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**E-14: County Goals, Policies, and Objectives  
Pertaining to Biological Resources**

**County Goals, Policies and Objectives Pertaining to  
Biological Resources  
for PG&E Line 406/407 Natural Gas Pipeline Project  
Yolo County, Sacramento County, Sutter County,  
and Placer County, California  
State Clearinghouse No. 2007062091  
California State Lands Commission EIR No. 740**

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## SACRAMENTO COUNTY

### COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN

The County of Sacramento General Plan was adopted in 1993 (County of Sacramento 1993) and the County currently is in the process of updating this document. On June 28, 2007, the Draft General Plan Update was transmitted to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) to begin the environmental review process. On August 13, 2007, DERA released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft EIR for the Sacramento County Draft General Plan Update. Sections of the Conservation Element that address biological resources are Water Resources and Vegetation and Wildlife sections. Strategies, objectives, and policies of these sections that are pertinent to the Project are summarized below.

#### Section 5: Vegetation and Wildlife

##### A. Marsh and Riparian Areas

**Goal.** Healthy, well-managed marsh and riparian woodlands along Sacramento County's waterways.

##### Habitat Protection

**Objective.** Marsh and riparian habitat protected.

##### **Policies:**

**CO-62.** Ensure no net loss of marsh and riparian woodland acreage, values or functions.

**CO-65.** In any cases where complete or selective removal of riparian woodland or scrub habitat is necessary for channel maintenance, public safety, or installation of infrastructure, it will be planned and carried out, or mitigated, so as to minimize unavoidable impacts upon biological resources.

**CO-66.** Encroachments within the designated floodway of Sacramento waterways shall be consistent with policies to protect marsh and riparian areas.

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## Habitat Restoration

**Objective:** Ten percent increase in marsh and riparian woodland habitat, respectively, by 2010.

**Policies:**

**CO-69.** Review projects for potential to restore marsh/riparian woodlands, considering effects on vernal pools, ground water, flooding, and proposed fill or removal of marsh and riparian habitat.

**CO-70.** Public or private projects involving filling or removal of marsh/riparian habitat shall be mitigated outside of natural preserves where on-site mitigation is not desirable or appropriate and shall be mitigated through the purchase of mitigation credits for restored wetlands/riparian areas at no net loss.

**CO-72.** New or restored marsh/riparian woodlands shall be under ownership of a public agency or subject to a permanent conservation easement.

## B. Vernal Pools and Ephemeral Wetlands

**Goal:** Preserve and enhance high-quality, self-sustaining vernal pool habitats.

### Vernal Pool Preserves

**Objective:** A system of self-sustaining vernal pool preserves representative of the four types of vernal pools in Sacramento.

**Policies:**

**CO-78.** Focus vernal pool preservation in permanent open space areas beyond the Urban Area.

**CO-79.** Strive to link preserves in the County system and create a network that encompasses all vernal pool types.

**CO-80.** Select vernal pool preserves based on the following evaluation criteria: representativeness, habitat quality, watershed integrity,

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defensibility, buffer, preserve size, plant species variety, and presence of special status species.

**CO-81.** Ensure that vernal pool preserves are large enough to protect vernal pool watersheds, provide an adequate buffer, have sufficient number and extent of pools to support adequate species populations and a range of vernal pool classes.

### Urban Development and Vernal Pools

**Objective:** Development directed so as to avoid concentrated vernal pool areas and achieve a balance between essential growth needs and vernal pool resource protection.

**Policies:**

**CO-83.** Ensure no net loss of vernal pool acreage, and/or values and functions, and mitigate any loss in relation to the values of quality of habitat.

**CO-84.** Evaluate feasible on-site alternatives in the environmental review process that reduce impacts on vernal pools and provide effective on-site preservation in terms of minimum management requirements, effective size, and evaluation criteria identified in the report "Sacramento County Vernal Pools" (1990).

**CO-85.** Require in-kind compensation for the type and functional values of vernal pools eliminated by development.

**CO-86.** When on-site preservation or mitigation is infeasible or undesirable, require off-site mitigation at County-approved mitigation banks within Sacramento County.

**CO-87.** Mitigation for vernal pool loss shall be considered in the environmental review process, and mitigation shall be required based on information contained within the environmental documents on the quality of those resources and their ability to be sustained within an urban setting.

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## C. Urban Streams

**Goal:** Natural and open space values of urban stream corridors preserved and protected.

### Maintenance of Urban Streams

**Objective:** Adequately funded maintenance and law enforcement programs to protect natural values of Urban Stream Corridors.

#### **Goals:**

**CO-125.** No grading, clearing, tree cutting, debris disposal or any other despoiling action shall be allowed in Urban Stream Corridors except for normal channel maintenance.

**CO-126.** Maintain streams to allow natural vegetation in and along streams, commensurate with flood control and public acceptance, to assist in removal of nutrients, pollutants, and silt.

**CO-127.** The use of special-status plant species, especially candidate 1 or 2 species, shall be encouraged on revegetation plans, if and only if such plant material can be propagated from local genetic stocks without significant adverse impacts upon the existing populations.

### Restoration of Urban Streams

**Objective:** Restoration of channelized creeks to increase natural values.

## D. Tree Resources

**Goal:** Sacramento trees preserved and protected.

### Native and Landmark Tree Protection

**Objective:** Native oak woodlands resources and landmark tree resources preserved and protected for their historic, economic, and environmental values.

#### **Policies:**

**CO-130.** Make every effort to protect and preserve non-oak native, excluding cottonwoods, and landmark trees and protect and preserve

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native oak trees measuring 6 inches in diameter at 4.5 feet above ground in urban and rural areas, excluding parcels zoned exclusively for agriculture.

**CO-131.** Native trees other than oaks, which cannot be protected shall be replaced with in-kind species in accordance with established tree planting specifications, the combined diameter of which shall equal the combined diameter of the trees removed. In addition, with respect to oaks, a provision for a comparable on-site area for the propagation of oak trees may substitute for replacement tree planting requirements at the discretion of the County Tree Coordinator when removal of a mature oak tree is necessary in accordance with consistent policy.

**CO-132.** If the project site is not capable of supporting all the required replacement trees a sum equivalent to the replacement cost of the number of trees that cannot be accommodated shall be paid to the County's Tree Preservation Fund. The replacement cost of trees shall be established in accordance with the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraiser's standards for appraising trees.

**CO-133.** For discretionary projects involving native oaks, ensure no net loss of canopy area by:

- (1) preserving the main, central portions of consolidated and isolated groves constituting the existing healthy and unhealthy native oak canopy and;
- (2) provide an area on-site to mitigate any canopy lost. Native oak mitigation area must be a contiguous area on-site which is equal to the size of canopy area lost and shall be adjacent to existing oak canopy to ensure opportunities for regeneration. If on-site mitigation area is not available due to area limitations, developer shall provide off-site mitigation consistent with policy proposed in CO-136.

**CO-134.** Mitigate for loss of trees for road expansion and development consistent with County Tree Ordinance and General Plan policies.

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**CO-135.** In 15 years the native oak canopy within on-site mitigation areas shall be 50 percent canopy coverage for valley oak and 30 percent canopy coverage for blue oak and other native oaks.

**CO-136.** If on-site mitigation is not possible given site limitation, off-site mitigation may be considered. Such a mitigation area must meet all of the following criteria to preserve, enhance, and maintain a natural woodland habitat in perpetuity, preferably by transfer of title to an appropriate public entity. Protected woodland habitat could be used as a suitable site for replacement tree plantings required by ordinances or other mitigations.

- a. Equal or greater in area to the total area that is included within a radius of 30 feet of the dripline of all trees to be removed;
- b. Adjacent to protected stream corridor or other preserved natural areas;
- c. Supports a significant number of native broadleaf trees; and
- d. Offers good potential for continued regeneration of an integrated woodland community.

#### E. Rare and Endangered Species

**Goal:** Increase population of threatened and endangered species found in Sacramento County.

##### Management of Rare and Endangered Species Habitat

**Objective:** Riparian and wetland environments managed with sensitivity to threatened species and maintained to the extent feasible in a manner that avoids conflicts with privately owned land and agricultural operations.

##### **Policies:**

**CO-141.** Manage vegetation on public lands with special status species to encourage native species and discourage nonindigenous invasive species.

**CO-142.** Public land shall be maintained to the extent feasible in a manner that avoids conflicts with privately owned lands and agricultural operations.

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## Protection of Rare and Endangered Species Habitat

**Objective:** Habitat suitable for threatened and endangered species identified, protected, interlinked with natural corridors, and where possible, reestablished with viable populations of special-status species.

## YOLO COUNTY

### YOLO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The Yolo County General Plan was adopted in July 1983 (Yolo County 1983) and in 2004 Yolo County began the process of updating this document, and a version was released for public review in September 2008. Policies of the adopted General Plan that are pertinent to the Project are summarized below.

#### **Open Space Policies**

**OS 3.** Agricultural Land. Yolo County shall preserve agricultural land as the principal component of open space.

**OS 5.** Limiting Facility Extensions. Yolo County shall protect open space lands from urban uses by limiting the extension of existing service facilities, particularly sewers. Where the County does not directly control the provision of such facilities, it shall respond in the negative to proposals to extend services by respective cities or districts and shall respond in the negative to related environmental impact reports produced by the lead agency on such proposals.

#### **Conservation Policies**

**CON 1.** Conservation, Basic. Yolo County shall conserve its land and other resources through available means of land use controls, regulations, and advice and guidance, and through coordination with other elements of this Plan, as amended, and with other agencies.

**CON 2.** Conservation, Basic Method. Yolo County shall foster conservation of its resources and avoid natural hazards by planning, encouraging, and regulating the development and use of these resources and the areas where they exist.

**CON 3.** Land as a Resource. Plans, projects, and programs shall treat land as a resource rather than as a commodity.

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**CON 5.** Element Content. In order to avoid conflict with this Plan, as amended, or to avoid environmental hazards, Yolo County shall require conservation of natural resources, in the development and managed utilization of.....other natural resources including gas, oil, and geothermal.

**CON 6.** Long Term Values. Yolo County shall plan, encourage, and regulate to ensure that natural resources are maintained for their long-term ecological values as well as for their more direct and immediate benefits.

**CON 7.** Design and Site Development Standards. Yolo County shall establish design and site development standards and shall apply these standards to development to prevent unnecessary disruption of the terrain, vegetation, and significant resource areas. Application of the standards shall include mitigation of potential adverse environmental impacts.

**CON 8.** Urban Growth / Natural Environment. Urban growth shall be permitted only in accord with and respectful of the natural environment. Particularly this policy shall apply to riverfront lands and adjoining agricultural lands.

**CON 9.** State Resources. Yolo County shall ensure the protection, maintenance, and wise use of the State's natural resources, especially scarce resources and those that require special control and management.

**CON 10.** Protection of Resources. Yolo County shall plan, encourage, and regulate public and private agencies to prevent the wasteful exploitation, destruction, or neglect of the State's resources.

**CON 11.** Soils/Agricultural Use. Yolo County shall encourage the highest agricultural use of good agricultural soils and the development of acceptable agricultural industry. Only agricultural development shall be allowed outside of Urban Area Boundaries and Community Area Plan lines except as a legal replacement of an existing, legal use or as specifically provided elsewhere in this Plan.

**CON 12.** Soils. Yolo County shall regulate land use and encourage and cooperate with appropriate agencies to conserve, study, and improve soils. Prime soils shall be preserved outside of designated urban areas.

**CON 30.** Wildlife Habitat. Yolo County shall safeguard existing and encourage development and protection of additional wildlife habitat and shall

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coordinate with other agencies and programs to enhance and create wildlife preserves and to preserve and rehabilitate wildlife habitat areas suitable for ecological education sites.

**CON 33.** Vegetation Conservation. Existing natural vegetation shall be conserved where possible, integrated into new development, and its life and continuity shall be assured by means of Conditional Use Permit procedures applied to permit approvals for new or reconstruction work.

## **PLACER COUNTY**

### **PLACER COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

The Placer County General Plan was adopted on August 16, 1994 (Placer County 1994). Goals and policies of the current Plan that are pertinent to the Project are summarized below.

#### **Water Resources**

**Goal 6.A.** To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's streams, creeks, and groundwater.

**Policy 6.A.3.** The County shall require development projects proposing to encroach into a creek corridor or creek setback to do one or more of the following, in descending order of desirability:

- Avoid the disturbance of riparian vegetation;
- Replace riparian vegetation (on-site, in-kind);
- Restore another section of creek (in-kind); and/or
- Pay a mitigation fee for restoration elsewhere (e.g., wetland mitigation banking program).

**Policy 6.A.4.** Where creek protection is required or proposed, the County should require public and private development to:

- c. Protect creek corridors and their habitat value by actions such as:
  - (1) providing an adequate creek setback, (2) maintaining creek corridors in an essentially natural state, (3) employing creek restoration techniques where restoration is needed to achieve a natural creek corridor, (4) utilizing riparian vegetation within creek

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corridors, and where possible, within creek setback areas, (5) prohibiting the planting of invasive, non-native plants within creek corridors or creek setbacks, and (6) avoiding tree removal within creek corridors;

- e. Use design, construction, and maintenance techniques that ensure development near a creek will not cause or worsen natural hazards (such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding, or water pollution) and will include erosion and sediment control practices such as: (1) turbidity screens and other management practices, which shall be used as necessary to minimize siltation, sedimentation, and erosion and shall be left in place until disturbed areas are stabilized with permanent vegetation that will prevent the transport of sediment off site; and/or (2) temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas.

**Policy 6.A.5.** The County shall continue to require the use of feasible and practical best management practices (BMPs) to protect streams from the adverse effects of construction activities and urban runoff and to encourage the use of BMPs for agricultural activities.

**Policy 6.A.7.** The County shall discourage grading activities during the rainy season, unless adequately mitigated, to avoid sedimentation of creeks and damage to riparian habitat.

## **Wetland and Riparian Areas**

**Goal 6.B:** To protect wetland communities and related riparian areas throughout Placer County as valuable resources.

**Policy 6.B.1.** The County shall support the "no net loss" policy for wetland areas regulated by the USACE, the USFWS, and the CDFG. Coordination with these agencies at all levels of project review shall continue to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and the concerns of these agencies are adequately addressed.

**Policy 6.B.2.** The County shall require new development to mitigate wetland loss in both regulated and nonregulated wetlands to achieve "no net loss" through any combination of the following, in descending order of desirability: (1) avoidance; (2) where avoidance is not possible, minimization of impacts on the resource; or (3) compensation, including use of a mitigation banking

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program that provides the opportunity to mitigate impacts to rare, threatened, and endangered species and/or the habitat which supports these species in wetland and riparian areas.

**Policy 6.B.3.** The County shall discourage direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into wetland areas from outfalls serving nearby urban development. Development shall be designed in such a manner that pollutants and siltation will not significantly adversely affect the value or function of wetlands.

**Policy 6.B.4.** The County shall strive to identify and conserve remaining upland habitat areas adjacent to wetlands and riparian areas that are critical to the survival and nesting of wetland and riparian species.

**Policy 6.B.5.** The County shall require development that may affect a wetland to employ avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation techniques. In evaluating the level of compensation to be required with respect to any given project, (a) on-site mitigation shall be preferred to off-site, and in-kind mitigation shall be preferred to out-of-kind; (b) functional replacement ratios may vary to the extent necessary to incorporate a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success associated with the mitigation plan; and (c) acreage replacement ratios may vary depending on the relative functions and values of those wetlands being lost and those being supplied, including compensation for temporal losses. The County shall continue to implement and refine criteria for determining when an alteration to a wetland is considered a less-than-significant impact under CEQA.

## **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

**Goal 6.C:** To protect, restore, and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels.

**Policy 6.C.1.** The County shall identify and protect significant ecological resource areas and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations. Significant ecological resource areas include the following:

- a. Wetland areas including vernal pools.
- b. Stream environment zones.
- c. Any habitat for rare, threatened or endangered animals or plants.

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- d. Critical deer winter ranges (winter and summer), migratory routes and fawning habitat.
  - e. Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat, including Blue Oak Woodlands, Valley Foothill Riparian, vernal pool habitat.
  - f. Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, non-fragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway.
  - g. Important spawning areas for anadromous fish.

**Policy 6.C.2.** The County shall require development in areas known to have particular value for wildlife to be carefully planned and, where possible, located so that the reasonable value of the habitat for wildlife is maintained.

**Policy 6.C.5.** The County shall require mitigation for development projects where isolated segments of stream habitat are unavoidably altered. Such impacts should be mitigated on-site with in-kind habitat replacement or elsewhere in the stream system through stream or riparian habitat restoration work.

**Policy 6.C.6.** The County shall support preservation of the habitats of rare, threatened, endangered, and/or other special status species. Federal and State agencies, as well as other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats.

**Policy 6.C.7.** The County shall support the maintenance of suitable habitats for all indigenous species of wildlife, without preference to game or non-game species, through maintenance of habitat diversity.

**Policy 6.C.9.** The County shall require new private or public developments to preserve and enhance existing native riparian habitat unless public safety concerns require removal of habitat for flood control or other public purposes. In cases where new private or public development results in modification or destruction of riparian habitat for purposes of flood control, the developers shall be responsible for acquiring, restoring, and enhancing at least an equivalent amount of like habitat within or near the project area.

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## Vegetation

**Policy Goal 6.D:** To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.

**Policy 6.D.1.** The County shall encourage landowners and developers to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and natural vegetation in visually-sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridges, and along important transportation corridors.

**Policy 6.D.2.** The County shall require developers to use native and compatible non-native species, especially drought-resistant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of discretionary permits or for project mitigation.

**Policy 6.D.3.** The County shall support the preservation of outstanding areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.

**Policy 6.D.4.** The County shall ensure that landmark trees and major groves of native trees are preserved and protected. In order to maintain these areas in perpetuity, protected areas shall also include younger vegetation with suitable space for growth and reproduction.

**Policy 6.D.6.** The County shall ensure the conservation of sufficiently large, continuous expanses of native vegetation to provide suitable habitat for maintaining abundant and diverse wildlife.

**Policy 6.D.7.** The County shall support the management of wetland and riparian plant communities for passive recreation, groundwater recharge, nutrient catchment, and wildlife habitats. Such communities shall be restored or expanded, where possible.

**Policy 6.D.8.** The County shall require that new development preserve natural woodlands to the maximum extent possible.

**Policy 6.D.13.** The County shall support the preservation of native trees and the use of native, drought-tolerant plant materials in all revegetation/landscaping projects.

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**Policy 6.D.14.** The County shall require that new development avoid, as much as possible, ecologically-fragile areas (e.g., areas of rare or endangered species of plants, riparian areas). Where feasible, these areas should be protected through public acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to ensure protection.

## **COUNTY OF SUTTER GENERAL PLAN**

The Sutter County General Plan was adopted on October 13, 1998 (Sutter County 1998). Goals and policies that are pertinent to the Project are summarized below.

### **Wetland and Riparian Areas**

**Goal 4B.** To protect wetland and riparian areas throughout Sutter County.

**Policy 4.B-1.** The County shall require new development to fully mitigate the loss of federally regulated wetlands to achieve a “no net loss” through any combination of avoidance, minimization, or compensation.

**Policy 4.B-2.** The County shall discourage direct discharge of surface runoff into wetland areas. New development shall be designated in such a manner that pollutants and siltation will not significantly affect wetlands.

**Policy 4.B-3.** The County encourages the preservation and restoration of natural wetland environments when feasible and practical as part of the development review process. Additionally, the County shall encourage and support the Resource Conservation District programs that facilitate those objectives if the programs do not significantly affect agricultural operations.

**Policy 4.B-4.** The County will encourage the creation and use of wetland mitigation banks as long as their creation and existence will not adversely impact existing and/or planned agricultural or urban development.

### **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

**Goal 4.C:** To protect and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species.

**Policy 4.C-1.** The County shall strive to preserve those areas of wildlife habitat designated “high habitat value” as shown on the biological sensitivity map in Chapter 9 of the Background Report.

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**Policy 4.C-2.** The County shall encourage preservation and proper management of those areas designated “moderate habitat value” on the biological sensitivity map in Chapter 9 of the background report.

**Policy 4.C-3.** The County shall support the preservation and re-establishment of fisheries in the rivers and streams within the County.

**Policy 4.C-5.** The County supports the preservation and protection of waterfowl resources and their habitat.

**Policy 4.C-6.** The County encourages the preservation of existing wildlife corridors between natural habitat areas to maintain biodiversity and prevent the creation of biological islands. This would also include promoting the re-establishment of previous corridors where feasible.

**Policy 4.C-7.** The County encourages the preservation of rare, threatened, or endangered animal species.

## **Vegetation**

**Goal 4.D.** To preserve and protect the vegetation resources of Sutter County.

**Policy 4.D-1.** The County shall encourage the preservation of important areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.

**Policy 4.D-2.** The County encourages the preservation of rare, threatened, or endangered plant species.

**Policy 4.D-3.** The County shall require that new development projects avoid, to the maximum extent possible, ecologically fragile areas.

**Policy 4.D-4.** The County shall strive to protect major groves of native trees located in the unincorporated areas of the County.

**Policy 4.D-5.** The County shall encourage the use of native and drought tolerant plant materials in all public and private revegetation/landscaping projects.

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## **Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources**

**Goal 4.E.** To conserve, protect, and enhance open space lands and natural resources in Sutter County.

**Policy 4.E-1.** The County shall support the preservation of natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible.