



COLUSA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE

AGENDA PACKET

Meeting #1 - September 15, 2010

TO: Steering Committee Members

FROM: Steve Hackney, Director of Planning and Building; Ben Ritchie and Beth Thompson, De Novo Planning Group

SUBJECT: Open Space and Recreation

DATE: September 2, 2010

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your decision to participate on the Colusa County General Plan Update Steering Committee. Over the next several months, this group will meet 8 or 9 times to collaboratively help guide the direction of the County's new General Plan.

A general plan is a broad and comprehensive document that covers a diverse set of topics. There is a lot of information to cover during our time together, and in order to ensure that we make the most beneficial use of everyone's time, it is imperative that each of you come to each meeting prepared to discuss the topics scheduled for that day.

Prior to each meeting, each of you will be provided with a meeting packet that includes reading materials, an agenda for the upcoming meeting, and key issues to consider prior to each meeting. These packets are meant to prepare you to discuss the scheduled topics for each meeting in a meaningful manner, and to ensure that all Committee members have access to all pertinent materials and resources.

Our first meeting together will provide an opportunity for introductions, an overview of how this committee will function, and will address the General Plan topics of Open Space and Recreation.

Prior to our first meeting, we ask that you read the attached materials regarding Open Space and Recreation and go through the work exercise. In addition to the required Open Space and Recreation reading materials and the work exercise, we have also included links to some background information regarding the County's General Plan Update.

WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

Every city and county in California is required by state law to prepare and maintain a planning document called a general plan. A general plan is designed to serve as the jurisdiction's "constitution" or "blueprint" for future decisions concerning land use, infrastructure, public services, and resource conservation. All specific plans, subdivisions, public works projects, and zoning decisions made by the County must be consistent with the General Plan.

General plans provide guidance on reaching a future envisioned 20 or more years in the future (the proposed General Plan will look out 20 years to the year 2030). To reach this envisioned future, the updated General Plan will include goals, policies and actions that address both immediate and long-term needs.

The General Plan will be organized into individual elements that address the “built environment” and “resource management”.

The built environment elements will address:

- Land Use, including land use designations and patterns, and maps which provide a roadmap for growth over the next 20 years;
- Circulation, including plans for roadway expansions to ensure that future growth can be accommodated by the County’s transportation network;
- Community Services and Facilities, including policies to ensure that the County is correctly planning for police and fire protection, schools and libraries and other services such as water and sewer services;
- Safety and Noise, including policies to protect the public from hazards such as fires, flooding, and geologic hazards, as well as policies related to noise-generating uses and noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, hospitals and schools;
- Economic Development, including policies to ensure to promote the creation of local jobs and to protect the local agricultural economy; and
- Housing, including measures to ensure that housing affordable to all segments of the community are addressed and planned for.

Resource management elements will address:

- Conservation, including measures to protect and improve air quality, biological resources, water management, and scenic resources;
- Open Space, including measures to ensure that open space resources, including scenic resources, wildlife refuges, and resource preservation areas, are protected and enhanced throughout the County; and
- Agriculture, including policies that will protect and enhance the County agricultural economy and provide guidance regarding the conversion of agricultural lands and the location of non-agricultural land uses in proximity to agricultural lands.

REQUIRED READING

This first meeting packet includes the following items, all of which should be read prior to the first meeting on September 15th:

1. September 15, 2010 General Plan Steering Committee Agenda
2. Meeting Schedule - list of future meeting dates and future meeting topics
3. General Plan Background Report: Select pages related to Open Space and Recreation
4. Issues and Opportunities Report: Introduction to the report and select pages related to Open Space and Recreation.
5. Colusa County 1989 General Plan: Goals and objectives related to Open Space and Recreation.
6. Colusa County 1989 General Plan: Open Space Element.

The 1989 General Plan does not include a separate element related to Recreation; recreation goals and policies are primarily presented in the Open Space Element. The Land Use Element includes the following policy related to recreation:

LU-14: Appropriate sites for recreational uses should be provided in Colusa County, as long as the activities are compatible with the environment and surrounding uses. Local recreational facilities in unincorporated areas should be paid for by service districts or by developer fees.

WORK EXERCISE

After reading the materials provided in this packet, please consider and draft a written response to the following questions:

1. In your mind, what are the top three priorities related to Recreation that the General Plan Update should address?
2. What are the top three priorities related to Open Space that the General Plan Update should address?
3. In reviewing the 1989 General Plan Goals and Objectives and Open Space Element, are the priorities you identified addressed?
 - a. Which 1989 goals, objectives, and policies best address the priorities you identified?
 - b. Which priorities are not addressed in the 1989 General Plan?
4. Should additional locations be identified for recreational facilities (e.g., neighborhood parks, regional parks, hiking/walking/biking trails, access to the Sacramento River, etc.)?

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND MATERIALS

The Colusa County General Plan Update website is an excellent source of information for this project. Full copies of the Background Report, Issues and Opportunities Report, the 1989 General Plan, and the General Plan newsletters can be viewed and downloaded from the website located at: www.countyofcolusageneralplan.org.

Attachment 1
Meeting Agenda

**GENERAL PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 15, 2010**

AGENDA

Public Comment: If you wish to speak on an item contained in the Agenda or an issue within the purview of the General Plan Steering Committee, please complete a Speaker Card identifying the Item(s) and provide it to the Clerk prior to consideration of the item. When addressing the Committee, please state your name for the record, and please address the Committee. The total amount of time allotted to each item is 15 minutes and each individual or speaker will be limited to no more than 5 minutes within the 15 minutes.

1. Call to Order – 1:00 P.M.

- a. Roll Call

2. General Business – 1:05 P.M.

- a. Introductions
- b. Committee requirements and schedule for future meetings
- c. Public comment - items not on the agenda

3. General Plan Overview – 1:30 P.M.

- a. Discussion of the legal requirements of a General Plan
- b. Discuss General Plan Update process and work completed to date

4. Open Space – 1:45 P.M.

- a. Open space: legal requirements
- b. Opportunities and constraints related to open space
- c. Goal and policy discussion
- d. Discuss areas designated for open space

5. Recreation – 3:50 P.M.

- a. Recreation: legal requirements
- b. Review opportunities and constraints related to recreation
- c. Goal and policy discussion
- d. Discuss potential locations for additional recreation activities

6. Adjournment

NOTE: The agenda, supporting documents, and public records distributed for this meeting are available for inspection at the Colusa County Department of Planning and Building, 220 12th Street, Colusa, CA 95932 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays and are also on the General Plan Update website at: <http://countyofcolusageneralplan.org/content/meetings-workshops>. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Colusa County General Plan Steering Committee meeting facility is accessible to persons with disabilities. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Department of Planning and Building at (530) 458-0480 at least 48 hours before the meeting to enable the County to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility.

Attachment 2

Meeting Schedule - list of future meeting dates and future meeting topics



COLUSA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Schedule

1. September 15, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Open Space and Recreation
2. October 13, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Agriculture and Economic Development
3. November 3, 2010, 1 P.M. to 7 P.M. – Land Use and Community Character
4. November 24, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Circulation and Safety
5. December 15, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Conservation and Noise
6. January 12, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Community Services and Facilities
7. February 2, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Goals and Policies #1
8. February 23, 2010, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. – Goals and Policies #2
9. March 16, 2010, 1 P. M. to 5 P.M. – Potential meeting if additional time is necessary to review goals and policies

Attachment 3

General Plan Background Report: Select Pages related to Open Space and Recreation

Table 3.3.3: Schools and Student Enrollment in Colusa County

	Student Enrollment				
	2004- 2005	2005- 2006	2006- 2007	2007- 2008	2008- 2009
County School Enrollment totals:	4518	4568	4635	4591	4581

SOURCE: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 2009.

3.4 PARKS AND RECREATION

KEY TERMS

Community park: A park designed to serve several neighborhoods, or approximately 2,000 to 5,000 residents. Community parks may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes and swimming pools. Such parks may also include opportunities for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, picnicking, or sitting.

Mini-park: A small park (0.25 to 0.5 acres) designed to serve a concentrated population. Mini-parks may be targeted at serving specific groups, such as tots or senior citizens.

Neighborhood park/playground: A park designed for intense recreational activity to serve approximately 500 to 1,000 residents. Neighborhood facilities may include baseball fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, and skating facilities. These parks may also include natural areas for picnicking, viewing, or walking.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

National Wildlife Refuges

Management of each National Wildlife Refuge is guided by the purpose of the individual refuge and the mission and goals of the Refuge System that includes the individual refuge, as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policy, laws, and international treaties. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the Improvement Act, Refuge Recreation Act of 1962, and selected portions of the Code of Federal Regulations provide the federal laws for establishment and management of the refuges.

The Colusa, Delevan, and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges are all part of the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex and are all guided by a single Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). The Sacramento, Delevan, Sutter, and Colusa National Wildlife Refuges Final CCP guide the management of the Sacramento, Delevan, Colusa, and Sutter National Wildlife Refuges. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages the refuges as part of the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Mendocino National Forest

The Mendocino National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) provides the framework to guide the ongoing land and resource management operations of the Mendocino National Forest. The LRMP's goal is to provide a management program reflecting a mix of activities for the use and protection of the Forest. The LRMP:

- Establishes the management direction and associated long-range goals and objectives for the Forest,

3. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Specifies the standards, approximate timing, and vicinity of the practices necessary to implement that direction, and
- Establishes the monitoring and evaluation requirements needed to ensure that the direction is being carried out, and to determine if outputs and effects have been reasonably estimated.

The LRMP is a strategic document that provides guidance for but does not make project level decisions. Those decisions are made after more detailed, site-specific environmental analysis and further public comment. The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires that resource plans and permits, contracts, and other instruments issued for the use and occupancy of National Forest System lands be consistent with the forest plan. The following are some examples of project decisions that require more detailed environmental analysis:

- Timber harvesting and related activities, such as slash disposal and road construction,
- Range allotment management plans,
- Fish or wildlife habitat improvement projects,
- Watershed improvement projects, and
- Developed recreation sites or trail construction.

The LRMP focuses primarily on management prescriptions for habitat, wilderness, and recreation uses. The LRMP anticipates a steady workforce and does not foresee the need for extensive construction of new facilities for administrative activities and to house the workforce, but rather anticipates that existing facilities will need to be maintained and improved.

The LRMP does not provide much direction regarding private development within the Mendocino National Forest. However, the U.S. Forest Service provides for special use permits for private activities. Special use permits may be requested from the U.S. Forest Service for a variety of land uses in national forests, including water transmission, agriculture, timber production, outfitting and guiding, recreation, telecommunication, research, photography and video productions, and granting road and utility rights-of-ways.

Recreation residences are also a federally permitted use in national forests. In 1968, a moratorium was placed on establishing additional residential tracts within forests and the moratorium was expanded in 1976 to also prohibit development of new lots within existing tracts. Existing recreation residences within a national forest are required to obtain a special use permit, which has a maximum term of 20 years. However, there is no guarantee that a new special use permit will be issued at the end of the permit term.

STATE

Quimby Act

The Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477) states that “the legislative body of a city or county may, by ordinance, require the dedication of land or impose a requirement of the payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative or parcel map.” Requirements of the Quimby Act apply only to the acquisition of new parkland and do not apply to the physical development of new park facilities or associated

operations and maintenance costs. The Quimby Act seeks to preserve open space needed to develop parkland and recreational facilities; however, the actual development of parks and other recreational facilities is subject to discretionary approval and is evaluated on a case-by-case basis with new residential development. The County has not adopted park fees as allowed by the Quimby Act.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Mendocino National Forest

The largest designated recreation area in Colusa County is the Mendocino National Forest, managed by the U.S. Forest Service. A variety of recreational opportunities exist within the forest: camping, hiking, backpacking, boating, fishing, nature study, photography, and off-highway vehicle travel. The Forest is a "working forest," so activities such as logging and grazing do occur. The U.S. Forest Service seeks to manage the variety of uses to ensure conservation of the forest resources.

Many of the developed recreation sites within the Mendocino National Forest were built 30-50 years ago. Since then, visitor preferences have changed and some facilities are in poor condition. In 2007, the U.S. Forest Service completed a 5-year analysis of recreational facilities and developed a list of proposed changes. These changes include fee increases for various facilities, removal of amenities, and replacement of existing amenities.

Letts Lake in Upper Letts Valley (within the Mendocino National Forest) is a popular recreation area. There are eight campgrounds around the lake, a few summer homes, and numerous trails. The lake is stocked with trout and bass, and boating is limited to non-motorized craft only.

Davis Flat, also located within the Mendocino National Forest, is a popular spot for off-highway vehicle (OHV) activity. The facilities at Davis Flat include a campground and special trails marked for various levels of driving skill. Organized OHV events require a special use permit which requires a bond to guarantee cleanup and trail maintenance following the event.

Sacramento River State Recreation Area (SRA)

The Sacramento River SRA provides 60 acres of riverfront recreation at the north end of the City of Colusa. The park features boat ramps, picnic facilities, trails, and camping. Fishing and boating are popular activities at this park. Though the Sacramento River SRA is the only public boat launch in the area of the Sacramento River around the City of Colusa, people enter the river at several private sites. Much of the land adjacent to the Sacramento River is privately owned agricultural land.

Boating is a popular activity on the Sacramento River. The boating season generally begins in April and continues until winter weather sets in. A cleared navigational channel is maintained between the City of Colusa and Sacramento. This channel allows boats up to 40 feet in length to travel between Colusa and Sacramento. There are several areas along the river for camping and houseboat rentals, most of which are outside of the County of Colusa. A river cruise from the mouth of the Sacramento River near Antioch to Colusa is approximately 145 miles and takes approximately 10-12 hours.

The river is generally not visible to motorists on SR 45, which parallels the river, due to an extensive system of levees along the river. There are segments of Butte Slough Road and River Road which are on top of the levees and offer views of the river. The only organized trail system along the banks of the river within Colusa County is connected to the Colusa-Sacramento River SRA.

3. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Fishing

Fishing is plentiful in the Sacramento River between Grimes and Princeton. Salmon, steelhead trout, and striped bass are the most common fish in this area. People fish both from boats and the banks of the Sacramento River. The Mendocino National Forest offers 85 miles of trout streams. Big Stony Creek and Little Stony Creek and their tributaries are the primary fishing areas. The streams are occasionally stocked with trout by the California Department of Fish and Game. Letts Lake, a 35-acre lake stocked with trout and bass, is another popular fishing spot.

Hunting

More ducks and geese winter in the Sacramento Valley than any other area of the Pacific Flyway. Numerous wildlife refuges help sustain the birds in Colusa County through the fall and winter by providing food and sanctuary. Ducks generally arrive in August, and geese generally arrive in late November. Public hunting is permitted in areas of the refuges during the appropriate season, but hunters must obtain a permit from one of the check stations.

In addition to providing habitat for ducks and geese, the refuges also attract swans, marsh and shore birds, upland birds, and small mammals. Nearly 200 species of birds have been recorded in the area, making Colusa County a popular location for bird watchers.

There are also a number of commercial hunting clubs and cooperatives operated by community organizations throughout Colusa County. Hunting camps are operated on private agricultural land by special use permit. Lambertsville has a large congregation of mobile homes and trailers used by hunters on a seasonal basis.

The Walker Ridge Public Hunting Area, located in the western foothills of Colusa County, is maintained by the Bureau of Land Management. This area is popular for hunting of quail and deer.

LOCAL RECREATION AREAS AND PARKS

City of Colusa

The City of Colusa Parks and Community Services Department is responsible for the operation of an aquatics complex, softball facility, and nine existing parks within the City of Colusa, as well as organizing various city-wide recreational activities that are offered on a year-around basis to city and county residents. The City of Colusa has an extensive network of local park facilities. The amenities at the City of Colusa parks include BBQ facilities, swimming pools, picnic tables, playgrounds, tot lots, trails, baseball fields, and basketball courts. The City of Colusa is also home to the Sacramento River SRA. The existing park and recreation facilities in the City of Colusa are listed in Table 3.4-1.

City of Williams

The City of Williams Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the operation of all parks and recreation facilities within the City of Williams, as well as organizing various city-wide recreational activities that are offered on a year-around basis to city and county residents. The existing park and recreation facilities in the City of Williams are listed in Table 3.4-1.

Arbuckle Parks and Recreation

Arbuckle Parks and Recreation has been operating in the Arbuckle area solely from community donations and other government agencies. In the past several years Arbuckle Parks and Recreation in coordination with the Arbuckle Revitalization Committee has been creating some new community parks.

These joint efforts were formed out of the CEDS (Community Economic Development Strategy) Plan for Arbuckle. In 1999 the Plan was accepted, and action items outlined for the Parks and Recreation Committee. The beautification of Arbuckle and the creation of a downtown parks plan were the first action items undertaken by the Committee.

Since 1999 the two committees have created the “Wee Park,” a beautification project at the intersection of Old Hwy 99 and Hillgate Road. The “KIA Memorial Park” in downtown Arbuckle, a project that also recognized members of the Arbuckle and College City communities killed during a foreign war was also completed. Finally, the Committee is developing the “Lavanch Hursh Park”, this park is also a downtown park that will have picnic areas, a covered pergola for events in the park, and central location for community events. For the recreation portion of the plan the committee has created and implemented the “Swim Program,” at the Arbuckle Pool. Other programs offered include Adult Aerobics, a Tot Tumbling Class and Yoga, as well as a youth basketball league.

The existing park and recreation facilities in Arbuckle are listed in Table 3.4-1.

Maxwell Recreation and Parks District

The Maxwell Recreation and Parks District was formed to manage the town pool and provide for the recreation needs of the community. Recreation facilities within the community of Maxwell include the local pool, the rodeo grounds and recreational opportunities on facilities owned by the local school district, which include primarily sports fields and playground facilities.

Other Facilities

The foothill and upland areas are surrounded by an abundance of outdoor recreational areas, however there are no formal park facilities in most of these areas. . The community of Sites is served by a small park. Residents in Stonyford and Lodoga are served by the Stonyford Rodeo grounds and amenities at the East Park Reservoir. The East Park Reservoir includes camping and other recreational uses. Stonyford also has one park.

Private Recreational Facilities

There are two golf courses in Colusa County. The Arbuckle Golf Club is a 9-hole course located on Hillgate Road, west of Arbuckle. The Colusa Golf and Country Club is a 9-hole course located on SR 20, southeast of Colusa.

Wilbur Hot Springs is located in southwest Colusa County in an area known in the early 1900’s for containing many hot springs resorts. The naturally hot mineral waters flow through the baths in varying temperatures from 98° to 120°.

Table 3.4-1: Inventory of County Parks by Community		
Community	Name/Location	Description
Colusa	Colusa Levee Scenic Park Located on 10th and Main St. adjacent to Sacramento River Recreation Area.	The park is placed on 2.19 acres and built upon the Sacramento River Levee. The park includes: grass, trees, paved walking, jogging or biking trail, picnic tables, a 20' x 20' concrete stage and BBQ Pits.
Colusa	Memorial Park Located on 10th and Market Sts.	This Park is placed on 2.35 acres with shady, tree-filled grassy areas with a children's play area that includes swings, a slide, rock-climbing wall, picnic tables and public restroom. Electricity available for public events.
Colusa	A.B. Davison Park	This park is situated on 1.02 with shady tree-filled grassy

3. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Table 3.4-1: Inventory of County Parks by Community

	Located on 10th St. between Webster and Parkhill.	areas with paved walking paths throughout.
Colusa	Municipal Swimming Pool Located on 9th St. between Webster and Parkhill.	The Municipal Swimming Pool includes One 8ft deep Pool, One 3ft. deep pool, and one wading pool. Open during the summer only.
Colusa	Will S. Green Park Located on 8th St. between Webster and Parkhill.	This park is located near the Municipal Swimming pool on 2.35 acres that includes barbeque facilities, picnic tables, horseshoe pit, children play area with swings, slide, jungle gym, and glider swings for tots. This is a great area for family activities.
Colusa	Sankey/Elmwood Park Located between Webster and Parkhill and 3rd and 4th Sts.	This 0.58 acre park includes a kindergarten playground with slide, swings, drinking fountain, picnic tables, BBQ pit, restrooms, lighted tennis courts, and volleyball area. Electricity available for public events.
Colusa	C.D. Semple Park Located on the corner of 3rd and Larson Larson Ln.	This 1.2 acre park is an open grass area that includes a children's play area, restrooms and covered in great shade trees and grassy areas with picnic tables and BBQ facilities.
Colusa	Lewis Tennant Ball Field Complex Located on Colus Ave. across from Colusa High School.	This 4.0 acre park is the site of the Colusa Softball Association games and tournaments. This park includes two softball fields, restrooms, concession stand, picnic tables, and 0.33 acres of tot lot play area scaled to toddlers with a sandy surface.
Colusa	King-Vale Park Located on 3rd St.	This 0.30 acre park is a large sandy area with children's tot lot with swings, slide, and merry go round.
Colusa	Leland L. Taylor Memorial Park Located on Country Club Dr.	The park is placed on an acre of open grass area for play, in addition to picnic tables.
Williams	North View Park Location: Northern end of Virginia Way	Amenities include children and toddler play structures, a full size basketball court, a soccer field, picnic tables and benches, drinking fountains, barbeques, a large dome gazebo, a dog run, and men and women restrooms.
Williams	Redinger Park Location: 9th Street/G Street	Playground area, soccer field, picnic tables and benches, men and women's restrooms.
Williams	Venice Park Location: Venice Boulevard between E Street and Westgate Drive	Playground area, baseball field, horse shoe pits, picnic tables, large open play area, and men and women's restrooms.
Williams	Valley Vista Park Location: Husted Road	Six full size basketball courts, walking/jogging trail, and nature pond area.
Williams	Pool Location: Western end of D Street	Amenities include a 105 foot long pool, diving board, slide, and men and women's restrooms.
Williams	Museum Location: E Street/Venice Boulevard	Built in 1911 as Williams High School, the Sacramento Valley Museum offers regional exhibits that feature items from the late 19th and early 20th century.
Williams	Valley Ranch Playground Location: White Oaks Drive/Sierra Oaks Drive	A neighborhood park located in the Valley Ranch Subdivision, the City is currently in the process of installing playground equipment in this park.
Maxwell	Maxwell Rodeo Grounds	Rodeo Grounds
Maxwell	Maxwell School District	Sports fields, playgrounds, and hard courts.

Table 3.4-1: Inventory of County Parks by Community

Arbuckle	Arbuckle Little League Park (Ball Four Park) Corner 10th & Garrett Street	Sports fields
Arbuckle	LaVanche Hursh Park Downtown Arbuckle	Picnic areas, a covered pergola for events in the park, and central location for community events.
Arbuckle	Veterans Memorial Park Hall St and SR 99	Picnic areas, veteran's memorial.
Arbuckle	Wee Park Old hwy 99 and Hillgate Road	Tot playground, community beautification.
Stonyford	Stonyford Rodeo Grounds	Rodeo Grounds
Stonyford	Stonyford Park	Sports fields, picnic areas
Stonyford/Lodoga	East Park Reservoir	Camping/recreational area

3.5 LIBRARIES AND OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

EXISTING FACILITIES

Libraries

The Colusa County Library has one main library and six branch libraries. The library owns 91,500 books, magazines, and movies. The Local History Collection contains over 2,500 items relating to the history of the region and genealogy of inhabitants. The main County Library is located in the City of Colusa. The location of the main library and the six branch libraries is shown in Table 3.5-1 below.

Table 3.5-1: County Library Facilities

Library	Location
Colusa County Library	738 Market Street, Colusa
Arbuckle Branch Library	610 King Street, Arbuckle
Grimes Branch Library	240 Main Street, Grimes
Maxwell Branch Library	34 Oak Street
Princeton Branch Library	232 Prince Street, Princeton
Stonyford Branch Library	5080 Stonyford-Lodoga Road, Stonyford
Williams Branch Library	901 E Street, Williams

SOURCE: COLUSA COUNTY LIBRARY, 2009.

Museums

The Sacramento Valley Museum is located at 1491 E Street in Williams. The museum includes 27 rooms that depict life in the Sacramento Valley between the mid-1800's and 1930's.

Health Care

The Colusa Regional Medical Center (CRMC) is the only acute care hospital in Colusa County. Patients requiring more comprehensive care generally go to Rideout Memorial Hospital in Marysville, Enloe Medical Center in Chico, Woodland Memorial Hospital in Woodland, or larger facilities in Sacramento. Colusa Regional Medical Center operates a county-wide health system consisting of a 48-bed acute care hospital and skilled nursing facility, a Home Health Agency, and rural health clinics located in the communities of Arbuckle, Colusa, Stonyford and Williams.

Project Supply. Approximately eight percent or 60,000 acre-feet is within contracts with entities within the non-organized areas. The balance, or 92 percent of the contract amount, is managed by water purveyors, some of which serve land in both Colusa County and Glenn or Yolo Counties (GMP, 2008). Under the provisions of the Settlement Contracts both the Base Supply and Project Supply could be reduced by 25 percent of the total contract amount.

Long Term Renewal Contracts

In accordance with the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA), the USBR negotiated long-term water service contracts in 2007. According to Section 3404c of the CVPIA, Renewal of Existing Long-Term Contracts requires the USBR to renew any existing long-term repayment or water service contract for the delivery of water from the Central Valley Project for a period of 25 years and may renew such contracts for successive periods of up to 25 years each. It is anticipated that as many as 113 CVP (Central Valley Project) water service contracts, located within the Central Valley of California, may be renewed during this negotiation process (GMP, 2008). There are seven water service contracts within the County, including with Colusa County. The total contract amount is 224,586 acre-feet, of which 20,000 acre-feet is with Colusa County. Colusa County has subcontracted the 20,000 acre-feet to seven water purveyors.

The long-term renewal contracts, unlike the Settlement Contracts, have no specified reduction in delivery; during critically dry or water-short years, the water supply available from the Project will be allocated among the contractors. There is no minimum allocation, thus it is conceivable that no water would be delivered.

Also, the long-term renewal contracts contain a tiered pricing provision. The Base Supply is 80 percent of the total contract amount, and Tier 1 and Tier 2 supplies represent 10 percent each of the remaining contract amount. Each tier has an incrementally higher water cost. The Tier 1 and Tier 2 water, which is available in most years, is not used due to the incremental higher cost of water. To illustrate the use of contract water in relation to the contract amount, in 2003, 137,302 acre-feet was delivered by the USBR, representing 76 percent of the total 179,668 acre-feet of Base Supply (GMP, 2008).

6.4 SCENIC RESOURCES

Colusa County possesses numerous scenic resources, many of which are found in the natural areas within the unincorporated county. These resources not only enhance the quality of life for Colusa County residents, but are a significant attraction that brings tourists to the region. Landscapes can be defined as a combination of four visual elements: landforms, water, vegetation, and man-made structures. Scenic resource quality is an assessment of the uniqueness or desirability of a visual element. This section reviews and summarizes Colusa County's key scenic resources.

METHODOLOGY

This section was prepared based on existing reports and literature for the Colusa County. Additional sources of information included the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Designated Scenic Route map for Colusa County. A reconnaissance-level visual resource survey of the County was conducted in the fall of 2009.

KEY TERMS

Scenic Highway Corridor. The area outside of a highway right-of-way that is generally visible to persons traveling on the highway.

Scenic Highway/Scenic Route. A highway, road, drive, or street that, in addition to its transportation function, provides opportunities for the enjoyment of natural and human-made scenic resources and access or direct views to areas or scenes of exceptional beauty (including those of historic or cultural interest). The aesthetic values of scenic routes often are protected and enhanced by regulations governing the development of property or the placement of outdoor advertising. Until the mid-1980's, General Plans in California were required to include a Scenic Highways Element.

View Corridor. A view corridor is a highway, road, trail, or other linear feature that offers travelers a vista of scenic areas within a City or county.

REGULATORY SETTING

STATE

California Department of Transportation – California Scenic Highway Program

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the Legislature in 1963 to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change, which would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. The state laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq.

The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been so designated. These highways are identified in Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code. A list of California's scenic highways and map showing their locations may be obtained from the Caltrans Scenic Highway Coordinators.

If a route is not included on a list of highways eligible for scenic highway designation in the Streets and Highways Code Section 263 et seq., it must be added before it can be considered for official designation. A highway may be designated scenic depending on the extent of the natural landscape that can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view.

When a local jurisdiction nominates an eligible scenic highway for official designation, it must identify and define the scenic corridor of the highway. A scenic corridor is the land generally adjacent to and visible from the highway. A scenic highway designation protects the scenic values of an area. Jurisdictional boundaries of the nominating agency are also considered, and the agency must also adopt ordinances to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or document such regulations that already exist in various portions of local codes. These ordinances make up the scenic corridor protection program.

To receive official designation, the local jurisdiction must follow the same process required for official designation of State Scenic Highways. The minimum requirements for scenic corridor protection include:

- Regulation of land use and density of development;
- Detailed land and site planning;
- Control of outdoor advertising (including a ban on billboards);
- Careful attention to and control of earthmoving and landscaping; and
- Careful attention to design and appearance of structures and equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Colusa County is largely defined by its rural agricultural setting. Much of the County is in active agricultural production, consisting of numerous farming operations, some of which cover thousands of contiguous acres of land. The County is also home to three National Wildlife Refuges, two National Wildlife Management Areas, one State Recreation Area, two State Wildlife Areas, three Land Conservancy Areas, and a wide variety of habitat types and surface water resources that contribute to the scenic beauty and quality of life in Colusa County. These visual and scenic resources are described in greater detail below.

Scenic Highways and Corridors

According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, administered by Caltrans, there are no officially designated scenic highways or scenic corridors in Colusa County. However, there are two Eligible State Scenic Highway Corridors in Colusa County that have not yet been officially designated.

1. In southwestern Colusa County the segment of SR 20 between the County line and the junction of SR 20 and SR 16 is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway.
2. In southwestern Colusa County the segment of SR 16 between the County line and the junction of SR 20 and SR 16 is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway.

Natural Scenic Resources

Colusa County encompasses an outstanding variety of natural vistas and landscapes. The following section describes the significant scenic resources found in the county.

Agricultural Lands. As described throughout the Background Report, much of the land Colusa County is currently in active agricultural production. While not a natural condition of the land, agricultural lands are perceived by many viewers as having a relatively high level of scenic value. Agricultural lands in Colusa County consist of orchards, row crops, and rice fields. Agricultural lands provide scenic viewsheds largely void of man-made structures. Many viewers perceive large swaths of land neatly covered in various types of crops as having a very high scenic value.

The eastern half of the County is dominated by a “checkerboard” of large acreage farms, with land ownership and road alignments generally following square mile section lines. Views of agricultural lands in the eastern portion of the County are expansive, and framed primarily by the rolling foothills of the Coast Range to the west and the jagged peaks of the Sutter Buttes to the east.

In the western portions of the County, large farms give way to much larger cattle and sheep ranches, cultivated fields give way to arid rangeland, and the flat terrain found throughout the eastern portions of the County transitions into rolling hills and spectacular upland valleys. Further west, the land becomes even more rugged and wild as elevations increase up to 7,000 feet in the Mendocino National Forest and the wilderness areas surrounding Snow Mountain.

Sutter Buttes. The Sutter Buttes are a small circular complex of eroded volcanic lava domes which rise above the flat plains of the Central Valley of California. The highest peak, South Butte, reaches about 2,130 feet (650 m) above sea level. The Buttes are located just outside of Yuba City, California in the Sacramento Valley, the northern part of the Central Valley. They are named for John Sutter, who received a large land grant from the Mexican government. The Sutter Buttes also hold the title of being

6. CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

the world's smallest mountain range. While not located within Colusa County, the Sutter Buttes provide a distinct visual backdrop to the eastern portion of Colusa County.

The indigenous Maidu referred to the Sutter Buttes as *Esto Yamani* and the native Patwin called them *Onolai*, both names roughly translate to mean The Middle Mountains. They were regarded as a spiritual place for renewal and sustenance rather than a place to live or build villages. A tour of the Sutter Buttes can yield historical markers, rock walls, the remains of old stone corrals, building foundations, historic homes and even a circular stone-lined well right beside the road. Several cemeteries are scattered around the Buttes.

Snow Mountain. Snow Mountain is a mountain with two 7,000+ summits named Snow Mountain East and Snow Mountain West, located on the border of Colusa County and Lake County in the northwestern portion of Colusa County. The East peak is the highest point of both counties. The mountain is part of the Pacific Coast Ranges mountain system and it is the first tall peak in the California Coast Ranges north of San Francisco. On clear days, the peak can be seen from Mount Diablo, and from several peaks in the Mayacamas Mountains, such as Mount Saint Helena, and Mount Konocti. Usually, the peaks are quite prominent from the California Central Valley, moreover the Sacramento Valley, such as from Interstate 5. On clear days the peaks can be seen from most vantage points in Colusa County. Like its name states, the summits and nearby high mountains get snowfall in winter, and the snowpack can last until June. The mountain gives its name to the 37,700-acre Mountain Wilderness in the Mendocino National Forest.

National Wildlife Refuges and Wildlife Management Areas

The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex consists of five national wildlife refuges (NWR) and three wildlife management areas (WMA) that comprise over 35,000 acres of wetlands and uplands in the Sacramento Valley, California. In addition, there are over 30,000 acres of conservation easements in the Complex. The Refuges and easements are part of the USFWS; they serve as resting and feeding areas for nearly half the migratory birds on the Pacific Flyway.

Colusa National Wildlife Refuge. The Colusa National Wildlife Refuge is a 4,507-acre refuge primarily consisting of intensively managed wetland impoundments, with some grassland and riparian habitat. This Wildlife Refuge typically supports wintering populations of more than 200,000 ducks and 50,000 geese. Wetland impoundments are intensively managed to provide optimal habitat for the dense concentration of wintering waterfowl, as well as habitat for resident wildlife and spring/summer migrants.

The grassland habitat supports several populations of endangered and sensitive species of plants. The refuge is a stronghold for populations of the endangered palmate-bracted bird's-beak and the threatened giant garter snake. About 35,000 visitors come to the refuge each year for wildlife viewing and 4,000 come to hunt waterfowl and pheasant.

Delevan National Wildlife Refuge. The Delevan National Wildlife Refuge is a 5,797-acre refuge consisting of over 4,500 acres of intensively managed wetlands and 1,200 acres of uplands. More than 200,000 ducks and 100,000 geese come to the refuge each winter. The Wildlife Refuge supports several endangered plants and animals: giant garter snake, wintering peregrine falcon and bald eagle, breeding tricolored blackbird, and a large colony of the endangered palmate-bracted bird's beak. Resident wildlife include grebe, heron, blackbird, beaver, muskrat, black tailed deer and other species typical of upland and wetland habitats. Approximately 7,000 people hunt on the refuge each year and an estimated 1,000 visitors observe wildlife from a primitive roadside overlook along the Maxwell-Colusa Highway.

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge is a 10,783-acre refuge consisting of about 7,600 acres of intensively managed wetlands, uplands, riparian habitat, and vernal pools. It typically supports wintering populations of more than 600,000 ducks and 200,000 geese. The refuge supports several endangered plants and animals, including transplanted colonies of palmate-bracted birds-beak, several species of fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, giant garter snake, wintering peregrine falcon, bald eagle, and breeding tricolored blackbird. Resident wildlife includes grebe, heron, blackbird, golden eagle, beaver, muskrat, black-tailed deer, and other species typical of upland and wetland habitats. Approximately 9,000 people hunt on the refuge each year, and 73,000 people use the visitor center, auto tour route, and walking trail.

Willow Creek-Lurline Wildlife Management Area. The Willow Creek-Lurline Wildlife Management Area is an approximately 20,000 acre area that has been approved for acquisition of conservation easements on privately owned wetlands to protect fall/winter habitat for waterfowl. Approximately 12,000 acres of the Wildlife Management Area are privately owned for the purpose of waterfowl hunting. Conservation easements have been acquired on approximately 6,000 acres, requiring landowners to maintain land in wetlands. The area is surrounded by intensive agriculture (rice and other grains). These privately-owned lands are closed to public access.

North Central Valley Wildlife Management Area. The North Central Valley Wildlife Management Area was established primarily to protect wintering habitat for waterfowl. Under the North Central Valley WMA the USFWS has the authority to purchase conservation easements on up to 48,750 acres of private lands located within an 11 county area of the Sacramento Valley. Within this management area, the Service has purchased conservation easements on 11,811 acres from willing landowners to protect wildlife habitat. In exchange for payment, the landowners agree to maintain wetlands and other habitats on their property in perpetuity. These Wildlife Management lands are privately owned and not open for public access.

State Recreational Areas

Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area. The Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area has 67 acres along the Sacramento River. Wildlife in the area includes deer, raccoons, opossums, foxes, skunks and muskrats, which are sheltered by riverbank cottonwood and willow trees. Wild grape and fig are among many other shrubs, trees and plants along the river. Common bird species include ring-necked pheasants, California quail, mallard ducks, Canada geese, western meadowlarks, northern flickers and ospreys. This facility provides 14 campsites, picnic sites, and a launch ramp for small boats, and is also within walking distance of the City of Colusa's downtown.

State Wildlife Areas

COLUSA BYPASS WILDLIFE AREA. This 1,248 acre wildlife area is mostly grasslands with several rows of willows and cottonwood trees that line the eastern edge of the property. Excess water is diverted into the area from the Sacramento River during high flows in the winter. The area provides a significant amount of cover for mammals and both resident and migratory birds. Hunting is allowed and opportunities are mostly for upland game, including deer, pheasant, snipe, and dove. Bird watching and wildlife viewing are also common.

SACRAMENTO RIVER WILDLIFE AREA. This 4,014 acres of wildlife area is located in 14 separate units along the west and east side of the Sacramento River in Butte, Glenn, and Colusa Counties. The wildlife area is a riparian forest dominated by cottonwood, willow, ash, sycamore, and box elder trees with a dense understory of wild grape, pipevine, poison oak and grasslands, oxbow lakes, and gravel bars. Common

6. CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

wildlife along the river includes otters, beavers, gray fox, bobcat, western pond turtles, ash-throated flycatchers, great blue herons, egrets, and a variety of birds of prey. Hunting is allowed and opportunities are mostly for deer, quail, turnkey, and dove. Fishing, trapping, and bird watching are also common.

US Reclamation Projects

EAST PARK RESERVOIR. East Park Reservoir was authorized in 1907 by the federal government as a storage facility to provide irrigation waters, under the Orland Project. East Park Reservoir is in the northwestern part of Colusa County few miles southeast of Stonyford and northwest of Lodoga. The total land area around the reservoir is 2,468 acres and the total water surface is 1,820 acres. Common mammals are wild pigs, coyotes, blacktail deer, tule elk, ground squirrels and black-tailed jackrabbits. Canada geese, bald eagles, a wide variety of ducks and bird species, and the special status tri-colored blackbird can be seen around the reservoir. East Park Reservoir provides opportunities for camping, boating, picnicking and fishing.

American Land Conservancy

BEAR VALLEY RANCH. A conservation easement over the 16,513-acre Bear Valley Ranch was acquired by the American Land Conservancy in 2001. The conservation easement permanently precludes development on the property, while permitting traditional cattle ranching. The ranch is known as having one of the state's most spectacular wildflower displays. This conservation easement was funded by the California Wildlife Conservation Board and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The easement is monitored by California Rangeland Trust.

SULPHUR CREEK. The American Land Conservancy acquired 1,531 acres in the Sulphur Creek valley in 1999. The Sulphur Creek valley is part of a 6,500-acre watershed located in the coastal range. From 2002 to 2005, the American Land Conservancy oversaw a three-year restoration effort on the property that was funded by the California Wildlife Conservation Board. The area was once heavily mined for gold, but is now known for the natural hot springs that are part of the historic Wilbur Hot Springs resort. The American Land Conservancy sold the resort to subject to a conservation easement that precludes development of the land and protects the oak woodlands, grasslands and riparian habitat.

PAYNE RANCH. A conservation easement over the 3,140-acre Payne Ranch was acquired by the American Land Conservancy in 2006. Payne Ranch is a private working cattle ranch in Colusa County. The southern border of the Payne Ranch is contiguous to 27,245 acres specially-designated as the Cache Creek Wilderness Area, home to one of the largest free roaming Tule Elk populations in California, the second largest wintering bald eagle population in the state, as well as numerous rare and endangered plant and animal communities. The conservation easement conserves the agricultural, ecological, and scenic resources of the property while contributing to the environmental health of the surrounding 70,000-acre Cache Creek Natural Area. The Payne Ranch connects to two other American Land Conservancy projects in the region – Bear Valley Ranch and Sulphur Creek, which together conserve nearly 20,000 acres that contribute to the region's rich biodiversity. The conservation easement was funded by the California Wildlife Conservation Board.

National Forests

Mendocino National Forest. The Mendocino National Forest is 913,306 acres and lies in parts of six counties, including Colusa, Lake, Glenn, Mendocino, Tehama, and Trinity. Elevations in the Forest range from 750 feet to 8,092 feet, with the average elevation about 4,000 feet. An estimated 60,000 acres of old growth occur here, including forests of Douglas-fir, Ponderosa Pine, White Fir, Tanoak, and Pacific

madrone. The Mendocino National Forest is the only one of California's 18 national Forests that are not crossed by a paved road or highway and it is attractive to people seeking outdoor recreation. The Forest provides resources through logging and grazing, in addition to its recreational activities.

Rivers

Sacramento River. The Sacramento River traverses the eastern portion of Colusa County in a north-south direction, stretching from the northern county border to the southern county border. South of the City of Colusa, the Sacramento River generally demarcates the County's eastern boundary. The Sacramento River corridor in Colusa County provides numerous opportunities for recreational activities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, boating and other water sports. The river corridor is home to countless plant, animal and aquatic species and numerous habitat types. Areas of the river corridor have been developed with parks and boat launch facilities to provide for public access to the river. The Sacramento River feeds, and is fed by, numerous creeks, streams and tributaries throughout Colusa County and neighboring Counties.

6.5 AIR QUALITY

This section discusses the overall regulatory framework for air quality management in California and the region, including national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) and California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS), and describes existing air quality conditions in Colusa County. This section also includes a discussion of climate change and greenhouse gasses. Information presented in this section is based in part on information gathered from the Colusa County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) was first signed into law in 1970. In 1977, and again in 1990, the law was substantially amended. The FCAA is the foundation for a national air pollution control effort, and it is composed of the following basic elements: NAAQS for criteria air pollutants, hazardous air pollutant standards, state attainment plans, motor vehicle emissions standards, stationary source emissions standards and permits, acid rain control measures, stratospheric ozone protection, and enforcement provisions.

The EPA is responsible for administering the FCAA. The FCAA requires the EPA to set NAAQS for several problem air pollutants based on human health and welfare criteria. Two types of NAAQS were established: primary standards, which protect public health, and secondary standards, which protect the public welfare from non-health-related adverse effects such as visibility reduction.

Energy Policy and Conservation Act

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 sought to ensure that all vehicles sold in the U.S. would meet certain fuel economy goals. Through this Act, Congress established the first fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles in the United States. Pursuant to the Act, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards and for revising existing standards.

Attachment 4

Issues and Opportunities Report: Introduction to the Report and Select Pages related to Open Space and Recreation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

State law requires every city and county in California to prepare and maintain a planning document called a general plan. A general plan is a “constitution” or “blueprint” for the future physical development of a county or city. As part of the General Plan Update process, the General Plan Background Report will establish a baseline of existing conditions in the County. This Issues and Opportunities Report identifies the challenges facing the community and provides an opportunity for citizens and policymakers to come together in a process of developing a common vision for the future.

In the summer of 2009, Colusa County began a two year process to update the County’s 1989 General Plan. The General Plan is the overarching policy document that guides land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, community design, and other policy decisions throughout the unincorporated areas of Colusa County.

The following paragraphs describe a summary of the key component documents that are the building blocks of the Colusa County General Plan Update.

Background Report

The Background Report takes a “snapshot” of Colusa County’s current (2009) trends and conditions. It provides a detailed description of a wide range of topics within the county, such as demographic and economic conditions, land use, public facilities, and environmental resources. The Report provides decision-makers, the public, and local agencies with context for making policy decisions. The Background Report also serves as the description for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared on the General Plan.

General Plan Policy Document

The Policy Document is the essence of the General Plan. The General Plan must address at least seven issue categories or elements, to the extent that they are relevant locally: land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, noise, and safety. The County may also address other topics of community interest, such as economic development or agricultural resource preservation in the General Plan. The General Plan sets out the goals, policies, and programs in each of these areas and serves as a policy guide for how the County will make key planning decisions in the future, and how the County will interact with the Cities of Colusa and Williams, and other local, regional, State, and Federal agencies, and surrounding counties.

The Policy Document contains the goals and policies that will guide future decisions within the county. It also identifies implementation programs that will ensure the goals and policies in the General Plan are carried out. As part of the Colusa County General Plan Update, the County and the consultant team will prepare several support documents that will serve as the building blocks for the Policy Document and analyze the environmental impacts associated with implementing the General Plan. A description of these reports is as follows:

Issues and Opportunities Report

Based on public input from stakeholder interviews, community visioning workshops, focus group meetings, direction from County staff, and direction from the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, this report identifies key issues and opportunities to be addressed in the General Plan and identifies the various Land Use Alternative Maps that have been developed. The Issues and Opportunities Report will provide the Board of Supervisors with tools and information in order for them

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to select the preferred Land Use Map Alternative, and to provide direction to the General Plan update team and the Steering Committee for the development of the General Plan Policy Document.

Environmental Impact Report

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) responds to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as set forth in Sections 15126, 15175, and 15176 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will use the EIR during the General Plan Update process in order to understand the potential environmental implications associated with implementing the General Plan. The EIR will be prepared concurrently with the Policy Document in order to facilitate the development of a General Plan that is largely self-mitigating. In other words, as environmental impacts associated with the new General Plan Land Use Map and Policy Document are identified; policies, programs and measures may be incorporated into the Policy Document in order to reduce or avoid potential environmental impacts.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES REPORT

The Issues and Opportunities Report provides a means of focusing the community's attention on key issues and opportunities that have major policy implications as Colusa County considers how to accommodate growth over the next 20-30 years, while balancing the County's economic development and natural resource needs. The Issues and Opportunities Report summarizes and proactively utilizes information derived from the community visioning workshops, stakeholder interviews, Draft Background Report, County staff observations, and input provided by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

This Issues and Opportunities Report includes three Land Use Map Alternatives that have been developed from input received during the community visioning workshops, staff input, and comments and direction from the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Each of the three Land Use Map Alternatives is presented in detail in Section 3 of this report.

The County anticipates that the Issues and Opportunities Report will stimulate discussion and lead to confirmation and selection of courses of action to be reflected in the preferred Land Use Map and Policy Document, which will be prepared in collaboration with the General Plan Steering Committee.

The report purposely does not reach conclusions or suggest the manner in which the County should proceed in the development of the General Plan. Rather, it provides a forum to facilitate discussion on important issues.

1.2 ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

This report is divided into three sections: Introduction, Issues and Opportunities, and Land Use Map Alternatives.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Introduction section includes a description of the key steps and building block documents included in the General Plan Update process, a summary of the purpose of this report, identifies how the Land Use Map Alternatives and the Issues and Opportunities were identified, and describes the key next steps in the General Plan Update process.

SECTION 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The updated Colusa County General Plan will address a lengthy list of issues. Many of these issues are defined by State Planning Law, while others reflect purely local concerns. Typically, in general plan update programs, the plan revolves around and is shaped by a handful of key issues or concerns. They most often concern growth, land use, economic development, transportation, or natural resource protection.

This report discusses issues and opportunities for eight key topic areas. These topic areas are not intended to match the Baseline Report chapters or the proposed Policy Document elements, but instead are based on the key points of discussion and areas of concern raised in the community visioning workshops. The topic areas are as follows:

- Land Use
- Agricultural Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Utilities and Infrastructure
- Natural Resources
- Safety
- Recreation and Tourism
- Economy

Each topic area section begins with a brief description of background information and a summary of the issues identified by participants at the community visioning workshops. Each topic area section is subdivided into subsections that discuss specific issues and opportunities. Finally, each topic area section concludes with a list of questions that frame the key policy considerations and choices. The key policy questions will be used to develop and evaluate General Plan alternatives and General Plan goals, policy, and programs.

SECTION 3: LAND USE MAP ALTERNATIVES

The General Plan Update will include a revised General Plan Land Use Map. The Land Use Map includes designations for each parcel in the unincorporated areas of Colusa County. This section includes an analysis and discussion of the three Land Use Map Alternatives that have been developed, and compares each of these alternatives to the existing (1989) General Plan Land Use Map. The following three Land Use Alternative scenarios have been developed:

1. Alternative 1- Economic Development Scenario
2. Alternative 2- Balanced Growth Scenario
3. Alternative 3- High Growth and Public Input Scenario

Section 3 includes a narrative summary of each alternative, county-wide and community-specific growth projections for each alternative, a discussion of the benefits and disadvantages of each alternative, and

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

a summary of traffic, fiscal, and environmental implications for each alternative. The comparison of land use impacts focuses on the following topics:

- Land Use
- Agricultural Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Utilities and Infrastructure
- Safety and Environmental Constraints
- Natural Resources
- Recreation and Tourism
- Economy
- Fiscal Effects

The Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will review each Land Use Map Alternative, provide input and feedback regarding key policy questions and preferred land uses. Following guidance from the decision-makers, a Preferred Land Use Map will be prepared. The Policy Document will then be developed in a way that enhances and implements the selected Preferred Land Use Map. The guidance from the Board of Supervisors regarding the policy questions guide the Steering Committee in development of the Policy Document.

1.3 HOW KEY ISSUES WERE IDENTIFIED

The issues and opportunities described in this report were compiled from a wide range of sources including: public input at the community visioning workshops that were conducted during the initial phases of the GPU process, interviews with key stakeholders, key findings from the Background Report, County staff observations and input, and input from individual members of the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission.

All the issues and opportunities described in this report meet the following criteria: they can be influenced by the General Plan; they are subject to the legal authority of the County; the General Plan is an appropriate forum for addressing the issue; and they can be addressed as a policy issue. This report does not reach conclusions or decide the manner in which the County should proceed in the development of the General Plan. Rather, it provides a framework for future discussion of issues that are of key importance, and opportunities that could help shape future growth.

The major information sources used to compile this report are summarized below:

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Between September 2009 and March 2010, the General Plan Consultants conducted interviews and outreach efforts with several key stakeholders in the county. These interviews and outreach efforts helped the General Plan Consultants gain perspectives and insights into the issues to be addressed by the General Plan Update. Key stakeholders contacted during these efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Maxwell Public Utilities District
- Arbuckle Public Utilities District
- City of Williams
- City of Colusa
- Colusa County Sheriff's Department
- Colusa County Assessor's Office
- Colusa County Department of Public Works
- Colusa Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
- Colusa County Library
- Colusa Rotary Club
- Colusa County Agricultural Commissioner
- Colusa County Department of Behavioral Health
- Colusa County Department of Health and Human Services
- Colusa County Department of Planning and Building
- Colusa County Office of Education
- Housing Authority (contracted through Glenn Co. HRA)
- Arbuckle Family Action Center
- Williams Migrant Camp
- Senior Information Center
- Colusa First 5
- Colusa County One-Stop Center
- Colusa-Glenn-Trinity Community Action Partnership
- Colusa County Chamber of Commerce
- Princeton Joint Unified School District
- Colusa County Farm Bureau
- Arbuckle Family Health Center
- Maxwell Unified School District
- Pierce Joint Unified School District
- Colusa Unified School District
- Stony Creek Joint Unified School District

COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOPS

Between September and November 2009, the General Plan Update team held 5 public visioning workshops to help kick-off the General Plan Update process. A diverse group of county residents and stakeholders attended workshops in Stonyford, Maxwell, Arbuckle, Colusa and Williams. The workshops provided an opportunity for the public to offer their thoughts on what they like and don't like about their communities and the county and what important issues should be addressed in preparing the general plan.

Each workshop included a presentation by the consultant team that explained the role of the General Plan, an overview of the General Plan Update process, and an opportunity for the workshop participants to ask questions and seek clarification on the process and the role of the community. Workshop participants were asked to complete three exercises in order to provide information to the General Plan Update team.

Participant Survey Questionnaire

Workshop participants completed a brief informational questionnaire that solicited results on the following topics:

- General characteristics of participants
 - Years spent in Colusa County
 - Home ownership status
 - Employment inside or outside of Colusa County, etc.
- Roadway conditions and areas for improvement
- Public services and areas for improvement
- Opportunities for expanded economic development and employment
- Identification of areas where future growth should occur

Vision, Assets and Challenges Activity

Workshop participants were asked a series of questions, and answers were placed on post-it notes, and attached to poster boards throughout the room.

VISION

- What ideas do you have for the future of Colusa County?
- What would make your County better?

ASSETS

- What do you value most about Colusa County?
- What makes this a special place to live or work?

CHALLENGES

- What issues are facing the County that need to be addressed in the General Plan?

The most common responses to these questions are listed below.

VISION

- Maintain rural nature of the County by maintaining agricultural resources and focusing new growth around existing communities.
- Increase employment opportunities across the County.
- Increase recreational and tourism-based resources.
- Improve roadway and service infrastructure.

- Expand educational opportunities.

ASSETS

- Rural lifestyle and small-town community within the County.
- Abundant agricultural resources.
- Regional location and proximity to I-5, Bay Area, and Sacramento Area.
- Natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities.

CHALLENGES

- Lack of jobs and employment opportunities.
- Infrastructure in need of updating (roadway system, water and wastewater).
- Water shortages for potable use and agricultural use.
- Maintaining orderly growth while preserving agricultural resources.

Interactive Mapping Activity

Visioning Workshop participants were divided into groups of four to eight people, and asked to provide notes, comments and input on large County-wide maps. Groups were asked to outline areas where new growth and land uses should occur (housing, commercial, parks, open space, agriculture, etc) using color markers; identify areas where existing land uses should change; identify areas where new roadways should be developed; and provide any other thoughts or input that the group developed.

Each group presented their marked-up map to the rest of the workshop participants, and key concepts from each map were discussed and noted. These workshop maps were used during the development of the Land Use Map Alternatives, which are discussed in greater detail in Section 3 or this report. Each alternative reflects some component of public comment (e.g., increased employment opportunities, keeping growth in existing communities, and preservation of agricultural lands). Land Use Map Alternative 3 includes the majority of the input received during these activities.

COUNTY STAFF OBSERVATIONS

County planning staff has worked to organize a summary of the issues and opportunities in Colusa County, since the beginning of the Update program. This summary is based on County staff experience and observations through day-to-day work implementing the 1989 General Plan policies, discussions with Supervisors and Planning Commissioners, and through the identification of key issues not addressed by current policy. County staff then worked with the General Plan consultants to identify the most important issues and opportunities that could be addressed through an update of the General Plan.

GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND REPORT

The General Plan Background Report is one of several key supporting documents to the General Plan. The Background Report provides information on a wide range of topics including demographics and economics, land use, agricultural resources, housing, transportation, public facilities and utilities, natural resources, recreational and cultural resources, safety, and noise. The Background Report does not

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contain policies; it is solely intended to provide a foundation or factual context for policy decisions. The Draft Background Report findings helped to identify key issues in the various aforementioned topical areas.

LAND USE MAP CHANGE REQUEST FORMS

Between November 2009 and January 2010, property owners in Colusa County were given the opportunity to submit General Plan land use designation change requests for their parcels to the Planning Department. Changes in existing General Plan designations were requested for approximately 20 parcels throughout the County. These requested changes were all included in Land Use Map Alternative 3, and many of the requested changes were incorporated into Land Use Map Alternatives 1 and 2 as well. Figure 1-1 illustrates the requested land use map changes.

1.4 NEXT STEPS IN THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

The information in this report will be presented to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors for review, comment and consideration. The Planning Commission will provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors with respect to the preferred Land Use Map Alternative, and any key policy direction to be considered during preparation of the General Plan Update.

The Board of Supervisors will consider the recommendations provided by the Planning Commission, and will provide formal direction to County staff and the General Plan Update team with respect to the preferred Land Use Alternative Map, and the overall direction of policy development for the General Plan Update. In addition to identifying specific uses to be included on the preferred Land Use Alternative map, this guidance will direct the development of goals and policies and will be used to prioritize which programs for implementation over the life of the General Plan.

After direction from the Board of Supervisors has been received, the General Plan Update team will begin working with the Steering Committee to develop the goals, policies and programs for the General Plan Policy Document. The Steering Committee will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and will consist of County residents, stakeholders, and persons interested in participating in the development of the General Plan Policy Document. The Steering Committee will meet 8 to 9 times during development of the Policy Document. The General Plan Update team will begin work on the EIR concurrent with the development of the Policy Document.

Updates on the status of the General Plan Update will be posted to the General Plan website periodically: <http://countyofcolusageneralplan.org/>.

2.0 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The updated Colusa County General Plan will address an extensive set of issues and opportunities. Many of these issues and opportunities are defined by State planning law, while others reflect local concerns and desires.

Typically, in a general plan update program, the plan revolves around and is shaped by a handful of key issues and opportunities. Key issues frequently concern growth, land use, agricultural preservation, economic development, transportation, public services and utilities, natural resource protection, safety, recreation, and tourism.

Despite the many challenges Colusa County may face, there are also opportunities to take advantage of over the time frame of the General Plan. Opportunities include areas of high paying job growth, community improvements, expanded services for County residents, and methods of boosting the local economy. However, due to fiscal limitations and regulatory requirements, the County may not be able to capitalize on or address all of the issues and opportunities identified in this report. Therefore, the County and its leaders and residents will need to make important choices during the General Plan Update process as to which issues and opportunities are most important to shape the vision of the County's future.

ISSUES

What is an Issue?

In the context of this report, an "Issue" is defined as an important condition or problem that needs to be addressed through the General Plan Update process.

Each issue is highlighted in a beige box. Following discussion of the issue, key policy questions associated with the issue are identified in italics.

OPPORTUNITIES

What is an Opportunity?

In the context of this report, an "Opportunity" is defined as a unique, favorable, or advantageous condition that the County can capitalize on through the General Plan Update process.

Each opportunity is highlighted in a teal box. Following discussion of the opportunity, key policy questions associated with the issue are identified in opportunity.

2.6: NATURAL RESOURCES ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.6 NATURAL RESOURCES

The rural atmosphere, open space, wildlife refuges, working landscapes, lakes, rivers and scenic vistas of Colusa County are some of the county's greatest assets. These assets provide a natural resource base for agricultural and forest industries, tourism and recreation, wildlife habitat, watershed storage and water quality protection, and a high quality of life for residents.



This section discusses the relationship between the preservation of open space and community planning. Participants in the community visioning workshops identified the need for protection of open space and community planning as some of the major challenges facing the county. They identified the following key issues:

- Maintain rural character and lifestyle of County and preserve open space;
- Focus new development around existing communities;
- Preserve agricultural lands, heritage and lifestyle; and
- Recreational opportunities.

When asked to identify Colusa County's greatest assets, visioning workshop participants overwhelmingly listed open space, rural lifestyle, agricultural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities. All of these existing assets can be maintained and enhanced by protection the open space and natural resources of the County.

The first subsection below discusses the major threats to open space. The second subsection discusses habitat encroachment and interface issues. The third subsection describes opportunities for open space and habitat preservation using tools and techniques such as transfer of development rights and conservation easements.

Issue: Protection of Open Space and Existing Landscapes

In many rural counties, weak regulations have allowed a sprawling pattern of land use that disperses houses along rural roads, fragments open space, and creates a nuisance for working landscapes. Rural residential development creates conflicts with farms and ranches by introducing pests such as cats and dogs, restrictions on the use of agricultural chemicals, and complaints regarding noise and dust. While General Plan land use designations and zoning regulate the amount, density, and type of development, other techniques can be employed by the County to protect open space, working landscapes, and scenic vistas, and redirect development pressure. In particular, the GPU can direct growth toward existing communities instead of allowing low density development in open space areas.

The terms open space, working landscapes, agricultural land, and rural are used interchangeably to describe the character of Colusa County's ranch land, farmland, and forests. For the purposes of this report "open space" is a broad category that includes: working landscapes (e.g., agriculture and forest); rural landscapes (e.g., undeveloped or sparsely developed lands); scenic vistas (e.g., scenic highways and oak woodland); natural resource lands (e.g., lakes, rivers, forests, oak woodlands, preserves); and recreational lands (e.g., reservoirs, parks, trails, hunting clubs, etc). Also, in this report the term agricultural land broadly refers to land used to raise crops along with land used for ranching or grazing livestock.

Open space can perform multiple functions and benefits. For example, it can serve as wildlife habitat while buffering development (around communities, industrial areas, or airports) and providing recreational opportunities in the form of trails, hunting areas and fishing opportunities. Agricultural lands are used primarily for food production but also can provide wildlife habitat, watershed recharge area, local jobs and revenue, and add scenic value (e.g., greenbelts or transition zones). The loss of these benefits has broad implications. For example, the conversion of open space to other uses has hydrological implications because of impacts on the existing watershed and reductions to groundwater recharge rates. The loss of open space can also impact County agricultural operations, which may lead to a loss of jobs, the loss of local agricultural revenues and other residual agriculture-related economic impacts.

Fragmentation of open space, especially agricultural lands, increases the likelihood of conflicting uses and nuisances. For agricultural operations, conflicts with development can result in restrictions on the use of agricultural chemicals, complaints regarding noise and dust, trespass, vandalism, and damage from domestic animals such as cats and dogs. These conflicts may increase costs to the agricultural operations and combined with rising land values for residential development, encourage the further conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

Some Colusa County agricultural and forestry operations are facing an additional threat. Many of the family farms and ranches in the county are facing a generational change, with some families opting to sell or considering selling their land rather than continuing to farm or ranch upon the death or retirement of the primary owners. When this transition occurs, land can be divided into smaller parcels and converted to other uses, which contributes to fragmentation of agricultural land use patterns and impacts other agricultural operations.

2.6: NATURAL RESOURCES ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Key Questions

- *How can the County work with farmers, ranchers, non-profit organizations and other partners to preserve open space?*
- *What is the appropriate minimum parcel size in rural areas that will discourage sprawl and protect open space and working landscapes?*

Issue: Habitat Encroachment and Interference

Colusa County is renowned in the environmental community of California for its unique natural resources, including unique plant and animal species, large managed wetland preserves, wildlife-based recreational opportunities, and water resources including the Sacramento River and East Park Reservoir. These habitat areas have been adversely impacted largely by two factors: urbanization due to the county's population growth and neighboring agricultural practices.

Colusa County is home to portions of the Mendocino National Forest, the Snow Mountain Wilderness Area, three National Wildlife Refuges, two privately owned Wildlife Management Areas, two State Wildlife Areas, the Colusa-Sacramento State Recreation Area, and numerous land conservancies. These areas are used by tens of thousands of hunters, fishermen, and wildlife observers each year, and are home to countless special-status plant, animal, aquatic and bird species. The Refuges and easements are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game, and they serve as resting and feeding areas for nearly half the migratory birds on the Pacific Flyway. These areas not only contribute to the quality of life in the county enjoyed by residents, they also provide an important source of revenue from tourism.

Wildlife habitat and natural resources face two challenges from urbanization: 1) new growth will result in pressures to eliminate more and more open areas that have wildlife resource value, and 2) increasing urban/habitat interface conflicts.

Urban uses can often introduce non-native species that can have lasting impacts on ecosystems. Agricultural lands can provide relatively high value habitat for many wildlife species, particularly as foraging habitat. However, growing crops and animals is not a benign process for the natural environment; it is an industrial-type activity that generates soil erosion and runoff, creates water quality problems (e.g., animal wastes and fertilizer), introduces night lighting in remote areas and reduces natural vegetation. Agricultural waste runoff can increase nitrate levels in creeks and streams to the detriment of various fish species. Two significant factors of whether agricultural practices may adversely affect native habitat include the crop pattern and the land's proximity to the habitats.

Poorly planned urban growth can also interfere with the enjoyment and use of resources such as the Sacramento River and East Park Reservoir, which provide numerous opportunities for outdoor recreational activities, including hunting and fishing.

Key Questions

- *What buffer sizes are needed to adequately protect habitat areas from urban and agricultural uses?*
- *Are additional policies or programs necessary to reduce potential ag/habitat conflicts?*
- *What additional steps can the County take to preserve and protect key natural and open space resources?*

2.6: NATURAL RESOURCES ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunity: Tools and Techniques for Open Space Protection

Protection of working landscapes, rural landscapes, scenic vistas, natural resource lands, and recreational lands can be accomplished through a wide variety of tools and techniques. General Plan land use designations and development regulations afford a certain degree of protection for open space through regulation of density, land use, and infrastructure investments. Other tools and techniques can also be employed for the preservation of open space such as:

- Partnering with State and Federal agencies to develop habitat conservation plans or other strategies;
- Protecting picturesque highway corridors with State Scenic Highway designations;
- Collaborating with land trusts to identify priorities for protection;
- Developing a land bank that purchases development rights (i.e. conservation easements) from agricultural and forestry lands to protect key parcels;
- Developing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program; and
- Educating private landowners about the methods by which they can create voluntary conservation easements on lands with significant conservation values, such as wetlands, riparian corridors, and special-status plant and animal species habitats.

Many of these tools and techniques can be institutionalized through GPU policy and programs. For example, the General Plan can include policies and programs that promote coordination with State and Federal agencies that manage resources lands. Through a combination of regulation and land conservation techniques the County can protect working and rural landscapes, scenic vistas, and recreation and natural resource lands.

Key Questions:

- *Should the County consider a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to protect open space?*
- *Should the County work with State and Federal agencies to develop a County-wide Habitat Conservation Plan?*
- *Should the County explore policies to support the creation of additional conservation easements?*
- *Should the County develop a Management Plan, in collaboration with state or federal agencies, to manage a future Sites Reservoir?*

2.8: RECREATION AND TOURISM ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.8 RECREATION AND TOURISM

The largest designated recreation area in Colusa County is the Mendocino National Forest, managed by the U.S. Forest Service. A variety of recreational opportunities exist within the forest: camping, hiking, backpacking, boating, fishing, nature study, photography, and off-highway vehicle travel. The forest is a working forest, so activities such as logging and grazing do occur. The Forest Service seeks to manage the variety of uses to ensure conservation of the forest resources.

Letts Lake in Upper Letts Valley (within the Mendocino National Forest) is a popular recreation area. There are eight campgrounds around the lake, a few summer homes, and numerous trails. The lake is stocked with trout and bass, and boating is limited to non-motorized craft only.

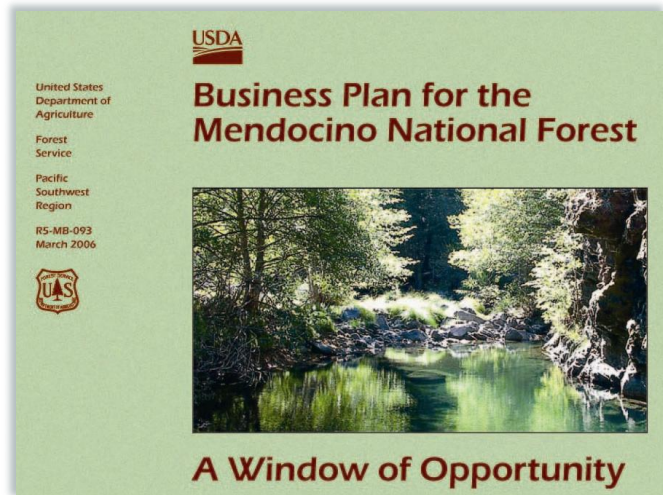
Davis Flat, also located within the Mendocino National Forest, is a popular spot for off-highway vehicle (OHV) activity. The facilities at Davis Flat include a campground and special trails marked for various levels of driving skill.

The Sacramento River State Recreation Area provides 60 acres of riverfront recreation at the north end of the City of Colusa. The park features boat ramps, picnic facilities, trails, and camping. Fishing and boating are popular activities at this park. Though the Sacramento River State Recreation Area is the only public boat launch in the area of the Sacramento River around the City of Colusa, people enter the river at several private sites. Much of the land adjacent to the Sacramento River is privately owned agricultural land.

Fishing is plentiful in the Sacramento River between Grimes and Princeton. Salmon, steelhead trout, and striped bass are the most common fish in this area. People fish both from boats and the banks of the Sacramento River. The Mendocino National Forest offers 85 miles of trout streams. Big Stony Creek and Little Stony Creek and their tributaries are the primary fishing areas. The streams are occasionally stocked with trout by the California Department of Fish and Game.

More ducks and geese winter in the Sacramento Valley than any other area of the Pacific Flyway. Numerous wildlife refuges help sustain the birds in Colusa County through the fall and winter by providing food and sanctuary. Ducks generally arrive in August, and geese generally arrive in late November. Public hunting is permitted in areas of the refuges during the appropriate season, but hunters must obtain a permit from one of the check stations.

There are also a number of commercial hunting clubs and cooperatives operated by community organizations throughout Colusa County. Hunting camps are operated on private agricultural land by special use permit. Lambertsville has a large congregation of mobile homes and trailers used by hunters on a seasonal basis.



2.8: RECREATION AND TOURISM ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Walker Ridge Public Hunting Area, located in the western foothills of Colusa County, is maintained by the Bureau of Land Management. This area is popular for hunting of quail and deer.

During the public visioning workshops, the following comments related to recreation and tourism were submitted:

- Improve access to recreational areas in the northwest portion of the County.
- There is a need for improved access and public facilities along the Sacramento River.
- The local tourism industry should be supported and expanded in order to generate revenue.

Outdoor recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, and boating were consistently identified as one of the County's top assets.

2.8: RECREATION AND TOURISM ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Issue: Limited Access to Recreational Areas

The East Park Reservoir and the Mendocino National Forest provide a wide range of recreational opportunities including, hunting, fishing, boating, camping, hiking, bird watching, and OHV activities to both County residents and visitors. These areas are located in the northwestern portion of the County, in the vicinity of Stonyford. The primary access road to this area is Maxwell Sites Road to Sites Lodoga Road. These roadways are generally narrow, winding and in need of significant repair and maintenance. Numerous participants in the visioning workshops identified the need to improve the condition of these roadways in order to provide better access for residents and recreational users.

There are limited public access points to the Sacramento River in Colusa County. There are very few public recreation areas along the river, and very few public boat launching facilities. Numerous participants in the visioning workshops identified the need for increased public access to the Sacramento River. Most the areas along the western shore of the Sacramento River are designated floodplains, which may make them largely unsuitable for residential development.

Key Questions

- *Is the expansion of outdoor recreational activities a critical component to the economic development strategy for Colusa County?*
- *How can the County improve public access to outdoor recreational areas?*
- *Should the County encourage the expansion of privately owned and operated recreational areas, such as hunting clubs and private marinas/boat launch facilities?*

Opportunity: Expand Tourism Industry

The natural and open space resources in Colusa County are astounding, and represent one of the County's greatest assets. The County's proximity to the Bay Area and the Sacramento Area make the County relatively accessible to people living in these regions. The prevalence of waterways in the County provide for exceptional hunting and fishing opportunities, which can generate significant income for local businesses.

Throughout the Visioning workshops, participants requested that additional boat launch and public access points be provided along the Sacramento River. Development of additional wildlife viewing/bird watching areas in the western portion of the County was recommended. Development of a youth camp facility in the East Park Reservoir area was suggested. There are a range of opportunities to increase tourism in the County. Land-based recreational opportunities at the Sacramento River and other natural resource areas include hunting, camping, picnicking, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, photography, sightseeing, and special events. Water-based activities on the Sacramento River, East Park Reservoir, and other water bodies include fishing, sailing, water skiing, operating personal watercraft, cruising, canoeing and kayaking, swimming, and house boating.

By improving access to recreational areas in the northwestern portion of the County, and along the Sacramento River and expanding public awareness of the County's tourism and recreation facilities, the County may be able to generate increased income from tourism and recreational visitors.

Key Questions:

- *What steps should the County take to improve public access to the Sacramento River?*
- *Given the limited funding available for roadway improvements, how can the County improve access to the Mendocino National Forest and the East Park Reservoir?*
- *Should the County partner with the public and private agencies that own or manage the County's most significant tourism resources to engage in a consolidated marketing and awareness campaign?*
- *What other steps can the County take to increase awareness and access to recreational opportunities?*

Opportunity: Support the Creation of Sites Reservoir

The proposed Sites Reservoir has been identified by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the CALFED Bay-Delta Program (CALFED) as one of the most cost-effective and environmentally beneficial new facilities under consideration in California.

The proposed location of the Sites off-stream storage project is approximately 10 miles west of Maxwell in Antelope Valley. The reservoir would have a storage capacity of 1.9 million acre-feet (possibly larger) and would enhance water management flexibility throughout the state and provide for improved flood control in Colusa County. Sites reservoir can greatly increase reliability of water supplies in the Sacramento Valley and other areas of the state by reducing water diversions on the Sacramento River during critical fish migration periods. In addition, by providing additional storage and operational benefits, Sites reservoir would be a critical component of an integrated water management and water development program for the Sacramento Valley.

Two large earthen dams would be constructed to allow a bowl like lake to store water from the Tehama-Colusa and Glenn-Colusa canals. A pipeline would also be constructed to the west of the Sacramento River. This new pipeline would release water from the reservoir into the river during drought times to help fisheries. As much as 90 megawatts of electricity could be generated at the same time. The reservoir, however, would be a net energy consumer because of the pumping power required to bring water to the facility. If constructed, it would operate in conjunction with Shasta, Oroville and Folsom dams as an improved Northern California water delivery system, allowing existing reservoirs to provide more water for California's fish habitat.

Water would be diverted into the reservoir during peak flow periods in winter months (for example, during flood years like 1997 and 1998). To minimize potential impacts of existing diversions on Sacramento River fisheries, Sites would release water back into valley conveyance systems (such as the Glenn Colusa Irrigation District Canal and Tehama Colusa Canal) in exchange for water that would otherwise have been diverted from the Sacramento River. This undiverted summer water could become available for other downstream uses in the Bay-Delta.

Numerous participants in the visioning workshops expressed support for the development of Sites Reservoir, while a very limited number expressed opposition to the project. The development of Sites Reservoir has the potential to impact the County across a wide range of topics addressed in this report. Construction activities associated with the project could generate significant local employment opportunities to County residents, and would result in an influx of non-local workers, which would support local businesses and increase the demand for rental housing. Once completed, the project may provide additional sources of surface water for agricultural use within the County. The project may also have numerous beneficial impacts to water quality and wildlife habitat. The project would also increase recreational opportunities in the County, including camping, boating, and fishing. Communities in the vicinity of the reservoir, such as Stonyford and Maxwell, may experience a rise in tourism and expansion of their economic base.

The County does not have final approval authority over this proposed project. However, the County does have the opportunity to support the project at the local level, and to assist and facilitate efforts underway at the State and Federal level.

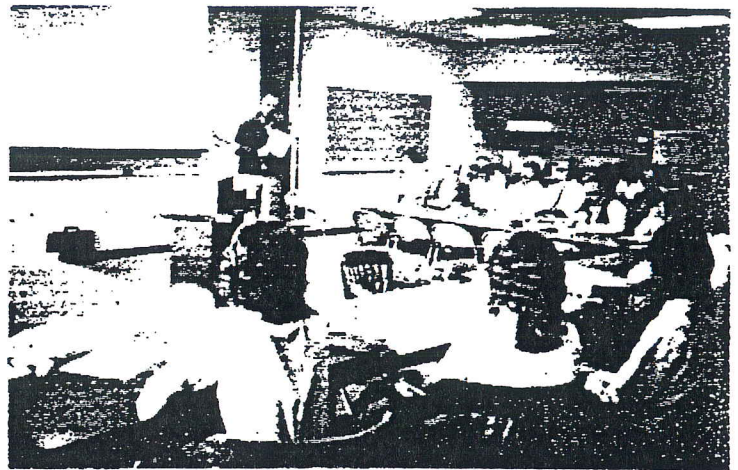
2.8: RECREATION AND TOURISM ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Key Questions:

- *Should the General Plan include goals, policies or programs that support or oppose the Sites Reservoir?*
- *If the General Plan is to provide statements of support for this project, what specific steps can the County take to encourage and assist in the facilitation of this project?*

Attachment 5

Colusa County 1989 General Plan: Goals and Objectives related to Open Space and Recreation



Goals & Objectives

- (n) To promote development which utilizes ecologically sound and energy conserving techniques.
- (o) To promote a high level of air quality
- (p) To conserve and explore historical resources, including archaeological sites.
- (q) To develop a surface supply of water commensurate with the needs of development so as not to impact existing agricultural practices.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

GOAL: Preserve open space and opportunities for recreational and leisure-time activities in Colusa County.

- Objectives:**
- (a) To preserve and promote the Sacramento River as a recreational asset.
 - (b) To promote a diverse range of recreational opportunities within the parks of Colusa County.
 - (c) To promote continued opportunities for hunting and fishing where appropriate.
 - (d) To retain the natural character of large open space areas.
 - (e) To develop a program of open space preservation which ensures the provision of open land near existing communities.
 - (f) To conserve the natural beauty of county rivers, streams, and hillsides.
 - (g) To maintain expansive open spaces, uninterrupted by urban development, both on the valley floor and in upland valleys.
 - (h) To locate new recreational and tourist-serving areas where they will be compatible with surrounding uses.
 - (i) To provide varied recreational facilities serving neighborhood needs, community needs, and regional needs.

Attachment 6

Colusa County 1989 General Plan: Open Space Element



Open Space Element

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

"Anything more gorgeously beautiful than the display in meadows and wild pasturelands on hillside and riverside, it were impossible for anyone but a mad florist to imagine. Along the railroads on either hand runs continuously the rich and radiant bloom."

Grace Greenwood, 1880
History of Colusa County

ORGANIZATION OF THIS ELEMENT

The Open Space Element of the General Plan is necessary to ensure that land in Colusa County will remain available for the production of food, the management of natural resources, the enjoyment of scenic beauty, and recreation. Open space is not a land use, but a characteristic of certain types of land uses. Its value is attributed to the fact that it is predominantly undeveloped or developed with uses that complement the inherent natural, scenic, resource, or hazardous characteristics of the land.

One of the contributors to the high quality of life enjoyed by Colusa residents is the vast amount of open land in the county. This essential ingredient of rural living makes open space a valuable resource. From the agricultural lands of the valley floor, there are uninterrupted vistas of the Coast Range to the west and the Sutter Buttes and Sierra Nevada to the east. The visual and aesthetic qualities which are unique to Colusa County must be protected from scattered and haphazard development. To preserve and protect open space land, a development pattern that concentrates growth in existing communities is highly recommended. The Open Space Element provides the basis for the county to regulate and restrict the use of undeveloped lands.

The county's economy relies heavily on agriculture and agriculturally-related businesses. In order to maintain this way of life, agricultural land must be preserved and urban uses of land must be prevented from encroaching onto agricultural land. Similarly, open space land for mineral resource extraction or conservation must be preserved. Other open space lands in the county of significant value are the hunting and fishing grounds. These places draw the regional population as well as tourists and are important to the local economy. As the county's population grows, provisions for open space in the form of both active and passive recreational areas need to be made. Park and recreational facilities at all levels--neighborhood, community, and county--should be considered.

There are five general subjects addressed in the Open Space Element: natural resource preservation, resource production and management, public health and safety, community character, and outdoor recreation. The Conservation Element covers in greater detail the natural resource preservation and resource production and management subjects. Likewise, public health and safety is more thoroughly addressed in the Safety Element. The focus of the Open Space Element is on the subject of outdoor recreation as it pertains to serving small communities, the larger county population, and an even larger regional population.

THE ROLE OF OPEN SPACE IN COLUSA COUNTY

NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION

Research Natural Areas

A research natural area (RNA) is an area set aside to preserve representative examples of specific botanic, aquatic, and geological features, primarily for scientific and educational purposes. The Frenzel Creek RNA is located in the Colusa County portion of the Mendocino National Forest, about six miles south of Stonyford. The area is approximately 935 acres and contains three botanical elements: Sargent Cypress, MacNab Cypress, and Serpentine Chaparral. It also has several plant species listed as sensitive by the U.S. Forest Service.

Wildlife Refuges

There are three wildlife refuges in Colusa County operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, comprising approximately 12,000 acres. Two are located entirely in Colusa County: the Colusa National Wildlife Refuge, located south of Highway 20 between Williams and Colusa, and the Delevan National Wildlife Refuge, located east of Interstate 5 near Maxwell. The southern tip of the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge is located in Colusa County, east of Interstate 5. The remainder of the Sacramento Refuge is in Glenn County.

The wildlife refuges were established in part to provide a feeding and resting place to the millions of birds that travel south for the winter from Alaska and western Canada; the path traveled by these birds is known as the Pacific Flyway. Much of the acreage on the refuges is used for growing agricultural crops, especially rice. Fields in the refuges are flooded and left unharvested so that birds may eat and nest. By providing food for the ducks and geese, the refuges also aid local farmers by keeping waterfowl from feeding on neighboring farm crops.

Riparian Communities

The term "riparian" describes the land adjacent to the bank of a river or other fresh water course. These areas are composed of soils with a significantly high moisture content and typically support plant species with very shallow root systems or plants which are capable of surviving with their roots completely submerged in water. A concentration of riparian vegetation is called a riparian community, a term that describes the relationship among plants within a geographically definable area (a riparian zone). These zones occur as corridors extending about 50 feet on either side of the river or streambank.

By nature of their diversity, riparian communities play a key role in maintaining environmental stability. Riparian communities protect water quality through natural filtration processes, facilitate ground water recharge, protect riverbanks from erosion, and provide habitat for numerous plant and animal species. In Colusa County, the largest riparian communities are located along the Sacramento River. In addition, a riparian area along Salt Creek contains the only known native grasslands in the Sacramento Valley.

The cumulative impacts of intensive human activities along riparian corridors can be detrimental to their survival and should be restricted. The main problem has been the rapid conversion of high terrace vegetation lands to orchards and other crop-lands, according to a Department of Water Resources Riparian Zone Study in 1975. The purchase of riparian zoned land by public agencies to increase public access to the river may also have the negative side effect of greatly reducing wildlife populations as people trample plants and scare wildlife away. Land uses which do not threaten riparian community integrity, such as grazing and low intensity recreation, are more acceptable uses within riparian corridors.

Mendocino National Forest

The Mendocino National Forest occupies 884,000 acres of the northern Coast Range and includes parts of six California counties. Less than one-tenth of the forest, or 72,000 acres, is in Colusa County. For planning purposes, the U.S. Forest Service has divided the forest into 37 geographic units, called management areas. Six of these areas lie partially or entirely in Colusa County. Within each of these management areas, the Forest Service has proposed various "management prescriptions" which state the mix of integrated management practices and activities to be applied to specific land areas.

Table OS-I lists the management prescriptions and number of acres affected within the Colusa County portion of the Mendocino National Forest.¹

The National Forest lands are divided into "management areas," three of which -- Sullivan, Frenzel Creek Research Natural Area, and Letts Lake -- are entirely contained within Colusa County. Cedar/Sanborn is primarily within Colusa County and the Snow Mountain Wilderness is partially within the County.

For each management area several "management prescriptions" are assigned. A large proportion of the National Forest land within Colusa County is designated for chaparral management and minimal management. Chaparral management provides for forage production, watershed management and fire management. Minimal management policies are primarily applied to non-productive, non-economical or unstable land, as well as land with scenic, ecologic, geologic or cultural resource values.

Another significant land management prescription is for wildlife. The emphasis is on maintaining or increasing habitat capability for specific wildlife species that the Forest Service calls "management indicators." These indicators gauge the viability of all other indigenous species in the forest. The wildlife management emphasis applies to 9,569 acres of presently existing annual and perennial grasslands, hardwood

¹For a detailed review of management prescriptions, see the Proposed Land and Resource Management Plan for the Mendocino National Forest, by the U.S. Forest Service, Chapter 4.

Table OS-1: Management Prescriptions for Mendocino Forest Lands

<u>Management Prescription</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Wildlife	9,569	13.3
Chapparral	13,043	18.2
Range	1,490	2.1
Minimal	19,344	26.9
Recreation	809	1.1
Spotted Owl Habitat	1,604	2.2
Timber-Modified	7,543	10.4
Timber-Intensive	7,243	10.0
Research Natural Area	4,539	6.3
Wilderness	<u>6,660</u>	<u>9.3</u>
Total	71,844	100%

Note: Approximately 156 acres of a management area which is primarily located in Glenn County is not included; therefore, total acreage does not match up to total forest land in Colusa County.

Savannah, hardwoods, and riparian areas in Colusa County. The key wildlife include Spotted Owl, Deer, Bald Eagle, Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Quail, and Raptors.

A portion of the National Forest land is designated for intensive timber harvest, managed for optimum timber yields (discussed further in the next section). Another portion is designated for modified wildlife purposes, visual quality objectives, or streamside management.

Snow Mountain Wilderness Area

Snow Mountain was designated a wilderness area in 1984 in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Colusa County portion of the area consists of approximately 6,660 acres with elevations ranging from 1,800 feet in the gorge of the Middle Fork of Stony Creek to 7,056 feet on the summit of Snow Mountain East. According to the Mendocino National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, management activities and permitted uses will be regulated to ensure that there are no unnecessary impacts on the wilderness characteristics of the area, and to develop specific management plans.

Bureau of Land Management

There are about 21,700 acres of public land in the County administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). These areas primarily lie along the Cortina Ridge and Walker Ridge in the western part of the County, and in High Valley in the northwestern part of the County. Much of the BLM land is designated for "protective withdrawals" which means that it is managed to protect wildlife species and habitat. Figure OS-1 shows publicly owned or administered land within Colusa County.

MANAGED PRODUCTION OF RESOURCES

Introduction

Forest, range, and agricultural land uses comprise three-quarters of the County's total acreage and characterize the bulk of Colusa County's open space. These areas contain finite natural resources which may be depleted over time. Thus, these land resources need to be properly managed. It is the purpose of this section to recognize that open space is a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved wherever possible. More detail on these resources is contained in the Conservation Element.

The management prescription for **timber-modified land**, as defined by the Forest Service for the Mendocino National Forest, provides a dual emphasis on timber harvesting and other resource objectives including wildlife, viewshed, and watershed protection. Such timberlands have been assigned to "reduced yield" and "marginal yield" regulation classes. Reduced timber yields are expected within key deer habitat areas, within streamside management zones, on areas with slope stability concerns, and in areas with outstanding visual quality. The management prescription for **timber-intensive land** is to obtain optimum timber yields from productive forest land; this class applies to all timberlands not constrained by other resource objectives. The **range land** prescription promotes intensified range management to increase forage production and utilization by domestic livestock.

The Forest Service uses a bidding process to permit the public to use forest lands for range, timber, and mining purposes. The Forest Service is obligated to pay the county 25 percent of the fees collected. In fiscal year 1986, Colusa County received \$183,156 in payments from the Mendocino National Forest receipts.

Bureau of Reclamation

Until recently, The Bureau of Reclamation administered approximately 6,660 acres of land around the East Park Reservoir and the Funks Creek Reservoir. Jurisdiction over the reservoir has recently been passed to the U.S. Forest Service. There is public access to East Park Reservoir from Lodoga and Stonyford for camping, fishing, and boating recreation. Recreation management is important in the watershed in order to preserve the water quality.

Agriculture

Farming in the Sacramento Valley and smaller upland valleys, and cattle or sheep herding in the foothills comprise the largest land uses and managed open spaces in the County. There are approximately 235,000 acres of active farmland and 200,000 acres of range land, totaling about 60 percent of the County's land area. The California Land Conservation Act (also known as the Williamson Act) allows the county to establish agricultural preserves and offer contracts to landowners for the purpose of protecting agricultural land from premature conversion to other uses. Landowners agree to keep land in agriculture or open space, and in return the county assesses the property at its agricultural rather than market value. The effect is to lessen the pressure for development on agricultural lands.

Colusa County is unique in the state in that most of its arable land is excluded from the Act. About 95 percent of the land which is under contract under the Williamson Act is grazing and ranchland in the foothills. The Williamson Act has been useful in preventing subdivision of these areas for rural residential development. The remaining 5 percent of contracted lands are concentrated in the western part of the valley. Although the valley floor is not imminently threatened by urban development there has been some interest expressed in extending the Act to include some of the county's prime farmland.

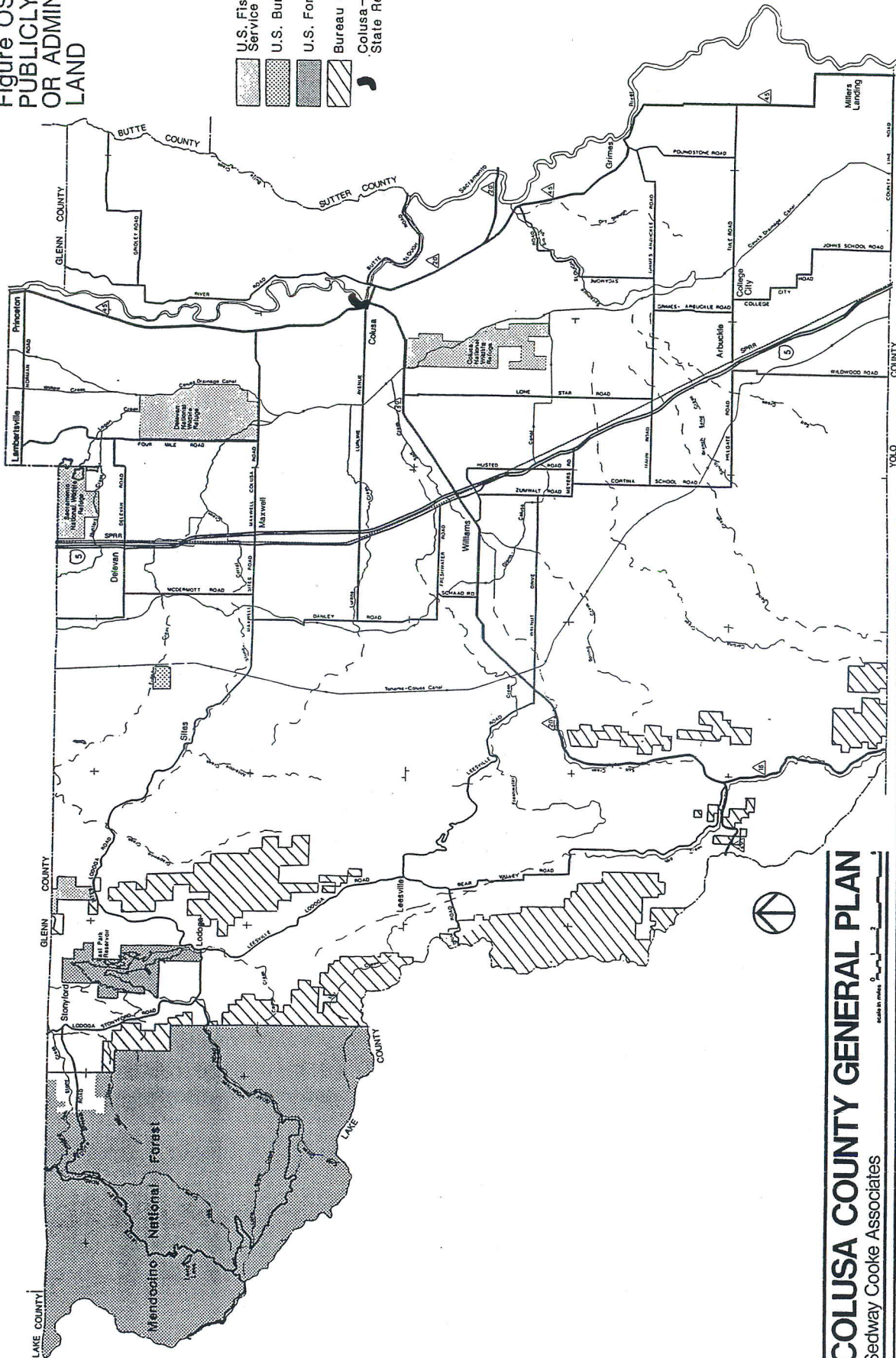
Proposition 13 has reduced the financial advantages associated with Williamson Act contracts, particularly on lands experiencing urbanization pressure. A broader application to lands on the valley floor would become more attractive to landowners if the taxation limits of Proposition 13 were to change in the future. An extension of lands covered might lower the tax burden on some of the county's farmers but could have a detrimental effect on county revenues. The fiscal impact of extending Williamson Act lands must be ascertained before such action is taken.

Groundwater Recharge

An underground geologic formation--strata of earth, gravel, or porous stone, containing water--is called an aquifer. A region of aquifers is known as a

Figure OS-1
PUBLICLY OWNED
OR ADMINISTERED
LAND

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area



COLUSA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

Sedway Cooke Associates

groundwater basin. The groundwater basin and water bearing soils are replenished by percolation, a natural process whereby rainwater is returned to the groundwater basin by filtration through the soils. As more areas are urbanized and covered by impervious surfaces, more water drains to streams and gullies rather than percolating through the soil. Extensive urbanization can limit the recharge of an aquifer and also affect the quality of the subsurface water.

Natural features are essential to ground water recharge, particularly floodplains and streams which pass over gravel or other porous materials. The flat agricultural lands of the Sacramento River Valley and the Sacramento River floodplains are the most significant areas for this process in Colusa County. It is important that these types of features are preserved in their present state as much as possible so that water transfer to the groundwater basin is maintained.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Introduction

This part of the Open Space Element addresses those lands which are held as open space to protect the public's health and safety. These areas are subject to hazards associated with flood plains, slope instability, wildfire, and groundwater recharge areas. The Safety Element of the General Plan reviews more extensively the issues and policies dealing with public safety.

Flood Plain Zones

The Sacramento River and adjacent creeks between the river and the Colusa Canal are subject to flooding during the rainy season. The soils in this area are silty clay and adobe, creating seepage problems during periods when the river is high. For a more detailed review of flood plain hazards and policies, see the Safety Element of the plan.

Slope Stability

The only area with a risk of landslide potential is in the Coast Range foothills on the western side of the County. The area is poorly suited for development, and roadways and homes could collapse in the event of a slide. Presently, the population is very low in the foothills, with the largest concentration of people in the Indian Valley.

Wildfire

The threat of wildfire in the County is mainly in the Coast Range mountains and foothills. Areas of high wildfire risk, particularly those on steep slopes or with difficult access, should be kept in open space. Fire hazards are mapped and discussed more thoroughly in the Safety Element.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

One important aspect of open space which is frequently ignored is its role in the definition of community character. This role cannot be ignored in Colusa County: when citizens were asked what qualities made Colusa County special, two-thirds replied "open space." The combination of small towns, open fields, and hillsides untouched by development are the essence of the county's rural quality. The county's lifestyle depends heavily upon the maintenance of open space.

This role of open space really occurs on two levels: on a county-wide level, maintaining open space becomes important to preserve particular views, such as the Sutter Buttes or Snow Mountain, and to maintain the integrity of the landscape. The undulating foothills of the Coast Range, the riparian corridors of the Sacramento River, the agricultural uses along the freeway, and the expansive upland valleys combine to create a landscape that is uniquely Colusa County. On a smaller scale, open space in the county helps to delineate the differences between communities, as well as each community's absolute boundaries. Designated open space areas around a community can encourage infill development and reduce urban sprawl.

By recognizing the important role that open space plays in Colusa County and developing policies to preserve its key aspects, future development can be encouraged to "fit" the existing landscape without disturbing unique features. For instance, industrial development should not occur in ribbons along the freeway between towns. Likewise, views of the foothills should not be cluttered by five to ten-acre ranchettes.

OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

Introduction

This section of the Open Space Element identifies park and recreational areas in the county. Parks and natural areas are of important cultural, educational, aesthetic, ecological, and social value. They are the foundation of the county's recreation system. As the population grows, park and recreational facilities need to be planned, acquired, and developed.

Regional Recreational Areas

The largest designated recreation area in Colusa County is the Mendocino National Forest, managed by the U.S. Forest Service. A variety of recreational opportunities exist within the forest: primitive and developed camping, picnic areas, organizational camps, second homes, hang-gliding, off-road vehicle trails, hiking and horseback riding trails, fishing, and hunting. It is the Forest Service's goal to manage these varied uses without conflict, and to ensure the preservation of the forest's natural resources.

Letts Lake in Upper Letts Valley is a popular recreation area which has eight campsites around the lake, a few summer homes, and numerous hiking trails. The lake is stocked with trout and bass, and boating is limited to rowboats, canoes, and rafts.

A well-known place for off-road vehicle (ORV) use in the forest is Davis Flat, located near Letts Lake. It is noted for endurance races; an "Enduro Weekend" may attract 2,000-3,000 people. On particularly big weekends, there may be 4,000-5,000 people, with up to 500 vehicles entered. The facilities at Davis Flat include a campground and special trails marked for various levels of driving skill. Organized ORV events are managed under special use permits that require bonding to guarantee cleanup and trail maintenance after the event. Events are scheduled so as not to conflict with hunting seasons or major holidays.

According to the Mendocino National Forest Resource Management Plan, ORV use has been the fastest growing recreation activity in the forest over the past 30 years. It began after World War II in conjunction with hunting and fishing. Motorcycles are the most popular ORV used today, while four-wheel drives are still primarily identified with hunting. By 1970, ORV use had developed into a sport, and conflicts between this use, other uses, and forest resources became pronounced. In the late 1970s, ORV "zoning" began by designating areas and trails available to ORV users. More trails are being planned for ORVs, including a corridor system similar to the Pacific Crest Trail.

The Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area provides 60 acres of riverfront recreation near the City of Colusa. The park is located at the north end of town where the river makes a wide easterly bend. Its key features are boat ramps, picnic sites, nature walks, and camp sites with piped water. Because of the river's width at the park--between 200 and 400 feet for a one-half-mile stretch--there is plenty of room for a variety of water activities, including fishing, boating, and water skiing.

Wilbur Hot Springs Health Sanctuary is located in the southwest portion of Colusa County, an area which contained several hot-spring resorts at the turn of the century. Its naturally hot mineral water flows through four baths in temperatures varying from 98° to 120° Fahrenheit.

Sacramento River Access

Public access to the Sacramento River in Colusa County is quite limited. The Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area is the only public boat launch and landing facility in the County. However, people do enter the river at several private sites. Most of the land adjacent to the river is privately owned agricultural land.

Boating is a popular activity on the Sacramento River. The season begins in April and lasts until the winter rains. A cleared navigational channel is maintained between the City of Colusa and Sacramento, so boats up to 40 feet in length can make the trip. There are several places along the river for camping and houseboat rental which are located outside of the County's jurisdiction. A river cruise from the mouth of the Sacramento River near Antioch to Colusa (145 miles) can be made in 10-12 hours. Traveling along the river, with its tree-lined banks, wild grapevines, and overhanging foliage, is a picturesque experience.

The river generally is not visible to motorists on Highway 45, which parallels the river, due to the levees. However, there are segments of Butte Slough and River Roads that are on top of the levees, offering panoramic views of the river. There is presently no organized trail system along the river.

Fishing

Fishing is good in the Sacramento River between Grimes and Princeton, particularly for salmon, steelhead trout, and striped bass. People fish from boats and along the banks of the river. The Mendocino National Forest in Colusa County offers 85 miles of trout streams, principally Big Stony and Little Stony Creeks and their tributaries. From time to time, the streams are stocked with trout by the California Department of Fish and Game, but "natives" can still be caught. A very popular fishing place is Letts Lake, a 35-acre lake stocked with trout and bass.

Hunting

More ducks and geese winter in the Sacramento Valley than in any other area of the Pacific Flyway. The wildlife refuges were established to sustain the birds in Colusa County through the fall and winter by providing an abundance of food and a place to rest. Ducks arrive in August, and geese arrive in large numbers around Thanksgiving. Public hunting is permitted on portions of the wildlife refuges during duck and pheasant seasons. To hunt on the refuges one must obtain a permit from one of the hunt check stations.

In addition to providing habitat for ducks and geese, the refuges attract swans, marsh and shore birds, upland birds and a number of small mammals. Nearly 200 different species of birds have been recorded, making the County a popular location for bird watching.

There also are a number of commercial hunting clubs and cooperatives operated by community organizations throughout the County. These "hunting camps" are operated on private agricultural land by special use permit. Lambertsville has a large congregation of mobile homes and trailers used by hunters on a seasonal basis.

In the western foothills of Colusa County in the Walker Ridge Public Hunting Area, hunting for quail and deer has become more popular as the habitat for these animals has been improved by the Bureau of Land Management.

Local Recreation Areas

Table OS-2 contains an inventory of local parks in the county listed by city or town. The table describes the location and features of each park area.

The City of Colusa offers the most complete set of local park facilities in the County, with areas for picnicking, walking, sitting under shade trees, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and playgrounds for children. About 18 acres within the city limits have been developed as community or neighborhood parks. The city has about 4 acres of community or neighborhood park per 1,000 residents; this is comparable with national standards and with standards used by neighboring counties. The proximity of the Sacramento River State Park puts Colusa in a much better position than most other communities in the country in terms of park amenities.

The City of Williams has two city parks; the larger park contains the Sacramento Valley Museum and a large area for barbecues or picnics. With about 9 acres of parkland, Williams has about 5 acres of park per 1,000 residents, comparable with national standards and with the city of Colusa.

Table OS-2: Inventory of Local Parks

<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Name/Location</u>	<u>Description</u>
Colusa	Colusa Levee Scenic Park --10th & Levee Streets adjacent to Sacramento River State Recreation Area	2.19 acres; built upon river levee; grass, trees, paved walking/jogging/ biking trail; picnic tables
Colusa	Memorial Park --10th & Market Streets	2.35 acres; shady, tree- filled; children's play area with swings and slide; pic- nic tables; restroom
Colusa	A. B. Davison Park --10th Street between Webster & Parkhill	2.35 acres; grassy, tree- filled; paved walking paths go through it
Colusa	Municipal Swimming Pool --9th Street between Webster and Parkhill	between A. B. Davison Park and Will S. Green Park
Colusa	Will S. Green Park --8th Street between Webster and Parkhill	2.88 acres; Boy Scout cabin; barbecue facilities, picnic tables, horseshoe pit, child- ren's play area with swings, slide, jungle gym, and glider swings for tots
Colusa	Sankey/Elmwood Park --between Webster & Parkhill, 3rd & 4th Streets	2.35 acres; 2 lighted tennis courts and children's play area; lots of shade trees
Colusa	Jennifer Rew Memorial Play Area--corner of Webster & 5th Streets	0.58 acre; kindergarten playground with slide, swings, drinking fountain
Colusa	C. D. Semple Park	1.87 acres; picnic tables, play area, shade trees
Colusa	Little League Ball Park --5th Avenue	baseball fields
Colusa	Lewis Tennant Ballfield Complex--Colusa Avenue across from high school	3.21 acres; site of Colusa Softball Association games and tournaments
Colusa	King's Vale Park --3rd Street	Tot lot play area scaled to toddlers; sand surface

cont'd...

<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Name/Location</u>	<u>Description</u>
Williams	Reddinger Park --9th & "F" Streets	1/2 of a city block; tree-filled, with children's play area and horseshoe pit
Williams	Museum/Venice Park --Venice & "E" Streets	Sacramento Valley Museum of area's early history; picnic tables; barbecue facilities; tennis courts; combination rugby/soccer/baseball field; horseshoe pits; children's play area; public or private rental of facility for weddings, quinceaneras, antique shows, dinners, meetings, etc.
Williams	School District properties	playground areas; athletic track and field area; football and baseball fields; Little League baseball diamond; exterior basketball courts; exterior handball court; all accessible to public when school is not in session
Maxwell	School District property	swimming pool
Arbuckle	Hall Street	approximately 6 acres; baseball fields
Sites	Sites Park --Maxwell Sites Road	
Stonyford	Rodeo Grounds and East Park Reservoir	camping/recreational area
Lodoga	East Park Reservoir	camping/recreational area

Arbuckle has one 6-acre park with ballfields, providing about 4 acres per 1,000 residents. Princeton, and Grimes have no community park facilities. In the past, the school playfields have served these towns' recreational needs. Since these communities are small, their proximity to open space has not made the lack of parkspace a particularly serious problem.

The Maxwell Recreation and Parks District was formed to manage the town pool and provide for the recreation needs of the community. There is a strong sentiment in Maxwell that a full-service park is needed, possibly on surplus land held by the Southern Pacific Railroad. This sentiment is likely to grow stronger as the town develops.

The foothill and upland valley areas are surrounded by outdoor recreational areas. Their sparse population does not justify the development of large community or neighborhood parks at this time. A small park serves residents of Sites, while the Rodeo Grounds and East Park Reservoir serve Stonyford-Lodoga residents. The Stonyford Recreation District has plans to improve the camping area behind the rodeo grounds and has recently completed improvements to the town baseball field. The District is continuing to look for financial assistance to create improved recreational facilities for the Stonyford-Lodoga area.

Private Recreation Areas

There are two public 9-hole golf courses in Colusa County. One is the Arbuckle Golf Course located on Hillgate Road west of Arbuckle. The other is the Colusa Golf Course located on Highway 20 southeast of Colusa.

Publicly-owned open space land and privately-owned, undeveloped lands contribute significantly to Colusa County's open space resources. Because of its relatively low population and rural location, developed parks are not needed as much as they would be in an urban area.

Future Recreation Needs

Local Needs. The need for developed neighborhood and community parks will increase with the growth of Arbuckle, Colusa, Maxwell, and Williams. Recommended allowances for community, neighborhood, and miniparks are shown in Table OS-3. While residents of Grimes, Princeton, Stonyford, and College City are encouraged to establish parks in their communities, their projected population will probably not be great enough to justify major public investment in parks.

Using a standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents, about 57 acres of new community or neighborhood parks will be needed by the year 2010. A community park should be developed in Maxwell and neighborhood parks should be developed in Arbuckle, Colusa, and Williams. The neighborhood parks should generally be located within growth areas.

The accepted means of acquiring neighborhood parkland is to pass the responsibility on to the development that generates the demand for the park. In many communities, a development over a certain threshold (such as 50 dwelling units) may be required to reserve land within the project for a neighborhood park. Since Colusa County developments are rarely that large, an in-lieu fee for parks can be

Table OS-3: Recommended Allowances for Parks

<u>Use</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Desirable Size</u>	<u>Ac/1,000 Population</u>	<u>Desirable Site Characteristics</u>	<u>Threshold Population Size</u>
<u>Mini-Park</u>					
Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.	Less than 1/4-mile radius	5,000 sf to 1 ac	0.25 to 0.5 ac	Within neighborhoods	250
<u>Neighborhood Park/Playground</u>					
Area for intensive recreational activities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc. May also include natural areas for picnicking, viewing, etc.	1/4- to 1/2-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000 (a neighborhood)	2-5 ac	1.0 to 3.0 ac	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population, geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school-park facility. May include picnic sites and a vista point.	500-1,000
<u>Community Park</u>					
Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of above, depending upon site suitability and community need.	Several neighborhoods, 1- to 2-mile radius	5-10 ac	2.0 to 5.0 ac	May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.	2,000-5,000

established based on the number of dwelling units to be built in a project. The fees are placed in a fund which is eventually used by the city, county, or service district for park acquisition and development.

In the absence of development, the community may choose to form a recreation service district and tax themselves for the cost of developing and operating parks. Donation of land and volunteer contributions of materials and labor can also be very effective in developing small neighborhood or community parks.

Regional Needs. The need for regional recreation facilities in the future should be focused on natural areas which can serve the multiple purpose of providing recreation, preserving natural resources and scenic beauty, and ensuring protection from flood hazards. Recreational trails will be especially important in the western foothills and mountains, as will provision of additional camping, swimming, and boat launching facilities.

At this time, acquisition of private land for county parks does not appear financially feasible. Donation of private land to the county or state for public use is encouraged. Due to the high cost of operating park facilities, such land should remain undeveloped and relatively maintenance-free. Colusa County does not appear ready to enter the "recreation business" at this time and the demand for income-generating parks in the county is very limited.

As an alternative, the county might consider establishing a countywide recreation district charged with the development and operation of county parks. Because such a measure would probably involve a property tax hike, and because there is no perceived shortage in regional recreational amenities, this alternative is probably not feasible at this time.

OPEN SPACE POLICIES

MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

General Policies

- OS-1 Land designated as Resource Conservation (R-C), Agriculture-General (A-G), and Agriculture-Upland (A-U) in the Land Use Element should be preserved in open space uses for the duration of the planning period unless development of these areas is consistent with applicable community plans or land use policies.
- OS-2 Land use policies should recognize the importance of open space in the County. Land use categories should be defined so that open space may be preserved through the planning period.
- OS-3 Publicly owned lands currently used for recreational purposes or as undeveloped open space should be retained in their present use, unless designated for an alternate use by the Land Use Element.

Natural Resource Preservation

- OS-4 The native perennial grasslands in Colusa County (located 6 miles west of Williams near Salt Creek; see Figure CO-3) should be preserved as open space.
- OS-5 The Mendocino National Forest Plan for Colusa County should be supported.
- OS-6 The National Wildlife Refuges in Colusa County should remain in their present use. Efforts to improve the conditions of the refuges for wildlife should be supported.

Managed Production of Resources

- OS-7 The conversion of agricultural land to urban use should occur only where the land adjoins an existing community. Where feasible, land that is poorly suited for agriculture due to soil or drainage conditions, urban encroachment, or small parcel size should be developed first.
- OS-8 The Sacramento Valley agricultural lands should be preserved to the maximum extent possible to ensure recharge of the Sacramento River ground water basin and water-bearing soils.

Public Health and Safety

- OS-9 Urban development should be prohibited in the designated floodway of the Sacramento River, Colusa Drainage Canal and the Sutter Bypass.
- OS-10 Development on highly unstable slopes or in areas with high wildfire risk and limited access should be prohibited in the absence of adequate mitigation measures.

Community Character

- OS-11 Urban growth should occur contiguous to existing communities within designated service areas. Infill of urban land should be encouraged.
- OS-12 The county should ensure that areas of permanent open space, as defined in Policy OS-1, are retained between the communities of Colusa County. Linear development patterns in which separate towns "grow together" should be discouraged.
- OS-13 Views of regional focal points, such as the Sutter Buttes, the Sacramento River, Snow Mountain, and St. John Mountain should be preserved wherever possible.
- OS-14 To the maximum extent possible, the significant open space resources in Colusa County, such as the foothills, Indian Valley, and Bear Valley, should remain visually undisturbed.

- OS-15 Where possible, new development within Community Plan Areas should be designed to capture view opportunities of the surrounding natural landmarks.
- OS-16 Expansion of rural residential development outside the designated Community Plan Areas should be discouraged.
- OS-17 All resource extraction activities should include mitigating measures which ensure that their effect on scenic views is minimized.

Outdoor Recreation

- OS-18 Colusa County should, through its land development regulations, ensure that adequate park space is provided to serve new development.
- OS-19 Sufficient land should be acquired and held in the public domain to satisfy the recreational needs of current and future residents. Advance, willing seller, acquisition is recommended to ensure the protection and availability of future park and open space land.
- OS-20 Park and recreation system planning, acquisition, development and operation should be coordinated among Colusa, Williams, the county, state and federal governments, school districts, and special districts, and should take advantage of opportunities for linkages between adjacent publicly owned parks, school facilities and open space lands.
- OS-21 Transportation improvements, such as road widening and bridge construction, should be designed to facilitate eventual provision of pedestrian and bicycling paths. Safe crossings should be provided through busy intersections.
- OS-22 Use of off-road vehicles on bicycling, hiking, or horseback riding trails should be prohibited.
- OS-23 A clear, coordinated system of signage should be developed for any new equestrian, hiking, or bicycling trail, with priority given to well-used or linked trail systems.
- OS-24 The county should discourage the conversion of existing privately operated outdoor recreational facilities, such as hunting camps and organizational camps, into year-round residential developments.
- OS-25 Private commercial recreation enterprises within existing communities should be encouraged.
- OS-26 Colusa County should support efforts of citizens and non-profit groups to establish trails or to improve parks within the Community Plan Areas.
- OS-27 Private landowners should continue to have the right to offer hunters access to their land during the official hunting seasons.
- OS-28 Before the horizon year of this plan (2010), the communities of Arbuckle, Colusa, Maxwell, and Williams should acquire and develop neighborhood

parks to meet current and future recreational demand. The scale of these parks and types of facilities provided should be based upon the size of the town, its financial resources, existing park facilities, and the desires of local residents.

- OS-29 Where feasible, future water development projects should include provisions for public access to the water and shoreline areas.

OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

- OS-30 The county should consider establishing local recreation service districts, especially in Arbuckle, for the establishment and improvement of public park and open space lands.
- OS-31 The county should adopt development standards which require dedication of parkland or in-lieu fees for development. Thresholds for dedication and the amount of the fee should be determined after the adoption of this plan. The county should generally strive to maintain a standard of providing 5 acres of community or neighborhood parkland per 1,000 population. The incorporated cities should be encouraged to adopt similar guidelines.
- OS-32 Where non-residential development will generate significant demand for new park facilities (due to induced population growth), modified in-lieu fees or park dedication requirements should also be considered.
- OS-33 The zoning ordinance should be revised to reflect the identification of appropriate sites for community parks and open space.