

**MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF FACILITY SERVICES
COUNTY OF PLACER**

To: **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Date: **AUGUST 26, 2008**

From:  **JAMES DURFEE / ALBERT RICHIE** 

Subject: **NORTH FORK AMERICAN RIVER TRAIL, PROJECT NO. 4753 – FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

ACTION REQUESTED/RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a Resolution certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the North Fork American River Trail Project and adopting attached Findings of Fact.

BACKGROUND: The North Fork American River Trail is a proposed multi-use trail within the Auburn State Recreation Area (ASRA) beginning near the confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River and proceeding 14.2 miles along the south side of the North Fork American River Canyon to the Ponderosa Crossing near Weimar. This is a stand-alone trail that begins and ends at logical points with a trailhead and parking at each end, which provide the trail with its own independent utility. In addition to its utility as a stand alone trail, it will also provide connection and loop opportunities with several other existing trails within the ASRA. Additional project features include a restroom facility at the westerly staging terminus and interpretive elements throughout the project area.

The ASRA comprises lands held by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) for the Auburn Dam Project. Pending a final decision on the Auburn Dam Project, the ASRA is managed for recreational purposes by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) under contract to Reclamation. Management policy is directed by the ASRA Interim Resource Management Plan (IRMP). County staff has coordinated with Reclamation and State Parks staff from the inception of the Project. Reclamation and State Parks staff have reviewed the Final EIR and find it to be consistent with the ASRA IRMP. On September 8, 2004, Reclamation issued License #04-LC-20-8324 to Placer County for the construction and maintenance of the North Fork American River Trail. Upon completion, the North Fork American River Trail will be managed by State Parks as part of the ASRA trail network.

Planning efforts began in 2002 with the formation of a twelve member Trail Advisory Group (TAG) made up of representatives of each of the user groups including hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers along with State Parks Staff. Using project objectives developed by the TAG, a route was carefully chosen and surveyed by County staff and qualified consultants. Following the survey of the trail corridor, the project route was reviewed by environmental and geotechnical consultants to ensure the project included appropriate protections of biological, cultural, visual, and water quality resources as well as geologic stability and adherence to local, state, and federal regulations. These planning efforts culminated in the creation of the *North Fork American River Trail Plan, revised February 2008* (Trail Plan). Upon certification of the Final EIR, your Board will be asked to consider approval of the Trail Plan. The Trail Plan has been updated for consistency with the Final EIR and will be intended as a construction document for use by staff, contractors, and volunteers during construction of the trail and associated amenities.

On June 14, 2005, your Board approved a contract with EDAW, Inc. for preparation of an EIR. A public scoping meeting for the North Fork American River Trail Project was held on August 31, 2005. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the North Fork American River was filed on November 9, 2005.

Following the release of the Draft EIR on August 9, 2007, a 45-day public comment period was provided, and a public hearing was held to discuss the Draft EIR on August 23, 2007. During the public comment period, 49 public comment letters were received. Of the letters, 24 expressed support for the project, and eighteen others offered input without opposition to the project. Seven of the letters expressed opposition. The comment response indicates a high level of public support for the North Fork American River Trail.

The County has received permits from the US Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Game for construction of the North Fork American River Trail. All permits will be updated if necessary following adoption of the Final EIR and prior to any work being constructed in affected areas.

Copies of the Final EIR are available for review at the Clerk of the Board's Office.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: Your Board's certification of the Final EIR and adoption of the Findings of Fact fulfills the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The conclusion of the Final EIR is that there will be no significant environmental impacts caused by the North Fork American River Trail Project following identified mitigations. A Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP) is a part of the Final EIR. The MMRP identifies all of the necessary mitigation measures required to reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. Upon adoption of the Final EIR and Findings of Fact, the County will be committed to implement the MMRP.

Since the proposed trail is to be constructed primarily on federally owned land, the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has taken the role as lead agency for review under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines. Reclamation has advised staff that they will consider the adoption of a Finding of No Significant Impact if your Board approves the EIR before you today.

Upon Certification of the Final EIR, the Department of Facility Services will file a Notice of Determination with the Clerk-Recorder and the State Clearinghouse as required by CEQA.

FISCAL IMPACT: The total anticipated project cost, including planning and design costs expended to date, construction costs, and the costs to implement mitigation measures defined in the Final EIR, is expected to be just over \$2,000,000. The current funding for this project includes \$1,500,000 in committed Proposition 40 grant funds, \$400,000 in County General Fund dollars from trail funds previously appropriated in the Parks and Grounds budget specifically allocated for expansion of trails in the County, and \$100,000 from Recreation Area #5 (Auburn/Meadow Vista Area) Park Dedication Fees. In addition, the Placer County Parks Commission has earmarked \$150,000 in Park Dedication Fees from three benefit areas adjacent to this project (\$50,000/each). Also, once the environmental review process is completed, this project will be eligible for various grant opportunities to fund additional improvements if needed.

It is staff's intent to construct the project in phases as funding permits and return to your Board for budget augmentation from other sources should the need arise. The construction costs of this project are not anticipated to have any additional impact on the County General Fund.

Ongoing maintenance of the trail will have a small general fund component that is expected to be between \$8,000 to \$10,000 annually. However, it is staff's intent to rely heavily on organized volunteer groups and utilize resources such as inmate labor, contract agreements with the Washington Ridge Conservation Camp and contracts with the California Conservation Corp when it is advantageous to the County to do so.

AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OFFICE: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW

ATTACHMENT: RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS OF FACT

cc: COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Before the Board of Supervisors County of Placer, State of California

In the matter of: A Resolution Certifying
the Final Environmental Impact Report and
Adopting Findings of Fact Regarding
the North Fork American River Trail Project

Resolution No. _____

The following RESOLUTION was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer at a regular meeting held _____, 2008, by the following vote:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Attest:

Board of Supervisors

Clerk of said Board

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

WHEREAS, the North Fork American River Trail Project (Project) is a proposal by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency—Placer County, Department of Facility Services (County)—to develop a 14.2-mile multiple-use natural surface trail and two staging termini.

WHEREAS, the project area is managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) as part of the State Park system under a contract with the property owner, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation).

WHEREAS, the environmental analysis contained in the draft environmental impact report (DEIR) is based on an evaluation of how environmental conditions would be expected to change as a result of implementing the project.

WHEREAS, CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines provide that:

"[N]o public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an environmental impact report has been certified which identifies one or more significant effects on the environment that would occur if the project is approved or carried out unless both of the following occur:

- (a) *The public agency makes one or more of the following findings with respect to each significant effect:*

- (1) *Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment.*
 - (2) *Those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.*
 - (3) *Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including considerations for the provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the environmental impact report.*
- (b) *With respect to significant effects which were subject to a finding under paragraph (3) of subdivision (a), the public agency finds that specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment. [Public Resources Code Section 21081]"*

WHEREAS, because the DEIR identified significant effects that may occur as a result of the Project and in accordance with the provisions of the State CEQA Guidelines, the County hereby adopts the findings contained herein as part of the approval of the proposed project.

WHEREAS, the project is a multiple-use trail within the Auburn State Recreation Area (SRA) that would begin at the confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River and end at the Ponderosa Bridge, approximately 14.2 miles upstream, and would include: a natural surface trail that would accommodate hiking, biking, and equestrian use; bridges and stream fords to accommodate stream crossings; two staging termini (Foresthill Road and Ponderosa Way); a restroom facility; signage; and informational kiosks.

WHEREAS, the project area is located on the southern slope of the North Fork American River canyon in the Sierra Nevada foothills of Placer County, approximately 40 miles northeast of Sacramento. The termini of the trail are logically placed at or near existing roads, so the project would be a stand-alone trail with its own independent utility. The beginning of the trail alignment is located near the confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River, approximately 3 miles northeast of the City of Auburn near Foresthill Road. The trail ends at the Ponderosa Bridge, 5 miles west of the town of Foresthill and southeast of Weimar. Interstate 80 is located approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the trail alignment and Foresthill Road is located to the south. The trail alignment is located at elevations of 800–1,200 feet above mean sea level.

WHEREAS, the County has coordinated planning efforts for the North Fork American River Trail Project with the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), its managing partner for the Auburn State Recreation Area (SRA); the County was issued License No. 04-LC-20-8324 by USBR on September 8, 2004 for the construction and maintenance of the North Fork American River Trail within the Auburn SRA.

WHEREAS, the County held a public scoping meeting for the North Fork American River Trail Project on August 31, 2005; issued a notice of preparation to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the North Fork American River Trail Project on November 10, 2005; prepared a Draft EIR and released it for public comment on August 7, 2007; took the public comments on the Draft EIR through September 24, 2007, a public meeting was held on August 23, 2007.

WHEREAS, In accordance with the Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a range of reasonable alternatives to the project that could feasibly attain the basic project objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project was addressed in the DEIR.

WHEREAS, the alternatives presented in the DEIR were selected to provide the County with the environmental information necessary to make a decision on the proposed trail project.

WHEREAS, as described in Section 16.1.1 of the DEIR, the following alternatives were considered in the planning stages of the proposed project: the North Side of River Alternative, the 4-foot Trail Alternative, the Revised Alignment Alternative, and the Ridgetop Alternative.

WHEREAS, these alternatives cited in the immediately previous recital represent a reasonable range of alternatives, including alternative locations for the trail, an alternative trail alignment, and an alternative width for the trail; however, because these alternatives did not meet the goals and objectives of the proposed project and in some cases would result in more severe impacts than the proposed project, they were not considered at the same level of detail as the proposed project.

WHEREAS, two other alternatives were considered in Section 16.1.2 of the DEIR at an equal level of detail as the proposed project.

WHEREAS, the No Project Alternative was analyzed according to Section 15126.6(e) of the State CEQA Guidelines to allow the County to compare the impact of approving the proposed project with the impact of not approving the proposed project.

WHEREAS, the Original Alignment Alternative was analyzed as proposed in the Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment for the North Fork American River Trail to provide a comparison at an equal level of detail between the proposed project and the previously proposed alignment for the trail.

WHEREAS, because the Original Alignment Alternative would have increased impacts on soils, geology, and seismicity, and hydrology and water quality compared to the proposed project this alternative is not the preferred alternative.

WHEREAS, a comprehensive evaluation of the No-Project Alternative, as required by Section 15126.6(e) of the State CEQA Guidelines, was included in the DEIR. Under the No Project Alternative the proposed trail and associated facilities, including the corresponding staging termini, would not be constructed.

WHEREAS, under the No-Project Alternative, existing trails in the surrounding area would continue to be used for recreation, and access and recreational opportunities would be limited in the project area.

WHEREAS, under the No-Project Alternative, the project area would continue to be managed under Reclamation contract with State Parks according to the *Auburn State Recreation Area Interim Resource Management Plan* (Auburn SRA IRMP) and the revised Auburn SRA General Plan (GP)/IRMP.

WHEREAS, although the No-Project Alternative would not result in environmental impacts to land use; biological resources; cultural resources; visual resources; transportation and circulation; air

quality; noise; soils, geology, and seismicity; hydrology and water quality; public services; recreation; and hazardous materials and hazards, it would not meet any of the project objectives and would not meet the demand for recreational facilities in Placer County, specifically hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian trails along the North Fork American River.

WHEREAS, therefore, even if the No-Project Alternative were selected, it is likely that at some point in the future trail development would occur and environmental impacts similar to those of the project would result. Because this alternative would not be consistent with the project objectives or meet the demand for recreational facilities in Placer County, this alternative has been rejected from further consideration.

WHEREAS, under the Original Alignment Alternative, as proposed in the IS/EA for the North Fork American River Trail, the trail would follow the same alignment as the proposed Project, except for a portion of the proposed trail near Upper Lake Clementine Road.

WHEREAS, under the Original Alignment Alternative: the trail would follow the canyon contour around the river bend upstream of Lake Clementine; this segment of trail would not climb higher up the canyon as it would for the proposed Project, and it would not include switchbacks; this alternative would cross steeper slopes that are more susceptible to high erosion than the proposed project; and, this alternative would also cross private property.

WHEREAS, the Original Alignment Alternative would meet the Project objectives by providing a multiple-use trail with two staging termini to provide access to the North Fork American River canyon; however, the Original Alignment Alternative would have more environmental impacts than the Project and would not be environmentally superior.

WHEREAS, therefore, the Original Alignment Alternative has been rejected from further consideration.

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors gave notice of a public meeting to consider and act upon the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Project, and a public meeting was duly held before the Board of Supervisors on August 26, 2008, and

WHEREAS, after holding the public meeting, the Board of Supervisors duly considered the FEIR as prepared for the Project (which includes the Draft EIR dated August 2007 and the FEIR, dated January 3, 2008).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer as follows:

1. The foregoing statements of procedural history are correct and accurate.
2. The FEIR has been prepared in accordance with all requirements of CEQA and the Guidelines.
3. The FEIR was presented to and reviewed by the Board of Supervisors. The FEIR was prepared under the supervision by the County and reflects the independent judgment of the County. The Board of Supervisors has reviewed the FEIR, and bases the findings stated below on such review and other substantial evidence in the record.

4. The County finds that the FEIR considers a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives, sufficient to foster informed decision making, public participation and a reasoned choice. Thus, the alternatives analysis in the EIR is sufficient to carry out the purposes of such analysis under CEQA and the Guidelines.
5. The Board of Supervisors hereby certifies the FEIR as complete, adequate and in full compliance with CEQA and as providing an adequate basis for considering and acting upon the Project Approval and makes the following specific findings with respect thereto.
6. The Board of Supervisors agrees with the characterization of the FEIR with respect to all Impacts initially identified as "less than significant" and finds that those Impacts have been described accurately and are less than significant or beneficial as so described in the FEIR. This finding does not apply to Impacts identified as significant or potentially significant that are reduced by mitigation measures to a level characterized in the FEIR as less than significant or Impacts characterized in the FEIR as significant and unavoidable. Each of those Impacts and the mitigation measures adopted to reduce them are dealt with specifically in the findings below.
7. Except as stated otherwise in certain cases below, all mitigation measures proposed in the FEIR are adopted and incorporated into the Project.
8. Except as stated otherwise below, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan ("MMRP") will apply to all mitigation measures adopted with respect to the Project pursuant to all of the Project Approvals and will be implemented.
9. The mitigation measures and the MMRP provisions that have been adopted have been incorporated into the Project and are binding on the County and its assigns or successors in interest at the time of approval of the Project.
10. The descriptions of the Impacts in these findings are summary statements. Reference should be made to the FEIR for a more complete description.
11. The Findings of Fact included on attached Exhibit A are hereby adopted.
12. The Department of Facility Services is directed to file a Notice of Determination with the County Clerk within five (5) working days in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21152(a) and CEQA Guidelines section 15094.

Exhibit A Findings of Fact

The County has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the proposed project, consisting of the Responses to Comments on the DEIR, revised sections of the DEIR, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). The County has also considered the public record on the project. In addition to this Statement of Findings, the public record for the proposed project is composed of the following elements (a full reference list is provided in Chapter 18.0 of the DEIR):

- ▶ *Geotechnical Input—EIR, North Fork American River Trail Project, Placer County, California, June 11, 2007.*
- ▶ *Auburn State Recreation Area Interim Resource Management Plan. Mid-Pacific Region, Central California Area Office. September 1992.*
- ▶ *Draft Environmental Impact Report for the North Fork American River Trail Project, August 2007 (State Clearinghouse # 2005112042).*
- ▶ *Final Environmental Impact Report for the North Fork American River Trail Project, December 2007 (State Clearinghouse # 2005112042).*
- ▶ *Placer County General Plan, adopted August 16, 1994.*

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081, for each significant effect identified in the DEIR, the County must make one or more of the findings stated on page 1-1.

After reviewing the public record, as composed of the aforementioned elements, the County hereby makes the following findings regarding the significant effects of the proposed project, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081 and Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

5.1 Biological Resources

Significant Effect: Potential Disturbance of Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog Habitat or Individuals (Impact 5-1)

Implementation of the project could degrade aquatic habitat or could result in physical injury to yellow-legged frog. This would be a **potentially significant** impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to yellow-legged frog.

Mitigation Measure 5-1: Protect Foothill Yellow-legged Frog.

The County and its primary construction contractor shall implement the following measures to reduce impacts on foothill yellow-legged frogs:

- ▶ Construction of the trail across drainages and streams shall occur when the drainages are dry, to the extent feasible.
- ▶ Guidelines shall be implemented to protect water quality and prevent erosion, as outlined in the best management practices (BMPs) in Chapter 3.0, "Project Description," and Mitigation Measure 11-2, "Obtain Authorization for Construction Activities with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Measures as Required."
- ▶ If water is present during construction, disturbance to pools and slow runs with cobble-sized substrate shall be minimized. In particular, rocks shall not be collected from in-water environments from late March to early September to avoid disturbing foothill yellow-legged frog egg masses and tadpoles.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-1 (Potential Disturbance of Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog Habitat or Individuals) to a less-than-significant level because construction would occur when yellow-legged frog is not present, to the extent feasible, and water quality would not be degraded.

Significant Effect: Potential Disturbance of Nests and Individual Raptors and Other Nesting Birds (Impact 5-2)

Trees and other vegetation in the project area provide potential nest sites for raptors and migratory birds. Removal of trees or other vegetation during trail construction could destroy or disturb nests, resulting in loss of eggs or young. This would be a *potentially significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to nests and individual raptors.

Mitigation Measure 5-2: Protect Raptors and Other Nesting Birds.

The County and its primary construction contractor shall implement the following measures to reduce impacts on raptors and other nesting birds:

- ▶ Limit removal of trees greater than 6 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh) to the greatest degree possible. If trees larger than 6 inches dbh must be removed, then the following mitigation measures shall be implemented:
 - Tree removal shall be done in accordance with the Placer County Tree Ordinance.
 - Before removal of trees during the non-breeding season, a qualified biologist shall inspect the tree for potential raptor nest, which are protected under Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code. If raptor nests are present and cannot be avoided, consult with California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) regarding appropriate measures for tree removal. If no nests are found, no further mitigation is required.
 - If any construction activities, including tree removal, take place between March 1 and August 31, preconstruction surveys for active raptor nests shall be conducted prior to the beginning of construction. If any active raptor nests are identified during preconstruction surveys, then impacts

to active raptor nests shall be avoided by the establishment of appropriate buffers and/or nest monitoring by a qualified wildlife biologist.

- Avoid construction within the buffer until the end of the breeding season and consult with DFG regarding alternative appropriate protection measures. The nest tree shall not be removed.
- Woody vegetation (e.g., small trees and shrubs) shall not be removed during the nesting season for raptors and migratory birds (i.e., March to August) to the extent feasible. If woody vegetation must be removed during the nesting season, the amount and extent to be removed shall be minimized to the extent feasible.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-2 (Potential Disturbance of Nests and Individual Raptors and Other Nesting Birds) to a less-than-significant level because removal of trees greater than 6 inches dbh would be limited and the County would consult with DFG to determine how to avoid impacts to nests and individual raptors.

Significant Effect: Potential Loss of Special-Status Plants (Impact 5-3)

One special-status plant species, Brandegee's clarkia, was documented along the proposed trail alignment. Construction of the proposed trail could potentially disturb a population of Brandegee's clarkia. This would be a *potentially significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to Brandegee's clarkia.

Mitigation Measure 5-3: Protect Special-Status Plants. Note: Special-status plant surveys in support of the proposed project have been conducted along the entire alignment of the original and revised trail corridors; however, surveys of the new segment of the proposed trail alignment were completed during the non-blooming season. The only special-status plant species documented during these surveys is Brandegee's clarkia. Brandegee's clarkia is a CNPS list 2 species; it is not listed under the state or federal endangered species acts. Nevertheless, impacts to Brandegee's clarkia resulting from the proposed project would be considered significant under CEQA. Brandegee's clarkia is an annual species that is fairly common in the vicinity of the project site and appears to thrive on sites that have experienced some level of prior disturbance such as roadsides of along trails.

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse effects on Brandegee's clarkia resulting from project implementation:

- ▶ The 2.3-mile new segment of the proposed trail alignment shall be surveyed during the blooming season for Brandegee's clarkia prior to the start of construction.
- ▶ The locations of all known Brandegee's clarkia occurrences in the vicinity of the proposed trail alignment shall be clearly marked by a qualified biologist for avoidance by construction crews prior to the commencement of trail construction activities.

- ▶ Construction crews shall be alerted to the presence of Brandagee's clarkia in the vicinity of the proposed trail corridor, shall be shown maps of known locations and the methods used to identify populations in the field, and shall be asked to avoid these occurrences and a 25 foot buffer zone around them to the greatest extent possible.
- ▶ If complete avoidance of the populations is not feasible, the areas where occurrences would be impacted shall be minimized to the greatest extent feasible.
- ▶ In those areas where Brandagee's clarkia cannot be avoided, trail construction shall take place after the plants have completed their flowering cycles and set seed.
- ▶ A qualified biologist shall be present during trail construction in or near occurrences of Brandagee's clarkia and shall collect seeds from any occurrences of Brandagee's clarkia at those sites that will be impacted. Seeds collected shall be distributed immediately following collection in the immediate vicinity of the original site, but outside the construction footprint.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-3 (Potential Loss of Special-Status Plants) to a less-than-significant level because all known Brandagee's clarkia occurrences would be marked prior to construction and avoided.

Significant Effect: Impacts on Waters of the United States (Impact 5-4)

Installation of stream crossings and bridges and trail construction could result in fill of jurisdictional waters of the United States, including wetlands. This would be a *potentially significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to waters of the United States.

Mitigation Measure 5-4: Protect Jurisdictional Waters of the United States. Note: The wetland delineation completed in support of the proposed project in 2004 was submitted to and verified by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). In addition, a nationwide permit for the proposed project has been obtained from USACE, and a water quality certification pursuant to Section 401 has been obtained from the Central Valley RWQCB. After the nationwide permit was issued for the project, the trail was realigned, resulting in placement of fill in two new drainage crossings and avoiding placement of fill into four previously included drainage crossings. Therefore, an amendment to the nationwide permit will be requested.

The County and its primary construction contractor shall implement the following measures to reduce potential impacts on jurisdictional waters of the United States, including wetlands:

- ▶ Comply with the terms and conditions set forth in Nationwide Permit 42 obtained from USACE for the proposed project.
- ▶ Comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Section 401 water quality certification. For a complete list of these terms see Chapter 3.0, "Project Description."

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-4 (Impacts on Waters of the United States) to a less-than-significant level because the County would comply with the terms of the Nationwide Permit 42 and the Section 401 water quality certification for the project, which would minimize disturbance of jurisdictional wetlands and adequately protect water quality.

Significant Effect: Streambed Alteration (Impact 5-5)

Construction of the proposed trail would require crossing 46 drainages. These crossings could alter the streambeds and adjacent vegetation of these drainages that are regulated by DFG. This would be a *potentially significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to streambeds.

Mitigation Measure 5-5: Implement Conditions of Streambed Alteration Agreement. Note: A Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project was obtained from DFG in August 2004.

The County shall comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement. Because of alignment changes and new drainages affected since the issuance of the 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement, the permit application will be resubmitted following the filing of the Notice of Determination for the proposed project, and any new conditions attached to the reissuance of the Streambed Alteration Agreement will be implemented.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-5 (Streambed Alteration) to a less-than-significant level because the County would comply with the Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement for the project, which would adequately protect stream resources.

Significant Effect: Potential Introduction and Spread of Invasive Weeds (Impact 5-6)

Several invasive weeds, including Himalayan blackberry, Italian thistle, and yellow starthistle, currently occur in the project area. Construction and use of the proposed trail has the potential to introduce additional invasive weed species or spread invasive weeds already in the project area. Introduction and spread of invasive weeds could reduce habitat quality. This would be a *potentially significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to introduction and spread of invasive weeds.

Mitigation Measure 5-6: Prevent the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Weeds.

The County shall implement the following measures to reduce potential impacts resulting from the introduction and spread of invasive weeds:

- ▶ A target list of invasive weeds with the potential to occur and be problematic in the project area shall be developed. This may be accomplished by reviewing the California Invasive Plant Council's "CalEPPC List," or list of invasive wildland weeds (2006); the California Department of Food and Agriculture's "Encycloweediea," or list of invasive weeds (2004); and by consulting knowledgeable individuals such as the resource ecologists employed by Reclamation and the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the County agricultural commissioner.
- ▶ The County shall ensure that any equipment used during construction is free of mud or seed-bearing material before such equipment enters the construction area.
- ▶ If populations of invasive weeds are documented in the construction area, they shall be eradicated prior to construction, preferably before they set seed. If eradication is infeasible, the population shall be clearly identified in the field by flagging and shall be avoided during construction to prevent spread.
- ▶ The County shall ensure that any fill soil, mulch, seeds, and straw materials used during construction and implementation of BMPs are weed-free. Certified weed-free material shall be used if available.
- ▶ Once the trail is constructed and open to the public, conduct periodic monitoring (at least once per year during the growing season) to ensure early detection and eradication of any invasive weed species brought in by users. Any populations detected during annual monitoring shall be treated and eradicated as soon as possible after detection, preferably before seeds set.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-6 (Potential Introduction and Spread of Invasive Weeds) to a less-than-significant level because the County will ensure that construction equipment and fill material is free of mud or seed-bearing material and will conduct monitoring and treatment/eradication of invasive weeds once the trail is open.

Significant Effect: Impacts on Oak Woodland Habitat (Impact 5-8)

The proposed project may result in the removal of some trees that are 6 inches dbh or larger from oak woodland habitat. Native oak trees are protected under the Placer County Tree Ordinance. Also, SB 1334, Statutes of 2004, requires County's to determine significance of conversion of oak woodland, and provide mitigation measures for significant effects. This would be a **potentially significant** impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to oak woodland habitat.

Mitigation Measure 5-7: Replacement of Native Oaks.

If removal of native oak trees larger than 6 inches dbh is required during construction of the proposed project, the County shall take measures to compensate for the removal of those trees consistent with the Placer County Tree Ordinance.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 5-8 (Impacts on Oak Woodland Habitat) to a less-than-significant level because the County would compensate for removal of oak trees larger than 6 inches dbh.

5.2 Cultural Resources

Significant Effect: Potential for Loss of or Damage to Potentially Significant Cultural Resources (Impact 6-1)

Six unevaluated, although potentially significant, cultural resources have been documented within and immediately adjacent to the proposed trail alignment. The proposed project has the potential to destroy these cultural resources. This would be a *significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to potentially significant cultural resources.

Mitigation Measure 6-1: Realign Trail to Avoid Potentially Significant Cultural Resources.

- ▶ To ensure that construction of the proposed trail avoids all significant documented cultural resources in the project area, the County shall realign the trail route as follows:
- ▶ The proposed trail shall be realigned at least 25 feet downslope from sites NF-4, NF-5, NF-7, and NF-8 to eliminate direct impacts and reduce the possibility of trail-related erosion and siltation.
- ▶ The proposed trail shall be realigned at least 25–50 feet upslope from the currently proposed trail alignment from the Ponderosa Bridge to approximately 2,000 feet downriver to avoid the historically mined bar (site NF-9) and associated features.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 6-1 (Potential for Loss of or Damage to Potentially Significant Cultural Resources) to a less-than-significant level because the trail would avoid all known significant cultural resources.

Significant Effect: Potential for Disturbance of Known and Undiscovered Cultural Resources (Impact 6-2)

The project vicinity is known to contain numerous historic and prehistoric resources. In addition, buried traces of historic-era activity and early Native American occupation that remain undocumented may be present within and in the vicinity of the proposed trail alignment. Ground-disturbing activities during trail construction could disturb these known and undiscovered cultural resources. This would be a *significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to known and undiscovered cultural resources.

Mitigation Measure 6-2: Protect Previously Unknown Cultural Resources.

If archaeological materials such as historic buildings or structures remain, artifact deposits or scatters, or prehistoric artifacts such as stone tool flaking debitage, mortars, pestles, shell, bone, or human remains are encountered during trail construction, all ground-disturbing activity in the area shall cease. A qualified cultural resources specialist shall be contacted to identify the materials, determine their possible significance, and formulate appropriate mitigation measures. Appropriate measures may include no action, avoidance of the resource through trail realignment, subsurface testing, and potentially data recovery.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 6-2 (Potential for Disturbance of Known and Undiscovered Cultural Resources) to a less-than-significant level because if any previously unknown cultural resource are discovered during construction appropriate measures would be taken to avoid impacts to cultural resources.

Significant Effect: Potential for Disturbance of Unknown Human Interments (Impact 6-3)

Although no evidence of human interments was found in documentary research or the archaeological inventory, ground-disturbing activities during trail construction could adversely affect presently unmarked human interments. This would be **potentially significant** impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to unknown human interments.

Mitigation Measure 6-3: Stop Potentially Damaging Work if Human Remains are Uncovered during Construction.

In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, the contractor and/or the County shall immediately halt potentially damaging excavation in the area of the burial and notify the County Coroner and a professional archaeologist to determine the nature of the remains. The coroner is required to examine all discoveries of human remains within 48 hours of receiving notice of a discovery on private or state lands (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5[b]). If the coroner determines that the remains are those of a Native American, he or she must contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) by phone within 24 hours of making that determination (Health

and Safety Code Section 7050(c)). Following the coroner's findings, the property owner, contractor or County, an archaeologist, and the NAHC-designated Most Likely Descendent (MLD) shall determine the ultimate treatment and disposition of the remains and take appropriate steps to ensure that additional human interments are not disturbed.

Upon the discovery of Native American remains, the procedures above regarding involvement of the County Coroner, notification of the NAHC, and identification of a MLD shall be followed. The County shall ensure that the immediate vicinity (according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards and practices) is not damaged or disturbed by further development activity until consultation with the MLD has taken place. The MLD shall have 48 hours to complete a site inspection and make recommendations after being granted access to the site. A range of possible treatments for the remains, including nondestructive removal and analysis, preservation in place, relinquishment of the remains and associated items to the descendants, or other culturally appropriate treatment may be discussed. State Assembly Bill (AB) 2641 suggests that the concerned parties may extend discussions beyond the initial 48 hours to allow for the discovery of additional remains. AB 2641(e) includes a list of site protection measures and states that the County shall comply with one or more of the following:

- ▶ Record the site with the NAHC or the appropriate Information Center
- ▶ Utilize an open-space or conservation zoning designation or easement
- ▶ Record a document with the county in which the property is located

The County or their authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance if the NAHC is unable to identify a MLD or the MLD fails to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being granted access to the site. The County or their authorized representative may also re-inter the remains in a location not subject to further disturbance if they reject the recommendation of the MLD, and mediation by the NAHC fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner. Adherence to these procedures and other provisions of the California Health and Safety Code and AB 2641(e) will reduce potential impacts to human remains to a less-than-significant level.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 6-3 (Potential for Disturbance of Unknown Human Interments) to a less-than-significant level because if any human interments are discovered, work will cease until appropriate actions are taken.

5.3 Soils, Geology, and Seismicity

Significant Effect: Construction-Related Erosion Hazards (Impact 11-1)

Based on soil types and topography, the excavation and grading of soil could result in erosion during project construction, particularly during periods of strong winds or storm events. This would be a **potentially significant** impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to construction-related erosion hazards.

Mitigation Measure 11-1: Obtain Authorization for Construction and Operation Activities with the Central Valley RWQCB and Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Measures as Required.

The County and/or the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) shall design a drainage system for erosion control that incorporates the use of BMPs. Erosion and stormwater control shall be designed and implemented in accordance with the latest edition of the erosion and sediment control guidelines for developing areas of the Sierra Nevada foothills and mountains (HSR CDC 1991). BMPs for erosion and siltation prevention, as described in Chapter 3.0, "Project Description," of this document and developed in the trail plan, would be implemented along the trail. Because of the small size of the staging areas and the implementation of these design features, the proposed project is not anticipated to have significant effects on water quality.

The County shall comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Section 401 water quality certification obtained from the Central Valley RWQCB. Because of alignment changes and new drainages affected since the issuance of the 401 certification, this permit will be resubmitted following the filing of the Notice of Determination and any new conditions attached to that permit will be incorporated into the project.

As required under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit for general construction activities, the County shall prepare and submit the appropriate notices of intent and shall prepare any other necessary engineering plans and specifications for pollution prevention and control. The County will prepare a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) that identifies and specifies the use of erosion and sediment control BMPs, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, nonstormwater management controls, permanent postconstruction BMPs, and inspection and maintenance responsibilities. The SWPPP shall also specify the pollutants that are likely to be used during construction that could be present in stormwater drainage and nonstormwater discharges. A sampling and monitoring program shall be included in the SWPPP that meets the requirements of State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Order 99-08-DWQ to ensure that the BMPs are effective.

Construction techniques shall be identified that would reduce the potential for runoff, and the plan shall identify the erosion and sedimentation control measures to be implemented. The SWPPP shall also specify spill prevention and contingency measures, identify the types of materials used for equipment operation, and identify measures to prevent or clean up spills of hazardous materials used for equipment operation and hazardous waste. Emergency procedures for responding to spills shall also be identified. BMPs identified in the SWPPP shall be used in all subsequent site development activities. The SWPPP shall identify personnel training requirements and procedures that would be used to ensure that workers are aware of permit requirements and proper installation and performance inspection methods for BMPs specified in the SWPPP. The SWPPP shall also identify the appropriate personnel responsible for supervisory duties related to implementation of the SWPPP. All construction contractors shall retain a copy of the approved SWPPP on the construction site.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 11-1 (Construction-Related Erosion Hazards) to a less-than-significant level because the County will prepare and implement a SWPPP and BMPs.

Significant Effect: Risks to People and Structures Caused by Strong Seismic Ground Shaking (Impact 11-3)

The foothills of the Sierra Nevada are characterized by extremely low seismicity. However, four notable earthquakes have been reported in the northern Sierra Nevada. In addition, the area does have the potential to be affected by shock waves resulting from earthquakes in western and eastern Placer County, and in more distant areas that display greater seismic activity. Ground shaking could cause structural damage to permanent improvements proposed as part of the project. This would be a **potentially significant** Impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to people and structures caused by strong seismic ground shaking.

Mitigation Measure 11-2: Implement Recommended Measures to Reduce the Potential for Exposure to Seismic Hazards.

A geotechnical report for the proposed project has been prepared (Blackburn Consulting 2007) (Appendix B) that evaluates the potential for various geologic and seismic-related hazards. During project design and construction, all measures outlined in the geotechnical report for the proposed project (Blackburn Consulting 2007) (Appendix B) and, if necessary, supplemental site-specific geotechnical recommendations shall be implemented to ensure that the proposed trail alignment and bridge crossings are safe. It is the responsibility of the County to provide for engineering inspection and certification that earthwork has been performed in conformity with recommendations contained in the report.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 11-3 (Risks to People and Structures Caused by Strong Seismic Ground Shaking) to a less-than-significant level because the County will implement measures included in the geotechnical report prepared for the project that minimize geotechnical risks.

Significant Effect: Risks to People and Structures Caused by Landsliding (Impact 11-4)

Field review of the proposed trail alignment noted several areas of shallow slope instability and/or small landslide areas. Although landsliding does not appear to be a current problem for the project area, stable conditions may be changed by slope alterations from cuts or fills, and by changes to drainage patterns. This would be a **potentially significant** Impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to people and structures caused by landsliding.

Mitigation Measure 11-2: Implement Recommended Measures to Reduce the Potential for Exposure to Seismic Hazards.

A geotechnical report for the proposed project has been prepared (Blackburn Consulting 2007) (Appendix B) that evaluates the potential for various geologic and seismic-related hazards. During project design and construction, all measures outlined in the geotechnical report for the proposed project (Blackburn Consulting 2007) (Appendix B) and, if necessary, supplemental site-specific geotechnical recommendations shall be implemented to ensure that the proposed trail alignment and bridge crossings are safe. It is the responsibility of the County to provide for engineering inspection and certification that earthwork has been performed in conformity with recommendations contained in the report.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 11-4 (Risks to People and Structures Caused by landsliding) to a less-than-significant level because the County will implement measures included in the geotechnical report prepared for the project that minimize landsliding risks.

5.4 Hydrology/Water Quality

Significant Effect: Potential for Short-Term Construction-Related Soil Erosion and Water Quality Impairment (Impact 12-1)

Implementation of the proposed project could cause short-term water quality degradation associated with construction activities. Areas from which duff and vegetation have been removed could be subject to erosion from rain and wind. In addition, accidental spills of construction-related contaminants could occur during construction activities in the project area. Both of these mechanisms could carry soil and construction-related contaminants to intermittent drainages before they are ultimately discharged to the North Fork American River. This would be a **potentially significant** impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to short-term construction-related soil erosion and water quality impairment.

Mitigation Measure 11-1: Obtain Authorization for Construction and Operation Activities with the Central Valley RWQCB and Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Measures as Required.

The County and/or the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) shall design a drainage system for erosion control that incorporates the use of BMPs. Erosion and stormwater control shall be designed and implemented in accordance with the latest edition of the erosion and sediment control guidelines for developing areas of the Sierra Nevada foothills and mountains (HSRCOD 1991). BMPs for erosion and siltation prevention, as described in Chapter 3.0, "Project Description," of this document and developed in the trail plan, would be implemented along the trail. Because of the small size of the staging areas and the implementation of these design features, the proposed project is not anticipated to have significant effects on water quality.

The County shall comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Section 401 water quality certification obtained from the Central Valley RWQCB. Because of alignment changes and new drainages affected since the issuance of the 401 certification, this permit will be resubmitted following the filing of the Notice of Determination and any new conditions attached to that permit will be incorporated into the project.

As required under the NPDES stormwater permit for general construction activities, the County shall prepare and submit the appropriate notices of intent and shall prepare any other necessary engineering plans and specifications for pollution prevention and control. The County will prepared a SWPPP that identifies and specifies the use of erosion and sediment control BMPs, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, nonstormwater management controls, permanent postconstruction BMPs, and inspection and maintenance responsibilities. The SWPPP shall also specify the pollutants that are likely to be used during construction that could be present in stormwater drainage and nonstormwater discharges. A sampling and monitoring program shall be included in the SWPPP that meets the requirements of SWRCB Order 99-08-DWQ to ensure that the BMPs are effective.

Construction techniques shall be identified that would reduce the potential for runoff, and the plan shall identify the erosion and sedimentation control measures to be implemented. The SWPPP shall also specify spill prevention and contingency measures, identify the types of materials used for equipment operation, and identify measures to prevent or clean up spills of hazardous materials used for equipment operation and hazardous waste. Emergency procedures for responding to spills shall also be identified. BMPs identified in the SWPPP shall be used in all subsequent site development activities. The SWPPP shall identify personnel training requirements and procedures that would be used to ensure that workers are aware of permit requirements and proper installation and performance inspection methods for BMPs specified in the SWPPP. The SWPPP shall also identify the appropriate personnel responsible for supervisory duties related to implementation of the SWPPP. All construction contractors shall retain a copy of the approved SWPPP on the construction site.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 12-1 (Potential for Short-Term Construction-Related Soil Erosion and Water Quality Impairment) to a less-than-significant level because the County will prepare and implement a SWPPP and BMPs, which will minimize short-term erosion risks.

Significant Effect: Potential for Long-Term Soil Erosion and Water Quality Impairment (Impact 12-2)

Implementation of the proposed project could cause long-term water quality degradation associated with use of the proposed trail and extreme weather events. Areas from which duff and vegetation have been removed could be subject to erosion from rain and wind. These mechanisms could carry soil into intermittent drainages before they are ultimately discharged to the North Fork American River. This would be a **potentially significant** impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts to long-term soil erosion and water quality impairment.

Mitigation Measure 11-1: Obtain Authorization for Construction and Operation Activities with the Central Valley RWQCB and Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Measures as Required.

The County and/or the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) shall design a drainage system for erosion control that incorporates the use of BMPs. Erosion and stormwater control shall be designed and implemented in accordance with the latest edition of the erosion and sediment control guidelines for developing areas of the Sierra Nevada foothills and mountains (High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council [HSRCDC] 1991). BMPs for erosion and siltation prevention, as described in Chapter 3.0, "Project Description," of this document and developed in the trail plan, would be implemented along the trail. Because of the small size of the staging areas and the implementation of these design features, the proposed project is not anticipated to have significant effects on water quality.

The County shall comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Section 401 water quality certification obtained from the Central Valley RWQCB. Because of alignment changes and new drainages affected since the issuance of the 401 certification, this permit will be resubmitted following the filing of the Notice of Determination and any new conditions attached to that permit will be incorporated into the project.

As required under the NPDES stormwater permit for general construction activities, the County shall prepare and submit the appropriate notices of intent and shall prepare any other necessary engineering plans and specifications for pollution prevention and control. The County will prepared a SWPPP that identifies and specifies the use of erosion and sediment control BMPs, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, nonstormwater management controls, permanent postconstruction BMPs, and inspection and maintenance responsibilities. The SWPPP shall also specify the pollutants that are likely to be used during construction that could be present in stormwater drainage and nonstormwater discharges. A sampling and monitoring program shall be included in the SWPPP that meets the requirements of SWRCB Order 99-08-DWQ to ensure that the BMPs are effective.

Construction techniques shall be identified that would reduce the potential for runoff, and the plan shall identify the erosion and sedimentation control measures to be implemented. The SWPPP shall also specify spill prevention and contingency measures, identify the types of materials used for equipment operation, and identify measures to prevent or clean up spills of hazardous materials used for equipment operation and hazardous waste. Emergency procedures for responding to spills shall also be identified. BMPs identified in the SWPPP shall be used in all subsequent site development activities. The SWPPP shall identify personnel training requirements and procedures that would be used to ensure that workers are aware of permit requirements and proper installation and performance inspection methods for BMPs specified in the SWPPP. The SWPPP shall also identify the appropriate personnel responsible for supervisory duties related to implementation of the SWPPP. All construction contractors shall retain a copy of the approved SWPPP on the construction site.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 12-2 (Potential for Long-Term Soil Erosion and Water Quality Impairment) to a less-than-significant level because the

County will prepare and implement a SWPPP and BMPs, which will minimize long-term erosion risks.

5.5 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Significant Effect: Potential for Release of Hazardous Materials During Trail Construction or Maintenance (Impact 15-2)

Trail construction and maintenance equipment may require the use of small amounts of hazardous materials. The proposed project would comply with all applicable federal and state regulations pertaining to handling of hazardous materials and worker health and safety; however, accidental spills or other releases of small amounts of hazardous materials could still occur in an otherwise pristine, undeveloped area during construction or maintenance of the proposed trail. This would be a *potentially significant* impact.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment. This mitigation would reduce the significant effects of the project to a less-than-significant level.

Facts in Support of Finding

The County adopted the following mitigation measure that would reduce to less-than-significant levels the project's impacts from release of hazardous materials during trail construction or maintenance.

Mitigation Measure 15-1: Implement Measures to Reduce Hazards Associated with Potential Hazardous Materials Releases.

This mitigation measure would be implemented in conjunction with Mitigation Measure 11-1, "Obtain Authorization for Construction and Operation Activities with the Central Valley RWQCB and Implement Erosion and Sediment Control Measures as Required," described in Chapter 11.0, "Soils, Geology, and Seismicity."

Before the commencement of trail construction, the County shall implement the following measures.

- ▶ An accidental-spill prevention and response plan shall be prepared and implemented for storage and use of hazardous materials during trail construction and maintenance. This plan shall identify measures to prevent accidental spills from leaving the site and methods for responding to and cleaning up spills before neighboring properties are exposed to hazardous materials.
- ▶ The County shall ensure that any employee handling hazardous materials is trained in the safe handling and storage of hazardous materials and trained to follow all applicable regulations with regard to such hazardous materials.
- ▶ The primary construction contractor shall identify a staging area where hazardous materials will be stored during construction in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce Impact 15-2 (Potential for Release of Hazardous Materials During Trail Construction or Maintenance) to a less-than-

significant level because the County will prepare and implement an accidental-spill prevention and response plan and train employees on safe handling of hazardous materials.

References

Blackburn Consulting, Inc. 2007. (June). Geotechnical Input—EIR. North Fork American River Trail Project, Placer County, California. Originally prepared February 2, 2006. Auburn, CA. Prepared for EDAW, Inc., Sacramento, CA.

High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council. 1991 (October). Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Developing Areas of the Sierra Foothills and Mountains. Auburn, CA.

HSRCDC. See High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council.

From: Craig Wilson [CWilson@sanjuan.edu]
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2008 7:09 AM
To: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Subject: North Fork Trail Project

RECEIVED
AUG 20 2008
CLERK OF SUPERVISORS
PLACER COUNTY

As a frequent user of mountain bike trails in Placer County, I want to encourage you to certifying the Final EIR and approve the North Fork Trail along the American River.

Not only is the trail environmentally sound by design, it is a better way to get folks to appreciate nature by providing a simple trail to access it. With high gas prices more and more families are looking for affordable ways to recreate near home. It is clear that your constituency is willing to help build and use Placer County trails, because other new trails in the area, such as those at Hidden Falls are extremely popular.

Please take all of these factors into consideration as you meet on this issue.

Thank you,

Craig Wilson
2580 Burl Lane
Newcastle, CA
95658

From: Liebert [dliebert@ssctv.net]
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2008 8:33 PM
To: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Subject: North Fork Trail

RECEIVED

AUG 18 2008

PLACER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

-the trail will be environmentally sound by design.

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing this e-mail in hopes that you will support the North Fork Trail. The trails provide a great way to enjoy nature and to get into shape. With the rising cost of gas, this trail will enable families to enjoy the outdoors without having to take a long car ride. The volunteers that have built other Auburn trails are a dedicated group and I am sure that they would do an excellent job if given the chance to build the North Fork Trail.

Thank you for your time,

David Liebert
5th Grade Teacher
Weimar Hills Middle School

--what better way to get folks to appreciate nature than by providing a simple trail to access it.

--with high gas prices more & more families are looking for affordable ways to recreate near home.

--a healthier community saves money by dealing with costly health problems associated with obesity.

--volunteers helped build trails in the area; the community likes to give back by supporting these kinds of projects.

--Other new trails in the area, such as those at Hidden Falls are extremely popular.

Clearly your constituency appreciates trail projects.

--Remote trails are great, but near Auburn, hiker & family friendly trails are important.

Sent via the WebMail system at mail.ssctv.net

From: Teri Sayad **On Behalf Of** Placer County Board of Supervisors
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 5:01 PM
To: Ann Holman
Subject: EIR - North Fork Trail

From: Brian Pease [mailto:bpease67@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 1:48 PM
To: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Subject: EIR - North Fork Trail

Hello,

I am an avid mountain biker / hiker and a placer county resident for over 10 years. I am writing to express my deep support for the proposed trail project to extend the North Fork system.

--

Brian Pease
5141 Wedgewood Way
Rocklin, CA 95765

Ann Holman

From: Teri Sayad on behalf of Placer County Board of Supervisors
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 5:02 PM
To: Ann Holman
Subject: FW: north fork trail

From: markglace@comcast.net [mailto:markglace@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 4:09 PM
To: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Subject: north fork trail

I write to urge you to go forward with the North Fork Trail Project for the following reasons. Having a abundance of trails close to a town defines that community as a healthy recreation minded community. This is a major criterion for communities ranked in the best places to live articles in many of the "active lifestyle" magazines.

It also provides the local citizens a place to exercise, take children outside of the house, and be a family. For those in the know, Auburn is the "Endurance Capital", let's live up to the name.

Thanks for listening
Mark Glace

From: Teri Sayad **On Behalf Of** Placer County Board of Supervisors
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 5:02 PM
To: Ann Holman
Subject: FW: 14 mile multi-use trail will go from Foresthill Bridge upriver to the Ponderosa Bridge

From: Eric Grady [mailto:eric.grady@horizononline.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 2:34 PM
To: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Subject: 14 mile multi-use trail will go from Foresthill Bridge upriver to the Ponderosa Bridge

Dear Sirs/madams-

Every time I turn on the news there is a report about America's obesity problems and the lack of fitness of Americans. I whole-heartedly support any proposal that provides an outlet for exercise for the public. I am an area mountain biker and it has been my experience that mountain bikers are among the most courteous and clean trail users. The majority of mountain bikers are middle-aged fathers and mothers that take to sport to enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty of our area, while exercising.

Please list me as a supporter of a multi-use trail that would run from the Foresthill Bridge up river to the Ponderosa Bridge.

Eric Grady
Horizon
Erosion Control Sales Manager
11380-A Sunrise Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95742
916-638-4338 office
916-638-5338 fax
916-869-2263 cell
egrady@horizononline.com

