ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

III. ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

The Environmental Resources Management Element contains the state-mandated general plan elements for Conservation, Open Space and Seismic Safety (by reference.) It also contains a Cultural Resources Element for the identification of goals and policies for the protection, identification and enhancement of historic sites and for the development of resource based park sites.

The Dry Creek-West Placer area is unique in that vast tracts of undeveloped land exist, a portion of which remains in its natural state (i.e, the Dry Creek floodplain). This condition will allow for a complete assessment of all resources in the area prior to any significant development. With this assessment, a comprehensive set of goals and policies can be created which will ensure the conservation of all unique habitats, natural resources, and historic sites recognizing that the preservation of these resources, in a manner which retains native diversity and sustainability, is arguably the single most important community conservation value.

The Dry Creek West Placer area contains a variety of ecotypes including valley grasslands, riparian woodlands, valley woodlands and cultivated or grazed agricultural lands. Within these areas, unique and sensitive habitats are also noted, including vernal pools, riparian areas, salmon spawning grounds and significant groves of mature native oaks. This element shall seek to identify these areas and provide the goals and policies necessary to ensure that losses to these unique areas are minimized.

The Board of Supervisors and the existing residents in the plan area have repeatedly expressed their concern about urbanization of the area and the subsequent impacts on the resources found in the area. The desire to make a conservation ethic a part of this plan is therefore recognized. The goals and

policies, to be adopted herein as part of the Natural Resources, Open Space and Cultural Resources Elements shall reflect this ethic and provide a framework for the conservation and utilization of natural open space and cultural resources. These policies shall also ensure that the community resulting from this plan is a safe place to live, work and recreate.

A. NATURAL RESOURCES

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to identify the existing natural resources of the plan area and develop goals and policies to allow for their preservation, utilization and enhancement.

GOALS

1. PROVIDE FOR THE PROTECTION OF RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND THE HABITAT WHICH SUPPORTS THOSE SPECIES.
2. CONSERVE THE QUALITY OF ALL HABITATS WHICH SUPPORT THE ENVIRONMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE SPECIES SO AS TO MAINTAIN POPULATIONS AT SUSTAINABLE LEVELS.
3. MANAGE THE GROUND WATER RESOURCE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PROTECT IT FROM DEGRADATION AND TO MAINTAIN THE WATER TABLE.
4. SAFEGUARD AND MAINTAIN NATURAL WATERWAYS TO ENSURE WATER QUALITY, SPECIES DIVERSITY AND UNIQUE HABITAT PRESERVATION.
5. IDENTIFY ALL ECONOMICALLY VALUABLE RESOURCES, INCLUDING MINERAL DEPOSITS, SOILS CONDUCIVE TO AGRICULTURAL USES, AND THOSE OPEN SPACE AREAS WHICH ADD TO THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE REGION AND ARE VITAL TO ITS DEVELOPMENT AS AN AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY.
6. PRESERVE OUTSTANDING AREAS OF NATURAL VEGETATION.
7. RECOGNIZE AGRICULTURAL LANDS AS A RESOURCE AND SEEK TO PROTECT THESE AREAS FROM URBAN ENCROACHMENT.
8. RECOGNIZE THAT CLEAN AIR AND WATER ARE ESSENTIAL RESOURCES FOR MAINTAINING A HIGH QUALITY OF LIVING, AND ENSURE THAT THESE RESOURCES ARE MAINTAINED AT ACCEPTABLE LEVELS.

Policies

1. Any rare, significant, or endangered environmental features and conditions should be identified and programs designed to conserve or enhance their continued existence.
2. Preserve in their natural condition all stream environment zones, including flood plains, and riparian vegetation areas. (Also see Policy #4, page 80 and Policy 14, page 99).
3. Seek to maintain or improve the quality of water in the major creeks, especially Dry Creek and its tributaries.
4. Make every attempt to maintain the existing high quality of the ground water and preserve aquifer recharge areas.
5. Identify all important fish and wildlife areas within the plan area and where feasible, protect these areas from urban/suburban encroachment.
6. Identify, preserve and protect areas of unique or significant natural vegetation, including but not limited to vernal pools, riparian areas and native oak groves.
7. Rehabilitate those portions of Dry Creek which are critical to seasonal anadromous fish (salmon) runs and which provide suitable habitat for fish populations.
8. Protect important spawning grounds, migratory routes, waterfowl resting areas, oak woodlands, and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations.
9. Prepare an inventory of important natural resources, including streams, vernal pools, wildlife habitat, oak woodlands, geologic formations, mineral resources and soil types. The inventory shall serve as a means of identifying unique and important resources prior to project development in order to ensure that the goals of this element are satisfied.
10. Improve water quality in the aquifer and the Dry Creek watershed by eliminating existing water pollution sources and by discouraging activities which include the use of hazardous materials around wetland and recharge areas.

11. Recognize clean air as a resource to be protected and improved through project mitigation.
12. Conservation of the natural landscape, including minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation, shall be an overriding consideration in the design of any subdivision or land development project, paying particular attention to the protection and preservation of existing vegetation.
13. For landscaping which is part of site development where original vegetation has been removed or where additional plantings are included, the emphasis should be on drought tolerant, native species where possible.
14. No construction activities shall occur within the Dry Creek floodplain and only limited alteration of its tributaries shall be permitted except as part of the development of the floodplain as a recreational area, or for stream enhancement, or where work is done in accordance with the Placer County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, Department of Fish and Game Regulations, and Clean Water Act Provisions administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
15. Coordinate with local, state and federal agencies who have a trustee responsibility for the management of natural resources when land development activities affect resource conservation and management efforts.
16. Require site specific studies, from qualified consultants, for projects which impact unique or significant fish, wildlife or vegetative resources.
17. Incorporate a mitigation monitoring program for all projects subject to environmental review where detrimental impacts to an area's natural resources have been identified.
18. Require field studies as part of project review where vernal pools are noted on the property. These studies shall document the possible occurrence of special status plant and wildlife species and provide a method of protecting, monitoring, replacing or otherwise mitigating development in and around these sensitive habitats.

19. Support the "no net loss" policy for wetland areas administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Department of Fish and Game. Continue to coordinate with these agencies at all levels of project review to ensure that their concerns are adequately addressed.
20. Preserve agricultural lands as an economically viable land use, and for the purposes of open space, groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, buffering, flood control and soil conservation.
21. Flood waters, prevalent during the rainy season, shall be recognized as a renewable resource with a potential for use as waterfowl habitat, aquifer recharge, or used to enhance Dry Creek's salmon run by releases during periods of low volume and high water temperatures.
22. Continue to monitor and control land uses which threaten to deteriorate air and water quality.
23. Require the application of measures which mitigate soil erosion and air and water pollution from earth disturbing activities related to land development.
24. Tracts of undisturbed oak woodlands and valley grasslands that have significant value as wildlife habitat shall be preserved as open space.
25. Intermittent streams often become permanent streams concurrent with the development of an area. Therefore, these waterways shall be protected from land development activities which have a potential for detrimental impacts (e.g. grading, channelization, etc.). (Also see Policy 4, page 80 and Policy 14, page 99.)

DISCUSSION

Natural Resources

Soils

A comprehensive soil evaluation was performed for the Dry Creek West-Placer plan area and the surrounding area by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (USSCS) in 1973. Specific information

regarding soil type and characteristics can be found in the USSCS Soil Survey of Placer County, Western Part, publication. The following are some general characteristics of soils in the area:

1. The soils all originate from alluvial deposits.
2. The majority of soils have very limited permeability due to a dense subsoil of clay (hardpans and claypans).
3. The soils typically have shallow root depth potential due to the dense subsoil of clay. Exceptions to this characteristic exist on the soils within the Dry Creek floodplain and the Ramona sandy loam found on the area's alluvial bottoms or low terraces.
4. Many of the soils are suitable for rice due to the low permeability of water through the soil.
5. Hazards related to erosion are typically slight to moderate.
6. With the exception of the Ramona sandy loam, the soil capability classes of the soils for agricultural suitability are between III & IV. Class III soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require special conservation practices, or both. Class IV soils have very severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants, or that require very careful management. The Ramona sandy clay loam has a capability Class of I and II, if irrigated.
7. The majority of soils pose some construction difficulties due to slow permeability shrink/swell potential and a limited ability to support a load.[6]

Geology

The geology of the plan area is generally categorized as being composed of sedimentary or metasedimentary rocks. These underlying rock formations are mostly composed of alluvium which is an unconsolidated sediment of relatively recent geologic age that was deposited by a source flowing water. The three general types of rocks in the area fall into the following categories:

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6. Source: Soil Survey of Placer County, California, Western Part, Soil Conservation Service, 1973

1. Riverbank Formation - Pleistocene deposits of alluvium. Generally occurs from Sutter County line east to Watt Ave.
2. Turlock Lake Formation - Pleistocene deposits of partially consolidated sand, silt, and gravel derived mainly from Sierran granitic and metamorphic rocks. Occurs east of Watt Ave. outside the Dry Creek floodplain.
3. Modesto-Riverbank Formation - Pleistocene deposits of alluvium. Generally found within the Dry Creek floodplain.

Hydrology

The hydrologic characteristics in the plan area are largely affected by the seasonal rainfall which ranges from 18-20 inches. The majority of watercourses in the area are seasonal; supporting flows only during the rainy season. However, Dry Creek, due to the expanse of its watershed, flows year around. Its summer flow consists primarily of irrigation return and excess flow, groundwater discharge and secondarily treated sewage effluent. The groundwater in the area is found under unconfined, confined and perched conditions depending on the area's specific geologic formation. Groundwater levels are generally found between 70 and 90 feet below the surface. However, these figures may change seasonally due to discharge and recharge impacts on the aquifer. The water levels in the area have historically been decreasing over the past ±40 years.

Vegetation

Four basic vegetative communities can be identified in the Community Plan area, each supporting a diversity of plant and animal species.

1. Riparian areas: These dense vegetative areas are located near or adjacent to streams, ponds, springs or marshy areas. Typical species include Willow (Salix), Cottonwood (Populus), Oaks (Quercus), Sycamore (Platanus) Cattail (Typhus), Tule (Scirpus) and numerous smaller annual and perennial grasses and shrubs. Riparian areas are considered extremely important due to their plant, fish and wildlife diversity, and their ability to serve as a natural means of

maintaining water quality. These areas have received national recognition of being an important resource which needs to be retained.

2. Valley Grasslands - Very little or none of the original native grasses of the Central Valley remain in the Plan area today. The majority of grasses prevalent today were introduced by Europeans for grazing and they effectively have out competed the native species over time. Typical grasses include Fescue (Festuca), Brome Grass (Bromus) and Wild Oats (Avena). Some of these grassland areas support hardpan or volcanic vernal pool formations. These shallow pools fill with water in the winter time and as they dry up in the spring, various colorful annual plant species begin to emerge and flower. Some of these pools support state and federally listed animal and plant species which are threatened with irrevocable loss as these areas are converted for agricultural or development purposes.

3. Oak Woodlands - The Oak Woodlands found in the Dry Creek area are typically located within the Dry Creek floodplain and therefore somewhat related to the riparian area found along the watercourse. Typical plants found in this area include Valley Oak (Quercus lobata), Blue Oak (Quercus douglasii), Interior Live Oak (Quercus wislizenii) and annual grasses. Many of these trees are typically referred to as "Heritage Oaks" due to their stature and grand appearance. These trees are typically threatened throughout California due to development and poor regeneration of the species.

4. Cultivated Grazing and Croplands - The Plan area is used extensively for irrigated pasture, dryland grazing and cultivation of annual and perennial plants for commercial production. Typical operations include the production of fruit trees, rice, winter wheat, vineyards, and dry and irrigated pastureland. These operations occur on different levels of intensity throughout the Plan area.

Climate

Although climate is not considered a natural resource, it has a dramatic impact on area's natural community. In many ways, an area's climatic condition dictates the type of ecological systems that can be sustained. Therefore, it is important to consider and understand the climate affecting the Plan area.

The geographic location of the Dry Creek West Placer Community Plan area in the Central Valley region of California plays a significant role in the climate of the vicinity. The Central Valley, which extends from south of Bakersfield to north of Redding, is bounded by the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the east, the Coast Range on the west, the Tehachapi Range on the South, and the Cascade Mountains on the north. These mountain ranges tend to isolate the Valley from the prevailing west coast weather pattern. The only breach in this barrier is the Carquinez Straits which exposes the mid-section of the Valley to the Pacific Coast marine weather regime. The Sacramento/Roseville area is noticeably affected by this marine influence, the major effect of which is to moderate the climatic extremes. This is especially evident on summer evenings when cooling occurs as a result of the penetration of the sea breeze into the central portion of the Central Valley.

The climate of the area is typically polarized between summer and winter seasons. The winter season is characterized by overcast days and lengthy periods of rain and drizzle. Winter temperatures range from an average low of 40°F to an average high of 57°F, with occasional overnight freezing temperatures. Annual precipitation averages 25 inches, 90 percent of which falls from November through April. Summer temperatures range from an average low of 70°F to an average high of 90°F, with temperatures in excess of 100 degrees being fairly common. This high average summer temperature, combined with very low relative humidity, produces hot, dry summers. Prevailing winds are from the southwest with a secondary concentration from the northwest. Air stagnation due to surface and/or elevated inversion formation is common in the late summer and fall. Surface inversions are

formed when cool air is trapped close to the surface by a layer of warm air above it. Elevated inversions occur when a layer of cool air is suspended between warm air layers above and below it. Stagnation allows for the concentration of contaminants, subjecting persons in the region to elevated pollution levels and consequent increases in hazards to health. (Source: Northwest Roseville Specific Plan EIR.)

Fish and Wildlife

The distinct vegetative communities in the Plan area support a diversity of fish and wildlife species. Typical amongst these include the following:

a) Mammals - mule deer; coyote; Gray fox; striped skunk; opossum, jackrabbit; California ground squirrel and deer-mouse; b) Birds - Redtailed hawk; Herons; Kestrel; Pheasant; California quail; Mourning dove; Scrub-jay; Western meadowlark and Mockingbird; c) Reptiles and Amphibians - Western toad Gopher snake; Common kingsnake; Western garter snake; Slender salamander and Western fence lizard; d) Fish - Sacramento squawfish; bluegill; green sunfish; Sacramento perch; brown bullhead and anadromous populations of Chinook salmon. No rare, threatened or endangered fish and wildlife species are presently known to exist in the area, however, the habitats for many of the above species are threatened by development. As they are identified, these areas shall be given special consideration with an emphasis on protection.

Of particular note is the salmon run in Dry Creek. Each year, between October and December, adult Chinook or King salmon ascend Dry Creek for the annual spawning run. The Salmon will spawn in gravel beds protected and cooled by riparian vegetation. Fingerlings will rear after 50 days of being fertilized and will swim downstream when they are 3 inches in length as late as June. The present fall run ranges from 100 to 1,000 fish. The growth rate of the fingerlings is noted to be excellent by the Department of Fish and Game.

Air Quality

As a result of prevailing winds coming generally from south to southwest, air quality in the area is heavily influenced by mobile and stationary sources of air pollution located upwind in the Sacramento Metropolitan area.

The three principal pollutants of concern in the region and the Plan area specifically include ozone, carbon monoxide, and total particulate matter. The regional ozone problem (the Plan area is a non-attainment area for ozone), is mainly the result of mobile source emissions, a small portion of which originates in the Plan area. Carbon monoxide is generally considered a "hotspot" problem rather than a regionwide problem and is principally caused from auto emissions. Suspended particulates are mainly a result of human activities such as urban construction and agricultural burning in the fall.

Mitigation measures to offset development resulting from the adoption of this plan can be found in the EIR.

Implementation

In order to satisfy and be consistent with a number of goals and policies of this community plan and other elements of the County General Plan, it is necessary to create and follow programs implementing the policy direction adopted by the Board of Supervisors. The various implementation programs include the following measures:

Soils

The Placer County Agricultural Element provides a number of policies which encourage and protect the continued use of viable agricultural lands. The use of an Open Space land use designation for the area within the 100 year floodplain of Dry Creek and its major tributaries should protect the majority of Class I and II soils in the Plan area from urban development.

Geology

The goals and policies adopted pursuant to this plan encourage the protection of all significant resources including significant or rare geologic formations. The adoption of a

Mineral Resource Conservation Element of the General Plan has also proven to be an effective method of identifying and protecting significant geological resources from incompatible uses.

Hydrology

No single authority is responsible for comprehensive management or surface water resources within the area. Instead, several jurisdictions and agencies are involved in various issues.

The State Department of Water Resources has jurisdiction over water rights.

The State's Regional Water Quality Control Board regulates point discharges from waste water and other facilities to protect water quality in Dry Creek.

Placer County and upstream cities enforce various grading ordinances to prevent sedimentation and to protect water quality. The Placer County Resource Conservation District provides assistance to the County and Cities in developing policies and guidelines for erosion control.

The Placer County Flood Control District is concerned with measures for managing storm runoff to prevent flood damages. The District provides assistance to local jurisdictions in the planning and design of facilities and the planning and implementation of programs for flood management. The District is proceeding to develop comprehensive regional plans for the area. These plans are intended to coordinate development, optimize the cost and effectiveness of public facilities, and account for cumulative impacts of development. Further, the District is anticipating involvement in programs to protect stream and streamside resources and water quality impact of storm runoff.

Groundwater use is not specifically regulated by Placer County except through Environmental Health ordinances for well use. The State Department of Water Resources has some jurisdiction over groundwater use and it is a policy of this plan to incorporate their concerns into the County's land development review processes of the County. It is also a policy of this plan to take specific action to protect the existing aquifer by

requiring a surface water supply as a precursor to development in the Plan area.

Vegetation

The Placer County Tree Ordinance is presently being considered at this time as a means of regulating the loss of significant vegetation. If adopted by the Board of Supervisors, it will be incorporated into the land development review process of the County. The policies, land use, and Significant Natural Resources/Features maps, adopted pursuant to this Community Plan, shall provide the information necessary to protect extensive stands or areas of vegetation including native oaks, riparian areas and vernal pools. Environmental review procedures shall also be utilized to provide mitigation and ongoing monitoring of mitigation measures which are implemented for projects which impact vegetation.

Fish and Wildlife

Active cooperation and coordination shall continue with the State Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The County shall continue to include mitigative measures for land use development which are adopted pursuant to Fish and Game Stream Alteration Agreements and permits issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, when such development affect fish, wildlife and their habitat. Specific policies adopted as part of this plan shall also be made a part of the land development review process when such policies affect fish and wildlife.

Air Quality

The Placer County Air Pollution Control District is preparing implementation and mitigation programs pursuant to State Air Resources Board guidelines, California Clean Air Act requirements and local ordinances and policies. These programs include dust control, analysis of alternative transportation modes to reduce vehicle emissions, implementation of all Clean Air Act requirements, possible expansion of the air quality monitoring network, possible regulation of wood stove emissions, stationary pollution source controls and the review of land development applications.

The County is considering a number of additional programs which will seek to conserve, enhance and protect the natural resources of an area. Important amongst these will be a cultural resources inventory and a geo-base mapping of all resources in a given area. These tools should provide an efficient and complete assessment of an area and the impacts of development on the resources identified. Refer to Plate 2, following page 109, for mapping of many of the significant natural resources which should be enhanced, preserved, and protected pursuant to the goals and policies of this Plan.

The most obvious and effective means of implementing these policies is through site specific analysis of an individual project's environmental impact and subsequent mitigation. This Plan provides the framework for the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. In that different geographic areas with potentially different land uses will have varied levels and types of environmental impacts, site specific implementation measures are not noted in this Plan. However, unique opportunities exist for implementation of the many policies contained in this Plan. In particular, the large open space areas could provide the necessary acreage for recreation and floodplain protection as well as area for various types of urban runoff treatment while minimizing the impacts on riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat.

B. OPEN SPACE

Purpose: This element shall establish goals and policies with the intent of preserving open space areas as a scenic resource and for purposes of recreation, agriculture, soil conservation, fish and wildlife habitat and for the protection of rare, threatened or endangered species. This element is closely aligned and overlaps extensively with the previous discussion of natural resources.

GOALS

1. TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE OPEN SPACE LANDS TO MAINTAIN THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND RURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AREA.

2. TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE OPEN SPACES VITAL FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT AND OTHER AREAS OF MAJOR OR UNIQUE ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE.
3. TO PROTECT THE NATURAL BEAUTY AND MINIMIZE DISTURBANCE OF THE NATURAL TERRAIN AND VEGETATION.
4. TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE UNIQUE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE OF THE AREA AND TO MINIMIZE DISTURBANCE OF THE NATURAL TERRAIN BECAUSE THESE ARE UNIQUE AND VALUABLE ASSETS FOR THE DRY CREEK-WEST PLACER COMMUNITY PLAN AREA, PLACER COUNTY AND THE COUNTIES THAT BORDER THE AREA.
5. PRESERVE OUTSTANDING AREAS OF NATURAL VEGETATION INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, OAK WOODLANDS, RIPARIAN AREAS AND VERNAL POOLS.
6. TO CONSERVE THE VISUAL RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THE IMPORTANT VISTAS AND WOODED AREAS, AND IN PARTICULAR, THE RIPARIAN HABITAT OF DRY CREEK AND ITS INTERMITTENT STREAMS AND NATURAL DRAINAGE CHANNELS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT IN PROVIDING LOW COST NATURAL FLOOD CONTROL.
7. PROVIDE FOR THE PROTECTION OF RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND/OR THE HABITAT WHICH SUPPORTS THESE SPECIES.
8. TO PERMIT EXISTING AGRICULTURAL USES TO CONTINUE, AND TO CONSERVE LANDS SUITABLE FOR AGRICULTURAL USES WHILE ALLOWING URBAN/SUBURBAN/RURAL RESIDENTIAL USES.
9. TO PROVIDE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND ALLOW FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BUILDINGS AND SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.
10. TO PROVIDE OPEN SPACE TO SHAPE AND GUIDE DEVELOPMENT AND TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY IDENTITY.

Policies

1. Preserve in their natural conditions all stream environment zones, including flood plains and riparian vegetation areas. (Also see Policy 4, page 80 and Policy 14, page 99.)
2. Identify and, where possible, preserve all soils which are suitable for agricultural uses.

3. Identify and where possible preserve all important fish and wildlife habitats within the plan area.
4. Encourage both private and public ownership and maintenance of open space.
5. Protect natural areas along creeks and canals through the use of non-development setbacks with setback distances varying according to the significance of the area to be protected. (See Implementation discussion on page 114).
6. Projects which include non-development setbacks should include provisions which prohibit the placement of fill during or after construction within the buffer area, protection of vegetation within the buffer during construction and covenants. Codes and restrictions should be established for projects within buffers for their proper maintenance and care.
7. Encourage scenic or greenbelt corridors along major transportation routes. Roads and other public works shall incorporate beauty as well as utility, safety, and economy.
8. Preserve outstanding visual features and landmarks.
9. Preserve productive agricultural lands as regional open space.
10. Areas hazardous to the public safety and welfare shall be open or predominantly open. This category includes:
    a. Areas subject to landslide or with severe slope instability problems.
    b. Streams and other areas subject to flooding by the 100 year storm.
    c. Areas with high fire risk.
    d. Areas of high noise exposure.
11. Open spaces should be linked visually and physically to form a system of open spaces. Where appropriate, trails shall connect open space areas. Dedication of easements shall be encouraged and in many cases required as lands are developed and built.
12. Development on private lands should be planned and designed to provide for preservation of open space.

13. Because the dominant features of the Planning Area contributing to the open quality are the natural land forms and vegetation, structures should be subordinated thereto. Only in the confines of individual sites should structures be allowed to be dominant.
14. The scale of building, the siting of structures, and the design and materials of construction shall be harmonious with the natural setting so that the visual quality of open spaces will not be unreasonably impaired.
15. Natural resources other than water shall not be extracted from areas of dedicated open space.
16. Both public and private efforts shall be directed to preserving open space values of historical landmarks.
17. Stream corridors shall be left in an open, natural condition, except for structures or uses which are compatible with stream corridors. (Also see Policy 4, page 80 and Policy 14, page 99.)
18. In the design and development of new subdivisions the following types of areas and features shall be preserved as open spaces to the maximum extent feasible: high hazard areas, scenic and trail corridors, streams, streamside vegetation, other significant stands of beneficial native vegetation, and any areas of special ecological significance.
19. The community will use its implementing ordinances, such as subdivision and zoning, to assure that valuable open space resources on both public and private properties will be preserved.
20. A variety of vistas shall be provided and preserved, ranging from the small enclosed private views to the more distant views shared by many people.
21. Where impacts to stream environment zones or wetland areas are unavoidable, project specific mitigation shall include the identification and quantification of vegetation impacted, the preparation or revegetation plans to assure no

net loss of riparian or wetland acreage or values, and the specific monitoring of plans to assure compliance and satisfactory results.

Discussion

Open Space can serve a variety of purposes. It can be used as the focal point of a community in the form of local and regional parks for recreation or as a means of preserving significant features in an area, including high capability soils, important habitats, stream environment zones, and mineral resources. This Plan recognizes that open space is needed to create a sense of well being and a high quality of life. Without the use of open space in community design, all sense of the natural environment is lost and the resulting landscape appears sterile, completely man-modified and uninviting. It is the intent of this plan to make open space an integral part of the resulting community in recognition of its importance as a mandatory amenity.

In order to use open space in community design, it must first be recognized. Once recognized it should be incorporated into programs for the preservation of natural resources, managed for the production of resources, used for outdoor recreation, and set aside, where appropriate, for public health and safety. The Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan should include open spaces for all of these purposes.

1. Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources

These areas should include lands for the preservation of plant and animal life including habitat for fish and wildlife species. A protective corridor is being recommended along Dry Creek and its primary tributaries and riparian vegetation area as a means to eliminate the encroachment of development in these environmentally sensitive areas. These protective corridors will also help to preserve the water quality of the major waterways in the area. The majority of the oak woodland groves found in the community plan area shall also be protected as open space

both in the Dry Creek floodplain and as they are individually identified during the course of review on land development projects.

2. Open Space for the Managed Production of Resources

Included in this category would be any agricultural lands of economic importance used in the production of food or fiber. Also included would be any major mineral deposit areas, including those in short supply.

3. Open Space for Outdoor Recreation

Included in this category would be several outstanding scenic routes (e.g. Baseline Road, Walegra Road, Dry Creek Corridor, etc.). Also included would be greenbelts along major County roads to provide an aesthetically pleasing drive as well as creating a noise buffer. There would also be park sites and school property dedicated to playground use, as well as access points to areas such as the Dry Creek Open Space Corridor. Even smaller open space areas surrounding individual residences in rural areas, when considered in the aggregate, constitute a sizable area of visually open landscape. Open space areas are also expected to provide linkages between destinations. For example, the Dry Creek Corridor with an improved trail system would be able to provide a linkage between the Gibson Ranch Co. Park in Sacramento and the City of Roseville.

4. Open Space for Public Health and Safety

These areas would include open space areas for protection from 100 year floods, buffering from disagreeable or potentially hazardous sites (e.g. Southern Pacific Rail Yard or the City of Roseville Sewage Treatment Plant) or from sources of excessive noise.

Implementation

Open space land is any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and designated for any of the open space uses defined in Section 65560 of the Government code of the State of California (see 1 through 4 above). These open space resources shall be protected through the dedication of certain

rights of development and use to the community, in the public interest, while the land remains in private ownership. These protective easements are deemed to be an important adjunct to the implementation of the community's primary planning goal of maintaining its rural quality.

As a condition of approval for development projects, the County may require the dedication of open space lands or the payment of open space mitigation fees in order to provide and maintain open space for the purposes mandated by the state and for those purposes deemed important by the community and Placer County.

Special setbacks will be adopted by ordinance with the specific zoning prepared for this Plan. These call for a non-development (impervious surfaces, fences and structures) setback of 100 feet from the edge of the low flow embankment of permanent streams and 50 feet from the edge of the low flow embankment or centerline of the swale where no flow is apparent for intermittent streams or creeks or the limits of the 100 year floodplain, whichever is greater. Many of the creeks affected are shown on the Community Plan and zoning map of the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan area. These streams and their buffer areas shall be delineated on all subdivision maps as open space. This setback is used since the exact extent of the 100 year floodplain for many of the smaller creeks is not known. It is also consistent with the requirements of the State Department of Fish & Game for the minimum area required to maintain the integrity of the wetland and for water quality. With new development projects, the 100 year floodplain of any affected creek should be identified and the project designed to preserve these areas, especially where significant riparian areas exist. Development in open space easements will be less than that allowed in the applicable zoning district. Generally, low intensity activity such as trails, pasturing or minimal planting of native plants may be allowed in these easements, while most structures are not. Where permanent or intermittent streams are not identified by this Plan, the zoning maps, USGS topographical maps or on the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory, an individual site analysis shall determine where setbacks or easements are deemed important. Wetland determinations shall be made using standard criteria for such determinations possibly including a vegetative and soil analysis. The imposition of wetland setbacks shall only be considered for projects subject to discretionary review by the County including, but not limited to, tentative subdivision map approvals, design review and grading permits.

For the purpose of this Plan, wetlands are defined as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, opens water areas, permanent and intermittent streams, riffle and pool complexes, vegetated shallows and other aquatic habitats.[7]

The use of specific zoning shall also serve as a tool for implementation by establishing appropriate land use development criteria which includes consideration of the need to provide open space. Specific zoning can also be used to identify and hold parcels as open space land in the short term or indefinitely for the 4 purposes defined earlier. The tools that are provided by zoning include setbacks (this includes noise setbacks), height restrictions, maximum lot coverage and limitations on the use of land. Zoning can serve to protect and enhance agricultural operations, mineral resource deposits, uses which require buffering, floodplains and riparian habitat.

In addition to the Zoning Ordinance, Placer County has a number of additional programs which provide for implementation. These include park fees which can be used for acquisition of open space. Also, land development review procedures can provide for various types of open space. The Placer County Bikeways Master Plan identifies a number of corridors which can provide linear

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7. Source: Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

open space for trail development. The Placer County Grading and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance will continue to be strictly enforced in order to specifically avoid inappropriate work within floodplains and riparian areas.

C. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Purpose: The intent of the cultural resources element is to determine goals and policies affecting historic and archaeologically or culturally significant areas. This section shall also provide goals and policies affecting recreation facilities for the area.

GOALS

1. RECOGNIZE THAT THE DRY CREEK WEST PLACER COMMUNITY PLAN AREA IS A UNIQUE COMMUNITY, WHICH SHOULD INCORPORATE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS THAT ENHANCE THE AREA'S SEPARATE CULTURAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL IDENTITY.
2. PRESERVE AREAS OF OUTSTANDING HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE.
3. PROVIDE A VARIETY OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION LIVING IN THE DRY CREEK AREA.
4. ENCOURAGE ACTIVITIES, EVENTS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WHICH ARE DESIRED BY THE LOCAL CITIZENS AND WHICH ENCOURAGE THE INTERACTION OF THE RESIDENTS IN THE PURSUIT OF COMMON INTERESTS.
5. PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OF THE DRY CREEK WEST PLACER COMMUNITY PLAN AREA AND MAINTAIN THE COMMUNITY AS A SCENIC, TRANQUIL, FAMILY AND FARM ORIENTED (RESIDENTIAL/AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY) AREA THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL CONSTRAINTS AND FEATURES PRESENT IN THE COMMUNITY.
6. DESIGNATE, PROTECT, AND CONSERVE THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE AREA ESPECIALLY WHERE SUCH RESOURCES CAN ADD TO THE VARIETY OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE.
7. TO MAINTAIN SOME FLEXIBILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARK AREAS TO ALLOW FOR CHANGING TRENDS IN RECREATION ACTIVITIES.

8. IN THE LONG TERM, ESTABLISH A PUBLIC AGENCY OR DISTRICT TO GENERATE FUNDS FOR THE MAINTENANCE, PROTECTION, OPERATION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF PARK AND RECREATION AS WELL AS OPEN SPACE AREAS.

Policies

1. Identify and protect from destruction and abuse all representative and unique historical, cultural and archaeological sites.
2. Encourage and promote legislation for the protection of notable historical sites and artifacts.
3. Provide future park facilities in accordance with park standards and location guidelines as set forth in the parks and Recreation Section of this Plan.
4. Require the dedication of land and/or payment of fees, in accordance with state law, in order to acquire and develop public recreation facilities, open space, or areas of historical or archaeological significance.
5. Support and cooperate with volunteer groups and organizations that provide recreation activities and events for area residents.
6. Encourage compatible recreational use of open space areas and riparian areas along streams and creeks in the area, where feasible.
7. Encourage the development of multipurpose facilities which can function as recreational sites, open space areas and for historic preservation.
8. Require site specific studies for archaeological or historical sites in all instances where land development has the potential to have a detrimental impact on these sites.

History

The history of the Dry Creek area is varied. Specific information about important persons and events is difficult to identify, however, the remains of the different inhabitants can be found throughout the area representing hundreds of years of occupancy.

The first known inhabitants were the Valley Nisenan Native Americans. These individuals were of the southern Maidu tribe who made their home in the drainages of the American, Yuba and Bear Rivers. They were hunters, gatherers and fishermen. The oak trees' acorn crops were considered to be an important part of their diet, although not the sole source of nutrition. Deer and elk were hunted by bow and arrow, nets, deadfalls, traps and snares. In and around the City of Roseville deep middens, cemeteries, bedrock mortars and artifacts have been found, particularly around Dry Creek. A typical group would control a defined geographic area of ±100 miles. The population of Nisenan was largely eliminated by disease brought in by the influx of Euro-American settlers starting in the 1830's.

The first European exploration of the area was conducted by a by a Spaniard by the name of Gabriel Moraga between 1806 and 1808. The purpose of this visit was to search for prospective mission sites, runaway Indians and to punish those Indians found to be hostile to Spanish rule. Jedediah Smith and his party of fur trappers is thought to have visited this region for beaver pelts between 1827-1828. By the 1850's ±10,000 people were thought to inhabit the area as part of the "Gold Rush" initiated in 1848. By this time the Nisenan population had largely been eliminated by disease or had left the area.

Following a lapse in mining activities, the area began to be cultivated for agricultural products. Eventually the City of Roseville was formed as a hub for ranching and farming and as the switching yard facilities for the transcontinental railroad over the Sierra Nevada's.

Over the past 50 years or so, the area has largely developed into a rural residential and farming community, distinctly different then the more urbanized communities of Roseville to the north and east and Antelope to the south. This plan recognizes this rich historical past and attempts to provide goals and policies which encourage efforts to maintain the uniqueness of the area.

Recreation

Specific information related to recreational facilities is found in the Parks and Recreation section of the Community Development Element.

Implementation

All historical and archaeological sites should be located and evaluated. If deemed important, these sites should be made known to the Placer County Historical Advisory Board. This Board may support a listing of the site with the State of California as a Point of Historical Interest. Furthermore, all known sites should be brought to the attention of the County Museum's office whose staff and volunteers will be implementing a cultural resource inventory throughout Placer County.

Park development in the Plan area shall consider multi-use functions for open space which includes the preservation of significant cultural or historical sites. The dedication of land and/or payment of fees which is used to acquire, improve, or enhance park sites shall be made a part of the land development review process in this Plan area and be specifically applied to development of park facilities in recognition of the goals and policies stated herein.