

Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Ecosystem Restoration Plan

The Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Ecosystem Restoration Plan (ERP) focuses on the restoration of three major watersheds, which include Auburn Ravine, Markham Ravine, and Coon Creek. Doty Ravine, a tributary of Coon Creek, and associated tributaries are located within the Coon Creek watershed. These four watersheds covered by the ERP are located north of the American River watershed and northeast of Sacramento.

The headwaters of Auburn Ravine and Coon Creek are located in the western Sierra Nevada foothills near the City of Auburn. Doty Ravine originates just west of the City of Auburn. Markham Ravine, which is located between Auburn Ravine (south) and Coon Creek (north), originates just east of the City of Lincoln. Auburn Ravine, Markham Ravine, and Coon Creek all discharge flows into the East Side Canal in southeastern Sutter County.

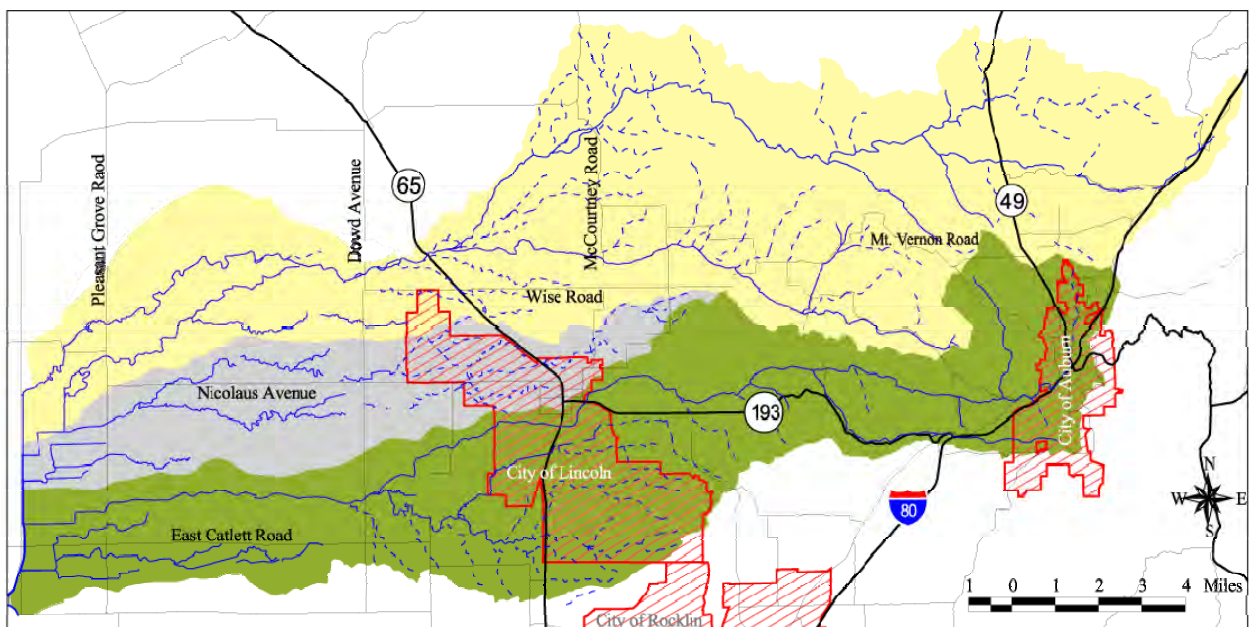









FIGURE 1-3

AUBURN RAVINE/COON CREEK
 Ecosystem Restoration Project
 AR/CC Watershed Group
 Placer County Planning Department

West Placer Watersheds	Streams	 Cities
 Markham Ravine	 Perennial	
 Auburn Ravine	 Intermittent	
 Coon Creek		

Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Watershed Base Map

In 1997 the Auburn Ravine/Coon Creek Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) Group was formed. Membership and signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding include County of Placer, cities of Lincoln and Auburn, Placer County Water Agency, South Sutter Water District, Nevada Irrigation District, Placer County Resource Conservation District, Ophir Area Property Owners Association, Placer Nature Center, several environmental groups, and a variety of landowners in the watersheds.

The group received a grant from the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program to prepare an Ecosystem Restoration Plan (ERP) for the watersheds. An ERP is a document that identifies potential restoration opportunities for an identified area using an ecosystem-based approach. The ERP identifies the goals and objectives of the restoration effort, provides background information and baseline data regarding the watersheds, and discusses the specific ecosystem restoration goals, opportunities, and requirements for implementation within the ERP planning area.

Implementation of the ERP for Auburn Ravine and Cook Creek will help improve habitat for anadromous fish including steelhead, spring-run chinook salmon, fall-run chinook salmon as well as other native fish species. In addition to improving fish habitat, the restoration of these watersheds will improve habitat conditions for numerous wildlife species that utilize the streams and adjacent riparian and upland habitats. These restoration activities will result in improvements in water quality benefiting downstream water users.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the ERP is to restore and protect water quality and fisheries habitat. A major emphasis will be on protection and restoration of riparian and aquatic habitats (including anadromous and native resident species), protecting watershed integrity, improving water quality, reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, improving wildlife habitat, and improving the ecological functioning of the watersheds.



The overall intent of the Ecosystem Restoration Plan is:

- To develop an inter-jurisdictional, public/private, long term view of aquatic and riverine habitats, water quality and ecosystem conditions;
- To identify achievable ecological restoration projects;
- To identify restoration projects that conform to the Plan Objectives;
- To develop channel, stream corridor, and watershed management recommendations necessary to maintain and/or achieve desired habitat/ecosystem conditions;
- To maintain consistency with the planning and management objectives of the public/private entities of the Study Area;
- To develop an ecosystem restoration approach through a consensus building process with the public/private entities of the Study Area; and,
- To develop an ecosystem restoration strategy to implement the Ecosystem Restoration Plan.

Plan Summary

The planning process included several evening public meetings in addition to the regular monthly meetings to enable the public ample opportunity to express their views regarding problems and potential solutions to those problems. The ERP was completed in April 2002 and includes approximately 300 actions designed to improve water quality; reduce the flooding potential of adjacent lands; maintain or restore riparian plant communities to promote bank stability, reduce invasive species, and improve terrestrial wildlife habitats; reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire; and improve aquatic habitat conditions for the federally threatened steelhead trout and candidate species fall run chinook salmon.



CRMP membership stressed the need to complete several pilot projects in different geographic areas that could be used as a public education tool and demonstrate the compatibility of restoration actions with adjacent land uses.

The primary factors identified in the ERP to improve aquatic habitats, reduce flood potential, and improve water quality were a reduction in sediment delivery to the stream channel from unstable banks, improving the transport of sediment (particularly in the middle and lower reaches of a particular stream) through the system, and improving the quantity and quality of associated riparian vegetation for bank stability, improved terrestrial wildlife, and improved food production for anadromous salmonids.

Restoration and habitat improvement projects are being implemented in the watershed as funding allows.