]
Funeral/Interment Services	Mortuaries, crematorium, columbaria, mausoleums, and similar services when in conjunction with cemeteries.
Other Urban/Suburban Uses	Activities consistent with the local general plan and zoning ordinances of the Placer County or the City of Lincoln that are similar in nature to the uses listed above.
Land Use consistent with rural and agricultural general plan designations	Urban and suburban general plan designations also allow land uses listed in [Plan] Table 2-7 [shown as Table 2-5 of this EIS/EIR].
Public facilities consistent with rural and agricultural general plan designations	Urban and suburban general plan designations also allow public facilities listed in [Plan] Table 2-8 [shown as Table 2-6 of this EIS/EIR].

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-6.

[a] Public use of trails and other park facilities is not a Covered Activity.

Table 2-5. Land Uses Consistent with Rural and Agricultural General Plan Designations

Category	Example Projects
Rural Residential	Single-family homes at a density of less than one dwelling per 2.3 acres, including privately owned roads, bridges, driveways, emergency access roads, clearing land for a range of rural residential land use activities, and other features commonly associated with rural dwelling units and use of land in rural settings.
Public/Private Recreational Facilities	Neighborhood parks, dog parks, soccer fields, golf courses, indoor and outdoor sports centers, recreational centers, open space and passive recreation facilities, trails, golf courses, racetracks, campgrounds, and associated infrastructure including roads, bridges, parking areas, and restrooms as well as maintenance facilities.
Private Facilities of Public Assembly	Churches, convention centers, theaters, rural recreational uses (e.g., equestrian facilities), community centers, concert venues, community gardens, and concession buildings.
Transportation Facilities	New capital facility construction, roads, road widening, shoulder improvements, bike lane construction, bridge replacement/widening, culverts, transit facilities, and park and ride facilities.
Agricultural Facilities and Uses	Plant nurseries, greenhouses, wine production, wineries, equestrian facilities, farm equipment sales, community centers, and outdoor retail sales. This may include nurseries, Christmas tree farms, ornamental plant nurseries, dairies, and feedlots, if a discretionary permit is required.
Food Production Facilities	Industrial/manufacturing uses associated with food/beverage production and agricultural support services.
Agricultural Uses Requiring Conditional/ Minor Use Permits	New intensive agriculture that requires a conditional/minor use permit consistent with local general plans, such as commercial equestrian facilities, dairy and swine operations, equestrian event facilities, and wineries.
Fuel Load Modifications and Treatments	Fuel load modifications and treatments consistent with the *Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*, Placer County Strategic Plan for Biomass Utilization Program, local ordinances, and Public Resources Code 4291.
Vegetation Management	Fuel reduction (including hand and mechanized removal and controlled burns), tree removal and pruning, grazing activities, exotic vegetation control/removal, hazardous tree work, weed abatement, and algae control in ponds. Permittees may use herbicides and pesticides in accordance with best management practices described in Chapter 6 of the Plan but shall be responsible for ensuring no take of Covered Species occurs as a result of herbicide and pesticide uses.
Public Facilities	New fire stations, police/sheriff stations and substations, community policing centers, libraries, communications facilities, public maintenance facilities (park maintenance and transportation corporation yards), and public administration centers. Solid waste facilities including transfer stations and recycling centers.
Non-Residential Development in Rural Areas	Telecom facilities and small utility facilities. Solar energy projects in rural areas are covered by the Plan as long as their effects on Covered Species and natural communities are consistent with the effects evaluation in Chapter 4 of the Plan.

Category	Example Projects
Other Rural Uses	Other rural uses, consistent with the local general plan and zoning ordinances of Placer County or the City of Lincoln, that are similar in nature to the uses listed above. Such proposed uses must share characteristics in common with the uses listed above, must not be of greater intensity or density, and must not generate more environmental effects.
Conservation Activities	Acquisition or operation of land for use as a biological reserve or mitigation bank.

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-7.

Table 2-6. Public Facilities Consistent with Rural and Agricultural General Plan Designations

Category	Example Projects
Water Supply Facilities	County, Placer County Water Agency, and City of Lincoln water supply and conveyance facilities and appurtenances to meet the needs of residential, commercial, office/professional public/quasi-public, and industrial uses.
Stormwater Management Facilities	Storm water conveyance systems, low impact development facilities, nonpoint source reduction, detention/retention facilities, outfall structures, and other drainage improvements.
Wastewater Management Facilities	Sewage-treatment plants, sanitary sewer systems and rehabilitation, force main and effluent line construction and maintenance, effluent discharge and reclaimed water line installation and maintenance, and pump station construction.
Solid Waste Management Facilities	Landfills, or transfer stations, material recovery facilities, small-scale energy production facilities (i.e., landfill gas utilization), and recycling centers.
Public and Private Utilities	Transmission lines, telecommunications lines, and gas lines subject to authority of Permittees. *Note: Actions by PG&E, Sacramento Municipal Utilities District, and Northern California Power Agency that are not directly subject to the authority of Permittees will not be covered under these permits.*
Other	Other public programs as described below under “Regional Public Programs.”

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-8.

Valley Rural Development

This category includes all ground- or habitat-disturbing projects and activities that occur in the Valley in component A2, Valley Conservation and Rural Development. This represents the Valley RAA and EXR but excludes the Valley PFG (see Figure 2-2). This 53,929-acre area is an arc of unincorporated County land around the west and north side of the Valley PFG. Covered Activities here include rural residential uses and the few types of agriculture-related activities (e.g., barns and agricultural processing facilities) that are subject to ministerial or discretionary approval by the County or City of Lincoln. Other agricultural activities such as grazing and the growing of rice, field crops, and orchard crops are not covered by the Plan. The Valley Conservation and Rural Development component is where most of the PCCP conservation objectives for the Valley would be implemented; PCA acquisition and management of reserve lands in the RAA is a Covered Activity described below.

Activities in A2, Valley Conservation and Rural Development, are based on designations in the general plans of the County and the City of Lincoln. These general plans, community plans, area plans, specific plans, and associated zoning designations may be changed over the course of the PCCP permit term to allow changes in allowed land use type so long as the following terms are met.

- The land use remains rural or agricultural or compatible with rural or agricultural general plan designations.
- Land use intensity is not increased.
- Residential density is not increased.

Activities that do not meet the criteria listed above are not prohibited by the Plan, but they are specifically not covered by the Plan. Project proponents who seek approvals or entitlements inconsistent with the above criteria cannot receive take coverage for their projects under the PCCP and must apply for take authorization directly from the relevant state or federal agencies. Rural development activities covered by the Plan are summarized in Table 2-5. Public agency programs are described below as they are covered in component A2, Valley Conservation and Rural Development.

Foothills Potential Future Growth

This category includes all ground- or habitat-disturbing projects and activities that occur in component A3—Foothills PFG (Figure 2-2). The 78,897 acres of the Foothills PFG comprise the unincorporated communities of Granite Bay, Penryn, Ophir, Mt. Pleasant, and Newcastle and adjacent portions of the I-80 corridor; the unincorporated area around the City of Auburn; and rural residential lands east of the Cities of Rocklin and Lincoln. The Foothills PFG boundary extends easterly to the Placer/El Dorado County line, hence area tabulations include 3,820 acres of Folsom Reservoir and the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area in which there is no coverage by this Plan.

Future growth in the Foothills PFG will be less in magnitude and density than in the Valley PFG. There will be portions of the I-80 corridor and the outlying areas around Auburn and along SR 49 that will develop at urban densities with urban land use. However, most of the Foothills PFG outside the urban core of Granite Bay, North Auburn/Bowman is zoned for very low-density, rural residential and agricultural development. It is expected that most of the land area subject to future growth will be rural residential (i.e., a density of one dwelling unit per acre to one dwelling unit per 10 acres). Acquisition of reserve lands and conservation activities may occur in the Foothills PFG, primarily in the Stream System to benefit covered fish.

Activities in the Foothills PFG are based on designations in the general plan and community plans of Placer County. The general plans, community plans, specific plans, and associated zoning designations may be changed over the course of the PCCP permit term to allow changes in allowed land use type, increases in land use intensity, and increases in residential density.

Urban land use activities are summarized in Table 2-4. Ongoing rural and agricultural land uses are also covered as summarized in Table 2-5. Public agency programs are described below as they are covered in Component A3—Foothills PFG.

Current plans that apply to the Foothills PFG include those listed below.

- *Granite Bay Community Plan.*
- *Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Community Plan.*

- *Ophir General Plan.*
- *Auburn/Bowman Community Plan.*
- *Bickford Ranch Specific Plan*.

Additional area plans, community plans, specific plans, and updates to comprehensive general plans would be developed over the course of the Plan's permit term.

Foothills Rural Development

This category includes all ground- or habitat-disturbing projects and activities that occur in the Foothills RAA and EXR, which are grouped into component A4—Foothills Conservation and Rural Development (Figure 2-2). This 30,237-acre area is north of the Foothills PFG, generally north and east of the intersection of Wise and Gladding Roads extending to north and west of the intersection of Hubbard and Bell Roads. The Plan boundary extends to the Placer/Yuba/Nevada County line, hence area tabulations include 837 acres of Camp Far West Reservoir, in which no Covered Activities would take place.

Most of the area consists of large parcels in woodland and rangeland and is currently zoned for large-parcel minimums. The category includes rural residential uses and agricultural activities which are subject to ministerial or discretionary approval by the County. Component A4—Foothills Conservation and Rural Development is where most of the PCCP conservation objectives for the Foothills would be implemented; PCA acquisition and management of reserve lands in the RAA is a Covered Activity described below.

Covered rural development activities are based on designations in the *Placer County General Plan*. This general plan and its associated zoning designations may be changed over the course of the PCCP permit term to allow changes in allowed land use type so long as the following terms are met.

- The land remains in rural or agricultural use or is compatible with rural or agricultural general plan designations.
- Land use intensity is not increased.
- Residential density is not increased.

Activities that do not meet the criteria listed above are not prohibited by the PCCP, but they are specifically not covered by the Plan. Project proponents who seek approvals or entitlements inconsistent with the above criteria cannot receive take coverage for their projects under the PCCP and must apply for take authorization directly from the relevant state or federal agencies.

Covered rural development activities are summarized in Table 2-5. Covered public agency programs are described below as they are covered in the Foothills Conservation and Rural Development component.

Regional Public Programs

Regional public programs provide and sustain the backbone infrastructure that supports public services and development within the Plan Area. Regional public programs involve O&M of existing facilities and construction and O&M for new facilities. These important public projects will serve existing and future Placer County and city of Lincoln residents during the permit term. The programs are typically funded through a variety of sources, and public projects are frequently listed

as capital improvement programs in adopted plans or programs. Projects could be carried out by a public agency/utility district or private developer on behalf of a public agency/utility district.

All regional public programs in Plan Area A are covered under the Plan. Specific activities/projects in Plan Area B are covered, as noted below. Regional public programs are divided into six categories by public facility provider such that similar activities are grouped together to help organize the effects analysis. These categories are transportation programs, wastewater programs, water supply programs, solid waste management facility programs, public recreation serving activities, and utility line construction and facility maintenance.

Transportation Programs

Transportation programs provide, enhance, and maintain infrastructure that supports existing development and new development. Transportation program activities covered under the Plan may occur anywhere within Plan Area A or component B1. Types of transportation activities proposed for coverage under the PCCP include those listed below.

- County and City road projects including new lanes, new connections, extensions, widening, and realignment projects. Projects may include trails for use by pedestrians and bicyclists.
- County and City roadway safety and operational improvement projects to roads including shoulder widening and straightening of curves. Modifications to vertical and horizontal alignments. Improvements at intersections and driveway encroachments, including constructing new turning lanes, adding signals, and lengthening of existing turning lanes. Also, intersection level-of-service improvements, grade separations, and sound wall installations. Projects may improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- County and City maintenance of new and existing transportation facilities, including appurtenant drainage and water quality infrastructure.
- New roads constructed in association with urban or rural development will usually be installed by the developer, and the County or city will assume ownership and maintenance.
- *Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035* and subsequent Metropolitan Transportation Plans (projects that are located in the Plan Area and under the jurisdiction of the Permit Applicants).
- Other yet undesignated major regional transportation projects.

Two major transportation projects—Placer Parkway and its interchanges and the I-80/SR 65 Interchange improvements—are planned for implementation within the permit term. Placer Parkway is planned be an approximately 15-mile-long, high-speed roadway of four to six lanes connecting SR 65 in western Placer County to SR 70/SR 99 in southern Sutter County. Placer Parkway is intended to provide access from rapidly developing parts of western Placer County to the I-5 corridor, downtown Sacramento, and Sacramento International Airport. The first phase of Placer Parkway, from SR 65 to Foothills Boulevard North, is under construction.

Modifications to the I-80/SR 65 interchange have not been finalized. Potential options include construction of a bi-directional high-occupancy vehicle direct connector between I-80 and SR 65; replacement of the eastbound I-80 to northbound SR 65 loop-connector with a flyover connector; structure widening of the East Roseville Viaduct and replacement of the Taylor Road overcrossing; and widening of the southbound SR 65 to westbound I-80 and the westbound I-80 to northbound SR 65 connectors with associated auxiliary lanes and ramp realignments. High-traffic volumes cause operational problems at the interchange, and traffic is expected to increase because of population

and employment growth. The improvements are intended to reduce congestion, improve traffic operations, and enhance safety.

Wastewater Programs

The County (through sewer maintenance districts) and the City of Lincoln operate and maintain multiple wastewater treatment facilities. The PCCP would provide coverage for Permit Applicant wastewater projects including treatment plant construction or expansion (including installation of pipelines), O&M, effluent discharge, force main and effluent line construction and maintenance, discharge and reclamation line installation, and pump station construction. Covered wastewater activities may occur anywhere within Plan Area A or component B1, Permittee Activity in Non-participating City Jurisdiction. Planned wastewater projects are listed in Table 2-7.

Pipeline O&M includes important activities within the Plan Area as they prevent deterioration of infrastructure necessary for wastewater conveyance. For purposes of the Plan, routine maintenance work is defined as work performed regularly (i.e., every 1–5 years) to maintain the functional and structural integrity of facilities.

Maintenance activities will generally require trenching around existing pipelines and conducting repairs or replacing segments of pipeline. The pipelines are located in both urban and rural areas. The maintenance activities that are proposed for coverage under the Plan include the following.

- Mechanical root removal, including the use of a drain snaking rotor with an auger which cuts at the tree root incursion with a rotating blade.
- Rehabilitation, repair, and/or replacement of pipelines and components including but not limited to air release valves, piping connections, joints, and appurtenances. Activities may include excavation to access pipelines.
- Sewer pipe sliplining, which is a trenchless method of rehabilitating pipelines to repair leaks or restore structural stability.
- Replacement/repair of buried service valves (including valves within creek embankments that may require excavation and minor bank stabilization activities).
- Maintenance of pipeline turnouts, including access to pipelines.
- Replacement/repair of appurtenances, fittings, utility hole covers, and meters.
- Wastewater vault maintenance which include minor repairs and debris removal.
- Wastewater meter inspections and repairs.
- Maintenance of pump stations, operation yards, utility yards, and corporation yards.
- Facility access road repairs and maintenance, which is limited to existing roads.

Table 2-7. Current Planned Wastewater Management Projects

Project Name	Description
Sewer Maintenance District 1 Service Area	
Auburn Ravine Force Main Rehab/Replacement	Rehabilitate pipe either by digging and replacing or using a less invasive pipe lining technology. An estimated 1.14 miles of pipe are expected to be lined or replaced. Also analyze other downstream trunk line restrictions.
Hwy 49 Siphon Relief	Install up to 3,350 feet of parallel pipe and/or a pump station. May include excavation, compaction, and paving.
Bell Road Lift Station	Panel and pump replacement.
Joeger Road Lift Station	Construct retaining wall, new control building, paving, new pumps and control panels.
Vineyard Lift Station	Evaluate lift station wet well and booster pumps.
Airport Lift Station	New wet well, pumps, panels, control building, lids, and generator.
Olive Grove Lift Station	Replace pumps and rails.
Rock Creek Realignment	Abandon about 1,600 feet of sewer pipe installed in the 1960s. Reroute about 1,600 feet of pipe adjacent to Rock Creek and reinstall about 1,600 feet of pipe along another route away from the creek bed. May include excavation, compaction, and paving.
Sewer Maintenance District 2 Service Area	
Trunkline Upsizing	Upsize 7,500 feet of 18-inch sewer pipe and 6,000 feet of 21-inch pipe. May be completed by digging and replacing or with less invasive pipe bursting technology. May include occasional work near creeks.
Wexford Lift Station	Replace generator, add transfer switch and overflow storage.
Winterhawk Lift Station	Replace lids, pumps, rails, panels, generator and add storage.
Maintenance Yard at Plant 2	Construct a building at the maintenance yard for equipment storage and maintenance.
Sewer Maintenance District 3 Service Area	
Regional Sewer, Phase II (Auburn Folsom Road, Loomis)	Upsize approximately 10,150 linear feet of 10-inch sewer pipe in the Sewer Maintenance District 2 (Granite Bay) collection system to provide for growth in the Sewer Maintenance District 3 area. Install new or additional pumps in the existing pump station.
E Street, Sheridan	
Chlorine Contact Basin	Construct new concrete chlorine contact basin.
Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	Construct new storage and treatment ponds to provide for growth. Construct a new wastewater treatment plant, including several concrete basins and buildings to house equipment to provide additional capacity. Construct significant upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant with new technology appropriate for anticipated water quality requirements.
Wastewater Treatment Plant Abandonment	Demolish existing wastewater treatment plant and construct a pump station and pipeline to Wheatland or Lincoln (about 4–8 miles); project may include a possible Bear River crossing.

Project Name	Description
Community of Sheridan	
Sheridan—Water System Improvements	Replace and upsize several thousand feet of potable water supply piping. Conversion of old piping to convey reclaimed water. Replacement of fire hydrants and placement of additional fire hydrants. Install approximately 300 potable water meters. Installation of a water storage tank not exceeding 1 million gallons in volume.
Nader Road and Community of Sheridan	
Sheridan—Water Import Project	Construction of a raw water transmission pipeline from the Bear River or Coon Creek to Nader Road area to provide surface water for Nader Road and Sheridan area.
Sunset Whitney Service Area	
Sunset Whitney—SASUG Pipeline	Build a gravity sewer system, force main, and pump station from Athens Road in Lincoln to either the Dry Creek wastewater treatment plant or the City of Lincoln's wastewater treatment plant.

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-9A.

Water Supply Programs

Permit Applicants PCWA, the City of Lincoln, and Placer County (for the Sheridan community) would supply present and future water users in the Plan Area and portions of the non-participating cities. These Permit Applicants would seek coverage for O&M of existing water supply facilities, future capital improvement projects within the Plan Area, and future construction of water supply facilities to meet the needs of residential, commercial, public facility, and industrial construction within the Plan Area (e.g., new water supply, treatment, storage, and delivery infrastructure as well as the O&M of new water supply, treatment, storage, and delivery infrastructure). O&M and planned capital improvement projects are described below and in Table 2-8. Covered PCWA water supply activities may occur anywhere within Plan Area A or in component B1, Permittee Activity in Non-participating City Jurisdiction or B2, PCWA Zone 1 O&M.

Operations and Maintenance Activities

The following O&M activities for raw water distribution are proposed for coverage under the Plan (a more comprehensive description specific to PCWA activities can be found in the PCWA *Natural Resources Management Plan for Raw Water Distribution System Operations and Maintenance Activities*; Appendix E of the Plan).

- Adjusting or replacing orifices, which control flow rates, at delivery points where customers divert water from PCWA canals.
- Yearly water delivery outages.
- Delivery schedule changes and routine flow adjustments throughout the canal system through use of check boards, temporary weirs, valve controls, and debris removal.
- Seasonal release of excess water at designated outlet locations for flood management during storm events.

- Clearing debris and sediment in canals, lining leaky canal sections, repairing damaged pipes and/or flumes, and controlling vegetative growth in the canals and on the canal berms through physical removal.
- Sediment removal from reservoirs and dams, reservoir and canal berm maintenance due to damage by muskrats, beavers, and otters.
- Periodic reservoir outages for canal cleaning, repair, or sediment removal.
- Repair and replacement of treated and raw water distribution facilities, including pipeline flushing and meter replacement.
- Canal lining, guniting, and piping.
- Maintenance and operation of water supply, treatment, and delivery infrastructure, including water storage tanks, pump stations, connecting transmission lines, and their appurtenances.

Capital Improvement Projects

The Permit Applicants would undertake a number of capital projects for new surface and groundwater water supply, treatment, storage, and delivery infrastructure over the PCCP permit term. These would include water supply projects, groundwater wells, transmission and distribution pipelines, metering station installations, water treatment and storage facilities, corporation yards, facilities and administration buildings, and pump stations.

Table 2-8. Water Supply Projects

Activity	Description
Placer County Water Agency	
Auxiliary Power Plant for Pumping American River Water Supply (Ophir)	Construct a power plant either diesel generator on Maidu Drive, Auburn or a co-generation plant at the future Ophir Water Treatment Plant.
Baltimore Ravine Pipeline (Auburn area)	Construct a pipeline from the future Werner Road Storage Tank to run through the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan Area and connect to the Auburn Water System.
Duncan Hill Pipeline (Ophir area)	Construct a pipeline within Millertown, Voyiatzes, and Duncan Hill Roads to connect the Auburn Water System to Ophir Road.
Foothill Water Treatment Plant—Ophir Road Pipeline	Connect the Foothill Water Treatment Plant in Newcastle to the Newcastle Water Storage Tank with a pipeline.
Groundwater Wells within Western Placer County (various locations in western Placer County)	Install new groundwater wells within western Placer County and improve the existing Tinker and Sunset Industrial Wells.
Lincoln Phase 3 Pipeline and Metering Station (West of Sierra College Boulevard near Twelve Bridges)	This project includes approximately 5,000 feet of pipeline to convey water from the existing Lincoln Metering Station to a new metering station.
Loomis Basin Tank (6.5 million gallons) and Connecting Pipelines (Lake Forest Drive, Loomis)	Construct a 6.5-million-gallon treated water storage tank, booster pump station, altitude valve vault, detention basin, access road, and approximately 13,000 feet of 12- and 18-inch diameter pipeline.

Activity	Description
Ophir Water Treatment Plant and Treated Water Pipeline Project	Construct a new water treatment plant on Ophir Road adjacent to the Auburn Tunnel Pump Station site. This project includes new treated and raw water pipelines within Ophir Road associated with the Auburn Tunnel Pump Station and proposed Ophir Water Treatment Plant.
Raw Water Diversion	Construct a diversion structure on Dry Creek in western Placer County.
Taylor Road Pipeline Phase 1 and 2 (Penryn)	Construct a pipeline within Taylor Road from the Penryn Tank to Sierra College Boulevard.
Water System Facilities Center (Ophir/Newcastle area)	Acquire land in Ophir/Newcastle area to be used for a future PCWA Water Systems Facilities Center. The facilities center would include a warehouse, fabrication shop, crew building, administration building, vehicle/equipment wash area, and fuel station.
Werner Road Storage Tanks (Ophir)	Construct two treated water storage tanks on PCWA property.
West Placer Corporation Yards (various locations in western Placer County)	Construct a corporation yard that would include a warehouse and lay-down area for storage of pipe and other construction equipment.
West Placer Pipeline, Storage Tanks, and Distribution Pump Stations (various locations in western Placer County)	Construct pipelines, water storage tanks and pump stations to distribute water to various new development in western Placer County. Most would be included in private development process.
West Placer Water Supply Projects	Develop a regional water supply for western Placer County. Two are being considered: • Expanded American River Pump Station: increase current diversion capability at the existing American River Pump Station located on the American River upstream of Folsom Reservoir. • Sacramento River Diversion: develop a new diversion facility on the Sacramento River upstream of the confluence of the American River and Sacramento River. This would include construction of water supply infrastructure components, including new or expanded diversions from the Sacramento or American Rivers, and new or expanded water treatment and pumping facilities, storage tanks, and major transmission and distribution pipelines. The operational direct effects of West Placer Water Supply Projects would not be a Covered Activity (and therefore are not assessed in the PCCP). However, development projects within the Plan Area that would use this new water supply are covered by the PCCP. Therefore, the indirect effects would be covered by the PCCP.

Activity	Description
Placer County—Sheridan Water Supply	
Sheridan—Water Supply and Distribution (Camp Far West Road, Sheridan)	Construct a new well, standby generator, and water tank for the Sheridan community water system.
Sheridan—Water System Improvements	Construct a new well, standby generator, and water tank for the Sheridan community water system.
Sheridan—Water System Improvements	Replace and upsize several thousand feet of potable water supply piping. Convert old piping to convey reclaimed water. Replace fire hydrants and place additional fire hydrants.
Sheridan—Water System Improvements	Install approximately 300 potable water meters. Install a water storage tank not exceeding 1 million gallons in volume.
Sheridan—Water Import Project	Construct a raw water transmission pipeline from the Bear River or Coon Creek to Nader Road area to provide surface water for the Nader Road and Sheridan area.
Sunset Whitney – SASUG Pipeline	Build a gravity sewer system, forcemain, and pump station from Athens Road in Lincoln to either the Dry Creek wastewater treatment plant or the City of Lincoln's wastewater treatment plant.

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-9B.
PCCP = Placer County Conservation Program.
PCWA = Placer County Water Agency.

Solid Waste Management Facility Programs

Solid waste management facility programs include O&M and construction of new facilities or expansion or existing facilities. Covered solid waste management facility program activities may occur anywhere within Plan Area A, and transfer stations built or operated by the County are permitted in component B1, Permittee Activity in Non-participating City Jurisdiction.

The PCCP would also provide coverage for post-closure maintenance activities and the future use of the property as open space that may include public recreation (i.e., trails), agriculture, grazing, or other compatible activities compatible with post-closure conditions that might be constructed. The solid waste management projects listed in Table 2-9 are expected to occur within permit term of the PCCP.

Covered Activities associated with these programs include operation and potential expansion of the Western Regional Sanitary Landfill, operation of the Materials Recovery Facility (or its potential relocation or construction of a new Materials Recovery Facility), and post-closure maintenance activities at the Loomis Landfill.

Table 2-9. Solid Waste Management Projects

Activity	Description
Loomis Landfill—Gas System Upgrades (Ong Place, near intersection of King Road and Penryn Road)	Replace and/or upgrade landfill gas components: blower, flare, piping, leachate and condensate collection and storage tanks, and supervisory control and data acquisition system.
Loomis Landfill—Decommission Landfill Gas Extraction System	Remove flare, blowers, compressors, condensate, storage, and piping and regrade and revegetate.
Loomis Landfill—Abandon Groundwater Monitoring Wells	Grout well casings and remove upper well casings below grade.
Loomis Landfill—Beneficial Use Project	Construct passive recreational facilities (parks, trail systems, minor structures/landscaping) on and/or around landfill property.
Western Regional Sanitary Landfill—Landfill Expansion	Revise final fill height of existing landfill near southeast corner of site. If eastern property is acquired, revise fill plan to include eastward expansion of landfill facilities.

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-9C.

Public Recreation–Serving Activities

Permit Applicants' recreation-serving activities—establishing and maintaining public recreation facilities—is a Covered Activity, although public use of the facilities is not. Public parks and recreation activities include construction of new parks, adaptation of existing public lands for enhanced recreational access, and O&M of all facilities. The locations of many County and most City of Lincoln parks and trail facilities where these Covered Activities would occur will be within, or close to, urban areas. Covered public parks and recreation-serving activities may occur anywhere within Plan Area A.

The effects of trail stream crossing are discussed below under *In-Stream Activities*. Passive forms of recreation may be allowed on some lands acquired for the Reserve System. Construction and maintenance of trails and other recreation facilities in the Reserve System are discussed below under *Conservation Programs*.

Covered Activities include construction of new County and City of Lincoln parks, which would include trails, recreation facilities, and other park infrastructure including restrooms, parking areas, maintenance facilities, restrooms, wildlife observation platforms facilities, and educational kiosks. To the extent possible, recreational facilities would use existing infrastructure such as trails and fire or ranch roads.

Maintenance of these facilities includes trail and road maintenance, installation of fencing, facility maintenance, prescribed burns, pond maintenance (including draining and dredging), and invasive vegetation management. In the unincorporated area, parks in rural settings will also include controls on feral pig introductions. Vegetation management activities include the removal of exotic species, planting of native vegetation, and livestock grazing. Trail maintenance includes grading, clearing, brushing, erosion control, paving, re-paving, and trail restoration. If a park is to be included as part of the Reserve System, details for maintenance would be provided within the Reserve Management Plan.

Utility Line Construction and Facility Maintenance

This category of Covered Activities relates to pipelines and cables in the Plan Area that are maintained by the Permit Applicants or by public or private utilities, natural gas companies, petroleum companies, or telecommunications companies acting under Permit Applicant authority, including franchise and encroachment within Permit Applicant–owned roadways or other rights-of-way. Private companies also operate and maintain electric substations, gas valve stations, radio broadcasting towers, and cellular telephone towers, among other facilities. Covered utility line construction and facility maintenance activities may occur anywhere within Plan Area A.

Public and private utility activities that are directly subject to the authority of a Permit Applicant would be a Covered Activity. Public and private utility activities that are regulated by or subject to the authority of another entity such as the California Public Utility Commission would not be covered by the Plan. Some energy or water utilities may already have their own ITPs or NCCP permits for their activities (e.g., the Pacific Gas and Electric Company is developing its own HCP for O&M activities) and would therefore not require coverage under the Plan. A utility may request coverage under the Plan for routine maintenance and repair of existing utilities within the Plan Area as a Participating Special Entity.

Maintenance or repair of linear facilities may involve vegetation clearing (e.g., mowing, disking, herbicide spraying, tree trimming) or excavation of underground utility lines for inspection, maintenance, or replacement. The routine maintenance of utility lines in the Plan Area is a Covered Activity under the Plan, except for the use of pesticides, which is not covered by the federal permit. Coverage for utility line or facility maintenance that takes place in the Reserve System would be decided on a case-by-case basis, and the Permit Applicant may need to consult with the Resource Agencies as needed.

In-Stream Activities

The term *in-stream activities* is defined for the purposes of the Plan as those occurring within streams, typically the top of the bank or the outer edge of the riparian canopy, whichever is more landward. This category addresses projects that occur within streams and may result in effects on a stream, reservoir, or on-stream ponds. This category includes O&M activities in the stream channel, along the stream bank, and on adjacent lands at the top-of-bank within the riparian corridor. Covered in-stream activities may occur anywhere within Plan Area A. The flood control and water conservation projects listed in Table 2-10 are expected to occur within permit term of the PCCP.

In-stream activities that would be covered under the Plan include the following.

- Urban and rural development activities described above that overlap with the Stream System and the adjacent riparian corridor, including transportation, water supply, wastewater management, and stormwater management.
- Construction, replacement, and repair of bridges for cars and trucks, trains, and pedestrians.
- Flood control and storm water management including water retention/detention facilities construction, streambed and channel debris and vegetative control and removal, channel lining of canals, canal realignment, culvert replacement, maintenance of access roads, beaver dam removal, stormwater conveyance facilities and outfall structures, erosion/sediment control, bank stabilization, and floodplain enhancement.

- Maintenance of existing flood protection and stormwater facilities such as drainage improvements, existing dams, armored creeks, bypass channels, and stormwater ponds. Maintenance includes trail repair, trash removal, fence installation, sediment removal (primarily in reservoirs), and road, culvert, and minor bridge repair.
- Natural resource protection such as bank stabilization projects, restoration to reduce erosion, and fish passage enhancements.
- Erosion control projects or storm damage prevention projects that do not create new permanent structures or hardscape on the creek bank or channel. This category includes temporary flood-fighting activities to prevent storm damage (e.g., temporary flood-fighting would include sandbagging and earth fill levees).
- Vegetation management for exotic species removal and native vegetation plantings including the use of livestock grazing and prescribed burns.
- Reservoir fluctuations including drawdown and filling for maintenance or operational purposes (i.e., not associated with a capital project).
- In-stream gauge station monitoring (installation and maintenance).
- O&M of in-stream water system facilities.
- Implementation of resource management plans.
- Implementation of the riverine and riparian conservation and management strategies including cleaning/removing sediment from gravel beds and augmenting gravel in stream beds, among other in-stream conservation activities.

As may be noted from this list, some in-stream projects are intended to mitigate, enhance, or restore stream and riparian functions. A number of restoration activities are underway in the Plan Area and more would be expected in the future. Water utility/water supply O&M activities associated with habitat enhancement and restoration that would be conducted inside and outside the Reserve System are identified below under *Conservation Programs*.

Table 2-10. Flood Control and Water Conservation Projects

Activity	Description
Scilacci Farms Regional Retention Project	Stormwater retention project with wetlands and agricultural conservation easements located North and South of Coon Creek immediately East of the Sutter County line.
Regional Retention Projects within Cross Canal Watershed	Stormwater retention projects with wetlands and agricultural conservation easements within floodplain areas of streams within the general Cross Canal Watershed, including Pleasant Grove Creek, Curry Creek, Auburn Ravine, Markham Ravine, and Coon Creek.
Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan—Regional Detention Projects	Both on- and off-channel stormwater detention projects located throughout the Dry Creek Watershed.
Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan—Regional Floodplain Restoration Projects	Floodplain restoration/reconnection projects located throughout the Dry Creek Watershed.
Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan—Bridge/Culvert Replacement Projects	Bridge and culvert improvement projects throughout the Dry Creek Watershed.

Activity	Description
Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan—Conveyance and Channel Improvement Projects	Improvements to underground conduits, artificial channels, and natural channels throughout the Dry Creek Watershed.
ALERT Flood Warning System of Precipitation and Stream Level Gages	Installation, monitoring, and maintenance of remote stream data sensors throughout Dry Creek and Cross Canal Watersheds.
Dry Creek Watershed Stream Channel Maintenance Program	Stream channel clearing and conveyance maintenance activities throughout flood-prone locations within Dry Creek Watershed.
Operations, Monitoring, and Maintenance activities at the District's Miners Ravine Off-Channel Detention Basin Facility	Routine annual maintenance and monitoring as well as non-routine maintenance and operation activities at the District's facility in Roseville.

Source: Appendix A:Table 2-9D.

Conservation Programs

PCCP Management Activities

Activities associated with implementation of the Plan's conservation strategy are included in PCCP Covered Activities. The management activities that would be used on the Reserve System are summarized below and described in detail in Chapter 5 of the Plan. Most of these activities would take place within the Reserve System assembled by the Plan. Some conservation activities may also occur outside of the Reserve System but within the Plan Area. In-stream conservation measures described below under *Conservation Strategy* overlap with the PCCP management activities discussed in this section.

Reserve Management and Habitat Enhancement, Restoration, Creation, and Translocation

This category includes all management measures, including habitat restoration and creation, required by the Plan or other measures that might be necessary to achieve Plan biological goals and objectives. The Plan's conservation strategy sets forth requirements for habitat enhancement, restoration, and creation.

Activities in this category may involve soil disturbance, removal of undesirable plants, and limited grading. All habitat enhancement, restoration, and creation activities conducted within the Reserve System that are consistent with the requirements of the Plan are covered by the permits. Habitat enhancement, restoration, and creation activities may also be conducted outside the Reserve System so long as they are consistent with the Plan. Examples of habitat enhancement, restoration, creation, and reserve management activities include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Management measures identified in Chapter 5 of the Plan intended to maintain, enhance, restore, and create habitat for Covered Species (Table 2-11 lists Covered Species).
- Vegetation management, including management of invasive plants, using livestock grazing, mowing, manual labor, and/or prescribed burning.

- Collection of cysts from covered branchiopods (i.e., conservancy fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp) for depositing in a cyst bank with Wildlife Agency approval.
- Relocation of Covered Species from affected sites and within reserves where effects would be unavoidable and relocation would have a high likelihood of success. This is expected to occur in very limited circumstances, except for collection of seeds and cysts of covered vernal pool plants and branchiopods, respectively (see above bullet points).
- Demolition or removal of structures, roads, or constructed livestock ponds to increase public safety or to restore habitat.
- Control of introduced predators (e.g., feral cats and dogs, pigs, nonnative fish, and bullfrogs).
- Management activities for burrowing owls such as population augmentation and owl relocation for conservation purposes.
- Surveys and monitoring for mitigation and restoration/habitat enhancement projects.
- Use of motorized vehicles for patrolling, maintenance, and resource management activities in the Reserve System.
- Use of mechanized equipment for construction, maintenance, and resource management projects in the Reserve System.
- Installation of wells, canals, irrigation lines and other water conveyance facilities, the water from which would be used to fill stock ponds, troughs, and other storage facilities for cattle.
- Travel through the Reserve System by habitat managers, Wildlife Agency personnel. Off-trail travel will be kept to the minimum amount necessary to perform maintenance, management, or patrol activities.
- Fire management including prescribed burning, mowing, and fuel-break establishment and maintenance (see *Fuel Management*, below).
- Collection and processing (e.g., chipping for transportation and trimming and bucking of logs) of waste biomass materials that result from fuel management activities.
- Hazardous materials remediation, such as appropriate closure of underground storage tanks, soil remediation, and cleanup of illegal dumping.
- Repair of existing facilities damaged by floods, landslide, or fire.
- Restoration and enhancement projects in vernal pool grasslands, streams, riparian areas, wetlands, and uplands.
- Fish passage enhancements including removal of fish barriers, such as low flow crossings and development of fish screens.

Monitoring and Research

Biologists would need to conduct surveys for all Covered Species, natural communities, and other resources within the Reserve System on a regular basis for monitoring, research, and adaptive management purposes. These surveys may require physical capture and inspection of specimens to identify and mark individuals or measure physical features, all of which may be considered take under ESA or CESA. Research conducted by biologists on reserves in support of the Plan would be

covered by the permits as long as the research projects have negligible effects on populations of Covered Species.

Fuel Management

Each Reserve System unit would have a fire management component included within the PCCP Reserve Management Plans. The fire management component would describe site-specific conditions and actions required to (1) reduce existing fuel loads, (2) re-introduce fire as a natural process of the ecosystem (if permissible), (3) minimize environmental effects and protect sensitive resources, (4) minimize the impacts from fire incident response measures, and (5) enhance and/or restore natural community characteristics.

Preservation of reserve lands in perpetuity would require that they be managed to reduce their susceptibility to catastrophic wildfire as well as to meet the ecological objectives of the PCCP.

Recreation

The PCCP would develop limited recreation opportunities within the Reserve System according to the requirements in Chapter 5 of the Plan (see *Content of Reserve Unit Management Plans*) and Chapter 6 of the Plan (see Reserve Management Conditions 1–3). These activities are expected to be minimal but may include trails and associated infrastructure. The PCCP limits future reserves to 100 miles of trails with an average width of 6 feet. All trails and recreation facilities would be constructed to minimize effects on Covered Species and vegetation communities and in compliance with the guidelines in Chapter 6 of the Plan.

Recreational uses would only be allowed within the Reserve System if the PCA determines that they are consistent with the biological goals and objectives of the Plan and are consistent with a reserve unit management plan approved by the Wildlife Agencies. Allowed uses would be specified in the reserve unit management plan and may include hiking, non-motorized bicycle riding, walking, horseback riding, fishing and hunting, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation on designated trails at appropriate sites or other similar low intensity activities.

Reserve System Infrastructure

This category includes construction, maintenance, and use of facilities needed to manage the reserves, including but not limited to reserve field offices, maintenance yards, maintenance sheds, workshops, storage space (e.g., for machinery or vehicles) carports, driveways, roads, bridges, fences, gates, wells, stock tanks, stock ponds, and a native plant nursery to support restoration and enhancement projects. All reserve management structures would be constructed to minimize effects on Covered Species and vegetation communities and in compliance with the guidelines in Chapter 5 of the Plan and conditions on Covered Activities described in Chapter 6 of the Plan. Facilities existing at the time of land acquisition would be used whenever feasible.

Non-PCCP Placer County Conservation Programs

Placer County administers ongoing conservation and resource management programs (e.g., management of wildfire fuel) that are separate from but complementary to the PCCP. The actions conducted by Placer County to implement *Placer Legacy* and the *Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Ecosystem Restoration Plan, Dry Creek Comprehensive Resource Management Plan, Pleasant Grove/Curry Creek Ecosystem Restoration Plan*, and *Dry Creek Greenway Vision Plan* are similar to

many of those that would be conducted by the PCA to implement the PCCP conservation strategy. These actions, which are also Covered Activities, would occur primarily outside the Reserve System.

Covered Species

Covered Species are species for which take would be authorized as well as species that would be conserved and protected by the Plan. The Plan proposes 14 special-status species for coverage under the ITPs and NCCP permit as shown in Table 2-11 below.

Table 2-11. Plan Covered Species

		Status	
Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal	State
Birds			
Swainson's hawk	*Buteo swainsoni*	BCC	ST
California black rail	*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*	BCC	ST & FP
Western burrowing owl	*Athene cunicularia*	BCC	SSC
Tricolored blackbird	*Agelaius tricolor*	BCC	SC
Reptiles			
Giant garter snake	*Thamnophis gigas*	FT	ST
Western pond turtle	*Emys marmorata*		SSC
Amphibians			
Foothill yellow-legged frog	*Rana boylii*		SC
California red-legged frog	*Rana draytonii*	FT	SSC
Fish			
Central Valley steelhead—Distinct Population Segment	*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*	FT	
Central Valley fall/late fall-run Chinook salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit	*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*	SC	SSC
Invertebrates			
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle	*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*	FT	
Conservancy fairy shrimp	*Branchinecta conservatio*	FE	
Vernal pool fairy shrimp	*Branchinecta lynchi*	FT	
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp	*Lepidurus packardi*	FE	

Status:

Federal

BCC = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Birds of Conservation Concern.
FE = Federally Listed as Endangered.
FT = Federally Listed as Threatened.
SC = National Marine Fisheries Service Species of Concern.

State of California

FP = Fully Protected.
SC = State Candidate.
SE = State Listed as Endangered.
SSC = California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern.
ST = State Listed as Threatened.

Conservation Strategy

The PCCP conservation strategy and its components are part of the proposed action. The conservation strategy, defined in Chapter 5 of the Plan, is designed to provide for conservation of landscapes, natural communities, and Covered Species. The conservation strategy defines overarching biological goals, sets measurable objectives including quantified geographic acquisition targets, and defines implementation actions that would achieve these goals. The strategy comprises four main conservation measures, as described below.

Reserve System

The Plan proposes to progressively establish a large system of interconnected blocks of land. Over the 50-year permit term for the PCCP, the PCA would acquire approximately 47,300 acres that would augment the approximately 16,000 acres of existing conservation lands. Cumulatively, 38% of the present natural and semi-natural landscape in Plan Area A would ultimately be subject to conservation management. The Reserve System would provide a means for protecting, managing, enhancing, and restoring or creating the natural communities and habitats that support Covered Species. The Reserve System would be located mainly in the western and northern Valley and in the northern Foothills, regionally separated from future urban and suburban growth. The geographic aspect of the conservation strategy is expressed in Figure 2-3.

Stream Protection

The conservation strategy and associated CARP provide protection of the Stream System everywhere in Plan Area A. Conservation actions in, and avoidance of, the Stream System contribute both to Covered Species' habitats and connectivity to the Reserve System. The term *Stream System* is defined in the Plan as the stream channel itself (wet or dry) and the surrounding areas: (1) any area subject to flooding in a 100-year event as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (2005) or as determined by hydrologic analysis based on an engineering site survey (whichever is more accurate), or the area in #2 as follows, whichever is greater; (2) the outermost limit of a variable-width buffer measured outward from the edge of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) on streams mapped in the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) (so-called blueline streams) as listed in Plan Table 3-4; and (3) the area within 50 feet of streams not named in Plan Table 3-4, but which are shown as "blueline" streams on U.S. Geological Survey quad maps as specified in California Public Resources Code Section 4528 and as located on the NHD (for a detailed definition, see Section 3.2.7 of the Plan, provided in Appendix A).

Wetland Conservation and No Overall Net Loss of Wetland Values and Functions

The PCCP provides for protection, enhancement, restoration, and creation of the aquatic/wetland complex natural community. The conservation strategy provides for the protection of surrounding upland necessary to sustain the hydrological function of protected, restored, and created wetlands. The PCCP anticipates loss of wetlands, including vernal pool wetlands. Restoration and creation of wetlands would specifically provide in-kind compensatory habitat in the RAA or Stream System in order to achieve conservation of the Covered Species and no overall net loss of wetland habitat through the term of the permit.

Avoidance and Minimization

To avoid and minimize take, Covered Activities would comply with specific conditions that apply to certain natural communities and species. The conditions are listed in Chapter 6 of the Plan. For the most part, it is anticipated that (1) conservation actions would take place on lands generally set aside for conservation purposes, (2) implementation of the Reserve System and CARP would accomplish avoidance and minimization on a cumulative, regional scale, and (3) avoidance and minimization in the PFG would be focused only on specific resources and lands meeting the avoidance requirements of the Plan.

Conservation Measures

The conservation measures are designed to protect, enhance, and restore natural communities and the Covered Species habitats they support; improve the ecological function of natural communities; avoid, minimize, and compensate for effects on Covered Species associated with implementation of Covered Activities; and provide for the conservation of Covered Species in the Plan Area. The conservation measures would collectively achieve the Plan biological goals and objectives. Because of the large scale and long timeframe over which the PCCP would be implemented, the conservation measures are also designed to be flexible to allow for adaptive management with increasing knowledge over time. Tables 2-12 and 2-13 summarize the conservation measures, the magnitude of their application (typically in acres), their general locations, and the physical actions expected under each conservation measure.[8] Table 2-14 and 2-15 summarize the required acreage of protection of existing natural communities and constituent habitat within each conservation zone to achieve the objectives of Conservation Measure (CM) 1. Conservation Zones are shown on Figure 2-3. Table 2-15 presents the conservation for Covered Species to achieve the objectives of CM3.

[8] Chapter 5 of the Plan details the physical actions expected under the conservation measures.

Table 2-12. Plan Conservation Measures

CM Number: Title	Description	Location
CM1: Establish Reserve System	This CM describes the Plan's acquisition requirements for Reserve System assembly, including reserve design criteria and acre commitments for natural communities and Covered Species habitats; during implementation, the PCA will turn to this conservation measure for guidance regarding prioritization and acquisition of lands for the Reserve System (see Table 2-13).	Figure 2-2 (primarily the RAAs)
CM2: Manage and Enhance Reserve System	This CM describes the actions necessary to maintain and improve the ecological conditions of natural communities and Covered Species habitat on the Reserve System and along streams outside the Reserve System; during implementation, the PCA will turn to this measure for guidance regarding the preparation and implementation of Reserve Management Plans, which will include site-specific management and enhancement actions.	Entire Plan Area
CM3: Restore and Create Natural Communities and Covered Species Habitat	This CM describes restoration and creation actions the PCA will implement to increase the acres of natural communities and Covered Species habitat; during implementation, the PCA will turn to this measure for guidance related to restoration/creation requirements and the preparation and implementation of site-specific restoration/creation plans.	Figure 2-2 (primarily the RAAs)
CM4: Plan Area-Wide Actions	This CM describes actions the PCA will implement throughout the Plan Area outside of the Reserve System. These actions include development and implementation of Low Impact Development Standards and outreach to private landowners regarding land use practices and technical assistance for grants to improve and maintain wetlands and ponds on private lands.	Entire Plan Area

Source: Appendix A:Chapter 5.

Table 2-13. Physical Actions Needed to Implement Plan Conservation Measures

Conservation Measure	Physical Actions Required to Implement Measure
CM1: Establish Reserve System	• Acquisition of land in fee title, conservation easement, or purchase of credits at an approved Bank.
CM2: Manage and Enhance Reserve System	• Vegetation management through grazing by livestock, mowing, hand removal, prescribed burns, and herbicide application that avoids take of listed species. • Removal or retrofit of fences that serve as barriers or hazards to wildlife movement. • Improvement of culverts and other road crossing points to make them more attractive to and safer for wildlife. • Management of grassland vegetation and thatch to facilitate dispersal of amphibians. ***Management and enhancement actions for vernal pool complex and grassland natural communities may include the following.*** • Management of grassland through grazing, disking, controlled burns, hand-pulling, and other practices. • Removal or control of nonnative vegetation in restored and created vernal pools. • Prescribed burning for fire management. • Mechanical recontouring of vernal pool basins. • Removal or modification of ditches, raised roads, trails, and other barriers to restore surface flow to vernal pool basins. • Construction of drainage ditches or retention basins to divert surface runoff from sources which adversely affect vernal pools. • Removing livestock from vernal pool complexes during late spring (when livestock tend to congregate in pools to cool-off), providing stock ponds and well water pumped into troughs as supplements to vernal pools as drinking sources, and utilizing types of cattle that are less likely than others to congregate in and around pools. • Limitation of ground squirrel control measures (poisoning, hunting, and trapping) in some areas. ***Management and enhancement actions for aquatic/wetlands complex vegetation control*** • Removal and/or control of nonnative, invasive vegetation through grazing, prescribed burns, herbicide application, and hand and mechanical removal. • Installation of fencing, where ecologically appropriate, to manage grazing and exclude feral pigs. • Removal of sediment and repairs to improve water retention. • Eradication of nonnative predators through trapping, habitat manipulation, hand capturing, or other methods. • Creation of openings in vegetation through mowing and focused disking. • Installation of coarse woody debris or anchored basking platforms in wetlands. • Provision of vegetative cover through planting emergent vegetation.

Conservation Measure	Physical Actions Required to Implement Measure
	• Maintenance of appropriate water depths and hydrological cycles. • Use of filter and buffer strips around wetlands and minimization of the use of herbicides to remove or reduce point and nonpoint sources of water pollution. • Provision of access for staff of the Placer Mosquito and Vector Control District to monitor and control mosquitoes when warranted. ***Management and enhancement actions for riverine and riparian complex vegetation control*** • Removal and modification of barriers to fish passage including beaver dams, seasonal flashboard dams, pipeline crossings and concrete dams. • Improvement of in-channel features by reconstructing channel geometry, removal of nonnative vegetation (and re-vegetation with native plants), installation of large woody material, removal of armored levees and replacement with earthen levees, and replenishment and/or cleaning of spawning gravel. • Control of nonnative animal species through targeted harvest programs, modification of in-water structures that attract predatory fish, and improvement of in-stream refuge for juvenile salmonids. ***Management and enhancement actions for oak woodland natural communities*** • Planting and protecting seedlings and saplings. • Implementing prescribed grazing programs. • Implementing prescribed burning as part of a fire management regime. • Controlling nonnative plants by disking, mowing, mulching, hoeing, or use of herbicides. • Controlling nonnative animals that feed on acorns, seedlings, and saplings through development of a feral pig control program. ***Management and enhancement actions for agricultural and other open space*** • Maintenance or restoration of patches of emergent vegetation and grassland on rice fields and borders of waterways. • Development and implementation of a water management plan on rice lands in support of giant garter snake habitat. • Implementation of integrated pest management on rice lands.
CM3: Restore and Create Natural Communities and Covered Species Habitat	• Restoration or creation of vernal pool complex by excavating or recontouring historical vernal pools and swales to natural bathymetry. • Restoration of grasslands consisting of seeding, planting, and associated activities such as burning, disking, mowing, mulching, and in limited circumstances, herbicide treatment. • Restoration or creation of aquatic/wetland complex by recontouring hydrological features, planting native vegetation, and implementing BMPs to reduce the potential for mosquito production. • Acquisition and enhancement of riverine and riparian complex by removing/modifying barriers to fish passage, improvement of in-channel features, and control of nonnative animal species.

Conservation Measure	Physical Actions Required to Implement Measure
	• Restoration of oak woodland by planting acorns and seedlings, controlling nonnative plants and animals, implementing progressive livestock management, developing or augmenting approaches to offset sudden oak death, and incorporating fire into management regimes.
CM4: Plan Area–Wide Actions	• The actions associated with this conservation measure are administrative in nature and would not, in and of themselves, require physical, ground-disturbing activities.

Source: Appendix A:Chapter 5.

Table 2-14. Acquisition Commitments (acres)

Communities and Constituent Habitats	Total in Plan Area A	Acquired Acres		Existing Protected Areas	Available for Acquisition[c]	Acquisition Commitment + Existing Protected Areas as % of Total in Plan Area A
		Acquisition Commitment [a]	*Estimated Acquisition (Flexible)*[b]			
Vernal Pool Complex (VPC)	**45,065**	**17,000**		**7,067**	**20,115**	**53%**
Vernal Pool Constituent Habitats	2,237	790	–	555	882	60%
Vernal Pool Wetland	790	250	–	226	303	60%
Seasonal Wetland in VPC	845	–	*304*	209	327	61%
Seasonal Swales	602	–	*236*	120	253	59%
Vernal Pool Complex Uplands[b]	42,829	–	*16,210*	6,512	19,233	–
Grassland	**34,760**	**7,150**	**–**	**1,097**	**13,635**	**24%**
Aquatic/Wetland Complex	**3,433**	**600**	**–**	**591**	**1,594**	**35%**
Aquatic/Wetland Constituent Habitats	*2,850*	586	–	*407*	*1,321*	
Fresh Emergent Marsh	1,112	256	–	193	540	40%
Lacustrine	1,061	–	*181*	93	452	26%
Non-VP Seasonal Wetland	677	–	*148*	121	328	40%
Aquatic/Wetlands Complex Uplands[b]	583	–	*14*	184	273	–
Riverine/Riparian Complex	**6,685**	**2,200**	**–**	**458**	**3,390**	**40%**
Riverine/Riparian Constituent Habitats	*5,519*	1,718	–	*412*	2,732	
Riverine	868	–	*308*[d]	126	425	50%
Riparian	4,651	1,410	–	286	2,306	36%
Riverine/Riparian Complex Uplands[b]	1,167	–	*482*	46	658	

Communities and Constituent Habitats	Total in Plan Area A	Acquired Acres		Existing Protected Areas	Available for Acquisition[c]	Acquisition Commitment + Existing Protected Areas as % of Total in Plan Area A
		Acquisition Commitment [a]	*Estimated Acquisition (Flexible)[b]*			
Valley Oak Woodland	**1,364**	**190**	**–**	**21**	**396**	**15%**
Oak Woodland	**50,870**	**10,110**	**–**	**6,122**	**14,946**	**32%**
All Natural Communities	**142,179**	**37,250**	**–**	**15,357**	**54,075**	**37%**
Agriculture	**24,954**	**10,050**	**–**	**232**	**14,706**	**41%**
Rice Agriculture	19,580	2,000	–	185	14,430	11%
Field Agriculture	2,757	–	–	10	221	–
Orchard and Vineyard Agriculture	2,618	–	–	37	54	–
All Agriculture		**–**	**8,050**	**–**	**–**	**–**
Non-Natural	**42,698**	**–**	**–**	**369**	**–**	**–**
Managed Open Water	5,317	–	–	–	–	–
Rural Residential	18,871	–	–	32	–	–
Urban	18,510	–	–	337	–	–
Total All Land	**209,832**	**47,300[e]**	**–**	**15,957**	**68,781**	**37%**

Source: Appendix A:Table 5-2.

[a] Acquisition commitment: The acquisition of land, through purchase of fee title or conservation easement, to protect natural communities or Covered Species' habitat.

[b] Estimate of flexible acquisition is an estimate of the area of constituent habitats that will be acquired in reserves incidental to and as part of the land acquired as the acquisition commitment. More or less of these constituent habitats can be acquired as long as the acquisition commitments for communities and other constituent habitats are met.

[c] Available for acquisition: The extent of RAA land and PFG Stream System after direct loss from Covered Activities is deducted.

[d] Includes 88.6 stream miles of riverine identified in Objective RAR-1-2. The Plan requires 88.6 miles of protection.

[e] Some values in the table may not sum exactly to the total due to rounding. The values in the acquisition commitment column are fixed regardless of any rounding errors.

Table 2-15. Natural Community and Constituent Habitat Protection Commitments (acres)

Communities and Constituent Habitats	Total in Plan Area A	Acquired Acres		Conservation Zones (estimated/non-required in italics[b])				
		Total Protection Commitment[a]	*Estimated Protection (Flexible)[b]*	Valley North RAA	Valley South RAA	Valley Anywhere[c]	Foothills North RAA	Foothills Anywhere[b]
Vernal Pool Complex (VPC)	**45,065**	**17,000**	**–**	**8,430**	**5,170**	**3,400**	**–**	**–**
Vernal Pool Constituent Habitats	2,237	790	–	392	240	158	–	–
Vernal Pool Wetland	790	250	–	124	76	50	–	–
Seasonal Wetland in VPC	845	–	*304*	*153*	*94*	*62*	–	–
Seasonal Swales	602	–	*236*	*115*	*71*	*46*	–	–
Vernal Pool Complex Uplands	42,829	–	*16,210*	*8,038*	*4,930*	*3,242*	–	–
Grassland	**34,760**	**2,740**	**–**	**160**	**120**	**70**	**2,000**	**390**
Aquatic/Wetland Complex	**3,433**	**–**	***600***	**210**	**110**	**80**	**130**	**70**
Aquatic/Wetland Constituent Habitats	2,850	586	–	210	110	80	121	65
Fresh Emergent Marsh	1,112	256	–	98	51	37	45	24
Lacustrine	1,061	–	*181*	*57*	*30*	*22*	*47*	*26*
Non-VP Seasonal Wetland	677	–	*148*	*55*	*29*	*21*	*29*	*15*
Aquatic/Wetlands Complex Uplands	583	–	*14*	–	–	–	*9*	*5*
Riverine/Riparian Complex	**6,685**	–	***2,200***	**910**	**370**	**320**	**310**	**290**
Riverine/Riparian Constituent Habitats	5,519	1,718	–	696	283	245	256	239
Riverine	868	–	*308*[f]	*150*	*61*	*53*	*23*	*22*
Riparian	4,651	1,410	–	546	222	192	233	218
Riverine/Riparian Complex Uplands	1,167	–	*482*	*214*	*87*	*75*	*54*	*51*
Valley Oak Woodland	**1,364**	**190**	**–**	**70**	**–**	**20**	**–**	**100**
Oak Woodland	**50,870**	**10,110**	**–**	**70**	**20**	**20**	**8,820**	**1,180**
All Natural Communities	**142,179**	**32,840**	–	**9,850**	**5,790**	**3,910**	**11,260**	**2,030**

Communities and Constituent Habitats	Total in Plan Area A	Acquired Acres: Total Protection Commitment[a]	Acquired Acres: *Estimated Protection (Flexible)*[b]	Conservation Zones (estimated/non-required in italics[b]): Valley North RAA	Valley South RAA	Valley Anywhere[c]	Foothills North RAA	Foothills Anywhere[b]
Agriculture	**24,954**	**8,240**	–	–	–	**8,240**	–	–
Rice	19,580	2,000	–	–	–	2,000	–	–
Field	2,757	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Orchard	2,618	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Any Agriculture[d]		–	*6,240*	–	–	*6,240*	–	–
Total All Protection[e]		**41,080**		**9,850**	**5,790**	**12,150**	**11,200**	**2,090**

Source: Appendix A:Table 5-3.

[a] The protection commitment is all of a community acquired (see Table 5-2 of the Plan for acquisition commitments) minus any area converted to another community through restoration. The protection commitment does not include any areas added through restoration (see Table 5-4 of the Plan).

[b] Estimate of flexible protection is an estimate of the area of community or constituent habitats that will be protected in reserves incidental to and as part of the land acquired as the protection commitment. More or less of these constituent habitats can be acquired as long as the protection commitments are met. The protection commitments are also flexible within the conservation zones for constituent habitats and upland components of complexes with flexible protection estimates.

[c] Anywhere protection commitments can be acquired anywhere within the Valley conservation zone or PFG for "Valley Anywhere" and the Foothills conservation zone or PFG for "Foothills Anywhere." See Section 5.3.1.3.6, *Conservation Zones*, of the Plan for details.

[d] Any Agriculture: Includes rice, field crops, orchards, and vineyards and may be substituted by any natural community.

[e] Some values may not sum exactly to the total due to rounding. The values in the Total Protection Commitment column are fixed regardless of any rounding errors.

[f] Includes 88.6 stream miles of riverine identified in Objective RAR-1-2. The Plan requires protection of 88.6 miles.

Table 2-16. Covered Species' Protection and Restoration Commitments (acres)

Species/Habitat Type[a]	All Habitat in Plan Area A	Existing Protected Areas	Habitat Protected[b]	Habitat Restored	Habitat in Reserve (Protected + Restored)	Habitat in Reserve + Existing Protected Areas, as Proportion of Habitat in Plan Area A
Birds						
Swainson's Hawk						
Nesting Habitat	1,968	301	1,268	720	1,988	116%
Foraging Habitat	54,574	7,726	17,003	3,920	20,923	52%
Total	56,542	8,027	18,271	4,640	22,911	55%
California Black Rail						
Year-Round Habitat	1,112	193	256	175	432	56%
Western Burrowing Owl						
Year-Round Habitat	55,101	7,869	17,129	4,126	21,255	53%
Tricolored Blackbird						
Nesting Habitat	633	188	187	87	274	73%
Foraging Habitat	60,974	7,994	18,138	4,000	22,138	49%
Total	61,608	8,181	18,325	4,087	22,412	50%
Reptiles						
Giant Garter Snake						
Aquatic Habitat	19,511	660	2,702	529	3,231	20%
Upland Habitat	3,537	549	1,763	449	2,212	78%
Total	23,049	1,209	4,465	978	5,443	29%
Western Pond Turtle						
Aquatic Habitat	10,244	1,053	2,800	1,850	4,650	56%
Upland Habitat	14,263	1,970	3,859	1,930	5,789	54%
Total	24,507	3,023	6,659	3,780	10,439	55%

Species/Habitat Type[a]	All Habitat in Plan Area A	Existing Protected Areas	Habitat Protected[b]	Habitat Restored	Habitat in Reserve (Protected + Restored)	Habitat in Reserve + Existing Protected Areas, as Proportion of Habitat in Plan Area A
Amphibians						
Foothill Yellow-legged Frog						
Year-Round Habitat	1,837	11	83	83	167	10%
California Red-legged Frog						
Aquatic Habitat	8,532	119	1,168	1,241	2,409	30%
Upland Habitat	75,306	5,986	12,484	160	12,644	25%
Total	83,838	6,105	13,652	1,401	15,053	25%
Invertebrates						
Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle						
Year-Round Habitat	6,367	472	2,313	1,553	3,866	68%
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp and Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp[c]						
Wetland Habitat	2,237	555	790	900	1,690	101%
Vernal Pool Complex	44,278	7,067	17,000	3,000	20,000	61%
All Land Area[d]	**209,832**	**15,957**	**41,080**	**6,220**	**47,300**	**30%**

Source: Appendix A:Table 5-6.

[a] Based on modeled habitat for terrestrial species; see Chapter 3 of the Plan. The covered fish habitat is measured by stream miles (see text).

[b] Habitat Protected is all habitat acquired less any land altered for restoration as another land-cover type.

[c] The Plan does not model habitat for Conservancy fairy shrimp because its known distribution in the Plan Area is restricted to a single vernal pool and because the type of vernal pool this species typically occurs in (large and turbid pools) is not found in the Plan Area.

[d] Values are subject to rounding.

PCCP Implementation

PCCP implementation is described in detail in Chapter 8 of the Plan. The following provides a summary.

Plan

As noted in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, the Permit Applicants would vest the responsibility for implementing the Plan to the PCA.[9] The PCA would oversee implementation of the Plan on behalf of the Permit Applicants. The PCA, not yet formed, would also be a Permittee as it implements conservation actions and because it would be the permitting authority for Participating Special Entities.

As Permittees, the local participating agencies would be responsible for compliance with all the terms and conditions of the state and federal permits. They will ensure that all Covered Activities adhere to the Plan and avoid, minimize, and mitigate effects on Covered Species as described in the Plan, and they will monitor Covered Activities to ensure that such measures have been implemented in coordination with the Wildlife Agencies, public land managers, and the private sector.

Implementation of the Plan will begin when the implementing agreement is fully executed, the Section 10(a)(1)(B) ITPs and NCCP permit are issued, and the local implementing ordinances take effect.

It is expected that ecological conditions in the Plan Area may change as a result of future events and circumstances, since the implementation timeframe for the PCCP conservation strategy would be over 50 years. Chapter 10 of the Plan (Appendix A) details changes in circumstances that are reasonably foreseeable, outlines a process for identifying changed circumstances, and provides planned responses intended to address these events. Changed circumstances addressed by the PCCP include:

- Covered species listed
- Non-covered species listed
- Destruction of restoration projects due to fire
- Expansion of new or non-native species or disease
- Flooding of vernal pools and riparian restoration or enhancement sites
- Destruction of restoration projects through drought
- Climate change

The planned responses to these events, if needed, would be covered actions by the Plan. Examples of planned responses include: initiated a damage assessment of affected conservation lands within a specific time from the end of the event (e.g., 6 months); evaluation of the extent of the damage; and habitat restoration and enhanced recovery of affected habitat area.

[9] The role of the PCA is discussed in Section 8.3.2 of the Plan.

CARP

The CARP provides a structure for protecting aquatic resources in western Placer County while streamlining the environmental permitting process for effects on aquatic resources. The CARP protects aquatic resources by establishing avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements for projects that have the potential to affect such resources.

The CARP provides a means to fulfill the requirements of federal, state, and local laws that protect aquatic resources using a comprehensive, long-term, regional conservation strategy. This regional strategy focuses authorized effects on aquatic resources near or within existing urban areas and away from rural, intact natural areas, thereby avoiding and minimizing effects on aquatic resources on a regional scale.

The CARP uses a watershed approach to identify intact watersheds for conservation, creation, and establishment of aquatic resources and direct development towards watersheds that are already degraded and have been historically impacted by development. This comprehensive regional approach to aquatic resource conservation and mitigation in western Placer County provides a greater level of landscape- and watershed-scale protection of aquatic resources than has historically occurred with project-by-project permitting under CWA Sections 404 and 401 and the California Fish and Game Code 1602 programs (related to stream bed and bank impacts). The CARP also includes an in-lieu fee program under which compensatory mitigation requirements under CWA Section 404 can be fulfilled by payment of a fee.

CARP avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements are derived from the Plan. However, the CARP focuses on aquatic resources specifically and, in some areas, addresses them in greater detail than does the Plan. In addition, the CARP covers minor effects on aquatic resources resulting from very small projects that would not otherwise affect Covered Species under the Plan. Together, the CARP and Plan provide project proponents and applicants for development permits with a comprehensive regional approach to natural resource conservation and permitting (see Chapter 1 of the Plan for details).

The CARP and the Plan have complementary goals and objectives. The Plan minimizes and mitigates effects on Covered Species and natural communities, including aquatic natural communities and habitat, and provides for their conservation and management at a landscape-level scale. The CARP provides a multidisciplinary, programmatic approach to obtain permits the County and/or City for effects on aquatic resources, while providing preferred avoidance, minimization, and compensation at a larger landscape level, rather than on a project-by-project basis.

The majority of mitigation requirements under the CARP are drawn from the Plan, and these compensatory mitigation actions would be used to create the PCCP Reserve System that is described in the Plan.

In-Lieu Fee Program

The PCCP would also include the *Western Placer County In-Lieu Fee Program* (ILF Program) under which compensatory mitigation requirements under Section 404 of the CWA can be fulfilled by payment of a fee. The ILF Program would provide wetland mitigation "credits" that can be used to fulfill Section 404 compensatory mitigation requirements. The ILF Program would allow proponents of Covered Activities to pay a fee to the PCA for such credits; the PCA would use fee revenues to implement mitigation projects that protect, enhance, and restore aquatic resources. The ILF

Program would provide compensatory mitigation for impacts on aquatic resources for all projects and activities that are covered under the Plan and the CARP.

2.4.3 Alternative 3—Reduced Take/Reduced Fill

Alternative 3—Reduced Take/Reduced Fill is derived from the second tier alternatives screening process evaluation of Alternatives D, E, F, and G. These alternatives are based on different versions of a conservation and development map originally considered in 2005 during an early phase of the PCCP planning process (Map Alternatives 2, 4, 6, and 7), which examined different boundaries for reserve acquisition in the western area of the Valley portion of the Plan Area. The maps were also based upon an early version of land cover mapping that was subsequently determined to be inadequate for purposes of mapping of vernal pool complexes. Subsequent mapping, completed in 2011, ultimately superseded the mapping that provided the foundation for Maps 2, 4, 6, and 7. As a group, these maps were considered to be a basis for developing a proposed plan, as acknowledged by the USACE/USEPA letter dated August 24, 2007.

Under Alternative 3, permits would be issued by USFWS and NMFS under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA and by CDFW under Section 2081(b) for incidental take of the proposed Covered Species through a regional-scale programmatic HCP or NCCP. The USFWS permit would cover take of 11 species; the NMFS permit would cover take of 1 species; and the CDFW permit would cover take of 9 species. The permit durations would be for 50 years. The PCCP would be implemented as described below.

Compared with Alternative 2, the proposed action, the conservation principle of the earlier maps is essentially equivalent in the Foothills, but it differs mainly in the balance between the RAA and PFG in the Valley. The four maps all have a smaller amount of land designated PFG in the Valley, ranging from a reduction of 13% for Map 6 to a reduction of 5% for Map 4, described in more detail in Appendix E.

While the conservation concepts of the earlier maps remained valid, their vegetative land cover data and vernal pool complex mapping were outdated; consequently, they no longer met the purpose and need of the proposed Plan and therefore would not be implementable by the Permit Applicants.

The common quantitative feature among these alternatives is a reduced PFG, ranging from roughly 2,000 to 6,000 fewer acres of PFG. This reduction in PFG could also result in a reduction of effects on natural communities, including vernal pool complex lands, and reduction in fill of wetlands and other waters of the United States.

The Permit Applicants used the spatial model of the Plan Area to evaluate the effect of the resulting reduced-take alternative, Alternative 3, specifically estimating the effects of Covered Activities, including land development as represented by a 50-year growth scenario. Alternative 3 reduces the vernal pool complex land conversion for the Valley PFG by 10% (about 1,250 acres) compared to the proposed action; there are similar reductions in other communities associated with wetlands or other waters. When the spatial model assumes those land cover types are not available for land development by Covered Activities, the model reallocates future land development to other land cover types, resulting in a corresponding increase in conversion of some of the other natural community types. In order to minimize the impact on non–wetland associated communities, the total extent of land conversion in the Valley PFG is reduced for this alternative by 1,000 acres, compared to the proposed Plan. This limits increased conversion of non–wetland associated communities to less than 5%, as shown in Table 2-17.

Table 2-17. Alternative 3—Reduced Take/Reduced Fill Permit Limits for Direct Effects and Comparison with Proposed Plan

	PCCP Proposed Plan			Alternative 3 Reduced Take/Reduced Fill			Valley PFG Alt3 % Reduction/ Increase from PCCP
Communities and Constituent Habitats	All Plan	Valley PFG	All Valley	All Plan	Valley PFG	All Valley	
Vernal Pool Complex	12,550	12,200	12,400	11,300	10,950	11,150	-10%
Vernal Pool Constituent Habitats Total	580	560	570	525	505	515	-10%
Vernal Pool	185	180	180	165	160	160	-11%
Seasonal Wetland in VPC	223	220	220	198	195	195	-11%
Seasonal Swales	172	170	170	152	150	150	-12%
VPC Uplands	11,970	11,640	11,830	10,775	10,445	10,635	-10%
Grassland	6,900	3,400	3,500	7,040	3,540	3,640	+4%
Aquatic/Wetland Complex	260	120	120	250	110	110	-9%
Aquatic/Wetland Constituent Habitats Total	260	120	120	250	110	110	-9%
Fresh Emergent Marsh	105	50	50	100	45	45	-10%
Lacustrine	103	50	50	99	46	46	-8%
Non-VP Seasonal Wetland	52	20	20	50	18	18	-8%
Complex Uplands	–	–	–		–	–	–
Riverine/Riparian Complex	490	150	150	475	135	135	-10%
Riverine/Riparian Constituent Habitats Total	490	150	150	475	135	135	-10%
Riverine Type	115	80	80	106	71	71	-11%
Riparian Woodland	375	70	70	369	64	64	-9%
Complex Uplands	–	–	–		–	–	–
Valley Oak Woodland	140	30	30	140	30	30	0%
Oak Woodland	6,210	1,100	1,100	6,225	1,115	1,115	+1%
Subtotal Natural	26,550	17,000	17,300	25,430	15,880	16,180	-7%
Agriculture	3,550	2,700	2,900	3,670	2,820	3,020	+4%
Rice	2,060	1,800	2,000	2,140	1,880	2,080	+4%
Any Agriculture	1,490	900	900	1,530	940	940	+4%
Total All	30,100	19,700	20,200	29,100	18,700	19,200	-5%

Source: Placer County 2018:6.

Plan Area

Plan Area A

A1—Valley Potential Future Growth Area

The reduced permit limits of Alternative 3 would apply only to Plan Area component A1, Valley PFG. Because Alternative 3 would incorporate the same Reserve Map as the proposed action in order to retain feasibility with respect to the objectives of the Permit Applicants, the character and pattern of development would be modified slightly in order for the full amount of housing and employment growth in the growth scenario to be accommodated in the 50-year permit term. This would entail either increased onsite avoidance of vernal pool complex and other wetlands and waters, increased acquisition of reserve lands in the PFG, and/or reduced development footprint in the Valley PFG. The intra-regional shifts in development and the net reduction of 1,000 acres of land conversion—approximately 5%—could be accommodated by the land use diagrams and corresponding range of development densities in the adopted City and County general plans.

A2—Valley Conservation and Rural Development

Under Alternative 3, no change would occur to the mapped area or the permit limits that would apply to component A2, Valley Conservation and Rural Development. There may be changes in the extent of the Reserve System established there.

A3—Foothills Potential Future Growth Area

The extent of component A3, Foothills PFG, under Alternative 3 would be the same as under the proposed action.

A4—Foothills Conservation and Rural Development

The extent of component A4, Foothills Conservation and Rural Development, under Alternative 3 would be the same as under the proposed action.

Plan Area B

Activities in Area B, comprising the components listed below, would be the same under the Alternative 3 as under the proposed action.

- B1—Permit Applicant Activity in Non-Participating Cities
- B2—PCWA Operations and Maintenance
- B3—Coon Creek Floodplain Conservation
- B4—Fish Passage Channel Improvement
- B5—Big Gun Reserve

The County would be the main Permittee operating in component B1, and may alter public project design to reduce conversion of vernal pool complex or other wetlands in order to manage the overall reduced permit limits set in Alternative 3.

Covered Activities

Covered Activities under Alternative 3 would be the same as under the proposed action. As discussed above, the extent and location of covered growth may be changed slightly.

Covered Species

The same species would be covered under Alternative 3 as under the proposed action.

Conservation Strategy

Under this alternative, the conservation strategy and its components, designed to provide for conservation of landscapes, natural communities, and Covered Species, would be the same under Alternative 3 as under the proposed action.

Implementing Alternative 3 by relying on greater onsite avoidance would produce an appreciable change in the component of the conservation strategy that relies on establishing a regional scale Reserve System rather than a continuation of the present pattern of preserving smaller isolated patches of habitat that are more difficult to manage and inevitably subject to greater indirect effects of adjacent land uses.

The increased avoidance in the Valley PFG and the decreased mitigation dependent on effect, and the possibly smaller extent of land conversion overall would likely result in a smaller and potentially less contiguous reserve area to be acquired in the RAA. The decrease would depend on the way the reduced take/reduced fill for Alternative 3 was implemented in the Valley PFG; for the purposes of evaluating effects of Alternative 3, it is assumed that the extent of the Reserve System in the Valley RAA would probably be reduced by 3,000 acres from that assumed for implementation of the proposed action, and the extent of Reserve System in the Valley PFG would probably be increased by approximately 2,000 acres from that assumed for implementation of the proposed action.

PCCP Implementation

Plan

Plan implementation would follow the same principles and adhered to the same requirements under the Alternative 3 as under the proposed action.

CARP

Implementation of the CARP under Alternative 3 would be identical to that under the proposed action.

2.4.4 Alternative 4—Reduced Permit Term

Under Alternative 4, permits would be issued by USFWS and NMFS under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA and by CDFW under Section 2081(b) for incidental take of the proposed Covered Species through a regional-scale programmatic HCP or NCCP. The USFWS permit would cover take of 11 species; the NMFS permit would cover take of 1 species; and the CDFW permit would cover take of 9 species. The permit durations would be for 30 years rather than 50. The PCCP would be implemented as described below.

Under this alternative, the HCP/NCCP would include the same permit conditions for Covered Activities and similar conservation measures and conservation strategy as the PCCP.

Plan Area

The Plan Area would be the same as under the proposed action.

Covered Activities

Because of the shorter permit term, longer-term projects would not be covered. Additionally, there would be lower levels of urban and suburban development covered under the HCP/NCCP. Because of reduced impacts on Covered Species, the amount of conservation proposed would be less than the proposed action, generally in proportion to the lower level of development. Finally, it is expected that less funding would be needed for acquisition, management, and restoration of a lesser amount of conservation lands (i.e., a smaller Reserve System).

For the purposes of the analysis, it is assumed that under Alternative 4, the amount of total impacts of Covered Activities would be reduced by 40%, the same proportional reduction as the permit term (from 50 years to 30 years).

Covered Species

The Covered Species would be the same as under the proposed action.

Conservation Strategy

The conservation strategy needed to offset those impacts (i.e., mitigate) and provide for the conservation and management of the Covered Species has not been determined. However, for the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed under this alternative that the Reserve System would be 30% smaller than under the proposed action.

Under Alternative 4, the conservation actions proposed in the Plan (i.e., Alternative 2) would be proportional to the amount of development by year 30 under Alternative 2. Accordingly, the conservation proposed under the PCCP would be reduced for the Valley portion of Plan Area A, Foothill portion of Plan Area A, and for Plan Area B by multiplying those amounts by 0.55, 0.60, and 0.95, respectively.

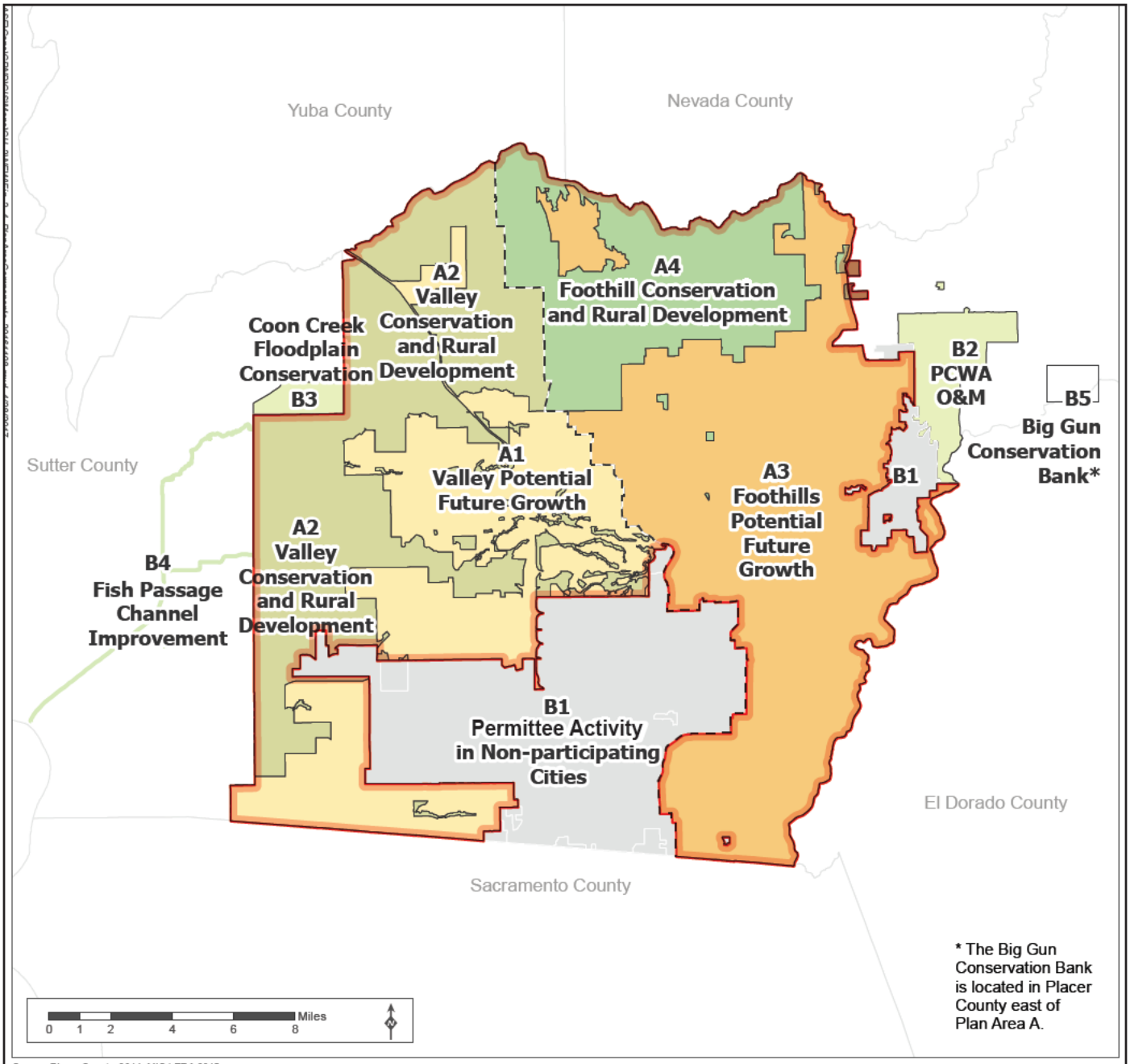
PCCP Implementation

Alternative 4 would entail implementation of the PCCP as under Alternative 2, the proposed action, except that the permit term would be 30 years instead of 50, resulting in less urban and suburban development within the permit term. The impacts by year 30—as shown in Table 2-1—were used as the estimate of impacts under Alternative 4. As shown in this table, land development at year 30 for the Valley and Foothill portions of Plan Area A would be 55% and 60%, respectively, of those estimated by year 50. For Plan Area B, land development at year 30 would be 95% of that estimated by year 50. The individual impacts under Alternative 4 were developed by multiplying these percentages (the fractions) by the total impacts on natural communities, agricultural lands, and Covered Species under Alternative 2.

2.5 References Cited

Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2005. *Flood Hazard Zones: FEMA Coastal Flood Hazard Analysis and Mapping Guidelines Focused Study Report*. February.

Placer County. 2018. Table 3: Alternative M Reduced Take/Reduced Fill Permit Limits for Direct Effects and Comparison with Proposed Plan. In: *Memo: County Comments on Appendix E, Screening of Alternatives*. Page 6.



Source: Placer County, 2014; MIG | TRA 2015

Plan Area A

- A1. Valley Potential Future Growth
- A2. Valley Conservation and Rural Development
- A3. Foothills Potential Future Growth
- A4. Foothill Conservation and Rural Development
- Plan Area A Boundary

Plan Area B Components

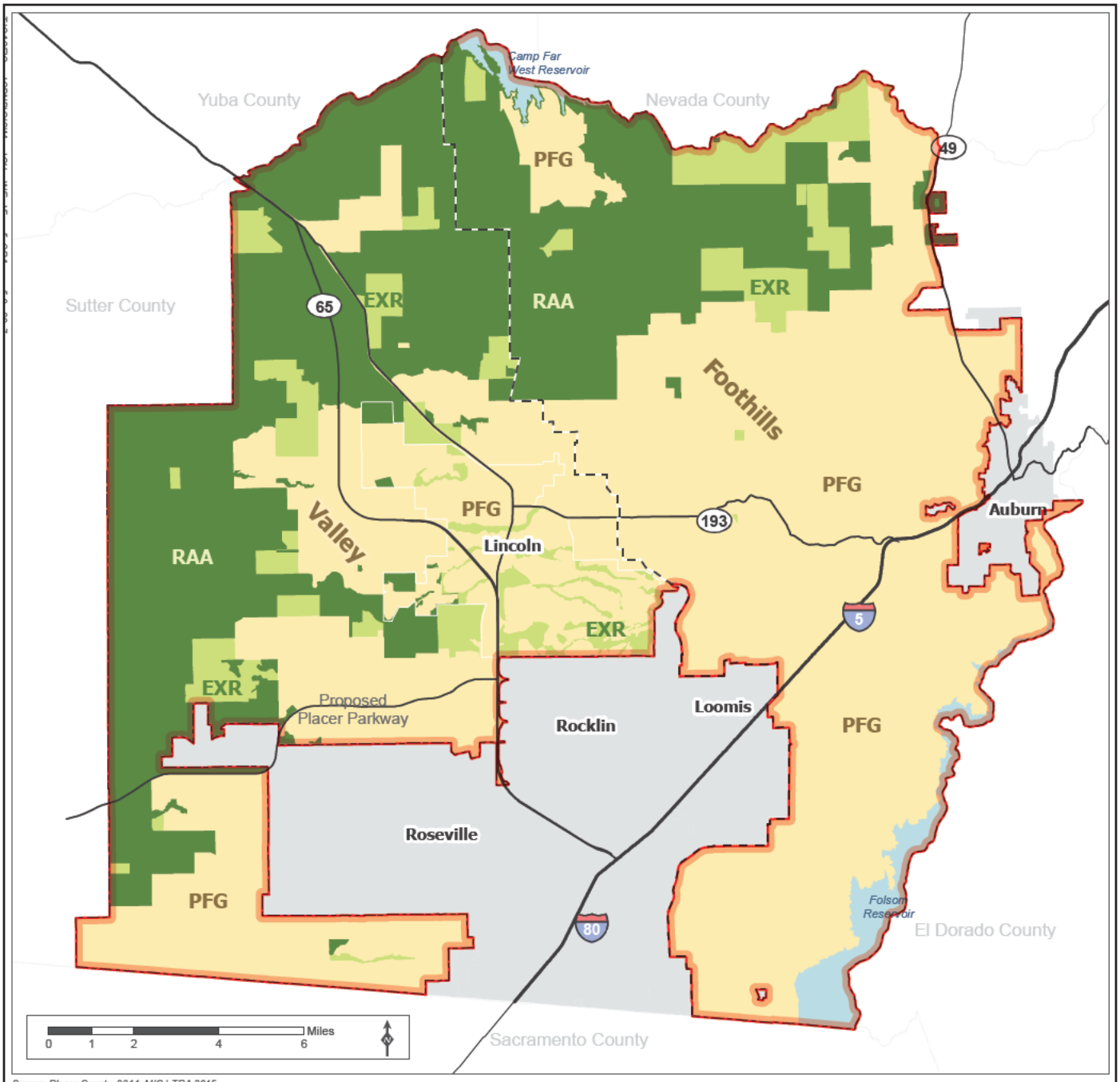
- B1. Permittee Activity in Non-Participating Cities: Public program or conservation activities undertaken by the Permittees.
- B2. PCWA O&M: PCWA Zone 1: Operations and Maintenance (O&M) for existing facilities east of Auburn plus adjacent Lake Theodor reservoir.
- B3. Coon Creek Floodplain Conservation: Watershed protection and stream restoration activities along Coon Creek floodplain in a portion of Sutter County.
- B4. Fish Passage Channel Improvement: Fish Passage Channel Improvement: Selective in-stream work on a portion of 33 miles of channels west of Placer County in Sutter County.
- B5. Big Gun Conservation Bank: Conservation actions for California red legged frog in Placer County on the Big Gun mitigation bank east of Auburn.

– – Valley/Foothill Divide

Source: Appendix A

Graphics ... 04406.04 (7-12-2018) tg

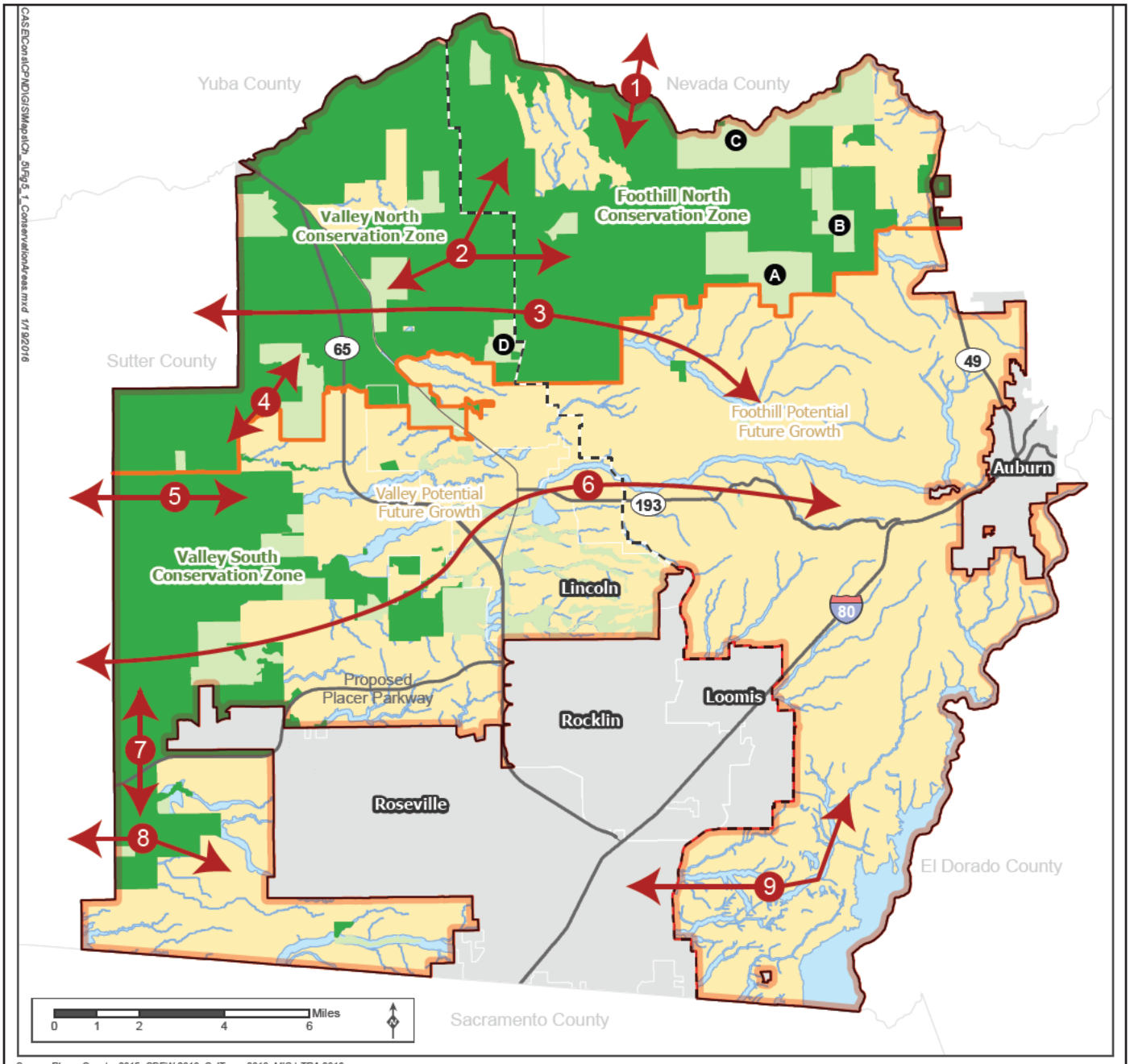
Figure 2-1
Plan Area Components
Placer County Conservation Program – EIS/EIR



Source: Appendix A.

Graphics ... 04406.04 (7-12-2018) tg

Figure 2-2
PCCP Designation Map
Placer County Conservation Program – EIS/EIR



Source Placer County 2015 CDFW 2010 CalTrans 2010 MIG | TRA 2016

- Existing Protected Area
- Reserve Acquisition Area
- Potential Future Growth Area
- Non-Participating City
- Linkage (Orientation)
- Valley/Foothill Divide
- North/South Conservation Zone Divide
- Stream System
- Major Road
- Plan Area A Boundary

Existing Protected Areas that will contribute to the PCCP Reserve System

- Hidden Falls
- Bruin Ranch
- Taylor Ranch
- Doty Ravine

1. **Bear River Watershed** (N-S) Connect PCCP oak woodland reserves to oak woodlands in Nevada County throughout the Bear River watershed as identified in the Spenceville CAPP.
2. **Yankee Slough - Coon Creek Watershed** (E-W) Connect Valley reserves to Foothill reserves.
3. **Coon Creek - Doty Creek corridor.** (E-W) Connect existing protected areas and reinforce riparian protection for salmonids.
4. **Lower Coon Creek** Maintain connectivity between PCCP northern and southern conservation areas and linkage along lower Coon Creek in the Sutter County
5. **Markham Ravine** (E-W) Connect PCCP reserves with scattered existing protected areas to the east; may play a role in giant garter snake dispersal.
6. **Auburn Ravine.** (E-W) Connect PCCP reserves with scattered existing protected areas to the east; important for salmonids.
7. **Cross Placer Parkway.** (N-S) Remediate barrier created by the proposed Placer Parkway. Connect Pleasant Grove Creek watershed to Curry Creek watershed; may play a role in giant garter snake dispersal.
8. **Curry Creek.** (E-W) Connect PCCP reserve lands to Sutter County on the west and avoided stream systems to the east; may play a role in giant garter snake dispersal.
9. **Miners Ravine.** (E-W) Connect stream system reserve opportunities in Miners Ravine to tributaries of Dry Creek; important for salmonids.

Source: Appendix A.

Graphics ... 04406.04 (7-12-2018) tg

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Figure 2-3
Conservation Zones
Placer County Conservation Program – EIS/EIR