

**MEMORANDUM**  
OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
COUNTY OF PLACER

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer  
Holly L. Heinzen, Assistant County Executive Officer

**DATE:** December 19, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Martis Valley Open Space Fees

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**Action Requested**

Direct staff to:

- 1) Continue work with the Trust for Public Lands, the Tahoe Donner Land Trust and other potential funding partners in development of a funding package for purchase of the Waddle Ranch property in the Martis Valley; and
- 2) Confirm the intention of the Board of Supervisors to participate in the purchase through contribution of open space fees to be collected in the Martis Valley pending successful negotiation of an acceptable funding package and terms relative to the transaction; and
- 3) Authorize the Chairman to sign a letter confirming the County's intention with respect to the contribution for the purchase of Waddle Ranch.

**Background**

The Trust for Public Lands and the Tahoe Donner Land Trust have been negotiating for purchase of the Waddle Ranch in Martis Valley for the last year. The property includes 589 acres with a general plan designation that would allow for approximately 1,000 dwelling units. The Waddle Ranch property is located east of Highway 267 in an undeveloped area separated from existing infrastructure and large enough to have value as open space and wildlife habitat. It therefore would be a valuable acquisition for an open space mitigation program. The property has been identified as a high priority for open space acquisition and would be consistent with the open space priorities contemplated in the Martis Valley Community Plan.

Conditions of approval for various development projects in the Martis Valley require that the project developers financially participate in an Open Space Preservation Program for the purpose of acquiring and managing properties within the Martis Valley. Financial participation is based on the proposed

Board of Supervisors  
Purchase of Waddle Ranch

project's amount of acreage that is converted from natural open space to other uses and the appraised value of permanently protecting a comparable amount of land. A final determination is made at improvement plan approval. The obligation is capped in the Conditions of Approval for these projects at \$5,000 per residential unit and \$5,000 per acre of impervious surface, which would be paid absent another acceptable program.

As an alternative to participating in the open space acquisition and management program the applicant may elect instead to propose land dedication and/or funding of open space preservation activities, acceptable to the County.

With build out of the projects over the next 20-25 years, approved as Siller Ranch, Hopkins Ranch, Northstar Village and Eaglewood, anticipated fee revenues at the \$5,000 cap are estimated at about \$12,500,000. Unless an acceptable alternative program is developed, fees would be paid with the submittal of improvement plans. Some improvement plans for the initial phases of these projects have been submitted. Advancement of the balance of the fees to provide for finalization of the transaction in October of 2007 is being discussed as a means to provide up-front funding for the purpose of contributing to the purchase of Waddle Ranch.

**Issue**

Representatives from the Land Trusts have requested County participation through dedication of open space fees that would be collected in the Martis Valley or other contributions in the amount of \$10,000,000 needed to close the deal.

The purpose of the requested action today is to seek confirmation from the Board of Supervisors that an open space program that includes the purchase of Waddle Ranch is a high priority for Placer County and that, should an acceptable deal be negotiated that provides for purchase of Waddle Ranch, the County would intend to dedicate open space fees in the Martis Valley for this purpose.

**Environmental**

The action requested of your Board is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).

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