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# MENDOCINO COUNTY MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Phil Gorny, Planning Team  
Eric Norris, General Plan Consultant

**Subject:** Introduction and Overview of the Public Review Draft Mendocino County General Plan Update

**Date:** July 21, 2008

## BACKGROUND

In March 2007, the County of Mendocino released a "Working Draft General Plan Update" for review by the public, other agencies, and the Planning Commission. Following the release of the Working Draft General Plan Update, the Planning Commission held a number of meetings in locations throughout the county to receive public comments on the Plan and to discuss and provide guidance to the Planning Team and General Plan consultant on a number of key issues.

On September 25, 2007, the Board was asked to review the direction received from the Planning Commission and, if necessary, provide additional recommendations to staff and the General Plan consultant for the preparation of the next version of the Plan. At the September 2007 meeting, the Board directed staff and consultants to proceed to develop the Public Review Draft General Plan Update and the Associated Draft Program EIR.

During the past year, planning staff and the General Plan consultant have worked with the Board and Planning Commission to clarify policy direction, review land use change requests for consideration in the EIR, and facilitate discussion of policy for the Anderson Valley Community.

The Public Review Draft General Plan Update has been completed and is now being provided to the Board. This Draft General Plan will be circulated for public and agency review along with a detailed Environmental Impact Report, and will be the subject of additional public hearings at the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, beginning later this year.

Consistent with the overall guidance provided by the Board and Planning Commission, the document presented to the Board today does not reflect a major change in policy or land use direction but instead is intended to consolidate existing policies, address new topics required by law, and provide reasonable action items that can be accomplished within the capacity of the County's resources.

## DOCUMENT FORMAT

Consistent with the working Draft General Plan (which was based on the Framework Goals and Policies document circulated for public review in 2005), the Public Review Draft General Plan includes two consolidated Elements: "Development" and "Resource Management." The order of topics has been modified based on input from the Planning Commission at their 19 April, 2007 workshop to provide a more logical sequence.

The Update effort has focused on preparation of the following chapters:

- 1.0 Introduction,
- 2.0 Planning Principles,
- 3.0 Development Management Element,
- 4.0 Resources Management Element and
- 6.0 Community Specific Policies *Note: Completion of this section was delayed by the postponement of a scheduled July 3 meeting of the Planning Commission (due to fires in the Anderson Valley area). As of the writing of this staff report, an updated Section 6 was scheduled to be transmitted to the Board separately from Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4.*

The current Update does **not** include the following Chapters:

- 5.0 Housing Element, which is being updated separately with a target completion date of August 2009
- 7.0 Coastal Element, which is being updated under a separate process
- 8.0 Mendocino Town Plan, which is being updated under a separate process
- 9.0 Gualala Town Plan, which is not being updated
- 10.0 Ukiah Valley Area Plan, which is being prepared under a separate process

The current Housing Element was prepared and adopted during an earlier phase of this Update process. County staff is currently working toward an August 2009 deadline to update the Housing Element. The Coastal Element is also being updated as part of a separate process. The Final General Plan will include all these sections in their most current form.

## KEY POLICY UPDATES

As part of the update process several key policy issues warranted special attention and consideration. Specifically the following topic areas have been discussed at length and addressed as part of the updated document:

- **Water** policy—This expanded section (featured prominently in the Resource Management Element) is based on extensive work by County staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors on this critical issue.
- **Climate Change** and related policies—This is a new topic area for the General Plan, and addresses this emerging issue as well as the requirements of State law related to greenhouse gas emissions.
- New **Energy** policies—This is the result of work by private citizens and the Planning Commission, which reviewed dozens of suggested policies. These policies also work in conjunction with Climate Change policies.
- Expanded **Community-Oriented** policies—This is an important change in the Draft General Plan, and provides more detailed guidance for development in the various communities in the county.
- **Economic Development**—The General Plan now includes overall Economic Development principles to help guide the County's efforts to improve the local economy.

## SCHEDULE

Shown below is a schedule of key dates as part of the review and adoption process for the General Plan Update. Adherence to this schedule will allow consideration and adoption of the General Plan and certification of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report in February/March of 2009.

- **July 21, 2008** – Draft General Plan released for public review
- **September 2008** – Draft Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan Update released for 45-day public review
- **October 2008** – Presentation to the Board of Supervisors on the Draft General Plan and EIR
- **October 16, 2008** – Planning Commission public hearing on the Draft General Plan and EIR
- **October 27, 2008** – Board of Supervisors public hearing on the Draft General Plan and EIR
- **November 2008** – Public comment period ends

- **January 2009** – Final General Plan and EIR released for public review
- **February 2009** – Planning Commission public hearing
- **March 2009** – Board of Supervisors public hearing for adoption of the General Plan

## General Plan Errata Sheet #2

### Staff recommended changes

July 21, 2008

The following policies and actions were identified by staff for inclusion in the Draft General Plan but were not included due to production timelines for printed copies. These revisions will make the Draft General Plan more consistent with the Draft Ukiah Valley Area Plan's land use categories.

#### Development Element

*Revision*      **Table 3-1:** Remove the MU zoning district from the Rural Community, Suburban Residential, and Commercial designations. Add Mixed Use as a new General Plan Land Use category. *(Insert after the Rural Community designation in Table 3.1 on page 62 in the July 21, 2008 Draft GPU)*

General Plan Land Use Category	Appropriate Zoning Designations
Mixed Use	R-2: Two-Family Residential R-3: Multiple-Family Residential C-1: Limited Commercial C-2: General Commercial <i>Plus any specific Mixed Use zoning categories created during the revision of the County's zoning ordinances.</i>

*Revision*      **Land Use Classification Index on page 3.0-67:** Add "MU-Mixed Use" category and page numbers to the index. *(Insert after RC-Rural Community)*

*Revision*      **Policy DE-10:** Remove the year 2004 reference to the housing element *(page 3.0-69)*.

*New*              **Policy DE-###<sup>1</sup>:** Include the following MU-Mixed Use category definition as outlined by the pending Draft Ukiah Valley Area Plan. **Please note:** The GPU will only create this category as a land use option for future use; no parcels are proposed to receive this classification as part of this update. *(Insert after Policy DE-11 on page 70 in the July 21, 2008 Draft General Plan)*

#### Land Use Category: MU-Mixed Use

Intent: The Mixed Use classification is a new category for future use that would allow two to three story mixed-use development with commercial uses encouraged at street level. Uses are encouraged to be mixed vertically (stacked or linearly) on the site. This classification is intended for the core of Community Planning Areas and along important transportation corridors near City boundaries, provided those areas have water and sewer service (or equivalent). The intent of this classification is to provide for true pedestrian and transit-capable urban development. Preference shall be given to those projects providing affordable housing, consistent with policies of the County's Housing Element, and infill development.

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<sup>1</sup> Policy numbers for new policies will be assigned prior to adoption when the Final General Plan is produced.

New development shall only be permitted when provisions are made for construction or expansion of public service facilities, such as schools, recreation facilities, fire stations, water systems, sewer systems, storm drainage and solid waste disposal facilities. Shared parking facilities that serve commercial areas during peak hours and residential uses at other times of day in mixed-use areas are encouraged.

General Uses: Residential developments of higher densities (with development of multi-family residential units to be classified in the Zoning Ordinance as a permitted use), community commercial, tourist commercial, combined residential and commercial structures, light industrial and cottage industries, live-work, public facilities, public services, public assemblies, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size:

- Within water and sewer districts: None.
- Within water or sewer districts: None.
- Not in a water or sewer district: Not permitted.

Maximum Dwelling Density:

- Within water and sewer districts: One (1) multiple family dwelling unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)
- Within water or sewer districts: Not permitted unless an alternative to sewage disposal is provided (County approval required) which would permit a maximum residential density of one (1) dwelling unit per 2,000 square feet. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)
- Not in a water or sewer district: Not permitted.

Other Requirements:

Single-family residential dwellings are to be discouraged in the MU category.

Consistent with Housing Element Action 6.8, provide for administrative approvals of subdivisions of four (4) or fewer units supporting multi-family residential development.

Design review for landscaping, parking and lighting will be required at time of application.

*New* **Policy DE-###:** Encourage the inclusion of child care facilities in commercial and residential areas, near transportation facilities and in or adjacent to public parks and schools to provide a needed service to working parents and a benefit to the community. (*Insert after DE-223 on page 3.0-108*)

*New* **Action Item DE-###.1:** Streamline and simplify the permit process to promote and support the development of childcare facilities.

**Resource Element**

*Revision* **Policy RM-50:** Move the policy text from page 4.0-37 to page 4.0-45. This places the policy text in the correct section.

# CHAPTER 1.0: INTRODUCTION

## Mendocino County: History

The history of what is now Mendocino County dates back thousands of years. The first inhabitants of this area, the Yokayo, the Kashaya, and several bands of Pomo peoples, established cultures based on the abundant natural resources of the area. These cultures thrived for centuries, their peoples traveling seasonally through the lush and generous landscapes of the coast, mountains and inland valleys.

The first permanent non-native settlers came to Mendocino County in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, exploring and establishing small outposts. It was almost 300 years before the first permanent non-Spanish settlements in the county were established on the Mendocino coast north of Big River in April of 1852.

Mendocino County's official history begins on February 18, 1850, when the first California legislature formed the state's original 27 counties. Interestingly, Mendocino County was not on the list of 18 counties recommended by a special committee in January 1850—Mendocino and eight others were added by the legislature.

The County's name is derived from "Cape Mendocino," which was named in honor of the Mendoza family.<sup>1</sup> (Mendocino is an adjective form of the family name of Mendoza.)

Mendocino County's early development was tied to the availability of land and natural resources, timber, and available land, which made it possible to earn a living from the bounty of the land.

One resource stands out in its impact on the County's early history: the vast stands of Coastal redwood, Douglas fir, and pine trees, which were logged and milled to meet the needs of a growing state. San Francisco was rebuilt after the Great Quake of 1906 in part with Mendocino County lumber, and its residents were fed with food produced in Mendocino County. Timber and agriculture were the mainstays of the County's economy from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century into the 20<sup>th</sup>, and in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century remain important to both the economy and culture of Mendocino County, although the character of agriculture is changing.

As the County enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, tourism is growing in importance, and the county's historic economies—timber and agriculture—are now also serving to draw visitors to forests and wine-growing regions that were once only visited by locals. According to a study commissioned by the County,<sup>2</sup> visitors to Mendocino County spent more than \$300-million in 2005 and generated some \$7-million in taxes. Almost 5,500 jobs were generated by tourism in the county in 2005. (By comparison, the total value of timber produced in the county in 2006 was about \$86-million.)

Mendocino County's land ownership patterns have also changed over time. The first land ownership was in the form of Spanish land grants. Later, smaller homesteads granted by the federal government in the County's early days were consolidated into massive ranches, which were later subdivided into smaller ownerships. Today, the fragmentation is continuing, fed in part by declines in ranching and timber and demand for smaller parcels by individuals seeking the County's ambiance and quality of life.

## Mendocino County: Today's Issues

Mendocino County in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century continues to value its oldest industries—timber and agriculture—as important aspects of the lifestyle and economy of the County. However, like all of

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<sup>1</sup> According to the California State Association of Counties, the county derived its name from Cape Mendocino, which in turn was probably named in honor of either Antonio de Mendoza or Lorenzo Suarez de Mendoza.

<sup>2</sup> "Mendocino County's Travel Industry: An Overview of Economic Benefits," 2005

California's counties, Mendocino County also faces new and difficult issues: development pressures from its more urban neighboring counties; changes in the timber and agricultural industries; and global climate change, which has the potential to directly and indirectly affect the future of the County. The long term availability of energy and water resources—both crucial to the continued health of the county's economy—also continue to be carefully considered as the County enters its third Century.

Key issues which have shaped this General Plan are summarized below:

### **Timber and Agriculture**

Mendocino County's livelihood has been linked since its most distant beginnings to the richness of the land and its ability to provide food and fiber.

Timber harvesting was the first modern industry, supplying the needs of the California gold rush era. In the aftermath of the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, Mendocino County sent food and timber to help in the rebuilding of the city.

Timber remains a vital part of the County's economy to this day. Similarly, agriculture remains strong. Both timber and agriculture have been protected by longstanding County policies which seek to concentrate development into existing cities, towns and villages, and to retain vast areas of the County in timber and farmland.

Today, both timber and agriculture face challenges.

The County's timber industry faces increasing competition from worldwide sources of lumber that have made it difficult for local mills to remain competitive. Mendocino County, which once boasted more than 200 lumber mills, now has only a handful; the last mill on the Mendocino Coast (in Fort Bragg) closed in 2003. The cost of local timber—itself affected by the need to comply with increasingly strict environmental regulations—has been blamed as a major factor in the mill closings, but it is only one of a number of factors impacting the County's timber industry. Others include a slowing the growth rate of trees due to reduced rainfall, fragmentation of forest ownership (reducing economies of scale), and new regulations intended to protect environmental quality.

Reductions in timber harvesting (the value of timber produced in the county dropped by half between 1995 and 2006) had spillover effects into the county's timber-related industrial economy. With fewer logs to process, mills closed, and many industrial jobs were lost.

Agriculture, unlike timber, is not in decline. Rather, it is changing, as the burgeoning California wine industry—and in particular the production of high-end wines—has discovered that many areas of Mendocino County can produce premium quality "fruit" (as grapes are called by winemakers). As of the writing of this General Plan, several areas of the County, including the Ukiah Valley, Anderson Valley, Redwood Valley, and the Hopland area, are now home to vineyards and wineries. As has occurred in other grape growing and premium wine producing regions to the south, the growth of wineries is being followed by a rise in tourism as persons seeking wine travel to the County to buy directly from the vintner.

As in other areas, however, the change from historic crops such as pears, apples, prunes, and livestock to grapes and wine-making has resulted in other changes as well. Some residents in the County's new grape-growing regions have bemoaned the loss of the fruit orchards, sheep ranches, and other historic uses that defined their regions in the past.

### **Water Supply and Quality**

Despite all of the advances of modern civilization, water in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century remains what it has always been—an irreplaceable key to building and maintaining cities, homes, and industry. In Mendocino County, a



limited water supply combined with uncertainty about the availability of future supplies, has served to limit development in most of the county. As the County enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, new challenges have been added to historical water equation: changes in agriculture from low-intensity farming to more water-intensive crops (primarily wine grapes), potential reductions in rainfall and river flows resulting from global climate change, and changes in upstream use of water that could limit flows in the rivers, which parts of the county depend upon for water. Growing concerns about the impacts of development on water quality are also being voiced. The County's homes, businesses, farmers, and timber companies are likely to fall under increasing scrutiny by the various local, state, and federal agencies charged with preserving California's and the nation's water supplies.

In response, this General Plan contains a comprehensive set of policies and actions (located in the Resource Management Element), which seek to address how Mendocino County manages water supply and quality issues. Key among these recommendations is the need to gather more information to supplement what is already known about water supplies so that future decisions will be based on the best knowledge available. The reader is invited to refer to the Water section of the Resource Management Element for additional information.

### **Energy Supply and Sustainability**

As of the writing of this General Plan (2007-08), the future of the energy resources on which Mendocino County and California depends has become more of a concern than in past years. Economic pressure from rising prices for fossil fuels such as gasoline and diesel are being felt by businesses and residents in the County, and concern has been expressed at a local and national level about the long-term availability of fossil fuels. While it is impossible to accurately predict when energy costs or shortages of supplies will occur, most observers agree that these will affect California and the nation in the foreseeable future.<sup>3</sup>

The reliability of energy resources is particularly important in Mendocino County for two key reasons:

- 1) The County's widely separated cities and towns make it necessary for many residents to travel long distances to work, shop and recreate. Fuel costs are therefore a major concern to residents and businesses. The County's small and widely separated urban areas make it difficult or impossible to establish cost-effective public transit, which typically functions best in dense urban areas.
- 2) Most of the County's energy resources originate outside the county. Mendocino County is not unlike most of California in this regard, sharing a vulnerability to events occurring far beyond its borders and influence.

Addressing these issues also touches upon a growing concern for ensuring that the County be "sustainable"—that is, that the use of energy and other resources is done in a way that can be sustained—environmentally, economically, and socially—over the long term. Ensuring that the County's homes and businesses use resources efficiently is part of an overall strategy of being sustainable.

This General Plan for Mendocino County seeks to manage these issues, and to chart a course for County government over the next 20 years. The goals, policies, and programs in this General Plan represent the County's statement of how Mendocino County should grow or change in the coming decades, (or where it should remain the same), and how today's challenges will be met.

### State Law and the General Plan

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<sup>3</sup> Opinions on the future of petroleum-based energy vary widely. An excellent overview of this issue can be found in "Crude Oil: Uncertainty about Future Oil Supply Makes It Important to Develop a Strategy for Addressing a Peak and Decline in Oil Production," published in 2007 by the United States Government Accountability Office (Publication No. GAO-07-283)

Every county and city in California is required by state law to prepare and maintain a General Plan.

State law requires that the following seven topic areas be addressed in a General Plan: **Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety**. This General Plan arranges these topics into four main sections, called “Elements,” organized into **Development Management, Resource Management, Housing, and Coastal**, plus sections on Community-specific policies. This General Plan consists of the following sections:

**1.0 Introduction**—An overview of key issues facing Mendocino County, the General Plan, and how the General Plan is to be used and interpreted.

**2.0 Planning Principles**—The broad principles upon which the Goals, Policies, Objectives, and Action Items of this General Plan are based.

**3.0 Development Management Element**—Topics include:

- Land Use
- Community Character (Community Areas, Noise, and Cultural Resources)
- Infrastructure (Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Water and Sewer, Drainage and Flood Control, Solid and Hazardous Wastes, and Other Utilities)
- Water Supply and Sewer (Wastewater Treatment)
- Safety (Hazard Reduction, Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, and Seismicity)

**4.0 Resources Management Element**—Topics include:

- Water Resources (Watersheds, Water Supply, Water Quality)
- Biological Resources and Ecological Systems (Overview, Terrestrial Resources, Freshwater and Marine Resources)
- Productive Use of the Land and Resources
- Aesthetics

**5.0 Housing Element**—The County’s detailed plan for seeking to ensure that a broad range of housing is built in the unincorporated areas to meet the needs of a growing population.

**6.0 Coastal Element**—Topics related to the Pacific Coast region of the County.

**7.0 Community-Specific Policies**—These sections describe key areas in the County and provide area-specific policies and actions to address local issues in:

- Anderson Valley
- Covelo
- Fort Bragg

- Hopland
- Laytonville
- Potter Valley
- Redwood Valley
- Willits

#### **8.0 Mendocino Town Plan**

#### **9.0 Gualala Town Plan**

#### **10.0 Ukiah Valley Area Plan<sup>4</sup>**

The General Plan also includes a **Glossary of Terms** and an **Index**.

### **Relationship of This General Plan to Other Plans and Areas**

This General Plan applies to all lands under the County's jurisdiction. The County does not have jurisdiction in the incorporated cities (Fort Bragg, Point Arena, Ukiah and Willits) and Tribal lands (though the County General Plan prescribes intended land uses and policies for the latter); therefore, this General Plan does not affect these areas.

In addition, resource lands in Mendocino County owned by State or Federal agencies (such as National Forest lands) may also be regulated under the particular agency's land use management plans.

The Development Management Element and Resources Management Element of the General Plan apply in both inland areas and on lands located in the Coastal Zone. However, the County's Local Coastal Program (adopted separately from this General Plan) takes precedence in regulating land use within the coastal zone.

### **How to Use and Interpret this General Plan**

The General Plan is intended to be used by a broad range of persons, including:

- The Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission in decision-making activities;
- County staff in developing programs and projects;
- The development community in preparing development proposals; and
- Residents and citizens interested in the future of Mendocino County and the County's policies.

When using this General Plan, the following basic rules should be kept in mind:

- The Principles contained in Chapter 2 of this General Plan are statements of County policy.

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<sup>4</sup> Although not an element of the General Plan, the Brooktrails Township Specific Plan is also used to guide decision-making.

- In the Elements, only those statements specifically listed as “Goal” are to be interpreted as stating the County’s goals.
- In the Elements, only those statements specifically listed as “Policy” are to be interpreted as statements of County policy. Narrative descriptions and discussions not preceded by a Policy designation are provided for information and background only and may assist decision makers with the interpretation of Policies.
- Unless otherwise defined by Policy, the standard definitions of words and terms shall be used. The Glossary to this General Plan provides definitions of many commonly used planning terms; these may be used as a starting point in resolving disputes about the meanings of words in Goals or Policies.
- Some information in this General Plan (e.g. population figures) is expected to become outdated in the normal course of events. Where this information is critical to the use of this Plan’s Goals or Policies, the most up-to-date information should be used, including the Background Report and/or Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The following specific word meanings are used in this General Plan:

- Where the word “County” is capitalized, the reference is generally to the County of Mendocino as a governmental agency, as in “The County’s offices are located in Ukiah.”
- Where the word “county” is lowercase, the reference is generally to the geographic place, as in “There are many excellent wineries in the county.”
- References to current facts and figures should generally be considered to refer to the years 2007-2008, unless specifically stated otherwise.

## **Amendments to this General Plan**

Recognizing the need for the General Plan to remain up-to-date and reflective of local issues and policies, State law allows the County to amend the General Plan to ensure that it is consistent with the conditions, values, expectations, and needs of the community. The General Plan may be amended only by action of the Board of Supervisors or by voter-approved initiative.

Periodic updates to the Housing Element are required by state law (generally every five years), but there is no required regular update for any other portion of the General Plan.

## **Implementation of This General Plan**

Future work, in the form of research, studies, and plans, will be needed to implement this General Plan. These actions are listed in the Implementation section. Some of these actions may occur in the short term; others will require more time and resources and may not be completed for some time.

The Mendocino County Zoning Ordinance is a key implementation tool for the General Plan. Many of the Goals, Policies, Objectives and Action Items in this General Plan are achieved through zoning, which regulates public and private development.

The County is responsible for ensuring that its Zoning Ordinance and this General Plan are in conformity. In most instances, this will mean that land is designated in the General Plan and zoned for similar uses with similar development standards (i.e., similar densities and minimum parcel sizes). Where zoning and General Plan land use designations are not consistent, this General Plan should be consulted carefully for guidance.

# CHAPTER 2.0: PLANNING PRINCIPLES

## 2 Comprehensive Principles

The following overarching Principles provide the basis for the goals and policies included in the Mendocino County General Plan. These Principles embody key issues identified by the residents of Mendocino County, such as stewardship of County resources, planning for growth, and the efficient and equitable provision of public services.

The Principles in this chapter are statements of County policy, and have the same legal effect as the Goals, Policies, and Action Items contained in other sections of this General Plan.<sup>1</sup>

### 2-1 Overall Planning Principles

These Principles recognize the wide range of County natural systems, open spaces and recreational opportunities by protecting and enhancing resources. Consistent with this approach, development opportunity is focused on community areas that will support more compact urban development patterns, where such development can be supported by necessary infrastructure and public services.

Principle 2-1a: Conservation of Mendocino County’s natural resources, farmland and open spaces is essential to the rural quality of life desired by residents and visitors alike.

- Planned growth and compact development forms are essential to conserving environmental resources, farmland and open spaces.
- Direct new growth to community areas where development can be supported by infrastructure and public services, and environmental impacts can be minimized.

Principle 2-1b: Mendocino County’s diverse natural, scenic and recreational resources are vital to the quality of life and shall be protected for the enjoyment and economic prosperity of present and future generations.

- Protection and enjoyment of the outstanding scenic, recreational and natural qualities of Mendocino County require long-term supporting economic and social systems.

Principle 2-1c: Emphasize compatibility between human activity and environmental resources and processes at all levels from regional planning to site design.

- Encourage safe, cost-effective and environmentally sound community planning and land use decisions.
- Emphasize development patterns, sustainable practices and materials that are compatible with natural environments and processes and that protect air and water quality.
- Discourage development at risk of natural or man-made hazards.

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<sup>1</sup> Only those statements specifically listed as “Principle #:” are statements of policy.

- Ensure that the existing database of County resources, including, but not limited to soil information, slope analysis, sensitive habitat, water resources, air resources, wind energy, solar energy, and hydro energy, is available to guide planning decisions and is kept current as new data is developed.

## **2-2 Economic Development and Jobs/Housing Principles**

These Principles ensure the County focuses on long-term objectives relative to creation of permanent jobs for local residents, consistent with each community planning area's vision for development. Creation of new employment opportunities will be balanced with protection of the environment and natural resources, with the goal of developing new businesses that utilize sustainable systems. Agricultural and timber-based operations are to be protected. Expansion of the tourism industry and County recreational activities will be encouraged. Housing development would be balanced with creation of new jobs by locating new dwelling units in proximity to employment centers.

Principle 2-2a: Emphasize long-term and sustainable economic and community objectives over short-term gains.

- Promote sustainable and innovative business practices and technologies that advance work force and community health, environmental protection, and use of clean, reliable and renewable energy sources.

Principle 2-2b: Promote a vibrant, diversified and stable economy.

- Facilitate a variety of land uses and employment opportunities in community areas, consistent with General Plan and local community objectives and environmental constraints.
- Promote telecommunications and information technology by supporting expanded opportunities for quality high speed internet service.
- Emphasize creation of permanent jobs for all skill levels over short-term objectives.

Principle 2-2c: Support the County's resource-based economy and take actions that protect and enhance the County's diverse natural resources.

- Support the protection and diversification of the County's agricultural and timber-based businesses.
- Promote and enhance the County's tourism and recreational sectors.
- Tourism and recreation-based activities must be located in areas with adequate access and services, and minimal impacts to surrounding areas and resources.
- The use of County funds to attract companies to Mendocino County should be focused on those firms that can produce or utilize renewable energy.
- Promote small-scale or niche manufacturing using local resources for local or general consumption.

Principle 2-2d: Employment and housing opportunities should be balanced within each region to maintain reasonable commute times, worker productivity and a sense of community.

- Create communities with a balanced distribution of economic, housing and transportation opportunities.
- Integrate jobs and housing through compact development patterns, mixed land uses, infill, redevelopment and reuse of existing sites and facilities, and supporting infrastructure.

### **2-3 Coordination, Partnerships and Funding Principles**

This General Plan emphasizes the role of the community – local residents, organizations and others – in shaping the future of the County through participation in the planning process. As such, the General Plan encourages open and inclusive planning efforts as a means of improving the development process. New development will be required to provide or contribute fair-share payments for infrastructure and public services, while state, federal and tribal governments will be encouraged to fund management activities of their lands and facilities.

Principle 2-3a: Encourage and empower local communities and organizations to engage in local planning and community improvement consistent with General Plan objectives.

Principle 2-3b: Improve the effectiveness of the planning and development process in achieving General Plan and community objectives.

- Promote open, inclusive public planning and development processes.
- Provide consistency and minimize conflicting mandates by integrating inter-agency planning and regulatory processes.
- Strive to make regulation and development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.
- Continue to improve the coordination of County departments and local agencies and functions to better facilitate the development process.
- Continue to explore opportunities to streamline the development process.

Principle 2-3c: Allocate the costs of development equitably among existing and future beneficiaries.

- New development should be required to pay its legal fair share of required infrastructure, such as water, sewer, drainage, fire protection, law enforcement, parks, general government, utilities, and transportation costs.
- New development must demonstrate its ability to provide supporting infrastructure and related improvements or services, including payment of required impact fees, posting of necessary security with the County, or other payment mechanisms acceptable to the County.
- Development may be required to evaluate and mitigate short- and long-term social, economic, public and environmental impacts and costs.

Principle 2-3d: Use a wide range of resources to implement General Plan programs and policies.

- Coordinate County and public agency capital improvement programs and funding with the General Plan as required by law.
- Encourage state, federal and tribal governments to fully fund the management of their lands and related infrastructure and facilities in Mendocino County.
- Seek public and private funding and volunteerism to protect and enhance natural, cultural and recreational resources.
- For regionally significant issues, investigate the delegation of regional planning to an existing agency best suited to handle that responsibility or research and justify the formation of a new entity.

Principle 2-3e: Work with city, regional and state agencies to allocate revenues and resources in a manner that is equitable and does not result in development or negative impacts for the sake of capturing revenues.

- Develop equitable revenue/cost sharing strategies to facilitate annexation, service delivery, economic development, and resource protection.



## CHAPTER 3.0: DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

### Introduction

#### 3-1 Land Use System

Mendocino County contains 2,246,000 acres, or 3,510 square miles, and is the 15th largest county in California in terms of land area. **Table 3-A** shows a breakdown of land ownership in the county. A map of land ownership is provided in **Figure 3-1**.

About one-fifth of the land in Mendocino County is in public ownership, controlled by a variety of federal, state, and local government agencies, including ten Indian reservations or rancherias. The rest of the land in the county (almost 80 percent) is in private ownership; about three-fourths of all privately held land is committed to long-term agricultural or timber uses.

**Table 3-A**  
**Land Ownership in Mendocino County**

Ownership Agency	Acres	Percentage Of Total
<b>Federal</b>	<b>360,597</b>	<b>16.1</b>
U.S. Forest Service	174,000	7.7
Bureau of Land Management	120,730	5.4
Native American	22,297	1.0
Other	43,570	1.9
<b>State, County, and Cities</b>	<b>102,000</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Private</b>	<b>1,783,403</b>	<b>79.4</b>
Agricultural Preserves	497,143	22.1
Timber Production Zones	854,383	38.0
Other	431,877	19.2
<b>Total All Land</b>	<b>2,246,000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Notes: Percentages may not add to totals due to rounding. Timber Production Zones exclude 50,700 acres in the Jackson State Forest.*

*Sources: Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service, 2007; Mendocino County Assessor's Office, Subvention Reports, 2002-2003 Assessment Year ; Mendocino Department of County Planning and Building Services, Potential Development Reports, 2002*

Mendocino County's diverse geographic regions have affected land use and settlement patterns. The **coastal terrace** and **inland river valleys** contain the major population centers, rural residential settlements, and agricultural uses. Timber, grazing, and rural residential development characterize the **Coast Range**. Other inland areas are largely mountainous and forested with limited population centers.

Today, Mendocino County remains mostly rural, with about 69 percent of the population living outside of incorporated cities. The remaining population lives in the four incorporated cities in the county; of these, Ukiah is by far the largest, with a population larger than the other three cities combined.

**City of Ukiah (incorporated 1876)**  
Area: 4 square miles  
Est. 2007 population: 15,876

**City of Fort Bragg (incorporated 1889)**  
Area: 2 square miles  
Est. 2007 population: 6,917

**City of Willits (incorporated 1888)**  
Area: 3 square miles  
Est. 2007 population: 5,049

**City of Point Arena (incorporated 1908)**  
Area: 2 square miles  
Est. 2007 population: 496

### Land Use Terms

**Agricultural Preserves** are lands enrolled under the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act. Through the Williamson Act, local governments enter into contracts with private landowners to restrict the use of land to agricultural or related open space use in return for lower property tax assessments.

**Timber Production Zones** are areas designated by the County which, because of their general soil types, location and timber-growing capabilities, are suited for and should be devoted to the growing, harvesting and production of timber and timber-related products.

*Sources: California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection; Mendocino County Zoning Ordinance.*

There were no established cities or towns in Mendocino County until 1859. Due to its large physical size but small population, Mendocino County was administered by the government of Sonoma County until 1859, when the county government was established in a small building on Main Street in Ukiah.

Historically, most settlements in Mendocino County were located along streams or rivers for access to a dependable water supply. Early development patterns were dispersed, reflecting the dependence of the communities on timber and agricultural resources. Communities with economies focused on the timber industry included Willits, Fort Bragg, Laytonville, Mendocino, Covelo, and Philo.

The communities of Ukiah, Redwood Valley, Calpella, Potter Valley, Hopland, Boonville, and Point Arena developed around agriculture and related industries.

The greatest population increases and development have occurred in the Ukiah Valley, where the City of Ukiah now serves as the County seat.

### 3-2 Population Trends

The county has undergone cycles of population boom followed by periods of slower growth. For example, the county population increased by approximately 25 percent between 1950 and 1960, but barely grew from 1960 to 1970. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of Mendocino County increased 7.4 percent, a much slower rate of growth than the 20 percent increase from 1980 to 1990. Similar growth rates were experienced by the unincorporated county area (7.3 percent) and incorporated cities (7.5 percent) during that time period. Population growth slowed further from 2000 to 2007, increasing only 4.6 percent. During that time, the unincorporated areas of the county experienced significantly more growth than incorporated cities. The population of Ukiah, the county seat, grew only 2.4 percent, and Willits and Fort Bragg experienced slight declines in population.

**Table 3-b**  
**Mendocino County Population Growth, 1950-2007**

Jurisdiction	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008
Fort Bragg	3,826	4,433	4,455	5,019	6,078	7,026	6,890
Point Arena	372	596	424	425	407	474	493
Ukiah	6,120	9,900	10,095	12,035	14,599	15,497	15,758
Willits	2,691	3,410	3,091	4,008	5,027	5,073	5,032
Total Cities	13,009	18,339	18,065	21,487	26,111	28,070	28,173
Unincorporated	27,845	32,720	33,036	45,251	54,234	58,195	61,990
Total County	40,854	51,059	51,101	66,738	80,345	86,265	90,163

*Sources: U.S. Census 1950-2000; California Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2007, with 2000 Benchmark, May 2007.*

The California Department of Finance projects the county's population will increase to 93,166 persons by the year 2010, and then increase an average of 9.5 percent every 10 years to a population of 134,358 in 2050. (Note: These are projections by the state and are not mandates or targets.)

Land use planning in Mendocino County has had a long history. Key milestones in county planning history include:

- 1850** Mendocino County is formed, one of the original 27 counties of California
- 1876** City of Ukiah incorporates
- 1888** City of Willits incorporates
- 1889** City of Fort Bragg incorporates
- 1908** City of Point Arena incorporates
- 1956** County adopts first Zoning Ordinance
- 1967** County adopts first Land Use Element
- 1967-77** County adopts collection of elements as its General Plan
- 1981** County adopts comprehensive update of General Plan
- 1985** California Coastal Commission certifies Land Use Plan portion of County's Local Coastal Plan
- 1992** Coastal Commission certifies total Local Coastal Plan
- 2001** County initiates comprehensive update of General Plan

Land use, density, and intensity are critical components of this General Plan, because they prescribe how and where land may be developed in the county. The intent is to provide a range of flexibility in how the General Plan is implemented, through updates to the Zoning Ordinance and other development codes.

Similarly, flexibility in development standards helps implement the Housing Element. The section also clarifies how legal, non-conforming lots may be developed and when discontinuance of a non-conforming use will be sought.

### **3-3 Community and Growth Area Boundaries**

This General Plan identifies community planning areas in which local land use patterns and themes are emphasized for communities that have experienced or are anticipated to experience the greatest change or growth during the planning period. While some of these areas surround incorporated cities, all of them cover only unincorporated lands. The community planning areas include:

- Round Valley/Covelo
- Laytonville
- Willits area (the Brooktrails area of Willits is addressed by a detailed County-adopted plan)
- Potter Valley
- Redwood Valley
- Ukiah Valley area, including Calpella, The Forks, and Talmage (this area is addressed in the Ukiah Valley Area Plan)
- Hopland
- Anderson Valley/Boonville
- Fort Bragg area (with the exception of the area addressed by the Local Coastal Plan)
- Point Arena area (with the exception of the area addressed by the Local Coastal Plan)
- Gualala (with the exception of the area addressed by the Local Coastal Plan)
- Town of Mendocino (this area is covered by the Mendocino Town Plan)

The development pattern policies provide for new development in the county's community planning areas, where infrastructure and public services would be available. In these areas, compact forms of development would be emphasized, using infill and redevelopment of underutilized sites. This approach will create better-defined urban boundaries, minimizing urban sprawl and preserving the predominantly rural character of the county.

### **3-4 Commercial, Industrial and Mixed-Use Development**

Mendocino County's economy and work force are changing. In the past, county residents have counted on seasonal crops, the timber and fishing industries, and tourism for most of their jobs. With the significant decline in natural resource extraction over recent years, the county workforce, has responded by becoming increasingly more diversified. The government sector was the largest employer by industry in Mendocino County in 2006, comprising 22.8 percent of industry employment. Other large employers were the trade, transportation and utilities industry and the leisure and hospitality industry.

**Figure 3-2** shows employment trends by major economic sector from 1995 to 2006. The most notable declines in employment during this time were in the natural resources and manufacturing sectors. The government sector had the most notable increase in employment, while other sectors in general experienced steadier growth.

The county's total employment is expected to grow by approximately 21 percent between 2000 and 2010, and then by 21 percent again between 2010 and 2020. The highest growth is forecast in sales and related occupations, followed by education, library, and training occupations. Retail, food service, and construction occupations are also expected to grow significantly. According to projections prepared by the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), approximately 69 percent of the job growth through 2020 is expected to occur in the Ukiah/Highway 101 Corridor, an area that includes Ukiah and vicinity.

This General Plan seeks to create opportunity for new commercial development by designating sufficient lands for commercial use, including an emphasis on mixed-use development. Additionally, policies call for business retention, expansion and diversification. This General Plan also emphasizes compatibility between new industrial development and adjoining land uses by requiring the use of buffers and setbacks, reducing the potential for environmental and other impacts and protecting natural resources. Lands planned for industrial use would not be allowed to convert to other uses unless there is an adequate regional supply of industrial lands. This General Plan also promotes diversified employment opportunity in the industrial sector and agricultural processing operations. In all instances, the General Plan promotes and encourages industrial uses that incorporate environmentally sound practices.

### **3-5 Community Areas and Urban Spaces**

Planning efforts will emphasize local culture, reflecting the historic, physical, and social values of each community. This will be accomplished, in part, through the eventual adoption of community design guidelines for physical factors such as site planning, resource protection, architecture, use of mixed housing types, landscaping, screened parking areas, sign control, view preservation, and incorporation of green building and other sustainable development practices. The policies also emphasize development of walkable communities.

### **3-6 Noise**

Noise—which is, simply put, any unwanted sound—is a known health problem, not only because it causes actual physiological damage such as hearing impairment, but also because it inhibits general well-being and contributes to stress and annoyance. The health effects of noise arise from interference with activities such as sleep, speech, recreation, and tasks demanding concentration or coordination.

Noise can come from two types of sources: mobile and stationary. Mobile source noises are generally associated with transportation, such as cars, trains and aircraft. Stationary sounds can be pinpointed and do not move; examples include machinery and construction sites.

Major noise sources in Mendocino County consist of highway and local traffic, railroad operations, airports, commercial and industrial uses, and recreation and community facilities. Highways with traffic that generates significant noise include U.S. Highway 101 and the State Routes (1, 20, 128, 162, 175, and 253). The only identified active railroad operation within Mendocino County is the Skunk Train passenger line, which runs between the cities of Fort Bragg and Willits. Public use airports are located in or near Ukiah, Willits, Covelo, Boonville, Gualala, and Little River. Major industrial noise sources are primarily lumber mills and timber products facilities.

Other noise sources in the county include:

- General service commercial and light industrial uses
- Paving companies
- Agricultural operations
- Solid waste, recycling and salvage sites

- Surface mining operations
- Portable mills and batch operations
- Wind turbines and other energy facilities
- Bus and truck terminals, truck stops, and truck or heavy equipment repair shops
- Fairgrounds
- Specialty recreational facilities such as gun clubs, racetracks, BMX tracks
- Entertainment events

**How Loud Is It?**  
**Sound Levels for Common Noise Sources**

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Noise Level in Decibels</i>
<i>Limit of Hearing</i>	<i>0 dB</i>
<i>Normal Breathing</i>	<i>10 dB</i>
<i>Soft Whisper</i>	<i>30 dB</i>
<i>Library</i>	<i>40 dB</i>
<i>Refrigerator</i>	<i>50 dB</i>
<i>Rainfall</i>	<i>50 dB</i>
<i>Washing Machine</i>	<i>50-75 dB</i>
<i>Normal Conversation</i>	<i>60 dB</i>
<i>Hair Dryer</i>	<i>60-95 dB</i>
<i>Alarm Clock</i>	<i>65-80 dB</i>
<i>Power Mower</i>	<i>65-95 dB</i>
<i>Dumpster Pickup (@ 50')</i>	<i>80 dB</i>
<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	<i>80-95 dB</i>
<i>Noisy Restaurant</i>	<i>85 dB</i>
<i>Train Approaching (Engines)</i>	<i>85-90 dB</i>
<i>Tractor</i>	<i>90 dB</i>
<i>Shouting in Ear</i>	<i>110 dB</i>
<i>Loud Rock Concert</i>	<i>120 dB</i>
<i>Stock Car Race</i>	<i>130 dB</i>
<i>Jet Engine at Takeoff</i>	<i>150 dB</i>

These are typical noise levels. Distance from the source will reduce the noise level. A 10 dB increase doubles perceived loudness. Continued exposure to noise above 85 dB can cause hearing loss; the maximum exposure to 85 dB noise in the workplace is eight hours. A single exposure to 140 dB noise can cause some hearing loss. Source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

In the mid 1970s, the State of California decided that noise issues were significant enough to warrant new laws. In 1976, the Department of Health issued the first guidelines for acceptable noise levels—guidelines which are today maintained by the Office of Noise Control in the State Department of Health Services. Soon thereafter, local governments were required to include Noise Elements in their general plans. Noise Elements were intended then, as now, to establish policies and programs which direct the distribution of land uses to “minimize the exposure of community residents to excessive noise.”

Generally speaking, land uses considered noise-sensitive are those in which noise can adversely affect what people are doing on the land. For example, a residential land use, where people live, sleep, and study, is generally considered sensitive to noise because noise can disrupt these activities (the passing train, for instance, whose warning sounds may disrupt sleep). Churches, schools, and certain kinds of

outdoor recreation are also usually considered noise-sensitive. Most communities handle noise issues through taking care to put compatible uses near each other and avoid placing noisy uses next to noise-sensitive uses. Mendocino County relies principally on standards in its Noise Element, its Zoning Ordinance and other County ordinances, and the Mendocino County Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan to evaluate noise-related impacts of development.

Noise policies are intended to protect county communities from excessive noise generation from stationary and non-stationary sources. Land uses would be controlled to reduce potential for incompatible uses relative to noise. Noise-sensitive environments, including schools, hospitals, and passive recreational use areas, would be protected from noise-generating uses. Structural development would be required to include noise insulation and other methods of construction to reduce the extent of excessive noise.

The following table and maps show future noise conditions in Mendocino County for two major sources of noise: **roadways** (based on future traffic levels) and **airports** (based on the approved master plans for the airports). Airports for which projected noise levels are shown are (in order):

- Ukiah Municipal Airport
- Willits Municipal Airport (Ells Field)
- Round Valley Airport, near Covelo
- Little River Airport, near the community of Little River
- Boonville Airport
- Ocean Ridge Airport, northeast of Gualala

### **3-7 Cultural Resources**

The term “cultural resources” refers to archaeological sites and features of the built environment (e.g., buildings, landscape elements) that have importance to the community, providing connections to pre-historic and historic peoples and events. As used in this General Plan, “archaeological” refers to any site containing a mound, midden, settlement location, burial ground, or similar feature containing evidence of previous human activity. “Cultural” refers to any heritage or social history of a group or community, and “historical” refers to a site or structure which is generally considered significant in the nation’s or state’s history, architecture, or culture.

Generally, the prehistory of Mendocino County is not well known. Native American tribes known to inhabit the county area concentrated mainly along the coast and along major rivers and streams. Mountainous areas were occupied seasonally by some tribes. No tribes apparently had lived permanently or even seasonally in the redwood belt of central Mendocino County. Ten Native American tribes had territory in what is now Mendocino County. As European-American settlement occurred in the county, most of these tribes were restricted to reservations and rancherias. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, other tribes from the interior of California were forced to settle on the Round Valley Reservation in the northeastern county. Today, there are ten reservations and rancherias in Mendocino County, most of which are inhabited by tribes native to the area.

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter of this General Plan, the first permanent non-native settlers came to Mendocino County in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, exploring and establishing small outposts. It was almost 300 years before the first permanent non-Spanish settlements in the county were established on the Mendocino coast north of Big River in April of 1852. Mendocino County’s modern development was tied to the vast stands of coast redwood trees, which were logged and milled to meet the needs of the state’s gold mining industry. Timber and agriculture were the mainstays of the county’s economy from

the 19<sup>th</sup> century into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As previously discussed, many of the county's cities and towns were founded around these activities.

Several historical resources have been identified in Mendocino County, many of which have been placed on various federal and state historical registers. Some of these historical resources include:

- Town of Mendocino and Headlands
- Point Cabrillo Light Station
- Lovejoy Homestead, Branscomb
- Milano Hotel, Gualala
- Manchester Schoolhouse, Manchester
- Con Creek School, Anderson Valley
- Round Valley Flour Mill, Covelo
- Vichy Springs Resort, east of Ukiah

Several historical organizations and museums exist in Mendocino County, but the County has not adopted an inventory of local historical resources. The County has not designated any historical sites or buildings, but has adopted an Archaeological Ordinance designed to protect Native American sites. The ordinance establishes a County Archaeological Commission that evaluates the potential impacts of proposed projects on archaeological resources and recommends measures to reduce or eliminate impacts on these resources.

The County will protect its wide range of historic, cultural, and archaeological resources through a variety of actions, including working closely with the County Museum, Native American Tribes, organizations, and agencies. New development projects will be evaluated for potential impact to cultural resources. The County will consider adoption of a historical review code as an additional means of ensuring protection of historic resources.

### **Native Peoples in Mendocino County**

The entire southern third of Mendocino County was the home of groups of **Central Pomo**. To the north of the Central Pomo groups were the **Northern Pomo**, who controlled a strip of land extending from the coast to Clear Lake.

The **Coast Yuki** claimed a portion of the coast from Fort Bragg north to an area slightly north of Rockport. They were linguistically related to a small group, called the **Huchnom**, living along the South Eel River north of Potter Valley. Both of these smaller groups were related to the **Yuki**, who were centered in Round Valley.

At the far northern end of the county, several groups extended south from Humboldt County. The territory of the **Cahto** was bounded by Branscomb, Laytonville, and Cummings. The **North Fork Wailaki** was almost entirely in Mendocino County, along the North Fork of the Eel River. Other groups in this area included the **Shelter Cove Sinkyone**, the **Eel River**, and the **Pitch Wailaki**.



### **3-8 Infrastructure Overview**

Infrastructure generally includes facilities designed to provide water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, storm drainage collection, and transportation. This discussion focuses on the first three services. Transportation facilities will be discussed in a separate section.

#### Water Infrastructure

Compared to other parts of California, significant development of water resources has not occurred in Mendocino County. The existing water projects in the county consist of some 300 surface water diversions, numerous small dams and reservoirs, and many small stock watering ponds. No major surface water storage exists within Mendocino's coastal streams. Mendocino County is an area particularly lacking in groundwater supplies during droughts. The County normally receives substantial wintertime precipitation, but relies on groundwater during the hot summer months. A number of its communities are built over "fractured hard rock," which stores groundwater in limited amounts, making residents especially susceptible to water shortages in dry years. The coast is another area susceptible to groundwater shortages during dry years.

There are many water service providers in Mendocino County, including the cities, special districts, and private water purveyors. Most of the latter were formed to serve specific land development projects. The California Department of Public Health has 123 public water systems on record in Mendocino County as of January 2007. Of these, 41 were community systems ranging in number of connections from a low of 15 to 5,486 in the City of Ukiah. Many residents of Mendocino County live outside of water and wastewater districts. Water supply in the remainder of the County is generally supplied by onsite methods such as wells or springs that are recharged annually by winter rains. The yield from these sources may vary from year to year. Deficiencies may occur, especially during years of low rainfall.

In some areas of the County, water infrastructure has imposed limits on development. The Redwood Valley County Water District has a court-ordered moratorium on new water connections due to concerns about the reliability of its water sources. In 2003, the California Department of Health Services (DHS) issued a Compliance Order which prevents the Brooktrails Township Community Service District from adding any more water connections to its existing system. DHS found that Brooktrails did not have enough water supply to serve more than half of its then-current population of about 1,500 homes in a drought year. Similar constraints have been identified in the Anderson Valley and portions of the Ukiah Valley.

#### Sewer Infrastructure

Public sewer systems in Mendocino County are provided by cities, special districts, and some private water purveyors. There are 13 major wastewater systems in the county, four of which primarily serve the incorporated cities, but also serve some unincorporated areas. Sewage collected by the Brooktrails Township Community Services District and Meadowbrook Manor Sanitation District is treated at the City of Willits Wastewater Treatment Plant. The City of Ukiah's Wastewater Treatment Plant also processes wastewater collected by the Ukiah Valley Sanitation District. Sewage disposal in the remainder of the county is generally handled by private onsite facilities, primarily septic tank and leach field systems, although alternative engineered wastewater systems may be used. The County Division of Environmental Health cites the lack of sites for disposal of wastewater pumped from onsite systems as a countywide issue.

Wastewater infrastructure, or lack thereof, has also imposed potential limits on development in some areas. The community of Laytonville is currently served by individual septic systems, but a high water table and high annual rainfall are contributing to septic system problems. Laytonville is currently

studying the feasibility of installing a wastewater treatment system. The Willits Wastewater Treatment has problems with high infiltration, lack of effluent storage area, exceedance of 75 percent of design flow, and winter irrigation runoff. The City of Willits is currently pursuing an upgrade of its treatment plant. Septic system constraints are an issue in the Anderson Valley.

Storm water drainage is an important issue in Mendocino County, due to the high amount of rainfall, the county topography and stream patterns, settlement patterns favoring river valleys and hillside environments, and widespread discharge of pollutants to surface and ground water systems. Changes to drainage patterns and runoff volumes and speeds, as well as discharges associated with activities and development, can affect surface and ground water quality, flood control structures, human health, and property. Localized flooding occurs in many areas of the county. Major flood areas include lands adjoining waterways, such as the Russian River and its tributaries in the south Ukiah and Hopland areas, and low-lying lands east of Willits. New development often results in the introduction of impervious surfaces that act to limit percolation of rain to the soil, thereby increasing the amount of runoff. Development projects in the unincorporated County are required to construct improvements that either retain storm drainage for a short time or detain it for longer periods of time to reduce potential flooding impacts. In some instances, storm drainage may be sent to a stream or river, typically through the use of pipes, culverts, or open channels.

Roads contribute to and channel runoff in open ditch and culvert systems or in contained urban storm water systems. The California Department of Transportation maintains drainage systems for state highways. The Mendocino County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) maintains over 5,513 stream crossings and culverts, including those in the Russian River watershed. Ongoing maintenance operations indicate that many culverts may be inadequately sized or subject to local flooding during periods of extreme weather. Roadway grades lower than local flood elevations or the placement of culverts may also result in flooding. These conditions exist along portions of State Route 1 near Gualala, Point Arena, and Elk; State Route 101 north of Willits; State Route 128 west of Navarro; State Route 175 between State Route 101 and Old Hopland; and State Route 222 near Talmage. The County does not maintain a list or map of planned storm drainage improvements for its roads. Drainage improvements are typically identified in construction plans for specific road improvement projects. Individual reaches of storm drain improvements may also be implemented at particular points in rural areas.

### **3-9 Transportation Systems Overview**

As with most California communities, transportation is an important issue in Mendocino County. Residents need to travel to work, school, or shopping. Businesses rely on the transportation system to move workers, products, and services. The movement of workers to their jobs is especially important. **Table 3-D** shows a summary of transportation modes to work for both California and Mendocino County, based on 2000 U.S. Census data. Most Mendocino County commuters use the automobile, which is typical of the rest of California. Public transportation use is significantly lower than the statewide percentage. However, bicycling, walking, and working at home percentages are higher than those for the remainder of the state. While spreading demand among the various modes can lessen the demand on the highway system, the county's small population, rural nature, and distances between population centers often limit the availability and efficiency of transportation modes other than the automobile.

## Transportation Modes

*Mendocino Transit Authority provides public transit in the county.*

Transportation is a way to move people and goods from one place to another. A transportation mode refers to the way in which people and goods are moved, including:

- Private vehicles
- Public or private transit systems
- Bicycling on roadways or off-street paths or trails
- Taxis, shuttles, paratransit, and other similar types of transport
- Walking
- Rail
- Air
- By water on rivers and other waterways

All of these travel modes are found to some extent in Mendocino County.

**TABLE 3-D  
WORK COMMUTE TRAVEL CHOICE**

Transportation Mode	California		Mendocino County		Unincorporated Mendocino County	
	Workers	Percent	Workers	Percent	Workers	Percent
Drive alone	10,432,462	71.8	26,959	71.6	18,542	72.0
Carpool	2,113,313	14.5	5,302	14.1	3,520	13.7
Public transportation	736,037	5.1	218	0.6	144	0.6
Bicycle or walk	535,148	3.7	2,238	5.9	1,245	4.8
Work at home	557,036	3.8	2,588	6.9	2,107	8.2
Other	151,326	1.0	358	1.0	203	0.8
Total	14,525,322	100.0	37,663	100.0	25,761	100.0

## Roadways

The unincorporated areas of Mendocino County are served by state highways, county roads, and private roads. City streets are under the jurisdiction of the cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg, Willits, and Point Arena. The state highway network, under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), provides interstate, interregional, and intra-county linkages. Highways in the state system include U.S. Highway 101 and State Routes (SR) 1, 20, 128, 162, 175, 222, 253, and 271. The County-maintained road system augments the state highway system to serve the unincorporated areas of the county. The system is primarily a network of two-lane roads for vehicular movement of goods and people and to provide facilities (such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes) for non-motorized traffic. Roads in the County road system include prescriptive rights or property offered to the County for public road purposes. Not all public roads are in the County-maintained road system; unless the County accepts responsibility for maintenance, these roads are maintained by property owners or other entities.

An extensive private road network serves a wide variety of uses throughout Mendocino County, from logging and ranching to residential subdivisions. While many private roads were adequate for their original uses, development generated by certificates of compliance and minor subdivisions in particular has resulted in increased traffic on roads with uncoordinated improvements and maintenance and limited circulation patterns. Conflicting road names and ambiguous or unmapped road locations hamper emergency services in some areas. Substandard design and construction standards to serve increased development, especially excessive grades in California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) responsibility areas, restrict emergency vehicle access and raise questions of safety for daily travel. Lack of adequate drainage systems and inadequate ditch and culvert maintenance contribute to road deterioration and down slope flooding and water quality problems.

## Public Transportation

The Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) provides public transportation services to residents of Mendocino County and its incorporated cities. The MTA offers fixed route and demand responsive service to residents of the county. As of August 2007, MTA operated 12 fixed routes, serving areas along SR 128 from SR 1 to Ukiah, the Ukiah Valley area, the U.S. 101 corridor between Hopland and Laytonville, and along SR 1 between SR 128 and Fort Bragg, as well as limited connections on the South Coast from SR 128 to Gualala. Other routes extend from SR 1 and U.S. 101 to Bodega Bay and Santa Rosa in Sonoma County. Demand responsive service is available in the Willits, Fort Bragg, and Ukiah areas.

The MTA has consistently made efforts to coordinate with private transportation in Mendocino County. Through this arrangement, service is provided between the North Coast and inland areas. A contract with Sonoma County Transit provides a transit link between the South Coast area and Santa Rosa.

MTA also provides services to individuals with special needs, such as the elderly, disabled, or others who cannot drive. Greyhound, a private company, provides interregional bus service.

## Railroads

Rail service in Mendocino County is limited for both passengers and freight. During the summer, the California Western Railroad (CWR) operates the Skunk Train, a 40-mile passenger excursion route between Willits and Fort Bragg. The CWR also provides mail service along the line. The Fort Bragg station has truck-to-rail transfer facilities for timber product shipping; however, there has been little demand for freight service to Willits. The CWR line is an essential means of transportation for some small communities between Fort Bragg and Willits. However, the line is susceptible to weather and geologic events.

The Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWPRR) extends from the Arcata/Eureka area in Humboldt County to the San Rafael area in Marin County. The railroad was heavily damaged in storms over a number of years and has not been in operation since 1998. The NWPRR segment in Mendocino County is managed by the North Coast Rail Authority (NCRA), formed by the State Legislature in 1989 to ensure the continuation of railroad service in northwestern California. The NCRA is responsible for implementing passenger rail service north of the Sonoma County line. Although passenger rail service does not currently exist on the NWPRR in Mendocino County, a contract between NCRA and the California Redwood Coast Company has been negotiated to operate service between Healdsburg and Willits. Excursion rail service to Mendocino County has not been programmed, but could begin by 2012. In 2006, voters in Marin and Sonoma Counties failed to approve a measure that would have established passenger rail service on the NWPRR line in those counties. The Sonoma/Marin Area Rail Transportation Authority has indicated it would sponsor a similar measure in the near future. Rail service in these counties may make it more feasible to start such service in Mendocino County.

### Aviation

The aviation system is composed of the airports, privately owned aircraft of various types, privately operated aircraft service facilities, and publicly and privately operated airport service facilities. Most aircraft are privately owned, small single or twin-engine planes flown primarily for personal business. Six public use airports in Mendocino County provide for regional and interregional needs of commercial and general aviation:

- Ukiah Municipal Airport
- Willits Municipal Airport (Ells Field)
- Round Valley Airport, near Covelo
- Little River Airport, near the community of Little River
- Boonville Airport (shown below)
- Ocean Ridge Airport, northeast of Gualala

A map showing the locations of these airports is provided in **Figure 3-9**.

In addition to the public use airports, there are three private use airfields in Mendocino County: Fort Bragg Airfield, Lofty Redwoods Airfield north of Anchor Bay, and Wilson's Field in Gualala. The airports play a vital role in the county's emergency service network and several are important to the economy of the areas served. The potential for commuter service in the county by private carriers has been discussed from time to time.

Mendocino County has three harbors of significance. Noyo Harbor, located south of Fort Bragg, is a well-established public marine facility. It has three ramps and numerous support facilities for the commercial fishing fleet. The Point Arena Harbor provides marine facilities, including the Arena Cove Pier used by the commercial fishing industry. The pier features a 10,000-pound hoist and two hoists for unloading boats. The Albion Harbor is the port for the Albion fishing community.

The greatest concentration of bicycle lanes, which are generally Class II or III, in Mendocino County is in the City of Ukiah. Bicycle travel does occur within communities such as Mendocino, between the outlying areas and communities such as the eastern hills of the Ukiah Valley and Ukiah, and along various sections of State Route 1. All state routes in the county are open to bicycle traffic. SR 1 is legislatively designated as the Pacific Coast Bike Route, although safety is a major concern. **Table 3-E** lists major existing bikeways (bicycle facilities separated from roadways) in the county.

**TABLE 3-E  
BIKEWAYS IN MENDOCINO COUNTY**

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Bikeway Location</i>	
City of Willits	East Commercial Street	
City of Fort Bragg	Harrison Street Harold Street Lincoln Avenue	Fir Avenue Maple Avenue
City of Ukiah	Low Gap Road Bush Street Dora Street	Grove Avenue Gobbi Street Despina Drive
Mendocino County	Hensley Creek Road (Ukiah Valley, Mendocino College) Simpson Lane (near Fort Bragg) Little Lake Road (Mendocino area) Lake Mendocino Drive (Ukiah Valley) Vichy Springs Road (Ukiah Valley)	

Mendocino County is a predominantly rural county, which limits the opportunity for bikeways to serve large segments of the population or to provide a practical means of transportation for commuting purposes. Intercity routes are impractical because of low demand, distances between cities, and corridor limitations due to topography. The 2006 Mendocino County Regional Bikeway Plan, adopted by MCOG and the Board of Supervisors, identifies projects for funding. The cities of Ukiah and Willits have adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans. The County’s Local Coastal Plan and some community plans adopted by the County also include bicycle components. However, the Regional Transportation Plan for Mendocino County notes that these various systems have not been integrated into a countywide master plan.

Sidewalks and pedestrian paths are located within communities in the county. The downtowns of Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg, and the Town of Mendocino experience the most significant amount of pedestrian traffic. Downtown areas with moderate pedestrian travel include Hopland, Gualala, Boonville, and Point Arena. Some areas within the unincorporated county with minimal walkways or intermittent walkways could attract more pedestrian trips with enhanced pedestrian facilities. These areas are generally on the edge of incorporated areas, such as the State Street corridor north and south of Ukiah and the Fort Bragg/SR 1 corridor south of the Noyo River. The Gualala Town Plan emphasizes upgrading its pedestrian facilities. For pedestrian activity to continue as the county grows, it may be necessary to construct curbs, gutters, and sidewalks along existing and future roadways as areas are developed and provide connections for continuous, accessible pathways.

This General Plan incorporates a wide range of policy approaches addressing transportation needs. Primary among these is an emphasis on multiple modes of transportation, rather than focusing solely on vehicular transportation, while stressing community livability. The County’s capital improvement budget and related funding would be required to maintain consistency with overall General Plan policies relative to development and desired transportation system improvements.

Emphasis is placed on improving and maintaining existing roadway systems and bridges, as opposed to construction of new roadways. This emphasis is in keeping with other General Plan policies that focus new development in the county’s community areas. The County will also support programs intended to reduce the number and extent of vehicle trips by working with major employers, supporting carpool and vanpool facilities and incentive programs reducing single-occupant vehicle use.

## Types of Bicycle Facilities

**Class I Bike Paths** are facilities specifically designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians. Class I bike paths are separate from streets, although they may cross roadways.

**Class II Bike Lanes** are striped lanes on a street or highway, designated for use by bicycles. Vehicle parking and vehicle pedestrian cross-flows are permitted at designated locations.

**Class III Bike Routes** are usually designated by pavement markings to indicate the use of bicycles within the vehicular travel lane of a roadway.

This General Plan supports use of public transit systems to meet community needs. Development standards and land use actions by the County will recognize transit options focused on community planning areas and multi-modal transportation.

This General Plan supports continued rail uses and places more emphasis on compatible rail corridor uses. Airports are recognized as providing important economic development and transportation options for the county and are therefore protected by limiting encroachment of non-compatible uses. Actions involving areas around airports will continue to be evaluated for consistency with the County's Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan and applicable federal regulations. Development of the County's harbors is guided primarily by policies in the County's Local Coastal Plan. Thus, this General Plan has relatively few policies for harbor development.

Policies in this Element provide for expanded pedestrian and bicycle systems in support of improved community livability. Connecting or expanding the county's system of pedestrian, bicycle, and trail routes is emphasized, as is providing improved linkages between modes of transportation. New development will be required to construct or support pedestrian and bicycle systems.

### 3-10 Parks and Recreation

Mendocino County is a predominantly rural County, rich in lands and waters that provide a variety of recreational opportunities. The county's recreational system encompasses many levels of park and recreational facilities.

Federal lands include recreation resources that are used by visitors and county residents. The Mendocino National Forest, which occupies approximately 81,000 acres in Mendocino County, offers an array of recreation opportunities including fishing, camping, picnicking, boating, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, hang-gliding, off-road vehicle riding, winter snow play, hunting, wilderness experiences, and mountain biking. The Cow Mountain Recreation Area, located in the eastern hills of the Ukiah Valley, is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The northern portion of this area is managed for primarily non-motorized activities, such as hunting, hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, and camping. The southern portion emphasizes off-highway vehicle use. The Lake Mendocino Recreation Area, located in the northeastern Ukiah Valley, offers a multi-purpose reservoir, day-use facilities, and overnight campground facilities operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Many state parks and recreation lands contain unique or scenic natural and historical resources that attract visitors from across California and the United States, as well as county residents. Many of the state parks are located along the coast, including:

- Van Damme State Park
- MacKerricher State Park
- Manchester State Park

- Russian Gulch State Park
- Mendocino Headlands State Park
- Navarro River Redwoods State Park
- Sinkyone Wilderness State Park
- Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve
- Jug Handle State Reserve
- Westport-Union Landing State Beach
- Caspar Headlands State Beach and Reserve
- Greenwood State Beach
- Schooner Gulch State Beach

State parks located inland include:

- Hendy Woods State Park
- Mendocino Woodlands State Park
- Admiral William H. Standley State Recreation Area
- Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area
- Smythe Redwoods State Reserve
- Montgomery Woods State Reserve
- Mailliard Redwoods State Reserve

In addition, the Jackson Demonstration State Forest, approximately 50,700 acres in size, is located in Mendocino County. Although its primary use is as an experimental forest for forest management techniques, it also provides recreational opportunities for the general public.

County parks typically serve residents of local communities or neighborhoods, depending on the size of the park, improvements, and programs. The Mendocino County parks system consists of seven parks, operated and maintained by the County General Services Department, Buildings and Grounds Division. **Table 3-F** lists the County parks and their facilities. In addition, the County manages two public access areas: the Mariposa Swimming Hole in Redwood Valley and the Vichy Springs Bridge Fishing Area in Ukiah.

**TABLE 3-F  
MENDOCINO COUNTY PARKS**

Park	Location	Acres	Facilities
Bower Park	NE of Gualala	50	Group picnic area, ball field, play area, nature trail, fitness course, tennis courts, basketball court, multipurpose community services room, outdoor theater
Faulkner Park	W of Boonville	40	Trails, picnic and play areas
Indian Creek Park	SE of Philo	10	Overnight camping facilities, nature trail



Low Gap Regional Park	Ukiah	80	Covered picnic area, tennis courts, playgrounds, softball field, horseshoe pits, fitness course, volleyball courts, basketball courts, archery range, disc golf course, nature/hiking trails, amphitheater
McKee Parkway	Potter Valley	N/A	Portage trail, Russian River access
Mill Creek Park	E of Ukiah	400	Picnic area, volleyball court, nature trails, barbeque and horseshoe pits
Redwood Valley Lions Club Park	Redwood Valley	3	Basketball court, volleyball court, softball field, picnic area, barbeque pit, playground

County residents also have access to parks managed by the incorporated cities. Facilities owned or managed by local districts (such as those addressing recreation, fairs, community services, community colleges, or school districts) generally focus on active recreation programs.

Policies in this Element seek to establish a wide range of parks and recreational opportunities for county residents. The policies call for a needs assessment of parks and recreation, followed by actions to provide needed facilities incorporating multiple uses of parks and school facilities and open spaces in urban communities. The County will work closely with local agencies and school districts in developing its parks and recreation plans and programs. With an emphasis on community livability, policies call for development of trails and bicycle lanes and paths throughout the county.

### **3-11 Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste and Materials Management**

Solid waste management in Mendocino County has undergone a significant transformation from waste disposal in landfills supplemented by transfer stations to a focus on transfer stations and waste stream diversion. These changes have responded to rigorous water quality and environmental laws, particularly the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939). The Act required each city and county to divert 50 percent of its waste stream from landfill disposal by the year 2000 through source reduction, recycling, composting, and other programs. As of 2004, Mendocino County complied with the waste diversion requirements of AB 939.

Currently, there are no remaining operating landfills in Mendocino County. Solid waste generated in the county is exported for disposal to the Potrero Hills Landfill in Solano County. Mendocino County's solid waste disposal system has shifted to a system of eight small volume transfer stations and two large volume transfer stations that receive waste for export. The two large volume transfer stations in Ukiah and Willits are privately owned and operated under agreements with local government. The County owns and operates the small volume transfer stations at Albion, Boonville, Caspar, Potter Valley, and the South Coast (Gualala). The small volume transfer stations in Covelo, Laytonville, and Westport are privately operated under agreements with Mendocino County.

The Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority (MSWMA), a Joint Powers Agency formed in 1990 by the County and cities of Ukiah, Willits, and Fort Bragg, identifies transfer stations, recycling processing facilities, and composting facilities necessary to implement each jurisdiction's waste diversion goals. The Source Reduction and Recycling Element, jointly adopted by the County of Mendocino and cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Willits, sets forth a strategy to minimize the volume of solid waste requiring land disposal. The Nondisposal Facility Element addresses the variety of new and expanded nondisposal facilities necessary to implement the Source Reduction and Recycling Element, including transfer stations with extensive drop-off recycling, composting facilities, and recycling processing facilities.

Mendocino County has adopted a Hazardous Waste Management Plan to guide future decisions by the County and the incorporated cities about hazardous waste management. Policies within this plan emphasize source reduction and recycling of hazardous wastes, and express a preference for onsite

hazardous waste treatment over offsite treatment. The Hazardous Waste Management Plan proposed a number of hazardous waste programs and set forth criteria to guide the siting of new offsite hazardous waste facilities. However, to date, no facilities have been sited in the county. In 1997, the County Division of Environmental Health assumed responsibility for administering hazardous waste generation and treatment regulations.

### **3-12 Other Utility Systems**

Most residents and businesses in Mendocino County, except those in Ukiah, receive electric service from Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). PG&E maintains transmission lines throughout the county. PG&E's Potter Valley Project is located primarily on the Eel River; the Potter Valley Powerhouse is adjacent to Adobe Creek. In addition to power generation, the Potter Valley project provides irrigation and domestic water, recreational opportunities, and fish habitat. Ukiah Public Utilities, the only municipal utility in Mendocino County, provides electricity to approximately 15,000 residential and business customers in the City of Ukiah, including County facilities within the city. The City of Ukiah also owns a hydroelectric power facility at Coyote Dam/Lake Mendocino designed to produce three megawatts of power when water flows are adequate. Ukiah Public Utilities purchases most of its power through the Northern California Power Association, a Joint Powers Agency comprised of thirteen municipal and other public agencies.

PG&E also provides natural gas in Mendocino County (only the southeast portion of the county is served by PG&E's natural gas pipeline, along the U.S. 101 corridor from the Sonoma County line to the Willits area). Throughout the county, a number of private businesses maintain large-volume propane gas containers to supply households and businesses.

Major telecommunications providers in Mendocino County include AT&T and Telecom Services Company in Ukiah. Residents and businesses in the county also have access to cellular phone services supplied by various providers. Microwave systems are used by the County and others. There are several cable and satellite television providers in Mendocino County, including DirecTV, Comcast, Central Valley Cable, Comcast, and Dish Network. Internet access via telephone lines, digital subscriber line (DSL), satellite, and television cable is available to Mendocino County residents and businesses. Some Internet providers include Esplanade.us, Mendocino Community Network, Pacific Internet, and Sabernet. DSL service is available in some of the more urban areas of the county. Internet service via cable and satellite is available from DirecTV, Comcast, and others.

### **3-13 Hazard Reduction and Emergency Response**

The Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services (OES) is responsible for disaster planning, assistance, and coordination of all jurisdictions in the Mendocino Operational Area, which encompasses Mendocino County. The OES Director administers the Mendocino County Emergency Operations Plan for the planned response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and national security emergencies within or affecting the county. The plan accomplishes the following:

Establishes the emergency management organization required to mitigate any significant emergency or disaster affecting the emergency operational area.

Identifies the responsibilities, policies, and procedures required to protect the health and safety of the population, public and private property, and the environmental effects of natural and technological emergencies and disasters.

- Establishes the operational concepts and procedures associated with field response to emergencies, County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activities, and the recovery process.

The OES identifies the predominant single or multiple hazard events as:

- *Natural Hazards:* earthquakes, floods, wildland fires, extreme weather/storm, tornados/high winds, landslides, tsunami
- *Technological Hazards:* dam failure, hazardous materials, transportation emergencies, train accident, major truck accident, airplane crash, nuclear materials emergencies
- *National Security Threats:* civil unrest, terrorism

Underlying all discussions concerning hazards is the concept of “risk.” Risk is the probability that something will cause harm, multiplied by the potential severity of the harm. In analyzing the risk of a potential event, two main factors are considered: the probability of the occurrence of the event and the severity of the consequences of the event. Hazard planning revolves around risk management, which includes preventive activities that reduce the likelihood of an event, mitigating activities that reduce the severity of the consequences of an event, or both.

Policies in this Element are designed to reduce potential loss and risk to life, property, and the environment from both natural and manmade hazards. They do so through the land use process, limiting the types and locations of uses relative to the potential for hazardous events, in the construction of key infrastructure and in requiring use of emergency plans and evacuation routes for communities.

### **3-14 Fire Protection**

Many areas of the county are at risk from wildland fires. “Wildlands” can be defined as undeveloped lands or lands with limited urban development. Many, but not all, wildlands are predominantly covered with vegetation, such as forests or grasslands. Population increases and the migration of people from the urban centers to the wildlands have presented challenges to fire protection agencies. One of the growing fire risk problems in California is the “wildland/urban interface,” where development encroaches on wildlands. Forests and grasslands are located throughout the county, side by side with residences and small communities. Even some of the more urban areas, such as of the lands surrounding Ukiah, are at risk from wildland fires. The potential fire hazard is exacerbated by the hot, dry summers typically experienced throughout most of the county and by the mountainous terrain.

Fire protection in Mendocino County is provided by local districts, the cities of Ukiah and Fort Bragg, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the U.S. Forest Service. **Table 3-G** lists all fire protection agencies in the county and their service areas. Fire agencies have mutual aid agreements to assist each other in handling fire and other emergency calls. The County of Mendocino Office of Emergency Services coordinates emergency response within the county.

Most first responders within local fire service agencies - excluding cities and state and federal agencies - are volunteers, with relatively few paid staff. Some local fire stations are run solely by volunteer firefighters. With only limited funding through property taxes and/or local assessments, local fire suppression operations in Mendocino County require continual fundraising. Other general problems faced by the county’s community fire districts, as identified by the Mendocino County Fire Chief’s Association Prevention Officers Committee in 2002, include:

- The continuing ability and availability of service providers to provide high-quality, timely transport of the sick and injured, including indigent care. Several ambulance services have reduced services, gone out of business, or face the possibility of one or the other in the near future.
- County fire and emergency service agencies, along with the County itself, have endured financial difficulties in providing funding necessary to maintain the joint dispatch system.

- Fire protection districts serve large areas of the County outside their boundaries, without financial compensation. Long response times and commitments of personnel and apparatus make these lands expensive to serve.
- Lack of private, and in some cases public, road signs and confusing address systems.
- Inadequate or inconsistent fire access road widths.
- Lack of water for structural and wildland firefighting.

**TABLE 3-G  
FIRE SERVICE AGENCIES IN MENDOCINO COUNTY**

Fire Service Agency	Area Served
<b>Local Fire Service Agencies</b>	
Albion Little River Volunteer Fire Department	Albion-Little River area
Anderson Valley Fire Department	Yorkville, Boonville, Philo, Navarro
Brooktrails Fire Department	Brooktrails township subdivision
Comptche Volunteer Fire Department	Comptche and environs
Covelo Fire Department	Covelo and environs
Elk Fire Department	Elk area
Greenwood Ridge Fire Department	Elk area
Hopland Fire District	Hopland area
Iron Peak Volunteer Fire Department	Laytonville area
Leggett Valley Fire Protection District	Restricted to state highway corridor area
Little Lake Fire Protection District	Willits area
Long Valley Fire Protection District	Laytonville area
Mendocino Fire Protection District	Mendocino area
Piercy Fire Protection District	Piercy area
Potter Valley Fire Department	Potter Valley area
Redwood Coast Fire Department	Point Arena area, City of Point Arena, Manchester
Redwood Valley-Calpella Fire Department	Redwood Valley and Calpella areas
South Coast Fire Protection District	Gualala and Anchor Bay areas
Ukiah Valley Fire District	Ukiah Valley, Talmage
Westport Volunteer Fire Department	Westport and immediate environs
Whale Gulch Volunteer Fire Department	Whitethorn area
<b>City Fire Departments</b>	
Fort Bragg Fire Department (City)	City of Fort Bragg
Ukiah Fire Department	City of Ukiah
<b>State and Federal Fire Service Agencies</b>	
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)	State responsibility areas (designated by the state)

U.S. Forest Service	Mendocino National Forest
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Source: Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services

### 3-15 Law Enforcement

The Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office is responsible for providing law enforcement services to the unincorporated areas of the county. The Sheriff’s Office also provides contract law enforcement services to the City of Point Arena, the Bureau of Land Management (Cow Mountain Recreation Area), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Lake Mendocino), and contract police dispatching services for the City of Fort Bragg. The main sheriff’s station, including dispatch and detention facilities, is located at the Mendocino County Administration Center complex in the City of Ukiah. Substations are located in the cities of Willits and Fort Bragg. The cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Willits have their own police departments. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is responsible for traffic enforcement services on state highways and county roads. A CHP office is located in Ukiah.

The number of reported crimes in Mendocino County has remained fairly consistent in recent years. From 2000 to 2006, the average number of reported crimes in the county was 1,510. The highest number was 1,731 in 2002, and the lowest number was 1,305 in 2006. For several years, the Sheriff’s Corrections Division suffered from chronic staffing shortages and turnover. However, in May 2007, the Corrections Division had nearly achieved full staffing with 45 of its 46 allocated positions filled.

Policies in this General Plan recognize the need and importance of providing adequate law enforcement services for the county, calling for regulation of development patterns and designs as a means of ensuring public safety, working with law enforcement agencies as part of the development process, and maintaining adequate development codes enforcement capabilities.

### 3-16 Education

Thirteen school districts and two community college districts serve Mendocino County. Each school district comprises various numbers of traditional public schools, charter schools, preschools, adult education, and special training opportunities. **Table 3-H** lists schools operated by each district. Some children in the northwestern part of the county may attend schools operated by the Southern Humboldt Unified School District in Humboldt County. Some school districts have experienced static or declining enrollment in recent years, such as Anderson Valley, Fort Bragg, Mendocino, and Willits. Others, such as Laytonville and Ukiah, are dealing with growth in their student populations.

**TABLE 3-H  
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MENDOCINO COUNTY**

School District	Schools Operated by District	
Anderson Valley	Anderson Valley Adult Education Anderson Valley Charter Network Anderson Valley Junior/Sr. High School Anderson Valley Agriculture Institute (part of Anderson Valley High School)	Peachland Preschool Rancheria High School Anderson Valley Elementary
Arena Union Elementary	Arena Union Elementary Arena Union Home Study	Pacific Community Charter School

Fort Bragg	Dana Gray Elementary School Fort Bragg Adult Education Fort Bragg High School Fort Bragg Independent Study Fort Bragg Middle School	Lighthouse Community Day School Noyo High School Redwood Elementary School Safe Passage Shelter Cove Community Day School
Laytonville	Branscomb School Laytonville Adult Education Laytonville Community Day School Laytonville Continuation High	Laytonville Elementary/Middle School Laytonville High School Spy Rock School
Leggett Valley	Leggett Valley Elementary School Leggett Valley Junior/Senior High School Redwood Continuation High School	Whale Gulch Elementary School Whale Gulch High School
Manchester Union Elementary	Manchester Union Elementary School	
Mendocino	Albion School Comptche Elementary School Greenwood Elementary School Mendocino Academy Mendocino Community High School	Mendocino Community Network Mendocino Grammar School Mendocino High School Mendocino Independent Study Mendocino Middle School
Point Arena Joint Union High	Point Arena Joint Union High School South Coast High School	
Potter Valley Community	Centerville High School Potter Valley Elementary Potter Valley Jr. High School	Potter Valley High School Potter Valley State Preschool Potter Valley Community Day School
Round Valley	Eel River Charter School Round Valley Community Day School Round Valley Continuation School	Round Valley Elementary School Round Valley High School
Ukiah	Accelerated Achievement Academy Black Oak Charter School Calpella School Eagle Peak Middle School Frank Zeek School Hopland School La Vida Independent Charter School Nokomis School Oak Manor School Pomolita Middle School Preschool Village	Redwood Academy of Ukiah South Valley High School Tree of Life Montessori School Ukiah Adult School Ukiah English Language Learners Ukiah High School Ukiah Independent Study Program Ukiah Special Services Yokayo School Yokayo Valley Charter High School
Willits	Baechtel Grove Blosser Lane Elementary Brookside Elementary New Horizons School for Independent Study Program San Hedrin High School Sherwood School	Willits Adult Education Willits Charter School Willits Community Day School Willits High School Willits Secondary Community Day School Willits Special Education

The College of the Redwoods Community College District was founded in Humboldt County. Later, coastal Mendocino County and Del Norte County joined to form the current district. The College of the Redwoods District has three campuses, one of which is located in Fort Bragg. The Mendocino-Lake Community College District serves inland Mendocino County and Lake County. The main campus, Mendocino College, is located in the Ukiah Valley north of Ukiah, with satellite campuses in Willits and Lakeport. In 2006, voters passed Measure W, a \$67.5 million facilities bond for building improvements in the Mendocino-Lake Community College District. A projected enrollment increase of 3 percent annually over the next five years can be accommodated within existing facilities and a planned expansion of the Willits campus. There is a significant immediate need for student housing. A portion of the county is also within the Sonoma Junior College District.

### 3-17 Seismicity and Geologic Conditions

Seismic and geologic hazards in Mendocino County include earthquakes, tsunamis (so-called “tidal waves”), landslides, and asbestos. These issues are summarized below.

#### Earthquake Hazards

Mendocino County is in an active **earthquake** area. Five faults or fault zones traverse Mendocino County and are considered potentially active or active.

- The *San Andreas Fault* traverses the southwest corner of the county and continues offshore north of Manchester. It is capable of generating very strong earthquakes. The last major earthquake on this portion of the San Andreas Fault was the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, which was estimated at a magnitude (M) of 7.9. This earthquake caused severe shaking in Mendocino County and extensive structural damage, particularly along the southern coast of the county. Ground rupture associated with this earthquake occurred from Santa Cruz to Manchester and offshore. It is reported that the lateral displacement across the fault was as much as 25 feet at Manchester during the 1906 earthquake. Since the 1906 earthquake, very little seismic activity has been recorded on the San Andreas Fault from San Francisco north.
- Associated with the San Andreas Fault is the *Whale Gulch Fault*, which extends from Shelter Cove southward into the northwesternmost corner of Mendocino County. In Mendocino County, the Whale Gulch Fault is located a few miles west of the offshore San Andreas Fault. It is considered to be potentially active.
- The *Maacama Fault* extends from northern Sonoma County to north of Laytonville in Mendocino County. Historically, the Maacama Fault has generated only a few moderate earthquakes. However, an abundance of micro-earthquakes (less than magnitude 3) are clearly associated with the fault. A magnitude 5.6 earthquake was reported to have occurred in the Ukiah area in 1869. Additionally, several earthquakes in the magnitude range of 4, with the strongest at M 4.9, were recorded in the Ukiah area in 1977-78. Surface fault creep, very slow movements across known fault locations, has been documented along the Maacama fault at locations east of Willits and Ukiah.
- The *Round Valley Fault* traverses the northeastern corner of Mendocino County. The Round Valley Fault has not been found to exhibit activity more recently than 1.6 million years ago, although study has been very limited. A few micro-earthquakes have been recorded in the vicinity of the fault, particularly at the southern end. The Round Valley Fault is considered potentially active.

- Located in the remote northeastern corner of Mendocino County, the *Etsel Ridge Fault* is the easternmost potentially active fault in Mendocino County. This fault has been the subject of very little study, but is believed to have experienced movement approximately 1.6 million years ago. Micro-earthquakes in the vicinity are scattered and limited. The Etsel Ridge Fault has been classified as potentially active.

In addition to the San Andreas and Maacama faults, the most significant seismic source is located about 30 miles northwest of Mendocino County and offshore. The Cascadia Subduction Zone is an area where several tectonic plates converge. It is considered capable of generating greater earthquakes than any other seismic source in the western United States. The most recent major earthquake associated with the Cascadia Subduction Zone occurred on January 26, 1700, and was estimated to have been M 9.0. In recent years, movement along the Cascadia Subduction Zone's margins in Northern California have generated magnitude 6.0-7.2 earthquakes, including a M 7.2 earthquake on June 15, 2005, and a M 6.6 earthquake on June 17, 2005.

**Liquefaction** is a condition that occurs during an earthquake when some soils behave more like a liquid than a solid, often with catastrophic results for buildings built on these soils.

There are several alluvial basins within Mendocino County where the subsurface conditions are locally conducive to liquefaction. These include the alluvial basins in the Willits, Ukiah, and Covelo areas. Fine-grained alluvial deposits along river systems (e.g., the mouth of the Garcia River at Manchester) also are susceptible to liquefaction. There are other, smaller alluvial deposits in the county that may have conditions conducive to liquefaction as well.

### Tsunamis

Tsunamis are ocean waves generated by earthquakes, submarine volcanic eruptions, or large submarine landslides. As a tsunami enters shallow water near the coastline, the wave height increases. If the trough of the wave reaches land first, the arrival of a tsunami is preceded by receding coastal waters. The large waves that follow can crest at heights of more than 50 feet and strike with devastating force. Three tsunamis have caused property damage along the Mendocino County coastline in the past 65 years. In 1946, Noyo Harbor experienced damage in the dock areas, with an estimated 100 fishing boats thrown about as a result of a tsunami generated by an earthquake in the Aleutian Islands. In 1960, six fishing boats in Noyo Harbor were lost as a result of a tsunami generated by an earthquake in Chile. In 1964, a tsunami generated by the Alaska earthquake struck Noyo Harbor, causing damage estimated at \$250,000-1,000,000, sinking 10 boats and damaging more than 100 fishing boats.

### Landslides

Landslides in Mendocino County have been a major part of the natural erosion process for tens of thousands of years. The rainy wet winters and relatively dry summers, the mountainous terrain, and commonly weak bedrock conditions all contribute to the development of landslides. Seismic shaking can also be a triggering mechanism. Activities of man that affect vegetation, slope gradients, and drainage processes can also contribute to landsliding and erosion. In general, most rock formations in Mendocino County are associated with the Franciscan Formation, which is known to have poor slope stability characteristics. Slope stability characteristics within the Maacama fault zone are typically very poor as well. Along the coast, undercutting of the coastal bluffs by wave action makes the bluffs particularly susceptible to rock fall slope failures.

### Asbestos

Naturally occurring asbestos is an issue of concern in Mendocino County, which contains areas where asbestos-containing rocks are found.



Asbestos is the general name for a group of rock-forming minerals that consist of extremely strong and durable fibers. When asbestos fibers are disturbed, such as by grading and construction activities, they are released into the air where they remain for a long period of time. These fibers pose a serious health threat if inhaled, as they can become permanently lodged in body tissues. Exposure to asbestos has been shown to cause cancer of the lung and stomach and other cancers, as well as asbestosis. The presence of ultramafic rocks indicates the possible existence of asbestos mineral groups. Ultramafic rocks contain 90 percent or more of dark-colored, iron-magnesium-silicate minerals. Ultramafic rocks may be partially or completely altered to a rock known as serpentinite, more commonly called serpentine.

Serpentine and ultramafic rocks are common within the eastern belt of the Franciscan Formation in Mendocino County. Small localized areas of serpentinite do occur within the coastal belt of the Franciscan Formation, but they are significantly less abundant.

The Mendocino County Air Quality Management District has adopted policies to reduce the effects of development projects involving construction sites and unpaved roads in areas tested and determined by a state-registered geologist to contain naturally occurring asbestos.

### **3-18 Flooding and Inundation**

Flooding can be a major problem in almost any part of the county. In Mendocino County, two types of flooding occur: overbank flooding due to excessive rainfall and coastal flooding due to wave run-up. Localized flooding may occur outside of recognized drainage channels or floodplains, due to a combination of locally heavy precipitation, increased surface runoff, and inadequate facilities for drainage and stormwater conveyance. Such events frequently occur in flat areas and in urbanized areas with large impermeable surfaces.

In general, major floods within Mendocino County have resulted from extended periods of winter rainfall produced by winter storms from the Pacific Ocean. Historical records from 1911 through 2006 indicate that flooding, landsliding, embankment failures, and high winds were experienced in portions of Mendocino County during the following periods: November 1912, December 1937, December 1955, December 1964, April 1965, January 1966, January 1974, January 1978, February, 1983, February 1986, January 1995, March 1995, January 1997, February 1998, and December 2005-January 2006. While most of the identified floodplains are located in relatively undeveloped areas, infrastructure and other nonresidential and residential development susceptible to flooding include:

- State Route 175 at the Russian River Bridge
- State Route 1 at the Garcia River
- Talmage Court – east side of the Ukiah Valley
- Ukiah – eastern side along/near the Russian River
- Little Lake Valley near Willits wastewater treatment plant
- Confluence of Anderson, Roversin, and Mill Creeks near Boonville
- Tenmile Creek near Laytonville
- Town Creek near Covelo
- South Fork of Eel
- Felize Creek and Russian River near Hopland
- Mill Creek in the Talmage area

Based on previous occurrences, Mendocino County can expect a serious flood event to occur every 3-4 years, and in particular, during strong El Niño years (every 7-8 years).

The county's numerous rivers and streams present potential flooding and inundation hazards. Policies call for recognition of flooding and inundation hazards in considering land use actions, and reducing potential for exposure of persons and structures to flooding. New development is also subject to review relative to impacts caused by placement of fill and structures in the floodplain. The County would continue to implement FEMA flood insurance program requirements.

## **Development Goals**

The following are the County of Mendocino's Goals related to the various topics addressed in this Development Element. These Goals are based on the Planning Principles contained in Section 2 of this General Plan; all of the Policies and Objectives in this Development Element are in turn based on these Goals.

- |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goal DE-1 (Land Use)</b>          | Land use patterns that maintain the rural character of Mendocino County, preserve its natural resources, and recognize the constraints of the land and the limited availability of infrastructure and public services.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Goal DE-2 (Land Use)</b>          | Compact and cohesive commercial centers to foster commercial growth, create livable and walkable communities, and allow the provision of cost-effective services and facilities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Goal DE-3 (Land Use)</b>          | Industrial sites and uses (including resource-based industries) located and designed to minimize conflicts with surrounding land uses, minimize environmental degradation and risk from natural and man-made hazards, and protect natural resources.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Goal DE-4 (Land Use)</b>          | Functional, safe and attractive communities compatible with the General Plan and community objectives, infrastructure availability, and environmental, safety, economic, and other opportunities and constraints.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Goal D-5 (Noise)</b>              | A county in which all land uses are protected from excessive noise.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Goal D-6 (Cultural Resources)</b> | Protection and preservation of the county's significant historical, archaeological and cultural resources.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Goal D-7 (Infrastructure)</b>     | Basic infrastructure sufficient to support existing and future development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Goal D-8 (Transportation)</b>     | A balanced and coordinated transportation system that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is an integrated and attractive part of each community.</li><li>• Is functional, safe and pleasant to use, and supports emergency services.</li><li>• Provides a choice of modes accessing and connecting places frequented in daily life.</li><li>• Promotes compact development and infrastructure efficiencies.</li><li>• Is consistent with principles of sustainability and conservation of resources.</li><li>• Is not solely dependent on the continuation of fossil fuel resources.</li><li>• Can be maintained, used, and justified as available energy sources which may undergo transition during the duration of the General Plan.</li></ul> |

<b>Goal D-9 (Road Systems)</b>	A countywide road system that provides safe, efficient and attractive access, coordinated with interstate, state, local and area-wide systems.
<b>Goal D-10 (Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle)</b>	Functional, safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle systems coordinated with regional and local transportation plans and other transportation modes.
<b>Goal D-11 (Transit Systems)</b>	A transit system responsive to transit-dependent populations and to local and regional needs.
<b>Goal D-12 (Rail)</b>	Viable rail service for freight and passenger movement, and tourism; compatible ancillary uses of railway rights-of-way; and protection of the rail right-of-way from encroachment by incompatible uses.
<b>Goal D-13 (Airports)</b>	Viable public airports which meet community and regional general aviation, economic, and emergency services needs.
<b>Goal D-14 (Harbors)</b>	Harbors which meet the needs of Mendocino County businesses and residents for the shipping and receiving of products, raw materials, and passengers.
<b>Goal D-15 (Parks/Recreation)</b>	Diverse recreational, leisure and cultural opportunities and community spaces to serve regional, community and neighborhood needs.
<b>Goal D-16 (Water/Sewer)</b>	Efficient and adequate public water and sewer services.
<b>Goal D-17 (Drainage)</b>	To protect residents and businesses from hazards caused by flooding.
<b>Goal D-18 (Flooding/Inundation)</b>	To protect and manage natural drainage ways, floodplains and flood retention basins, to maintain flood carrying capacity in harmony with environmental, recreational and open space objectives.
<b>Goal D-19 (Solid Waste)</b>	To reduce risks to human and environmental health posed by solid, hazardous and toxic materials and wastes.
<b>Goal D-20 (Other Utilities)</b>	Utility systems that are readily available and support a viable economy, safeguard health, and do not detract visually from the area.
<b>Goal D-21 (Safety)</b>	To reduce, to the extent possible, the risk and exposure of life, property and the environment to hazardous conditions and events such as earthquakes, landslides, wildfires, floods, inundation, energy emergencies, and toxic releases.
<b>Goal D-22 (Fire)</b>	To protect life, property and natural resources by ensuring that development is compatible with fire protection capabilities.
<b>Goal D-23 (Law Enforcement)</b>	To coordinate planning activities and development proposals with law enforcement capabilities to create communities,

neighborhoods and conditions that enhance community health, safety and effective law enforcement.

**Goal D-24 (Geologic Conditions)** To locate and design development in a manner that avoids or is compatible with risk posed by geologic and seismic hazards.

**Goal D-25 (Education)** Schools that provide adequate facilities and sustain a safe, healthy and peaceful learning environment.

### **Development Policies**

The following are the County of Mendocino’s Development policies related to the various topics addressed in this Development Element. These policies implement the Goals shown earlier in this Element, and are accompanied where necessary by specific actions to implement the policy. Policies in this Element address the following general topics:

#### **Land Use**

General Land Use Policies .....	3.0-61
Land Use Classifications.....	3.0-68
Commercial and Mixed Use Development Policies .....	3.0-81
Industrial Development Policies .....	3.0-82

#### **Community Character**

Community Character Policies .....	3.0-83
Noise Policies.....	3.0-87
Cultural Resources Policies .....	3.0-90

#### **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure (Facilities and Services) Policies.....	3.0-90
Transportation Policies .....	3.0-91
Road Systems Policies .....	3.0-92
Pedestrian and Bicycle Systems Policies .....	3.0-96
Transit Systems Policies .....	3.0-96
Rail Policies .....	3.0-97
Airports Policies.....	3.0-98
Harbors Policies .....	3.0-98
Parks and Recreation Policies .....	3.0-98

#### **Water Supply and Sewer (Wastewater Treatment)**

Water Supply and Sewer (Wastewater Treatment) Services Policies.....	3.0-75
Drainage and Flooding Policies .....	3.0-76
Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste and Materials Management Policies .....	3.0-76
Other Utility Systems Policies .....	3.0-77

#### **Safety**

Hazard Reduction and Emergency Response Policies.....	3.0-77
Fire Protection Policies .....	3.0-78
Law Enforcement Policies .....	3.0-80
Geologic Conditions Policies.....	3.0-80
Seismicity Policies .....	3.0-81
Education Policies.....	3.0-81

## General Land Use Policies

**Policy DE-1:** **Figure 3-14**, “Land Use Map,” depicts the land use policy of the County of Mendocino. The standards shown or contained in this General Plan shall apply to the land use categories shown on the Land Use Map. All discretionary approvals shall be in conformance with these standards unless explicitly stated otherwise in this General Plan.

**Policy DE-2:** The Land Use Map is presented as a general illustration of the policies of the General Plan and is not intended to reflect every policy direction. Specific review of applicable policies may be necessary to determine the precise land use potential of any site. Further, the information shown on the map is not intended to be parcel-specific and should not be interpreted as such. Information should be interpreted at a printed or displayed scale of one inch = 1,000 feet to ensure that the intended level of specificity is maintained.

**Policy DE-3:** Zoning shall be consistent with this General Plan. **Table 3-I**, “General Plan and Zoning Consistency,” shall be used to determine consistency for rezoning applications.

**Action Item DE-3.1:** Amend the Zoning Code to include a “Mixed Use” zoning district.

**TABLE 3-I  
GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CONSISTENCY**

General Plan Land Use Category	Appropriate Zoning Designations
Rural Community	R-C: Rural Community S-R: Suburban Residential R-1: Single-Family Residential R-2: Two-Family Residential R-3: Multiple-Family Residential MU: Mixed Use C-1: Limited Commercial C-2: General Commercial I-1: Limited Industrial I-2: General Industrial P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Suburban Residential	S-R: Suburban Residential R-1: Single-Family Residential R-2: Two-Family Residential R-3: Multiple-Family Residential MU: Mixed Use C-1: Limited Commercial P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Rural Residential (RR-1, RR-2, RR-5, RR-10)	RR: L: 1 Rural Residential; 40,000 SF Minimum RR: L: 2: 80,000 SF Minimum RR: L 5 Rural Residential: 5 acres Minimum RR: L: 10 Rural Residential: 10 acres Minimum

	P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Remote Residential (RMR:20 ACRES, RMR:40 Acres)	U-R: L: 20 Upland Residential: 20 acres Minimum U-R: L: 40 Upland Residential: 40 acres Minimum AG: Agricultural R-L: Rangeland F-L: Forestland T-P: Timberland Production P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Industrial	I-1: Limited Industrial I-2: General Industrial P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Commercial	C-1: Limited Commercial C-2: General Commercial MU: Mixed Use P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Agricultural Lands	AG: Agricultural P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Rangelands	R-L: Rangeland F-L: Forestland T-P: Timberland Production O-S: Open Space
Forest Lands	F-L: Forestland T-P: Timberland Production R-L: Rangeland O-S: Open Space
Remote Resource Lands	R-L: L: 640 Rangeland: 640 acres Minimum F-L: L: 640 Forestland Production: 640 acres Minimum T-P: L: 640 Timberland Production: 640 acres Minimum O-S: Open Space
Public Lands	P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space
Open Space	O-S: Open Space
Public Services	P-F: Public Facilities O-S: Open Space

Policy DE-4: Designate sufficient land to accommodate the projected commercial, industrial, residential, and infrastructure needs of each community, compatible with General Plan policies, site planning constraints, and local community objectives. (*Working Draft #3-2a*)

Policy DE-5: Land use classifications shall be broad enough to allow flexibility in implementation, but specific enough to provide sufficient direction for carrying out General Plan objectives. (Working Draft #3-2b)

Policy DE-6: The minimum parcel size for each classification is appropriate only when all conditions are favorable. The presence of various constraints or local community preferences for lower densities may result in larger minimum parcel sizes established through more restrictive zoning or actions on proposed subdivisions. In some cases, the minimum parcel size or maximum dwelling density may be increased under the terms of the County's Housing Element.

Policy DE-7: The minimum parcel size stated for each classification only applies to new divisions of land. Parcels legally created prior to adoption or amendment of the General Plan smaller than the stated minimum are afforded the same uses enjoyed by a parcel of the minimum size.

Action Item DE-7.1: The County will consider a program to encourage consolidation of rural parcels through density bonuses (allowing more units in exchange for preserving open space and/or providing larger lots) or other incentives.

## Land Use Classifications

**Note to the Reader:** The descriptions of land use classifications in the policies in this Element should be interpreted along with goals and policies in other Elements of the General Plan. Land use classifications include a statement of intent and the major types of uses that can be conducted. The County's Zoning Ordinance and other development Codes provide more detail about the distribution, location, type and intensity of land uses within each classification.

The following are the land use categories designated by the County:

I-Industrial .....	page 3.0-67
C-Commercial.....	page 3.0-68
RC-Rural Community .....	page 3.0-68
SR-Suburban Residential .....	page 3.0-70
RR-Rural Residential .....	page 3.0-71
RMR-Remote Residential .....	page 3.0-72
AG-Agricultural Lands .....	page 3.0-72
RL-Range Lands .....	page 3.0-73
FL-Forest Lands.....	page 3.0-73
RMR-Remote Resource Lands .....	page 3.0-74
PL-Public Lands.....	page 3.0-74
OS-Open Space.....	page 3.0-74
PS-Public Services .....	page 3.0-75
TL-Tribal Lands.....	page 3.0-75

Policy DE-8: Land Use Category: I-Industrial

Intent: The industrial classification is intended to be applied to lands suited for major industrial uses, where necessary services such as transportation systems and utilities exist or can be efficiently provided, where disruption of proximate uses will be least, and where the potential for environmental disruption is minimum or can be adequately controlled.



General Uses: Processing and manufacturing, industrial public utilities, industrial public facilities, compatible commercial uses, utility installations, limited residential uses. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

Minimum Parcel Size:

- Within water and sewer districts: none.
- Within water or sewer districts: 12,000 square feet.
- Not in a water or sewer district: 40,000 square feet.

Maximum Dwelling Density: Residential use shall be limited to a single caretaker dwelling per legally created parcel or employee housing not exceeding one unit per 6,000 square feet or three units total, except on the Pinoleville Rancheria where one single family residence and one second unit per parcel may also be allowed. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

Policy DE-9: Land Use Category: C-Commercial

Intent The Commercial classification is intended to be applied to lands appropriate for a variety of commercial uses. Lands classified Commercial should be within or contiguous to developed areas, such as near the boundaries of cities and in Community Planning Areas, and should be served by the publicly-maintained circulation network and should be situated in locations where future growth is anticipated. Residential uses within the commercial classification shall require County findings that the site need not be reserved for future commercial uses, and that the residential use is compatible with existing or anticipated commercial uses.

General Uses: General commercial, mixed uses, public facilities, public services, public assemblies, residential developments, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size:

- Within water and sewer districts: None for commercial uses; 6,000 square feet for residential use.
- Within water or sewer districts: 12,000 square feet.
- Not in a water or sewer district: 40,000 square feet.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One single family dwelling per legally created parcel, unless otherwise noted. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

- Within water and sewer districts: 1 multiple family dwelling unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)
- Within water or sewer districts: 1 multiple family dwelling unit per 12,000 square feet of lot area. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)
- Not in a water or sewer district: multiple family dwelling units not permitted. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254) Consistent with Housing Element Action 4.3, consider reduced lot sizes when subdivision design, use of clustering and other

site planning and service-provision techniques may support increased residential density.

Policy DE-10: Land Use Category: RC-Rural Community

Intent: The Rural Community classification is intended to be applied to small, unincorporated towns and community centers (including within the Community Planning Areas) and near City boundaries, which provide a variety of community and tourist-oriented goods and services, but which may not have well-defined or identifiable commercial or residential districts. The classification may also be appropriate around a central commercial or industrial nucleus. The Rural Community classification designates areas which are logical, planned centers for future growth. As such, the Rural Community designation anticipates mixed or multiple land uses on any given lot, consistent with and supportive of a higher intensity of development in the community area core that will further define each of these town centers. Preference shall be given to those projects providing affordable housing, consistent with policies of the County's 2004 Housing Element, and infill development. Lower residential densities and intensity of development is planned away from the town centers, near the peripheries of the Community Planning Areas, in order to ensure a transition to outlying resource lands and open space areas. New development shall only be permitted when provisions are made for construction or expansion of public service facilities, such as schools, recreation facilities, fire stations, water systems, sewer systems, storm drainage and solid waste disposal facilities.

General Uses: Residential developments of varying densities (with development of affordable multi-family residential units to be classified in the Zoning Ordinance as a permitted use), mobile home parks, community commercial, tourist commercial, cottage industries, light industrial, public facilities, public services, public assemblies, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size:

- Within water and sewer districts: None for commercial use; 4,000 square feet for mobile home subdivisions and manufactured home subdivisions; 6,000 square feet for single-family residential use.
- Within water or sewer districts: 12,000 square feet.
- Not in a water or sewer district: 40,000 square feet.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One single family dwelling per legally created parcel. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel, except as provided below:

- Within water and sewer districts: 1 single family dwelling per 4,000 square feet of lot area in mobile home parks, mobile home subdivisions and manufactured home subdivisions 1 single family dwelling per 6,000 square feet of lot area. 1 multiple family dwelling unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)
- Within water or sewer districts: 1 single family dwelling per 12,000 square feet of lot area, or 1 multiple family dwelling unit per 12,000 square feet of lot area. Higher residential densities (up to one dwelling unit per 2,000 square feet) may be allowed

where alternative sewage disposal is provided to the satisfaction of the County. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

- Not in a water or sewer district: 1 single family dwelling per 40,000 square feet, multiple family dwelling units not permitted. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254) Consistent with Housing Element Action 4.3, consider reduced lot sizes when subdivision design, use of clustering and other site planning and service-provision techniques may support increased residential density.

Higher residential densities, up to 20 units per acre, may be permitted in the town centers of Community Planning Areas and combined with commercial or other uses, with demonstration of availability of necessary public services, particularly public water and sewer systems.

Consistent with Housing Element Action 6.8, provide for administrative approvals of subdivisions of four or fewer units supporting multi-family residential development.

Policy DE-11: Land Use Category: SR-Suburban Residential

Intent: The Suburban Residential classification is intended to be applied to transitional lands adjacent to cities or towns, including within portions of Community Planning Areas where only residential activities are considered desirable, which lands are appropriate to accommodate future growth. Lands within the Suburban Residential classification should have moderate to light constraints for residential development, should be served by the publicly-maintained road network, and should be located within public service districts or the logical extensions thereof. Portions of lands within the Suburban Residential classification will be appropriate for development of residential subdivisions. Such areas should be developed as major subdivisions, not minor subdivisions; or retained in parcels of sufficient size to be economically developed as subdivisions at some future time.

General Uses: Residential developments, mobile home parks, community commercial, mixed uses, cottage industries, public facilities, public services, public assemblies, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size:

- Within water and sewer districts: 4,000 square feet for mobile home subdivisions and manufactured home subdivisions; 6,000 square feet for standard single-family residential lots.
- Within water or sewer districts: 12,000 square feet
- Not in a water or sewer district: 40,000 square feet. Consistent with Housing Element Action 4.3, consider reduced lot sizes when subdivision design, use of clustering and other site planning and service-provision techniques may support increased residential density.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One single family dwelling per legally created parcel. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel, except as provided below:

- Within water and sewer districts: 1 single family dwelling per 4,000 square feet of lot area in mobile home parks, mobile home subdivisions and manufactured home subdivisions. 1 single family dwelling per 6,000 square feet of lot area. 1 multiple

family dwelling unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

- Within water or sewer districts: 1 single family dwelling per 12,000 square feet of lot area, or 1 multiple family dwelling unit per 12,000 square feet of lot area. Higher residential densities (up to one dwelling unit per 2,000 square feet) may be allowed where alternative sewage disposal is provided to the satisfaction of the County. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)
- Not in a water or sewer district: 1 single family dwelling per 40,000 square feet, multiple family dwelling units not Permitted. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

Consistent with Housing Element Action 6.8, provide for administrative approvals of subdivisions of four or fewer units supporting multi-family residential development.

Policy DE-12: Land Use Category: RR-Rural Residential

Intent: The RR classification is intended to encourage local small scale food production (farming) in areas which are not well suited for large scale commercial agriculture, defined by present or potential use, location, mini-climate, slope, exposure, etc. The Rural Residential classification is not intended to be a growth area, and residences should be located as to create minimal impact on agricultural viability.

General Uses: Residential uses, agricultural uses, cottage industries, residential clustering, public facilities, public services, conservation and development of natural resources, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size:

- RR-1: 40,000 square feet.
- RR-2: 80,000 square feet.
- RR-5: Five acres.
- RR-10: Ten acres.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One dwelling per 40,000 square feet, 80,000 square feet, five acres or ten acres, as designated on the land use map. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

Policy DE-13: Land Use Category: RMR-Remote Residential

Intent: The RMR classification is intended to be applied to lands having constraints for commercial agriculture, timber production or grazing, which are well suited for small scale farming and low density agricultural/residential uses by the absence of such limitations as inadequate access, unacceptable hazard exposure or incompatibility with adjoining resource land uses. The classification is also applied to some areas which might not otherwise qualify except for the fact that the land has been divided and substantial development has occurred.

General Uses: Residential uses, agricultural uses, cottage industries, residential clustering, public facilities, conservation and development of natural resources, and recreation, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size: Twenty acres, or forty acres, as designated on the Land Use Map.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One dwelling per 20 acres or 40 acres as designated on the Land Use Map. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

Policy DE-14: Land Use Category: AG-Agricultural Lands

Intent: The Agricultural Lands classification is intended to be applied to lands which are suited for and are appropriately retained for production of crops. The classification should include lands presently under Type I agricultural preserve contracts, land having present or future potential for significant agricultural production, and contiguous or intermixed smaller parcels on which non-compatible uses could jeopardize the agricultural use of agricultural lands. Permitted non-agricultural uses, to the greatest extent possible, should not occur on lands that might otherwise be devoted to crop production.

General Uses: Residential uses, farmworker housing, agricultural uses, processing and sale of agricultural products, cottage industries, residential clustering, uses determined to be related to and compatible with agriculture, conservation, processing and development of natural resources, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size: Forty (40) acres

Maximum Dwelling Density: One dwelling per forty (40) acres, except farmworker housing which may be permitted at higher densities. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

Policy DE-15: Land Use Category: RL-Range Lands

Intent: The Range Lands classification is intended to be applied to lands which are suited for and are appropriately retained- for the grazing of livestock. The classification should include land eligible for incorporation into Type II agricultural preserves, other lands generally in range use, intermixed smaller parcels and other contiguous lands, the inclusion of which is necessary for the protection and efficient management of range lands.

General Uses: Residential uses, agricultural uses, forestry, cottage industries, residential clustering, uses determined to be related to and compatible with ranching, conservation, processing and development of natural resources, recreation, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size: One hundred sixty acres.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One dwelling per 160 acres, County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

Policy DE-16: Land Use Category: FL-Forest Lands

Intent: The Forest Lands classification is intended to be applied to lands which are suited for and are appropriately retained for the growing, harvesting and production of timber and timber-related products. The classification should include lands eligible to be zoned Timberland Production; intermixed smaller parcels and other contiguous lands, the inclusion of which is necessary for the protection and efficient management of timber resource lands. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

General Uses: Residential uses, forestry, timber processing, agricultural uses, cottage industries, residential clustering, uses determined to be related to and compatible with forestry, conservation, processing, and development of natural resources, recreation, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size: One hundred sixty acres.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One dwelling per 160 acres, County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

Policy DE-17: Land Use Category: RMR-Remote Resource Lands

Intent: Remote Resource Lands classification is intended to be applied to lands which are suited for and are appropriately retained for the grazing of livestock and the production of timber. The classification is intended to protect these lands from the pressures of residential development.

General Uses: Grazing, agriculture, forestry, residential, residential clustering, conservation, processing, and development of natural resources, recreation, uses determined to be related to and compatible with ranching and timber operations, utility installations. (Revised 12-9-91, Resolution No. 91-254)

Minimum Parcel Size: 640 acres.

Maximum Dwelling Density: One dwelling per 640 acres, including employee housing. County review and approval required for more than one dwelling per legally created parcel.

Policy DE-18: Land Use Category: PL-Public Lands

Intent: The Public Lands classification is intended to be applied to land in public ownership not appropriately included in some other classification. The classification is also intended to be applied to lands held and managed for public recreation or appropriate for acquisition for public purposes.

General Uses: Agricultural uses, forestry, conservation and development of natural resources, public facilities, recreation, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size: Not applicable.

Maximum Dwelling Density: No dwellings permitted except where required to meet the Public Lands intent.

Policy DE-19: Land Use Category: OS-Open Space

Intent: The Open Space classification is intended to be applied to lands not suited for development or to lands most valuable in their undeveloped natural state. Factors limiting the development potential of land would include such constraints as unstable soils, high fire hazard, remote location, poor access and susceptibility to flooding. Valuable natural areas could include rare and endangered species and habitat, riparian vegetation zones, or wild and scenic rivers.

General Uses: Agricultural uses, forestry, conservation and development of natural resources, recreation, utility installations.

Minimum Parcel Size: No division permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the division furthers the intent of the Open Space classification.

Maximum Dwelling Density: No dwellings permitted except to further the Open Space intent.

Policy DE-20: Land Use Category: PS-Public Services

Intent: The Public Services classification is intended to be applied to lands presently being used for major public service facilities and to lands appropriately reserved for expansion of or construction of new public serving facilities.

General Uses: Sanitary landfills, cemeteries, airports, corporation yards, electric generating plants, power substations and other support facilities, schools, hospitals, civic centers, fairgrounds, utility installations, caretaker's dwelling unit.

Minimum Parcel Size:

- Within water and sewer districts: None
- Within water or sewer districts: 12,000 square feet.
- Not in a water or sewer district: 40,000 square feet.

Maximum Dwelling Density: Residential use shall be limited to a single caretaker dwelling per ownership.

Policy DE-21: Land Use Category: T-Tribal Lands

Intent: The Tribal Lands classification is intended to be applied to lands owned by a Federally Recognized Tribe or Tribally Sponsored Organization when a Tribe requests the designation. The Tribal Lands designation provides for flexibility in the range of uses permitted, while requiring detailed planning and environmental analysis (as defined below) prior to development.

Detailed Planning: "Detailed planning" may include a Specific Plan or another type of comprehensive plan addressing land use, infrastructure, and other topics negotiated between the Tribe and the County for the proper planning of the land in question. A detailed plan shall be subject to negotiated application of applicable County of Mendocino requirements, including but not limited to those that relate to plan content, noticing, approval, amendment, and environmental analysis.

Voluntary Designation: The Tribal Lands designation shall only be placed on lands at the request of the Federally Recognized Tribe or Tribally Sponsored Organization which owns the land. Applying the Tribal Lands designation shall be a negotiation similar to a General Plan Amendment process and shall be subject to requirements for an analysis of potential environmental effects. Removal of the designation shall be considered a General Plan Amendment and subject to all the requirements for an Amendment to this General Plan.

A General Plan Amendment to remove the Tribal Lands designation may be initiated by the owner if the Tribe wishes to place the lands into Federal Trust Status.

The County may initiate a General Plan Amendment to remove the Tribal Lands designation if the designated lands are sold by the Federally Recognized Tribe (FRT) or Tribally Sponsored Organization (TSO) to any private or public entity which is not a FRT or TSO.

General Uses: The following land use categories may be applied through the detailed planning process to lands with the Tribal Lands designation:

I-Industrial

C-Commercial

RC-Rural Community

SR-Suburban Residential

RR-Rural Residential

RMR-Remote Residential

AG-Agricultural Lands

FL-Forest Lands

RMR-Remote Resource Lands

PL-Public Lands

OS-Open Space

PS-Public Services

Special Use Requirements: The following shall apply to the designations applied through the detailed planning process:

Residential development shall be subject to all locational, buffering, parcel size, and other requirements imposed by this General Plan to protect adjacent Agricultural and Range Lands.

Industrial development may not be placed adjacent to residential development or residentially designated lands outside the boundaries of the Tribal Lands areas.

Prohibited Uses: Casinos or other monetary or revenue-based gambling uses are specifically prohibited in the Tribal Lands designation.

Minimum Parcel Size: Minimum parcel sizes shall be as defined in this General Plan for the land use categories proposed to be applied through the detailed planning process.

Maximum Dwelling Density: Residential density shall be as defined in this General Plan for the land use categories proposed to be applied through the detailed planning process.

Policy DE-22: The County encourages clustering, density transfers and density bonuses or incentives to achieve General Plan, environmental and housing objectives.

Action Item DE-22.1: Amend the development codes, including the Zoning Ordinance, to implement parcel and dwelling unit clustering, density transfers, density averaging, density bonuses and similar programs, consistent with the General Plan.



Policy DE-23: Allow density transfers between land use classifications, especially in support of an action to preserve resource lands, subject to the following:

- Density may be transferred from any classification to any classification with an equivalent or higher base density; except that density may not be transferred to any of the following categories:
  - Land zoned Agricultural, Open Space, or Timberland Production;
  - Land within Resource Preserves pursuant to the Mendocino County Code;
  - Land within conservation or open space easements or other development-restricted areas; or
  - Environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas.
- Areas from which density is transferred (i.e., donor sites) shall be protected from future division or density increases in perpetuity by a legal mechanism acceptable to the County.
- The area to which density is transferred (i.e., receptor sites) must be located and designed to protect resources, minimize site disturbance, maintain compatibility with surrounding areas, have adequate infrastructure and services, access to public roads, and comply with the General Plan, development codes and environmental policies.

Policy DE-24: Allow a density bonus not exceeding 50 percent, in lieu of density that would be allowed if the property were subdivided and second units were placed on each parcel, provided parcels or dwellings are clustered and at least 75 percent of the site is protected from future development. (*Working Draft #3-2c*)

Action Item DE-24.1: Review the density bonus over time to assess its effectiveness and its impact on local services and facilities.

Policy DE-25: Allow increased and flexible land use density and intensity to implement the Housing Element. (*Working Draft #3-2d*)

Action Item DE-25.1: Revise development standards for residential densities and intensities to accommodate the development of affordable housing and housing for special need populations consistent with the Housing Element. (*Working Draft #3-2d*)

Policy DE-26: Until General Plan, zoning and other regulations are revised consistent with the Housing Element, regulations and decision making shall conform to Housing Element policies to the maximum extent possible. (*Working Draft #3-2d*)

Policy DE-27: Single-family residential density shall include one second unit or equivalent accessory unit per legal parcel as defined in the development code. Development codes shall define accessory and temporary residential use regulations. (*Working Draft #3-2e*)

Policy DE-28: Legal parcels split by General Plan or zoning lines shall not be subdivided along those lines unless each resulting parcel conforms to minimum parcel size requirements in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. (*Working Draft #3-2f*)

Policy DE-29: Protect natural resources and promote orderly development by enforcing the County's Resource Preserves Merger Ordinance. (*Working Draft #3-2g*)

Policy DE-30: Legally created parcels (including certificates of compliance) that do not comply with development requirements shall only be developed conditional to the satisfaction of basic requirements for health, safety, access and orderly development. *(Working Draft #3-2h)*

Policy DE-31: Encourage clustering, density transfers, or reconfiguration of parcels that do not comply with development requirements. *(Working Draft #3-2h)*

Policy DE-32: Allow development of legal nonconforming lots, structures and uses consistent with General Plan, environmental and community objectives. The following standards shall apply:

- Legal nonconforming lots may be developed, legal nonconforming structures may be used, and legal nonconforming uses may continue when basic health and safety are provided.
- Discontinued or destroyed legal nonconforming uses and structures must be reestablished within a reasonable time, as established in Development Code Section 20.204.015, or future uses must conform to applicable regulations. *(Working Draft #3-2i)*

Policy DE-33: The County shall seek the discontinuance or relocation of nonconforming structures and uses that are incompatible with General Plan, environmental or community objectives. *(Working Draft #3-2j)*

Policy DE-34: Legal nonconforming uses and structures may be expanded as provided in Development Code Section 20.204.025, compatible with General Plan, environmental and community objectives. *(Working Draft #3-2j)*

Policy DE-35: Locate development and infrastructure within community areas planned for growth. *(Working Draft #3-3a)*

Policy DE-36: Encourage compact development patterns, infill, redevelopment and reuse in community areas to protect natural resources and maximize the efficient use of infrastructure and services.

- Land use and development standards shall encourage intensive uses, infill and reuse projects within community areas.
- Encourage and facilitate mixed-use development.
- Maintain compact development patterns and limit sprawl by focusing commercial, residential and community uses within community areas. *(Working Draft #3-3b)*

Policy DE-37: Work with LAFCO and other agencies to reduce suburban sprawl, promote efficient service delivery, and protect agricultural, timber and open space areas from unintended conversion to urban uses. *(Working Draft #3-3c)*

Policy DE-38: Create defined boundaries for each community area, separating suburban or urban land uses from adjoining resource and rural landscapes. *(Working Draft #3-3d)*

Policy DE-39: Development limits and long-term phased growth boundaries may be established for the various community areas taking into account community objectives. Phased growth boundaries shall not result in premature expansion of community areas or infrastructure. *(Working Draft #3-3d)*

Policy DE-40: Maintain communities as distinct places with visual separation. *(Working Draft #3-3d)*

Policy DE-41: Maintain transitional open space boundaries between commercial and residential community core areas and open space/resource space lands. *(Working Draft #3-3d)*

Policy DE-42: Limit commercial strip development along highway corridors on the outskirts of communities by setting community-appropriate design standards and promoting infill, multi-story construction and compactness. *(Working Draft #3-3d)*

Policy DE-43: Maximize land use compatibility between community areas and the surrounding lands. *(Working Draft #3-3e)*

### **Commercial and Mixed Use Development Policies**

Policy DE-44: Designate adequate land to meet neighborhood and community growth demands for a broad range of commercial, residential and mixed uses.

Policy DE-45: Focus commercial and mixed-use development within community areas. *(Working Draft #3-5a)*

Action Item DE-45.1: Incorporate the UVAP-defined mixed use category as a compatible zoning district into the Zoning Code for use in the County's community planning areas. *(Working Draft #3-5a)*

Policy DE-46: Encourage mixed-use development where compatible with surrounding uses and supported by services and infrastructure, including mixed retail and office uses with multi-family residential development in urban settings. *(Working Draft #3-5b)*

Policy DE-47: Mixed commercial, employment and residential uses, including, day care centers should be designed and located to reduce vehicle trips. *(Working Draft #3-5b)*

Policy DE-48: Support business creation, expansion, retention and redevelopment to serve local and regional needs, consistent with General Plan objectives. *(Working Draft #3-5c)*

Policy DE-49: Expand economic opportunities that respect the individual character of each community area. *(Working Draft #3-5c)*

Action Item DE-49.1: Work with local interest groups and businesses to identify concerns relative to the long-term viability of retaining businesses, encouraging expansion, and attracting new businesses. *(Working Draft #3-5c)*

Policy DE-50: Prioritize funding options, streamline development processes, and undertake similar actions to assist retention and expansion of existing businesses. *(Working Draft #3-5c)*

Policy DE-51: Encourage home occupations and cottage industries in conjunction with residential uses when limited in scope and compatible with residential or neighborhood character. Cottage industries and home occupations that grow beyond site or building limitations or become incompatible with the neighborhood should be relocated to appropriately zoned properties. *(Working Draft #3-5d)*

## **Industrial Development Policies**

Policy DE-52: Designate and maintain an adequate supply of land to meet growth demands for a broad range of industrial uses, consistent with General Plan and community objectives, and environmental and infrastructure constraints and opportunities. *(Working Draft #3-6a)*

Policy DE-53: Discourage conversion of lands designated for industrial uses unless an adequate regional supply of lands designated for such uses exists. *(Working Draft #3-6a)*

Policy DE-54: Protect industrial and commercial lands adjacent to existing railroads and harbors so that current and future industrial users have access to more energy-efficient means of goods movement. This should happen outside Community Areas so as not to preclude residential development adjacent to passenger rail service.

Policy DE-55: Locate and design industrial sites and uses in a manner that protects natural resources and minimizes environmental degradation and risk from natural or manmade hazards. *(Working Draft #3-6b)*

Policy DE-56: Protect industrial areas and investments from future conflicts by designating surrounding lands for compatible uses and incorporating appropriate land use buffers. *(Working Draft #3-6c)*

Action Item DE-56.1: Adopt buffer provisions designed to limit incompatibilities between industrial and non-industrial operations. *(Working Draft #3-6c)*

Policy DE-57: Promote a diversified industrial sector, emphasizing industries resistant to seasonal or cyclic fluctuations. *(Working Draft #3-6d)*

Policy DE-58: Promote an agricultural sector with sustainable practices that minimize environmental impacts and provides safe, decent, affordable housing for agricultural workers both on individual farms and in the local community. *(Working Draft #3-6e)*

Policy DE-59: Allow the consolidation of agricultural processing operations within areas with existing processing facilities and supporting infrastructure, in addition to location on industrial lands. *(Working Draft #3-6f)*

Policy DE-60: Reuse or redevelopment of closed resource-based processing sites in rural areas (i.e., timber, mineral processing) should be compatible with the surrounding area, environment and supporting infrastructure. *(Working Draft #3-6g)*

Policy DE-61: Oppose development that undermines agricultural and timber-based operations. *(Working Draft #3-6h)*

Policy DE-62: Promote and encourage environmentally sound industries and practices that achieve or promote General Plan objectives. *(Working Draft #3-6i)*

Action Item DE-62.1: Create incentive programs to attract or expand progressive, environmentally sound businesses and industries. *(Working Draft #3-6i)*

Action Item DE-62.2: Investigate state and national programs and funding sources that can promote and create sustainable “green” business practices.

Policy DE-63: Encourage the location of different uses where resource inputs can be shared or cascaded and waste products from one could become the raw material for another.

Policy DE-64: Promote activities that process, use, recycle or reduce locally generated wastes, such as waste to energy or materials. (*Working Draft #3-6i*)

Policy DE-65: New and expanding industries should incorporate the ‘best available pollution control technology’ and existing industries should work toward this objective. (*Working Draft #3-6i*)

Action Item DE-65.1: Require that new applications for discretionary projects state their energy, water, and waste stream requirements at the time of application. As part of the review of the development application, distribute this information to the service providers and compare the capacity of existing and planned systems with the demand created by the proposed project.

Action Item DE-65.2: Work cooperatively with all industries to identify greenhouse gas impacts from their operations and develop a long-term plan for reducing emissions

### **Community Character Policies**

Policy DE-66: Emphasize local community character and culture in community planning and development. (*Working Draft #3-4a*)

Policy DE-67: Planned growth within community areas shall reflect the historical, physical and social values of each community. (*Working Draft #3-4a*)

Policy DE-68: Create attractive and economically viable community ‘core’ areas. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-69: Encourage mixed-use development such as ground-floor commercial and upper-story residential or office uses in the core area. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-70: Encourage infill development in the core area through increased densities, reduced setbacks, increased building heights, and joint-use parking. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-71: Focus new commercial development in the community areas in the ‘core’ area of each community. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-72: Discourage industrial uses in commercial areas where such mixing would create blight or disrupt commercial and pedestrian continuity. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-73: Encourage improvement to existing structures, particularly older structures in need of repair. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-74: Encourage communities to create downtown plans creating attractive and economically viable community ‘core’ areas. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-75: Encourage use of design, themes and materials to create a sense of place, such as constructing attractive crosswalks (i.e., brick façade) in the core areas, outdoor murals, facilities to facilitate outdoor community activities such as farmer’s markets or cultural fairs, and community signboards. (*Working Draft #3-4b*)

Policy DE-76: Site planning and design shall adhere to resource protection standards in order to integrate and complement the natural ecology and environmental setting. The emphasis shall be on creation of livable communities, function of scale, and land use pattern and intensity. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Action Item DE-76.1: Develop community design guidelines for site planning, architectural form, circulation and multi-modal access, streetscapes, landscaping, and site improvements such as landscaping, parking, lighting, utility placement and signage. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-77: Compatibility with desired architectural character within established neighborhoods and communities shall be evaluated when considering new development. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-78: Encourage neighborhoods with mixed housing types rather than gated communities. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-79: Require landscaping of new residential subdivisions, mobile home parks, and commercial and industrial uses adequate to enhance the site and scenic qualities of the area and reflect the local climate in the choice of plant materials. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-80: Require new commercial, office and industrial developments to include attractive and varied building materials, building designs that break or reduce the massing of large walls, building and rooflines; visually interesting landscaping plans, and avoidance of large parking lots. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-81: Parking lots should be located and designed to appear: 1) subordinate to the uses served, 2) visually attractive, and 3) properly sized to meet the expected vehicle demand. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-82: Incorporate green building principles and materials into site designs and facility planning, construction and operations. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Action Item DE-82.1: Revise County codes to incorporate green building principles and raise energy efficiency standards.

Policy DE-83: View preservation shall be considered when development is located in a highly scenic environment, adjacent to or atop a ridgeline or hill, with resource lands as a background scene, and in similar settings. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-84: Avoid tall, solid fences, sound walls or similar barriers within and adjacent to the downtown areas and along State Routes visible from the downtown areas. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-85: Signage should enhance the visual appearance of developments, unify streetscapes, and reduce visual clutter often associated with multiple, single-purpose signs. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-86: Limit billboards by emphasizing multiple-business and community highway signs, and reduction in existing billboards through amortization provisions. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-87: Reduce excessive artificial light and offsite light impacts while maintaining nighttime safety, security, and productivity. *(Working Draft #3-4c)*

Policy DE-88: Promote attractive, compact building designs, mixed land uses, walkable communities, and a range of housing opportunities and choices.

Policy DE-89: Require that all new developments include tree-lined streets and/or other vegetative treatments that enhance the visual or environmental aspects of the development. Promote the introduction of similar elements into existing communities where feasible.

Policy DE-90: Allow flexible and innovative site and building design as a means of achieving General Plan, environmental or housing objectives. (*Working Draft #3-4d*)

Policy DE-91: Create connectivity between land uses, including residential, schools, commercial and job centers, parks and open space. (*Working Draft #3-4d*)

Action Item DE-91.1: Require connections within and between new and existing uses. (*Working Draft #3-4d*)

Policy DE-92: Promote vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between land uses, including residential, schools, commercial and job centers and open space.

Action Item DE-92.1: Require for new development where appropriate.

Action Item DE-92.2: Develop standards for pedestrian and bicycle access.

Policy DE-93: Promote infill, reuse, redevelopment and brownfield redevelopment supported by existing or improved infrastructure. (*Working Draft #3-4e*)

Policy DE-94: Encourage restoration and reuse of buildings and spaces, especially those with community and architectural significance, over new construction. (*Working Draft #3-4e*)

Policy DE-95: The County will create attractive and multifunctional public places that enhance the County's communities. (*Working Draft #3-4f*)

Policy DE-96: The County and other agencies should design, restore, reuse, and maintain public buildings and facilities in a manner that enhances community character and meets or exceeds design guidelines. (*Working Draft #3-4f*)

Action Item DE-96.1: Explore joint-use of existing facilities to meet community needs. (*Working Draft #3-4f*)

Action Item DE-96.2: Work with communities to reduce the impacts of publicly owned or managed corporation yards, parking lots, transfer stations, airports, and other public uses on local communities through landscaping, operational, and other feasible measures. (*Working Draft #3-4g*)

Policy DE-97: Encourage the creation of community gardening spaces near new and existing residential areas.

Policy DE-98: Promote the temporary use of unused urban lots for gardening/food production, with owner's permission, as an alternative to letting them lie vacant.

Action Item DE-98.2: Work with other local, state and federal agencies to coordinate community enhancement programs with transportation, utility and other public improvements. (*Working Draft #3-4h*)

## Noise Policies

Policy DE-99: Protect noise-sensitive environments (such as residential uses, hospitals, schools, sanctuaries, natural or scenic areas, or passive recreational use areas) from noise levels that exceed adopted standards or substantially exceed ambient noise levels. (*Working Draft #3-7a*)

Action Item DE-99.1: Apply the State Noise Insulation Standards, zoning and building controls, buffers, sound barriers, traffic controls, and other effective measures to reduce exposure to unsafe and undesired noise sources.

Action Item DE-99.2: Require acoustical studies for (a) significant new noise generators, (b) new noise-sensitive uses in noise-impacted areas, (c) noise-sensitive uses near noise generators, or (d) development where CNEL (or Ldn) exceeds 60 dB to ensure an interior CNEL of 45 dB is achieved.

Policy DE-100: The following are the County's standards for maximum exterior noise levels for various types of land uses.

**TABLE 3-J  
EXTERIOR NOISE LEVEL STANDARDS (LEVELS NOT TO BE  
EXCEEDED MORE THAN 30 MINUTES IN ANY HOUR)**

Land Use Type	Time Period	Maximum CNEL (dBA)
Single-Family Homes and Duplexes	10 p.m. to 7 a.m.	50
	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	60
Multiple Residential 3 or More Units Per Building (Triplex +)	10 p.m. to 7 a.m.	55
	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	60
Office and Retail	10 p.m. to 7 a.m.	60
	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	65
Industrial	Anytime	75

- For the purposes of implementing this policy, standards for residential uses shall be measured at the housing unit in areas subject to noise levels in excess of the desired levels shown above.
- Industrial noise limits are intended primarily for use at the boundary of industrial zones rather than for noise reduction at the industrial use.
- Where projected noise levels for a given location are not included in this Element, site-specific noise modeling may need to be conducted in order to apply the County's Noise policies.

Policy DE-101: The following are noise compatibility guidelines for use in determining the general compatibility of planned land uses:



**TABLE 3-K  
NOISE COMPATIBILITY GUIDELINES (EXPRESSED AS A 24-HOUR  
DAY-NIGHT AVERAGE OR LDN)**

Land Use	Completely Compatible	Tentatively Compatible	Normally Incompatible	Completely Incompatible
Residential	Less than 55 dBA	55-60 dBA	60-75 dBA	Greater than 75 dBA
Commercial	Less than 65 dBA	65-75 dBA	75-80 dBA	Greater than 80 dBA
Industrial	Less than 70 dBA	70-80 dBA	80-85 dBA	Greater than 85 dBA

See Policy DE-102 for the definitions of these levels of compatibility.

Policy DE-102: The following definitions shall be used in combination with the standards in the Noise Compatibility Guidelines shown above.

- “Completely Compatible” means that the specified land use is satisfactory and both the indoor and outdoor environments are pleasant.
- “Tentatively Compatible” means that noise exposure may be of concern, but common building construction practices will make the indoor living environment acceptable, even for sleeping quarters, and the outdoor environment will be reasonably pleasant.
- “Normally Incompatible” means that noise exposure warrants special attention, and new construction or development should generally be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Careful site planning or exterior barriers may be needed to make the outdoor environment tolerable.
- “Completely Incompatible” means that the noise exposure is so severe that new construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Policy DE-103: The following are the County’s standards for acceptable indoor intermittent noise levels for various types of land uses. These standards should receive special attention when projects are considered in “Tentatively Compatible” or “Normally Incompatible” areas, and new uses shall incorporate design features to ensure that these standards are met.

**TABLE 3-L  
INTERIOR NOISE LEVEL CRITERIA FOR INTERMITTENT NOISE**

Land Use Type	Acceptable Noise Level (dBA CNEL)
Residential (Single- and Multi-Family)	
Living Areas, Daytime	60 dBA
Living Areas, Nighttime	55 dBA
Sleeping Areas	45 dBA
Institutional Uses	
School Classrooms or Library	55 dBA
Church Sanctuary	45 dBA
Commercial, Educational, Office, Light and Heavy Industrial, Warehousing	Conform with applicable state and federal workplace safety standards

*Note: Standards for public schools are set and enforced by the State of California and are not regulated by the County.*

Policy DE-104: New or expanded uses shall comply with adopted noise standards to ensure minimal impact on established noise-sensitive uses. *(Working Draft #3-7b)*

Policy DE-105: Noise standards in residential areas and at other sensitive receptors shall be applied at the boundaries to the exterior areas of the parcel or lot. *(Working Draft #3-7b)*

Policy DE-106: Noise barriers should be considered only if proven effective by accompanying noise studies. *(Working Draft #3-7b)*

Policy DE-107: Noise barriers should be visually attractive, complement the surroundings, and require a minimum of maintenance. *(Working Draft #3-7b)*

Policy DE-108: Noise barriers along major roadways are generally discouraged to avoid the appearance of ‘walled’ roadways. *(Working Draft #3-7b)*

### **Cultural Resources Policies**

Policy DE-109: Encourage collaboration among the County Museum, historical societies, and Native American peoples and others in inventorying and protecting the County’s significant cultural resources. *(Working Draft #3-10a)*

Policy DE-110: The Mendocino County Museum shall be the County’s ‘lead agency’ for technical advice and coordination of work on historical sites and issues. *(Working Draft #3-10a)*

Policy DE-111: The County and other public agencies are encouraged to protect, maintain and restore historical, archaeological and cultural resources under their ownership or management. *(Working Draft #3-10b)*

Policy DE-112: Fully evaluate and protect historical, archaeological and cultural resources through the development process, including resources of national, state or local significance.

Action Item DE-112.1: Evaluate development proposals for potential impact to historical and cultural resources that contribute to the character of the various community areas.

Action Item DE-112.2: Increase historical preservation through expanded review or adoption of an historical review code.

Action Item DE-112.3: Adopt a cultural resources section in the Zoning Ordinance to address effective inventory, preservation, protection and management of prehistoric and historic resources and to establish cultural and historic review procedures.

Action Item DE-112.4: Preserve the County's architectural heritage by adopting the State Historic Building Code and adhering to the Marks Historical Rehabilitation Act of 1976 (Health and Safety Code). *(Working Draft #3-10c)*

### **Infrastructure (Facilities and Services) Policies**

Policy DE-113: Deliver programs and services to communities in an integrated, coordinated and equitable manner, reflective of local conditions. *(Working Draft #3-8a)*

Policy DE-114: Work with the Local Agency Formation Commission and service providers to coordinate service capabilities with General Plan land use designations and objectives. *(Working Draft #3-8b)*

Policy DE-115: Consider infrastructure capabilities, spheres of influence and master service elements adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission, and city rezoning when adopting or revising General Plan elements. *(Working Draft #3-8c)*

Policy DE-116: General Plan changes to increase density or intensity should not be granted when basic infrastructure deficiencies are identified unless there is a program in place for timely resolution of the problem. *(Working Draft #3-8c)*

Policy DE-117: New discretionary development will be required to demonstrate that basic infrastructure is available and has adequate capacity to serve the project without degrading existing level of service standards. *(Working Draft #3-8d)*

Policy DE-118: When committing to serve new development, the County will encourage service providers to grant priority to allocation of available and future water resources to lower income housing developments that help meet the regional housing need. *(Working Draft #3-8d)*

Policy DE-119: Plans for completion of basic infrastructure should be made concurrent with discretionary development entitlement actions. *(Working Draft #3-8d)*

Policy DE-120: Plan for the expansion of commercial and industrial uses and sites for affordable housing when planning and designing community spaces and infrastructure. *(Working Draft #3-8e)*

### **Transportation Policies**

Policy DE-121: Provide for multiple transportation modes and functions within transportation corridors and rights-of-way. *(Working Draft #3-15a)*

Policy DE-122: The County's transportation policies and funding priorities shall emphasize use of multiple transportation modes. *(Working Draft #3-15a)*

Policy DE-123: Connect highway, rail, aviation, and marine components with inter-modal terminals for freight or passenger services as appropriate. *(Working Draft #3-15b)*

Policy DE-124: The County will coordinate with state and local agencies to ensure that transportation plans, standards and improvements are consistent and compatible across jurisdictional lines. *(Working Draft #3-15c)*

Policy DE-125: Development impact fees, assessments, and other secured funding sources may be required to fund transportation improvements to provide an adequate transportation system or offset transportation impacts. *(Working Draft #3-15d)*

Action Item DE-125.1: Maintain short and long-term capital improvements programs for transportation facilities, consistent with adopted plans.

Policy DE-126: Ensure priority County transportation and multimodal improvements are reflected in updated Regional Transportation Plans and other transportation planning and budget documents. *(Working Draft #3-15e)*

Policy DE-127: Consider community objectives in prioritizing transportation improvements funding. *(Working Draft #3-15e)*

Policy DE-128: Facilitate the increased use of electric vehicles by providing opportunities for vehicle charging at County facilities and investigate methods to develop them at other locations as well.

Policy DE-129: Evaluate and consider the greenhouse gas impacts of all proposed transportation projects.

## **Road Systems Policies**

Policy DE-130: Develop and improve a roadway system that facilitates orderly development and serves the multiple needs of existing and future development. **Figure 3-15, "Circulation Map,"** shows the County's policy regarding the ultimate width and general location of roadways in the unincorporated area. The following roadway types are shown on the Circulation Map:

- **Freeways:** Four- to eight-lane roadways providing service to through traffic exclusively with no access to abutting property and no at-grade intersections. Parking prohibited.
- **Expressways:** Roadways four to six lanes in width with at least partial control of access. Arterial highways may or may not be divided or have grade separations at intersections and may be an interim facility for an ultimate freeway. Parking prohibited.
- **Arterials:** Roadways four to six lanes in width intended to be used primarily by through traffic, with a minimal function to provide access to abutting property. Parking prohibited.
- **Collectors:** Roadways with two to four lanes which function to connect local streets with arterials and to provide access to abutting property. Parking permitted on a case-by-case basis.
- **Local Roadways:** Roadways intended to be used exclusively for property access, with minimal through traffic. Parking generally permitted.

Note: Local roadways are shown on the Circulation Map for informational purposes only. *(Working Draft #3-16a, edited)*

Policy DE-131: Support the construction or improvement of secondary neighborhood routes to alleviate congestion of the arterials.

Policy DE-132: Maximize the use of existing road systems and reduce environmental and community disruption through compatible land use planning. *(Working Draft #3-16b)*

Policy DE-133: The County encourages development using existing roads with available capacity prior to locating development in areas that require new transportation facilities. *(Working Draft #3-16b)*

Policy DE-134: Encourage mixed-use, infill and increased density development along multi-modal transportation corridors, focused on community areas. *(Working Draft #3-16b)*

Policy DE-135: Coordinate land use density and intensity with the functional classifications and capacities of the road system. *(Working Draft #3-16b)*

Policy DE-136: Prior to allocating funds for road widening projects, consider alternatives, such as enhanced system efficiency and alternative transportation. *(Working Draft #3-16b)*

Policy DE-137: Maximize the compatibility of major highway and road realignments, extensions and capacity-increasing projects with community objectives, and minimize impacts on commercial areas, neighborhoods, and resources.

Policy DE-138: The County supports the construction of the Willits and Hopland bypasses consistent with the standards of this General Plan. *(Working Draft #3-16c)*

Policy DE-139: The County will work to maintain and rehabilitate County roads, bridges and related drainage systems, consistent with Pavement Management System standards and environmental objectives. *(Working Draft #3-16d)*

Policy DE-140: Land divisions and other discretionary projects shall not be approved until access and road improvements adequate for the intended uses, density or intensity are identified and constructed or funding mechanisms are in place. *(Working Draft #3-16e)*

Policy DE-141: Major development applications shall include traffic studies to evaluate and mitigate cumulative effects on network level of service and safety. *(Working Draft #3-16e)*

Policy DE-142: The County supports community programs to reduce traffic volumes and single-occupant vehicles during peak hours. *(Working Draft #3-16f)*

Policy DE-143: Employers, including the County, are encouraged to reduce peak hour traffic through modified or flexible work schedules and work-at-home programs. *(Working Draft #3-16f)*

Action Item DE-143.1: Identify and develop car and van-pool parking facilities through a cooperative effort of the Mendocino Transit Authority, Mendocino Council of Governments and California Department of Transportation. *(Working Draft #3-16f)*

Action Item DE-143.2: Develop a program of incentives, such as preferential car or van-pool parking, to decrease single-occupant vehicles at employment sites. *(Working Draft #3-16f)***Pedestrian and Bicycle Systems Policies**

Policy DE-144: The County shall ensure that bicycle facilities are safe, attractive, and useful for both recreational and commuting cyclists. This shall include:

- Requiring that bicycle facilities be designed in accordance with the State Bikeway Design Criteria.
- Periodically reviewing, and updating if needed, street standards to accommodate bicycle lanes where indicated on the Bikeway Master Plan.
- Designing bridges, over passes, under passes, etc. to be compatible with bicycle travel.
- Considering bicycle safety when implementing improvements for automobile traffic operations.
- Provide an information/education program to encourage use of the system and to promote safe riding.

Policy DE-145: Provide pedestrian and bicycle ways along public roadway systems consistent with community area goals and policies. *(Working Draft #3-17a)*

Policy DE-146: Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, where applicable, when County roads and bridges are renovated or replaced.

Policy DE-147: Connect pedestrian, bicycle and trail routes to form local and regional networks. Link pedestrian, bicycle and trail routes with other transportation modes to maximize local and regional non-motorized transportation. *(Working Draft #3-17b)*

Policy DE-148: Concentrate pedestrian improvements along school and transit routes, in areas of established pedestrian activity, and adjacent to sites serving senior citizen and/or persons with disabilities. *(Working Draft #3-17c)*

Policy DE-149: When development occurs, require installation of pedestrian and bicycle systems or, if infeasible, contribution to systems in adopted bicycle and pedestrian plans. *(Working Draft #3-17d)*

Policy DE-150: Promote bicycle use and safety through development standards, education, promotional activities, incentives, and safe bicycle parking, facility design and maintenance. *(Working Draft #3-17e)*

### **Transit Systems Policies**

Policy DE-151: Increase the attractiveness and use of energy-efficient forms of transportation such as public transit, walking, and bicycling through a variety of means, including promoting transit-oriented development in existing cities and urbanized areas and the use of transit by visitors to the county.

Action Item DE-151.1: Adopt development standards that facilitate public transit and alternative transportation modes within multi-modal transportation corridors.

Action Item DE-151.2: Adopt zoning and development standards allowing increased land use densities and intensities proximate (generally within 0.5 mile) to multi-modal transportation corridors.

Policy DE-152: Preserve abandoned Railroad right-of-way for trail use and investigate the feasibility of co-locating bicycle paths on unused portions of existing rights-of-way.

Policy DE-153: The County will demonstrate leadership in the implementation of programs encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation by its employees, as well as the use of alternative fuels. Example programs may include:

- Preferential carpool parking and other ridesharing incentives;
- Flexible working hours or telecommuting where consistent with job duties and customer service needs;
- A purchasing program that favors hybrid, electric, or other energy-efficient vehicles;
- Properly matching trips to the most efficient vehicle to maximize fuel expenditures;
- Encouraging pedestrian/bicycle trips between County facilities where distances and physical ability permit;
- Assisting in the development of demonstration projects for alternative fuel technologies such as ethanol, hydrogen, and electricity;
- Secure bicycle parking; and
- Transit incentives

Policy DE-154: The use of public transit and multi-modal transportation systems in community areas should be emphasized. (*Working Draft #3-18a*)

Action Item DE-154.1: Work with transit providers to coordinate transit routes, frequency of service and facilities throughout the County. (*Working Draft #3-18b*)

## **Rail Policies**

Policy DE-155: The County will encourage federal, state and regional funding for rail service and corridor enhancements. (*Working Draft #3-19a*)

Policy DE-156: Land use planning and development should be compatible with a range of railway and rail rights-of-way uses. (*Working Draft #3-19b*)

## **Airports Policies**

Policy DE-157: Improve airport facilities and encourage economic development and uses that support airport viability. (*Working Draft #3-20a*)

Policy DE-158: Land use decisions and development should be carried out in a manner that will reduce aviation-related hazards (including hazards to aircraft, and hazards posed by aircraft). This could be accomplished through a variety of measures, including the following:

- Maintaining compatible zoning, land uses, densities and intensities within airport influence zones.

- Protecting the viability of existing airport operations and expansion potential. *(Working Draft #3-20b)*

Policy DE-159: Development within air traffic patterns, corridors, and airport influence zones shall be consistent with the Mendocino County Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan and California Division of Aeronautics and Federal Aviation Administration regulations. *(Working Draft #3-20b)*

Action Item DE-159.1: Update the Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan when changes in the aviation sector or airport use warrant a revision of land use restrictions.

## **Harbors Policies**

Policy DE-160: Encourage the use of water-based freight movement along the coast where applicable.

Policy DE-161: Encourage federal support for the development of the breakwater for Noyo Harbor. *(Working Draft #3-21a)*

Action Item DE-161.1: Seek funding for the development and maintenance of navigable waterways and harbors.

Policy DE-162: The County supports the maintenance and enhancement of Noyo and Albion harbors. *(Working Draft #3-21b)*

## **Parks and Recreation Policies**

Policy DE-163: Establish and maintain a countywide assessment of existing and future park and recreation needs, priorities and funding sources. *(Working Draft #3-11a)*

Action Item DE-163.1: Work with agencies and land trusts, to explore opportunities for use of resource lands and open spaces to provide passive recreational services for County residents. *(Working Draft #3-11b)*

Policy DE-164: Provide open space, parks and recreation opportunities within and around communities. *(Working Draft #3-11b)*

Policy DE-165: Promote multiple-use of parks, school facilities and recreational areas. *(Working Draft #3-11b)*

Policy DE-166: Emphasize improvement and shared use of existing facilities. *(Working Draft #3-11b)*

Policy DE-167: Join with cities, school districts, agencies and organizations to effectively fund and manage park and recreation facilities and services.

Policy DE-168: The County shall assume the primary responsibility for the acquisition and development of regional parks and assist in the acquisition and development of neighborhood and community parks to meet County resident needs. Such parks may be provided by cities, school and other special districts, incorporating agreements for use and maintenance. *(Working Draft #3-11c)*

Policy DE-169: The County will actively pursue federal, state and private grants to fund the construction of parks and trails of all types, including acquiring historical or archeologically significant land for parks. *(Working Draft #3-11c)*



Action Item DE-169.1: The County should adopt a Quimby Act ordinance requiring new development to dedicate parkland or contribute in-lieu fees. *(Working Draft #3-11d)*

Policy DE-170: New development projects proposing 50 or more single-family residential units shall dedicate and or construct parkland to meet the recreation needs of its future residents. *(Working Draft #3-11d)*

Policy DE-171: Parkland shall be provided based on the following standards:

- Regional Parks: 1.5 acres/1,000 population

Regional parks incorporate natural resources such as lakes, creeks, rivers, and serve a region involving more than one community. Regional parks generally range in size from 30 to 10,000 acres with the preferred size being several hundred acres. Facilities may include multi-purpose fields, ball fields, group picnic areas, playgrounds, hard court areas, swimming pools, tennis courts, skate board facilities, amphitheatres, shooting sports facilities, concessionaire facilities, trails, nature interpretive centers, campgrounds, natural or historic points of interest and community multi-purpose centers.

- Community Parks: 1.5 acres/1,000 population

Community parks provide a focal point and gathering place for all age groups of the larger community. Community parks are generally 10 to 50 acres in size, and may include multi-purpose fields, ball fields, hard court areas, playgrounds, swimming pools, tennis courts, skate board facilities, group picnic areas, and community centers.

- Neighborhood Parks: 2.0 acres/1,000 population

Neighborhood parks focus on serving children's recreation needs and where possible should be adjacent to schools. Neighborhood parks should be 2 to 5 acres in size and may include playgrounds, tot lots, turf play areas and picnic tables. New residential developments in community areas and large residential developments should have a neighborhood park within 0.5 miles of each residence. *(Working Draft #3-11e)*

Policy DE-172: Promote development of a network of pedestrian/hiking, bicycle and equestrian paths or trails linking public parks and recreation facilities to schools, residential neighborhoods, commercial areas and employment centers, and tourist facilities. *(Working Draft #3-11f)*

Action Item DE-172.1: Update the Equestrian and Hiking Trails Plan coordinating the development, expansion and maintenance of a countywide network of recreational trails connecting communities, recreational opportunities, open space, scenic resources, and other points of interest. The Equestrian and Hiking Trails Plan should:

- Minimize intrusion upon the natural landscape.
- Emphasize trails, trailheads and staging areas on publicly-owned lands or lands voluntarily offered for trail routes.
- Connect to existing trails where feasible, allowing for unconnected segments due to private ownerships, sensitive environmental areas, or public safety. *(Working Draft #3-11f)*

Policy DE-173: The County shall work with organizations such as groups in charge of trails to seek advice on administration of the County's Equestrian and Hiking Trails Plan. *(Working Draft #3-11f)*

Policy DE-174: The County should reserve adequate rights-of-way to develop facilities for non-motorized uses along new and extended roadways. Rights-of-way should be reserved for hiking, biking and pedestrian paths identified in adopted plans. *(Working Draft #3-11f)*

Policy DE-175: Protect parklands and recreational facilities from potential land use conflicts. Locate and design new recreational facilities for compatibility with surrounding land uses. *(Working Draft #3-11g)*

Policy DE-176: Evaluate proposals to purchase or development land for federal or state parks, recreational or cultural areas for compatibility with the General Plan, zoning and existing land uses. *(Working Draft #3-11h)*

### **Water Supply and Sewer (Wastewater Treatment) Services Policies**

Policy DE-177: Coordinate community water and sewer services with General Plan land use densities and intensities. *(Working Draft #3-22a)*

Policy DE-178: The County supports efficient and adequate public water and sewer services through combined service agencies, shared facilities, or other inter-agency agreements. *(Working Draft#3-22b)*

- Work aggressively with water and sewer service providers to overcome current and projected system and supply deficiencies necessary to serve planned community growth. *(Working Draft #3-22b)*
- Support funding applications to improve and expand water and sewer service capabilities in areas planned for future growth or to resolve existing deficiencies.

Policy DE-179: Encourage and assist communities in establishing or authorizing public water and sewer service entities to monitor, manage and/or maintain community-wide or decentralized systems.

Policy DE-180: Encourage water and sewer service providers to incorporate water conservation, reclamation, and reuse.

- Encourage the development and use of innovative systems and technologies that promote water conservation, reclamation, and reuse.
- Encourage the development of systems that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their operation.
- Encourage the development and use of innovative systems and technologies for the treatment of wastewater.

Policy DE-181: Oppose extension of water or sewer services to rural non-community areas when such extensions are inconsistent with land use and resource objectives of the General Plan. *(Working Draft#3-22e)*

Policy DE-182: Development shall be supported by water supply and wastewater treatment systems adequate to serve the long-term needs of the intended density, intensity, and use. *(Working Draft#3-22f)*

- New development within water or sewer service areas is allowed if the service provider serves the development, or the County approves an alternative method of service that is not prohibited by the service provider.

Policy DE-183: Land use plans and development shall not negatively affect drinking water supplies used by water service providers.

### **Drainage and Flooding Policies**

Policy DE-184: Encourage compatible uses of flood plain land, such as agriculture, forestry, and recreation. *(Working Draft #4-11a)*

Policy DE-185: Emphasize land use compatibility and onsite floodwater retention to prevent or manage flooding. Stream channelization may be used as a flood control solution where practical or necessary. *(Working Draft #4-11b)*

Policy DE-186: Development in the designated 100-year flood plain areas shall be consistent with all applicable federal regulations with regard to flooding.

Policy DE-187: To the maximum extent practical, avoid constructing critical facilities within the designated 100-year flood plain areas or areas potentially subject to inundation by dam failures (or other water impoundment facilities) or seiches.

Policy DE-188: Continue participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program. *(Working Draft #4-11c)*

Policy DE-189: Collaborate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other relevant agencies to update National Flood Insurance Program Hazard Maps.

Policy DE-190: The creation of lots with no flood-free buildable area will not be allowed.

Policy DE-191: Development in floodplain will not be allowed unless mitigation measures are incorporated into the project that protect against the contribution to downstream or upstream flooding.

Policy DE-192: Work with local, state and federal agencies to fund and implement site-specific flood hazard planning, forecasting, and flood proofing measures.

### **Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste and Materials Management Policies**

Policy DE-193: The County will maintain a comprehensive integrated waste management plan consistent with General Plan, environmental, and public health objectives. *(Working Draft #3-25a)*

Action Item DE-193.1: Work with local and regional agencies and enterprises to maintain and enhance integrated waste management programs. *(Working Draft #3-25a)*

Policy DE-194: Promote materials recovery programs and facilities, focusing on wastes generated in the Mendocino County region. *(Working Draft #3-25b)*

Policy DE-195: All development projects shall include plans and facilities to store and manage solid waste and hazardous materials and wastes in a safe and environmentally sound manner. *(Working Draft #3-25c)*

Policy DE-196: As one of the largest consumers of energy and other resources, the County shall make efficiency and total lifecycle cost accounting a priority for structural, vehicular, and equipment purchases and operation.

### **Other Utility Systems Policies**

Policy DE-197: The County will seek to reduce the impacts of above-ground utilities. Standards and policies to reduce impacts include:

- Promoting the underground installation of utilities to reduce visual impacts to significant scenic resources.
- Locating utility systems within established corridors where possible.
- Ensuring that above-ground utilities are located and designed to minimize visual impact and clutter.
- Avoiding vegetation removal, new road construction, and silhouettes against the sky.
- Pursuing the undergrounding of utility lines in new development, and in the downtown core of community areas. *(Working Draft #3-24a)*

Policy DE-198: The County will encourage appropriate utility infrastructure necessary to support social and economic needs including wired, wireless and satellite communications. *(Working Draft #3-24b)*

Policy DE-199: The County will facilitate investment in telecommunications infrastructure by providing clear guidelines for utility systems. *(Working Draft #3-24b)*

### **Hazard Reduction and Emergency Response Policies**

Policy DE-200: Land uses, densities and intensities shall be designed to reduce human risk and exposure to hazardous conditions and events. *(Working Draft #3-12a)*

Action Item DE-200.1: Continue to identify and assess risks to life, property and the environment. Incorporate appropriate strategies into emergency response and land use planning. *(Working Draft #3-12a)*

Policy DE-201: Locate and design critical infrastructure to withstand and operate during hazard events and subsequent recovery phases. Standards and policies include:

- Generally prohibit the construction of public or private structures designed for emergency services or public safety in areas of unacceptable risk, which shall be defined as any location at which an incident capable of either causing the facility to become inoperable has a likelihood of more than 1/1,000,000 per year.
- Facilities and structures owned or used by public entities should be designed or retrofitted, used, and occupied consistent with Uniform Building Code requirements to protect life and property from hazards.

- Noncompliant structures should be upgraded, abated or occupancy changed, with priority based on critical facilities and hazard risk.
- Encourage federal, state, and tribal authorities to evaluate facilities and structures not under County jurisdiction and to implement corrective safety measures as needed. *(Working Draft #3-12b)*

Action Item DE-201.1: Maintain emergency response plan(s) designed to reduce risk and exposure to hazardous conditions and events, respond to emergencies, and facilitate recovery. *(Working Draft #3-12c)*

Action Item DE-201.2: Update the emergency response plan on a regular basis to keep pace with the growing population and emergency service capabilities. *(Working Draft #3-12c)*

Action Item DE-201.3: Identify routes and sites necessary for evacuation, emergency operations and recovery during hazard events. *(Working Draft #3-12d)*

Action Item DE-201.4: Upgrade critical County services to employ onsite renewable energy systems to provide a basic level of operation, an encourage other agencies in the County to do the same.

Action Item DE-201.5: Increase the County's fuel storage capacities so as to withstand an extended, but temporary disruption of deliveries.

Action Item DE-201.6: Prepare an Energy Emergency Plan pursuant to the approved California Energy Commission guidelines for local jurisdictions on that subject.

Policy DE-202: Development shall not hinder the maintenance and use of routes and sites critical to evacuation, emergency operations and recovery. *(Working Draft #3-12d)*

Action Item DE-202.1: Establish and coordinate capital improvement programs and priorities to avoid or mitigate high-risk events. *(Working Draft #3-12e)*

Action Item DE-202.2: Through the Mendocino Emergency Services Authority, the County, and relevant agencies, promote public education and safety programs to reduce risk from *geologic*, fire, flood, inundation and other hazards related to growth and development. *(Working Draft #3-12f)*

## **Fire Protection Policies**

Policy DE-203: The General Plan Land Use and zoning maps shall limit development potential commensurate with wildland fire hazards. *(Working Draft #3-13b)*

Policy DE-204: Development, densities, intensities and type shall be consistent with the state wildfire hazard rating system and Fire Safe Guidelines (addressing weather, fuel and slope, access, water and other factors). *(Working Draft #3-13b)*

Policy DE-205: The County shall deny development proposals that present substantial fire hazard risk to residents and safety providers responding to a wildland fire. *(Working Draft #3-13b)*

Action Item DE-205.1: Work with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to administer the Fire Safe Guidelines and fire protection programs for State Responsibility Areas and development interfaces. *(Working Draft #3-13c)*

Policy DE-206: Development shall be located, designed and managed to reduce fire risk to life, property and natural resources, and incorporate adequate fire protection consistent with the General Plan and adopted regulations. *(Working Draft #3-13c)*

Policy DE-207: Development shall facilitate and integrate the ability for fire protection agencies to access and maintain fuel and firebreaks, water supplies, and emergency access routes. *(Working Draft #3-13c)*

Policy DE-208: New development in State Responsibility Areas and urban/rural interfaces should incorporate:

- Fuelbreaks or greenbelts coordinated with water supplies and access providing maximum circulation consistent with topography.
- Adequate and accessible defensible space.
- At least two ingress-egress routes to a public roadway, unless alternative routes accessible to fire equipment are provided.
- Access to publicly maintained evacuation routes at regular intervals.
- Access routes sufficient to accommodate evacuating vehicles, fire equipment and vegetation management zones.
- Primary traffic lanes to all building sites with turnarounds to accommodate fire equipment.
- Water supplies within short distance of fire equipment access.
- Fire flows with adequate duration. *(Working Draft #3-13c)*
- Develop fire safe plans for communities to assist in qualifying for grants.

Policy DE-209: The County supports effective and economically viable fire protection and emergency response provided by fire protection agencies. *(Working Draft #3-13d)*

Policy DE-210: Encourage fire protection districts to determine and report capabilities to adequately serve existing and potential development. *(Working Draft #3-13d)*

Policy DE-211: Developments shall be approved only if sufficient fire fighting resources, such as fire stations, equipment, personnel, hydrants and water supplies, will be available to serve all phases of development. *(Working Draft #3-13d)*

Action Item DE-211.1: Work with fire protection organizations to achieve funding stability necessary to maintain adequate staffing, facilities and equipment. *(Working Draft #3-13d)*

Action Item DE-211.2: Collaborate with fire protection authorities, land managers, private landowners, and others to improve fire management strategies for reducing the impacts of wildfires on forest and watershed ecosystems. *(Working Draft #3-13a)*

Action Item DE-211.3: Work with fire protection providers (i.e., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, U.S. Forest Service, County Fire Warden, local fire protection districts, and cities) to ensure development is compatible with fire protection capabilities. *(Working Draft #3-13b)*

Policy DE-212: The County will support viable emergency response and transport services such as emergency medical services. *(Working Draft #3-13d)*

Policy DE-213: New development not located within a fire protection district should mitigate impacts on first responders to emergency calls, and may be required to contribute to the cost of providing emergency services. *(Working Draft #3-13d)*

### **Law Enforcement Policies**

Policy DE-214: Create community and development patterns and designs that facilitate safe and healthy communities and law enforcement activities. *(Working Draft #3-14a)*

Policy DE-215: Work with citizens and community organizations to develop crime prevention programs addressing issues such as new urbanism, community watch program, “Eye on the Street”, and illegal gang-related activities.

Policy DE-216: Design public and community spaces to facilitate public safety as well as attractiveness (i.e., place ‘eyes’ on public places such as streets, parks, schools, sidewalks, pathways, trails, etc.) *(Working Draft #3-14a)*

Policy DE-217: Increase compliance with regulations intended to protect public, community and environmental health and safety. Measures include:

- Working with law enforcement agencies to improve coordination during the land use and development process.
- Working with affected agencies and interests to find cost effective solutions to significant compliance issues.
- Educating employers and the public, including conducting school programs, about the benefits of regulations intended to protect public, community and environmental health and safety.
- Establish and maintain adequate code enforcement staffing for an effective compliance program. *(Working Draft #3-14b)*

### **Geologic Conditions Policies**

Policy DE-218: Prior to recordation, new or reconfigured lots in areas zoned for residential, commercial or industrial use shall demonstrate sufficient areas with acceptable risk of geologic, seismic, slope and soils-related hazards to accommodate the proposed land uses, densities and intensities. *(Working Draft #4-4b)*

Policy DE-219: All new buildings and structures shall comply with the uniform construction codes and other regulations adopted by the County and State to minimize geologic hazards. *(Working Draft #4-4c)*

Action Item DE-219.1: Where appropriate, require geologic, seismic and soil engineering information to evaluate, locate and design development, especially critical

and high occupancy structures, to minimize seismic and other geologic hazards. *(Working Draft #4-4a)*

## **Seismicity Policies**

Policy DE-220: Require that structures for human habitation and occupancy, including residential, commercial and industrial uses, incorporate engineering and design measures which reduce risk to life in areas subject to excessive ground shaking and liquefaction during an earthquake. *(Working Draft #4-6d)*

Action Item DE-220.1: Continue to administer the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act which defines and mitigates impacts relating to surface fault-rupture hazards. *(Working Draft #4-6a)*

Action Item DE-220.2: Implement the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act when maps become available for Mendocino County (Public Resources Code, Division 2, Chapter 7.8). *(Working Draft #4-6b)*

Action Item DE-220.3: Require geologic, seismic, and/or soil engineering reports in areas of known or potential geologic hazards prior to final approval of discretionary permits

Action Item DE-220.4: Revise County codes to state that geologic, seismic, and soils reports may be prepared by the qualified professionals specified by law. *(Working Draft #4-6c)*

Policy DE-221: Prohibit structures necessary for public safety or emergency services in areas subject to ground shaking and subsequent failure unless the public benefit outweighs the use of reasonably feasible alternate sites. *(Working Draft #4-6e)*

## **Education Policies**

Policy DE-222: Promote job skills and community diversity by investing in excellent schools, post-secondary institutions, and opportunities for lifelong education and training available to all persons. *(Working Draft #3-9a)*

Policy DE-223: Encourage public and private educational institutions to select school sites that:

- Are compatible with land use plans, infrastructure, and neighborhood character.
- Are located within community areas.
- Are accessible by walking and bicycling.
- Are not impacted by excessive traffic, noise, or hazards.
- Avoid conflicts with agricultural or industrial uses.
- Facilitate multiple use of public parks and facilities. *(Working Draft #3-9b)*



# CHAPTER 4.0: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

## Introduction

### 4-1 Water: Watersheds, Groundwater, and Recharge

Healthy, functioning watersheds are vital for a healthy environment and a healthy economy. Watersheds collect all precipitation, filter or treat much of it, store water, and release water into rivers and groundwater aquifers. The natural processes that make watersheds valuable are vulnerable to damage and degradation. The results of such damage include decreased water infiltration, degraded water quality, increased maintenance costs from erosion-related impacts, changes in runoff patterns and timing, and decreased populations of native plants and wildlife.

#### Watersheds

#### What is a “Watershed”?

A watershed is an area of land in which all water drains to a single place, such as a creek or river. For planning purposes, a watershed includes living (including people living and working in the watershed) and non-living elements in a defined geographical area generally characterized by the flow of water. The flow of water defining a watershed includes both surface and groundwater as it moves through natural and manmade features, from higher elevations to lower elevations. In some cases, watershed planning boundaries are affected by administrative boundaries, such as city limits. In other cases, watershed boundaries are adjusted to accommodate water conveyance systems such as canals.

Mendocino County can be broadly divided into three watersheds: the Eel, Russian, and Coastal river basins. The Coastal system consists of numerous relatively short streams flowing west to the Pacific Ocean. Major stream systems located in the Coastal basin include the Ten Mile, Noyo, Big, Albion, Navarro, Garcia, and Gualala rivers. The interior county is drained by the two larger drainage systems – the Eel River and Russian River systems. The Eel River system drains the northern interior, while the Russian River system drains the southern interior. Only portions of these interior watersheds lie within the county. The Eel River watershed is shared with Humboldt, Lake, and Trinity counties, while the Russian River watershed includes significant portions of Sonoma County.

Surface runoff in each basin is derived almost entirely from rainfall, although snow does fall in the mountains located in the eastern portion of the Eel River watershed. Stream flow responds directly to the rainfall pattern; high stream flows will drop quickly without sustaining rainfall. During the dry summer months, stream flow must be supplied from groundwater seepage, channel storage, reservoir storage, or diversions.

Each main watershed may be said to contain smaller watersheds. These smaller watersheds are defined by the streams to which water drains, meaning every stream has its own watershed. Mendocino County contains or is part of 16 watersheds, shown in **Figure 4-1**.

Several individuals and organizations throughout Mendocino County are involved in managing watershed resources. There are approximately 15 public agencies and 25 private organizations which work on Mendocino County watershed-based issues. Interviews with these organizations indicate that other smaller, less well-organized groups and individuals, whose focus may be on a single local issue or short-term project, are also active in the county. Organizations and agencies collaborate in data collection, planning, management, sharing of technical expertise, pooling funding resources, and implementation of watershed projects.

A major focus of these watershed efforts is the improvement of water quality in the streams. Water in these streams can be polluted by excessive soil sediments or by contaminants such as motor vehicle oils and fluids, pesticides or heavy metals. The sources of these pollutants vary by the watershed—examples include discharges from industrial plants and runoff from agricultural fields, graded construction sites, and urban developments. Pollutants can be controlled by the use of “best management practices” (BMPs), which are activities, prohibitions, maintenance procedures, and other management practices designed to prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants to waters. Examples of BMPs include:

- Runoff control – check dams, slope drains, infiltration galleries.
- Erosion control – revegetation and preservation of existing vegetation (shown in the photo at left), riprap, mulching, soil binders.
- Sediment control – fiber rolls (shown in the photo at left), sandbag barriers, silt fences, sediment traps.
- Water treatment – stormwater detention basins, swales, treatment wetlands.
- Drainage protection – outlet protection (riprap at outlets), inlet filters to remove sediment and hydrocarbon contaminants.
- General site and materials – water conservation practices, stockpile management, street sweeping, spill prevention and control, handling and storage of materials.

Typically, BMPs are required as conditions of permits issued to activities such as construction to reduce their potential impacts on water quality.

## 4-2 Water Supply

The basic source of all water in Mendocino County is precipitation, either rain or snow, much of which falls on the county. Annual rainfall in Mendocino County ranges from slightly less than 35 inches (in the Ukiah area) to more than 80 inches (near Branscomb). Most of the precipitation falls during the winter, and substantial snowfall is limited to higher elevations. Rainfall is often from brief, intense storms which move in from the northwest. Virtually no rainfall occurs during the summer months.

Surface water in Mendocino County is used for a variety of agricultural, urban, and industrial activities. **Agricultural** uses include drinking water for livestock, wash water on dairies, irrigation of crops and pasturelands, and frost protection of sensitive crops in the spring. **Urban** uses include water used for drinking water and other indoor and outdoor household activities. **Industrial** users of water include mining, hydroelectric power, and sewage treatment activities.

As discussed in the Development Element of this General Plan, significant development of surface water resources has not occurred in Mendocino County. There are only two reservoirs of note in the county: Van Arsdale Reservoir in Potter Valley and Lake Mendocino northeast of Ukiah. There are, however, numerous smaller reservoirs and ponds.

Groundwater is the main source for municipal and individual domestic water systems and contributes significantly to irrigation. Wells throughout Mendocino County support a variety of uses, including domestic, commercial, industrial, and agricultural needs, and for fire protection.

In Mendocino County, groundwater is found in two distinct geologic settings: the inland valleys and the mountainous areas. Mountainous areas are underlain by consolidated rocks of the Franciscan Complex, which are commonly dry and generally supply less than 5 gallons per minute of water to wells. Interior valleys are underlain by relatively thick deposits of valley fill, in which yields vary from less than 50 gallons per minute to 1,000 gallons per minute.

There are six identified major groundwater basins in Mendocino County:

- Round Valley
- Little Lake Valley (Willits Valley)
- Ukiah Valley
- Laytonville Valley
- Potter Valley
- Anderson Valley

**Groundwater recharge** is the replacement of water in the groundwater aquifer. Recharge occurs in the form of precipitation, surface runoff, irrigation, and in some parts of California (but not in Mendocino County) by imported water. Specific information regarding recharge areas for Mendocino County's groundwater basins is not generally available, but recharge for inland groundwater basins comes primarily from infiltration of precipitation and intercepted runoff in stream channels, and from permeable soils along the margins of valleys. Recharge for coastal groundwater basins takes place in fractured and weathered bedrock and coastal terraces, and along recent alluvial deposits and bedrock formations. If recharge areas are protected from major modification - such as paving, building and gravel removal - it is anticipated that continued recharge will re-supply groundwater reservoirs.

Users obtain their water through private wells, deliveries from a water system, or a combination of both. Chapter 3.0, Development Element, discusses water systems in the county. As noted in the Development Element, several areas of the county face uncertainties in water supply, including Redwood Valley and the Brooktrails development northwest of Willits, and especially coastal areas.

Updated General Plan policies recognize the importance of water conservation as part of a sustainable management plan. The County will work with agencies in developing long-term water supplies to meet planned growth needs. Part of this policy approach would oppose transfer of water resources and rights out of the county.

#### **4-3 Water Quality**

The most critical surface water quality problem in Mendocino County is sedimentation—the carrying of dust and soils into bodies of water. Major sources of sediment include erosion from barren or poorly vegetated soils, erosion from the toes of slides along stream channels, and sediments from roads.

Manmade sources of sedimentation are a byproduct of current and historical land uses, including logging, agriculture, mining, processing of alluvial aggregate material, road construction and continued use of unpaved roads, and other development-related projects within the county.

Water temperature is affected by the volume of water flowing in the stream, the amount of sunlight reaching the stream water surface, and the daily average air temperature. Elevated water temperature may detrimentally affect different life stages of anadromous fish (e.g., salmon). Shade cover from riparian vegetation has been reduced through historical land uses and floods. The Eel and Russian

rivers, as well as several coastal rivers, have been identified as having degraded water quality due to sediments and water temperature.

While groundwater in Mendocino County is generally of good quality and suitable for most uses, the potential for groundwater contamination exists in any area. The greatest risk of contamination occurs in recharge areas that contain excavation sites, septic tanks, as well as agricultural areas with heavy applications of fertilizers or pesticides. Other factors that may lead to potential groundwater contamination include urban runoff (mostly oils and chemicals from paved roadways and parking lots), improperly drilled or sealed wells, and saltwater intrusion in coastal areas. This potential increases in the major valley areas because of the shallow depth to the water table.

#### 4-4 Ecosystems and Resources Overview

##### Biological Communities and Ecosystems

A **biological community** is a group of plants, animals and other living things that interact with each other in a common area.

An **ecosystem** is similar to a biological community, but it also includes the non-living components of the environment, such as soil and water. This section discusses biological communities, with focus on the plants and wildlife that live in them. However, some of the sensitive habitats discussed later in this introduction could be considered ecosystems, as non-living components are significant factors in their existence. These include wetlands and habitats in areas of serpentine soils.

The plants and wildlife of Mendocino County provide benefits to county residents in several important ways. Vegetation, both living and non-living, significantly decrease the rate of soil erosion. Healthy plant communities also decrease the likelihood and severity of fires and flooding. Vegetation often determines the type and productivity of wildlife habitat and determines to a large extent the suitability and value of fish habitat. Through the processes of filtering contaminants and soil retention, vegetation is instrumental in maintaining the quality of water in the county. Healthy plant communities and the fish and wildlife they sustain support an active tourism and recreation industry and are essential to the quality of life in Mendocino County.

Mendocino County has a wide range of climates, topography, soils, and watershed conditions, all of which produce very diverse plant and animal communities. Vegetation predominant in the region includes valley grassland and oak woodland in lowlands and valleys, coastal scrub and prairies along the Pacific Ocean, and mixed chaparral, hardwood forest, and coniferous forest in the mountains.

Mendocino County has a very wide range of biological communities, some of which are highly productive or contain rare plant communities. These include redwood, Douglas-fir, montane hardwood, chaparral, grasslands, closed cone pine-cypress, oak woodland, agricultural, white fir, ponderosa pine, Klamath mixed fir, coastal scrub, urban, red fir, barren, and aquatic habitats. **Figure 4-2** contains a map of the biological communities in Mendocino County. A more detailed description of these communities follows.

- Redwood forests are generally found within 25 miles of the Pacific coast on cool, moist slopes and along streams. The redwood community is characterized by a highly variable assemblage of conifer and hardwood species. The coastal redwood is the dominant tree on slopes nearest the coast and in riparian areas within the coastal influence. Drier slopes within the redwood community are characterized by an increasing dominance of Douglas fir in the upper canopy and an assemblage of hardwoods and conifers in the lower canopy. Nearly 200 species of wildlife can be found in the redwood community. These species

include the Pacific giant, California giant, and California slender salamanders, northern alligator lizard, western terrestrial garter snake, turkey vulture, great horned owl, gray jay, Pacific-slope flycatcher, Swainson's thrush, varied thrush, pine siskin, coyote, gray fox, and mule deer.

- In Mendocino County, **Douglas Fir Forest** is common in areas that are too dry for redwood or hardwood communities and too low in elevation for other conifer types. Douglas fir communities are characterized by an upper canopy dominated primarily by Douglas fir and a lower canopy composed of a number of conifer and hardwood species. Douglas fir forests support a high density of birds. Wildlife commonly found in the Douglas fir forests includes Ensatina, Pacific giant, California giant, and California slender salamanders, tailed frog, northern alligator lizard, northwestern garter snake, western flycatcher, chestnut-backed chickadee, golden-crowned kinglet, solitary vireo, varied thrush, turkey vulture, great horned owl, gray jay, Stellar's jay, olive-sided flycatcher, pine siskin, bushy-tailed woodrat, coyote, gray fox, elk, mule deer, fisher, deer mouse, Douglas' squirrel, and shrew-mole.
- **White fir forests** can be found on higher peaks of the mountain ranges in the northeastern portion of the county. Wildlife species found in white fir forests are generally similar to those found in Douglas fir forests and oak woodlands. White fir forests are probably the coolest, moistest non-riparian habitat in northern California at lower to mid elevations. As stands mature, windthrow and heart fungus provide downed logs and standing snags that greatly benefit cavity-dependent wildlife species, such as pileated woodpeckers. White fir is the preferred species for insect-gleaning yellow-rumped warblers and western tanagers, as well as other insectivorous birds.
- **Red fir forests** occur only on the highest peaks in northeastern Mendocino County. Red fir forests are characterized by open to moderately dense stands of red fir. Both the tree and shrub layer are generally devoid of other species. Wildlife found in a red fir forest is similar to that found in white fir forests. In general, there are fewer species found in red fir habitats, particularly amphibians and reptiles, because of the high elevation.
- **Ponderosa pine forests** occur commonly on the lower slopes in the northeastern portion of the county and also in isolated patches on ridgetops in the southern and western portions. Wildlife found in ponderosa pine forests is similar to other forested habitats in the region, including those species found in Douglas fir and white fir forests and in oak woodlands. Ponderosa pine may provide transitional or migratory habitat for mule deer and can be extremely important to deer nutrition in migration holding areas.
- The **Klamath mixed conifer** habitat type is a mid-elevation forest occurring throughout the Klamath Ranges in northwestern California. Within Mendocino County, Klamath mixed conifer is restricted to the northeastern portion of the county. Klamath mixed conifer is typically characterized by a moderate to dense canopy formed from a variety of conifer species. Dominant conifers include ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and white fir. On serpentine soils, Jeffrey pine is often the dominant tree. Wildlife found in Klamath mixed conifer forests is similar to those species found in Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, and white fir habitats.
- **Oak woodlands** have a patchy distribution in valleys and foothills in Mendocino County. Blue oaks are the most common trees, but coast live oaks also occur along drainages and in slightly moister areas. Foothill pines often grow in blue oak-pine communities. In Mendocino County, blue oak woodland is most common east of State Route 101 from Ukiah to the Sonoma County line. Wildlife occurring in oak woodlands includes Pacific chorus frog, ensatina, northwestern, arboreal, and California slender salamanders, bullfrog,

western fence lizard, southern and northern alligator lizards, western terrestrial garter snake, western rattlesnake, common garter snake, western rattlesnake, burrowing owl, great horned owl, red-tailed hawk, red-shouldered hawk, acorn woodpecker, western meadowlark, American kestrel, turkey vulture, Hammond's flycatcher, dusky flycatcher, northern flicker, western kingbird, chestnut-backed chickadee, ruby-crowned kinglet, western scrub-jay, Stellar's jay, Pacific slope flycatcher, Hutton's vireo, hermit thrush, wild turkey, common raven, cliff swallow, California ground squirrel, big brown bat, dusky-footed woodrat, gray fox, raccoon, mule deer, coyote, black bear, and fallow deer.

- **Montane hardwood forests** are one of the most abundant habitat types, occurring throughout Mendocino County and most commonly in the mountains of the central part of the county. Species composition in hardwood forests is variable. Common trees include canyon live oak, Pacific madrone, California black oak, coast live oak, and California bay-laurel. Blue oaks occur on dry, steep slopes with poor soil. Wildlife found in montane hardwood forests includes ensatina, relictual slender salamander, western fence lizard, northern alligator lizard, western rattlesnake, Hammond's flycatcher, northern flicker, ruby-crowned kinglet, Cassin's vireo, acorn woodpecker, wild turkey, great horned owl, Stellar's jay, dusky-footed woodrat, coyote, gray fox, black bear, mule deer, deer mouse, and western gray squirrel.
- **Closed-cone pine-cypress forests** are typically associated with rocky sites or infertile soils. This community is fire-dependent and often forms even-aged stands after a fire. In Mendocino County, this community occurs frequently along the southern and central coast and in patches in the mountainous area in the north and east, usually associated with serpentine soils. Pygmy forest, a rare closed-cone habitat unique to poor coastal soils, is found on the central coast of the county. Wildlife commonly found in closed cone pine-cypress forests includes ensatina, Pacific giant, California giant and California slender salamanders, bullfrog, southern alligator lizard, western terrestrial garter snake, western rattlesnake, dusky flycatcher, chestnut-backed chickadee, ruby-crowned kinglet, Hutton's vireo, hermit thrush, turkey vulture, great horned owl, red-tailed hawk, western scrub-jay, Stellar's jay, Pacific slope flycatcher, pine siskin, big brown bat, dusky-footed woodrat, coyote, gray fox, raccoon, and mule deer.
- **Chaparral** communities are found in the southern, eastern, and northeastern areas of Mendocino County. These communities are characterized by an open to very dense assemblage of woody shrubs with a canopy that can reach nearly 20 feet. Dominant plants include chamise, ceanothus, and manzanita. Other associated plants may include foothill pine, scrub oak, and chinquapin. The chaparral communities provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, particularly rodents, rabbits, mule deer, and other herbivorous mammals. Birds utilize the seeds, fruits, insects, and cover found in chaparral, and raptors prey on these birds and on small reptiles and mammals. Common among the species in chaparral communities are northern and southern alligator lizards, common kingsnake, rattlesnake, turkey vulture, ash-throated flycatcher, gray vireo, barn owl, common raven, Pacific kangaroo rat, desert cottontail, coyote, mule deer, and elk.
- **Grasslands** in Mendocino County are often maintained by cattle grazing in areas that might otherwise develop forest or chaparral communities. A variety of grassland types, including annual grassland, perennial grassland, montane meadow, wet meadow, and coastal prairie, occur within the county. Areas that are heavily grazed or otherwise disturbed are characterized by annual grasses and forbs. In areas lacking disturbance and on slopes with a high serpentine content, perennial grasses are dominant. Coastal prairies are also often dominated by native perennials, although grazing pressure can encourage invasion from non-native annual species. Moist areas, such as wetlands and meadows, support a variety of

plants adapted to saturated or inundated soil conditions. Wildlife found in grasslands includes Pacific chorus frog, western fence lizard, common garter snake, western rattlesnake, burrowing owl, western meadowlark, American kestrel, turkey vulture, willow flycatcher, northern flicker, western kingbird, wild turkey, great horned owl, common raven, cliff swallow, California ground squirrel, coyote, black bear, and fallow deer. Most native grassland in Mendocino County has been replaced by non-native invasive plants.

- **Coastal scrub** occurs in a coastal strip along the length of California. Although not the most prevalent coastal habitat in Mendocino County, coastal scrub communities occur in discontinuous patches along most of the county's coastline. In Mendocino County, coastal scrub communities usually occur as patches on south-facing slopes or in sandy soils. Composition of coastal scrub communities is highly variable throughout California. Along the north coast, coyote bush is typically the dominant shrub. Relatively little is known about the importance of coastal scrub habitat to wildlife. Wildlife species found in this habitat are generally similar to those species found in closed cone pine-cypress habitats. Species include *Ensatina*, bullfrog, Western fence lizard, western terrestrial garter snake, western rattlesnake, turkey vulture, blue-gray gnatcatcher, western bluebird, great horned owl, Trowbridge's shrew, California ground squirrel, gray fox, raccoon, and mule deer.
- **Barren/open dune** areas occur in Mendocino County primarily along the coast in areas where shifting sand dunes prevent the establishment of vegetation. Where vegetation occurs, cover is generally sparse, consisting of salt-tolerant shrubs and forbs. Dunes habitat have a low habitat value for wildlife, although shorebirds, gulls, terns, and other species can be found using these habitats in conjunction with the intertidal zone for feeding and nesting. Other wildlife species utilizing barren areas may include western rattlesnake, red-tailed hawk, common raven, killdeer, and coyote.
- **Aquatic habitats** occur throughout California at nearly all elevations and in association with all habitat types. *Lacustrine* (lake) habitats are bodies of fresh water that vary from large perennial lakes to shallow, seasonal ponds and playas. *Riverine* habitats occur throughout the county and include seasonal and perennial streams, rivers, and drainages. *Estuarine* habitats are transitional between riverine and marine zones. They occur where freshwater runoff combines with salt water to form a brackish habitat that supports a salt-tolerant plant community. Estuarine habitats are both highly productive and highly threatened. The *marine* habitat consists of a zone extending from the upper limit of the barren shoreline to twelve miles off shore and is continuous along the coastal portion of the county. Both the vegetation and the wildlife species in the aquatic habitats vary, depending on type of habitat.
- **Agricultural** areas in Mendocino County occur primarily on the valley floors and lower elevations and are often associated with populated areas in proximity to major roads and highways. Presently, agricultural land in Mendocino County is dominated by vineyards, followed by pear and apple orchards, row crops, and pasture. Because of their high degree of disturbance, agricultural areas generally have a low habitat value for wildlife, although a number of species adapted for disturbed conditions can be found. Fruit and nut orchards and fields of corn or pasture provide food and cover for squirrels, numerous birds, raccoons, and mule deer. Other species that take advantage of these food sources are feral pigs, ring-necked pheasant, American crows, rats, coyotes, opossums, and striped skunk. Seasonally flooded pastures can provide important habitat for migratory waterfowl.
- **Urban** includes all ranges of urban development, from metropolitan areas to suburban and rural communities. In Mendocino County, the largest urban areas are Ukiah, Willits, and Fort Bragg. Smaller urban areas include Hopland, Redwood Valley, Potter Valley, Laytonville, Covelo, and Point Arena. Plant composition in urban areas is highly variable. It can include areas with an abundance of exotic ornamental plants, as well as areas dominated

primarily by native vegetation. The wildlife value of urban habitats varies from very low in dense, highly urbanized areas to relatively high in areas with a lower human density and a significant amount of natural vegetation remaining. The most densely developed urban areas provide wildlife habitat for western scrub-jay, rock dove, northern mockingbird, European starling, and house finch. Associated mammals include raccoon, Norway rat, little brown myotis, Virginia opossum, squirrels, and striped skunk. Suburban areas provide habitat for a greater diversity of native birds and mammals, such as wrentits, bushtits, oak titmouse, chestnut-backed chickadee, California quail, and mule deer.

#### 4-5 Air Quality

##### Air Quality and Air Pollution

The air in Mendocino County is generally very good. As of 2006, the county meets most state and federal air quality standards. However, air in the county did not meet the state's standard for particulate matter (dust) less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>) (*see illustration at right*).

The main source of PM<sub>10</sub> in Mendocino County is dust generated from unpaved roads, accounting for approximately 60 percent of PM<sub>10</sub> emissions. Other significant sources included home heating (fireplaces and wood stoves), dust from paved roads, and construction and demolition.

Concentrations of PM<sub>10</sub> in Mendocino County have been reduced since the mid-1980s. The implementation of a Major Source Control Program, Burn/No Burn days, and a ban on the burning of paper coincide with a steady decline in measured concentrations between 1987 and 1993. Nevertheless, days in which state PM<sub>10</sub> standards are exceeded still occur, though infrequently and not in the Ukiah-Willits area since 2002. Also, as previously noted, dust from travel on unpaved roads and residential wood burning are the largest existing sources of PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> in Mendocino County. Aside from state standards for new wood-burning devices, the county lacks control programs for emissions from these sources, which generally increase in proportion to population growth. Construction of more miles of unpaved roads and an increase in total miles traveled would exacerbate the problem, as would increased use of wood-burning devices for heating.

Trends for ozone also appear good. No exceedances of state or federal ozone standards were recorded at the two monitoring stations for ozone (Ukiah and Willits) from 1999 to 2006, the latest year for which data are available. Future maintenance of the county's attainment status for ozone is threatened by continuing growth, primarily in the Ukiah Valley. The majority of manmade ozone precursors are emitted from the tailpipes of automobiles. Although newer vehicles are cleaner and older vehicles are being retired, increased automobile use in Mendocino County has the potential to surpass the reductions in emissions from other sources. The Sanel and Ukiah Valleys are also threatened by transport of ozone from northern Sonoma County.

##### Climate Change

Climate change has become an issue of increasing concern in California. Climate change is presently thought to be both naturally occurring and induced by increases in the amounts of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the earth's atmosphere attributable to the burning of fossil fuels.

#### **Air Pollutants**



**Particulate matter** includes a wide range of solid and liquid particles, including smoke, dust, aerosols, and metallic oxides. Of specific concern are particles less than 10 microns in diameter, called PM<sub>10</sub>. These particles can be more easily inhaled into lungs, and therefore can have more serious health impacts. Recently, air quality standards have been established for particles less than 2.5 microns in diameter, or PM<sub>2.5</sub>. These particles can bypass the body's natural filtration system more easily than larger particles and lodge deep in the lungs.

**Ozone** is not directly emitted into the air, but is a product of chemical reactions between nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and reactive organic gases (ROG) in sunlight and heat. The principal sources of NO<sub>x</sub> and ROG, often termed ozone precursors, are automobile emissions and evaporation of solvents, paints, and fuels. Exposure to ozone can cause eye irritation, aggravate respiratory diseases, and damage lung tissue, as well as damage vegetation and reduce visibility.

Under the federal Clean Air Act, air quality standards are established for particulate matter, ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead. California's Clean Air Act requires standards for these pollutants and for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility reducing particles. In some cases, California's standards are more stringent than the federal standards.

Since 2005, there have been a number of legislative changes that cover greenhouse gas impacts from land use planning decisions. Governor Schwarzenegger issued executive order (S-3-05) in June 2005, setting GHG emission targets for the state to meet, starting with a reduction to 2000 GHG emission levels by 2010 and concluding with a reduction to 80% below 1990 numbers by 2030. This order directed the California EPA, Business Transportation and Housing Agency, California Air Resources Board (CARB), the California Energy Commission and the Public Utilities Commission to work together to develop a Climate Action Plan and report back on progress on meeting the statewide targets under the Governor's executive Order. In 2006, the governor signed AB 32, which established the first set of limits on GHG emissions for the state of California and put into place the regulatory framework needed to reach those targets. AB 32 set the 1990 GHG emissions level as a target to be achieved by 2020. In order to meet this goal, CARB is required to develop greenhouse gas emissions reporting procedures and adopt rules and regulations for reducing emissions by January 1, 2011, enforceable by January 1, 2012. Taken together, both S-3-05 and AB 32 set the eventual emission targets that Mendocino County will eventually be required to attain locally. While explicit thresholds and requirements have yet to be developed, various state agencies have begun to examine proposed land use plans and specific projects for their potential GHG impacts.

Because Mendocino County is primarily rural, the amount of greenhouse gases generated is small compared to other, more urban counties and miniscule in statewide or global terms. However, like all other areas worldwide that contribute to global warming, Mendocino County will be affected by climate change and shares a responsibility to address this issue. Long-term efforts will focus on reductions in the sources of greenhouse gases in the county through a comprehensive greenhouse reduction plan for both County operations and the broader area governed by Mendocino County. In the near term, this General Plan identifies energy-reducing policies that will also lower overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

#### **4-6 Energy Resources**

Mendocino County relies on imported electricity and natural gas for most of its energy needs. The Development Element of this General Plan discusses the electricity and natural gas supply systems in the county. Two sources of locally produced electricity in the county include:

- PG&E's Potter Valley Project on the Eel River. The Potter Valley Powerhouse is adjacent to Adobe Creek.
- The City of Ukiah also owns a hydroelectric power facility at Coyote Valley Dam/Lake Mendocino, designed to produce three megawatts of power when water flows are adequate.

Nonrenewable energy sources are found in the county or offshore: oil and gas, oil shale, and coal. The economic feasibility of developing these resources and their environmental implications, particularly for air quality and climate change, are issues. Access to offshore reserves is prohibited by federal moratoria and cannot occur unless those restrictions are lifted at the federal level.

A variety of alternative energy supplies exist in Mendocino County:

- The southeastern corner of the county is within the Geysers-Calistoga Known Geothermal Resource Area, although commercial steam projects have not been developed within Mendocino County. Injection of effluent water from sources in Lake and Sonoma counties is helping to increase reservoir pressure in the Geysers geothermal fields in Lake County.
- Solar and wind power have great potential in many areas of Mendocino County.
- PG&E owns a site at Point Arena that is a possible location for an experimental wind-powered generation machine, but could be used for other types of generating facilities (i.e., solar, tidal).
- Wood residue, manure and agricultural crop wastes can be converted into liquid fuels or directly combusted.
- Alcohol fuel can be produced from wood residues, manure, and plant residue. The biomass plant operated by Georgia-Pacific Corporation in Fort Bragg ceased operation with the closure of the mill.
- A potential new source of energy is ocean wave. According to a 2005 report by the California Energy Commission, *California Small Hydropower and Ocean Wave Energy Resources*, the conversion of ocean wave energy along the Mendocino County coast to electricity has a raw production potential of 3,709 megawatts. (One megawatt, or one million watts, is roughly equal to the peak power demand of 1,000 homes. By comparison, the peak electrical delivery capacity in California as of 2008 is approximately 55,000 megawatts.)
- Although technically not “renewable,” several closed landfills offer the possibility for the short-term recovery of methane, which can in some cases be used as an energy source.

Facilities and activities using alternative energy sources are not widespread in the county, although a number of agencies and businesses promote the use of alternative energy. Electric-powered motor vehicles projects have been funded by the Mendocino Council of Governments, Air District, and PG&E public benefit funds. Some ‘off the grid’ construction, most commonly residences, use solar, wind, and other power sources. Wood heat is common in urban as well as rural areas, but could lead to potential air quality impacts.

#### **4-7 Soil and Agricultural Resources**

Soil resources in Mendocino County are the basis for local agricultural operations. Agriculture has a significant role in the Mendocino County economy. According to the 2006 Mendocino County Crop Report, the total value of agricultural production, excluding timber, was approximately \$136.7 million. This was a 14 percent increase above the 2005 production value and the second highest total in the past ten years. Fruit and nut crops accounted for approximately 78 percent of the county agricultural production value. Most of this value was in wine grapes, with pears accounting for a significant share. Another 10 percent was accounted for by livestock and related products. Mendocino County ranked 35<sup>th</sup> among California counties in value of agricultural production.

The Soil Surveys of Mendocino County, Eastern Part (1991) and Western Part (2001), prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, describe soils characteristics, which include suitability for agriculture. The following soil series are found in areas of Mendocino County used for non-grazing agriculture:

- **Feliz-Russian soil series.** Most areas of this soil series in the Ukiah Valley are used for irrigated crops. The area near Covelo is used for hay and pasture. Areas of this unit that are protected from flooding have few limitations for crops.
- **Cole soil series.** This soil is found on alluvial plains and alluvial fans and in basins in Hopland, Covelo, and Potter Valley. It is used mainly for irrigated crops. The area near Covelo is used for hay and pasture. The areas near Hopland and Potter Valley are used mostly for vineyards and orchards. This unit is limited for crops mainly by the slow soil permeability (ability of water to flow through a soil).
- **Pinole-Yokayo-Redvine soil series.** This soil type is found on terraces of the Ukiah, Redwood, Willits, and Laytonville valleys. Most areas of this unit in the Ukiah and Redwood valleys are used for irrigated crops. Areas in the Willits and Laytonville valleys are used for livestock grazing. The Redvine and Yokayo soils are limited for crops by slow and very slow permeability. The Pinole soils have few limitations for crops.
- **Boontling-Pinole-Cole soil series.** This soil type is found on river terraces and floodplains in the Laytonville and Anderson valleys. Areas of this unit are used mainly for production of wine grapes and apples in the Anderson Valley and for livestock grazing in the Laytonville Valley. In areas of Boontling and Cole soils that are used for the production of wine grapes and apples, the major limitation is the seasonal saturation of the soils. No major limitations affect the use of the Pinole soils for the production of wine grapes and apples.

Areas susceptible to erosion occur throughout the county where surface soils possess low-density and/or low-strength properties. Slopes are another factor in soil erosion – the greater the slope, the greater the erosion hazard, especially if the soil is bare. Most soils in the above soils series have only a slight erosion hazard at slopes less than 9 percent, except for Redvine soils which have a moderate hazard. Soils on 9 percent slopes and greater have a moderate erosion hazard, and soils on slopes greater than 15 percent have a high erosion hazard.

The vast majority of the county is underlain by bedrock of the Franciscan Formation. Thick soil development and landslides very commonly cover the underlying bedrock throughout the county. Due to the weak and deformed nature of the Franciscan rocks, they are prone to deep weathering and development of thick overlying soils. Soil deposits in swales and on the flanks of slopes commonly contain substantial amounts of clay and weathered rock fragments up to boulder size. These soils can be unstable when wet and are prone to slides. Landsliding of such soils is widespread in Mendocino County, particularly in the eastern belt of the Franciscan Formation beneath the eastern portion of the county. Activities of man that affect vegetation, slope gradients, and drainage processes can also contribute to landslides and erosion.

#### 4-8 Mineral Resources

Minerals play an important role in the economy of Mendocino County. Unlike some natural resources, such as timber, minerals are essentially non-renewable.

A variety of minerals resources are known to exist in the county. The most predominant minerals found in Mendocino County are aggregate resources, primarily sand and gravel. Three sources of aggregate materials are present in Mendocino County: quarries, instream gravel, and terrace gravel deposits. For most aggregate uses, rock from each of these sources requires varying amounts of processing. Depending on the site, the processing operations may include site preparation, removal of overburden, blasting, excavation, crushing, screening, classifying, washing, and product batching. Additional processing operations used less frequently are those necessary to develop specialty products and remove various deleterious substances.

The demand for aggregate is typically related to the size of the population, and construction activities, with demand fluctuating from year to year in response to major construction projects or large development activity. After the completion of U.S. 101 in the late 1960s, the bulk of aggregate production and use shifted primarily to residential and related construction. However, since 1990, use has begun to shift back toward highway construction.

Deposition of sand and gravel along a meander of a stream may take place every year, but this does not mean that the resource is infinitely renewable. The long-term effects of yearly harvesting of sand and gravel resources are largely unknown, but have resulted in streambed location and depth changes. Other impacts associated with instream mining include impacts to fishery resources such as reduction in spawning gravel, sediment input into waterways as a result of road construction, impediments to fish migration as a result of the construction of summer road crossings, and impacts to bridge abutments due to streambed alterations. Instream mining has decreased significantly in Mendocino County in recent years, replaced by increased quarrying and terrace mining permit requests.

#### 4-9 Biological Resources Overview

In many of the biological communities described previously, there are special plant and wildlife habitats known as “sensitive habitats.” Sensitive habitats include those that are of special concern to resource agencies or those that are protected under CEQA, Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code, the California Coastal Act, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection directives, and Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Sensitive habitats in Mendocino County include:

- **Serpentine Soils and Rock Outcrops.** Serpentine soils and rock outcrops are common in the northern and eastern portions of Mendocino County. Areas of serpentine or rock-outcrop dominated soils are known to support a large number of special-status species. Vegetation on serpentine and rock outcrop soils can vary drastically from adjacent non-serpentine soils, due to the harsh soil conditions existing on these sites. An estimated 90 to 100 plant species are restricted wholly or in large part to serpentine and related soil types in the northern coast ranges of California. A combination of the soil conditions and potential human disturbance (e.g., mining, grazing, logging, recreation, etc.) has led to the listing of special-status species associated with serpentine soils. Although the serpentine and rock inclusions are found in a variety of habitat types, most of the serpentine soils and rock outcrops are found in Klamath mixed conifer forests, closed-cone pine-cypress forests, Douglas fir forests, montane hardwood forests, and chaparral.
- **Pygmy Forest.** A habitat unique to several areas along California’s north coast, pygmy forest occurs in the western part of Mendocino County. Extreme soil and climatic conditions have created a highly specific plant community with limited growth. In the pygmy forests, soil has been leached of its nutrients, is highly acidic, and is underlain by an iron hardpan. Due to the poor soil conditions, these communities are dominated by dwarf species of plants such as pygmy manzanita, pygmy cypress, Bolander pine, and lichens.

- **Special-Status Species**

##### *Point Reyes Checkerbloom*

As defined in this General Plan, special-status species include:

- Species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act and the California Endangered Species Act.

- Species on the list of “Species of Special Concern” developed by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). The list tracks species in California whose numbers, reproductive success, or habitat may be threatened.
- Species on the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) list of plant species native to California that have low numbers, limited distribution, or are otherwise threatened with extinction.
- Raptors (birds of prey), migratory birds, and other bird species protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, and other regulations.

**Wetlands/Waters of the United States.** Wetlands and waters of the United States are protected under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act. They include freshwater and saltwater marshes, seasonal wetlands, lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers. Wetlands are often the most ecologically productive portions of the landscape. Moreover, wetlands provide habitat for many special-status wildlife species, directly affect the habitat of most special-status fish species, and provide habitat for some of the special-status plant species in Mendocino County. Wetlands and waters of the U.S. located within Mendocino County may be negatively affected by residential and commercial development and by agricultural and forest management practices. The rivers and streams in Mendocino County, and the wetlands and seasonal drainages that are tributaries to those rivers, are essential fish habitat. Land use activities in the county that affect the volume and quality of surface water runoff may consequently affect the value and production of fish habitat.

- **Old-Growth Forest.** There is no single definition of old-growth forest, except perhaps the presence of large, old trees. Numerous factors, such as stand age, size and density, canopy layers, and the presence of decay in live trees, determine the classification of old-growth forests. Valued as a source of high-quality timber, these forests also provide critical wildlife habitat and have been seen as crucial components of genetic reserves, biodiversity, climate stabilization, and nutrient cycling. Over two-thirds of the pristine old-growth in northwestern California is in Douglas fir forest. Redwood forests influenced by coastal moisture are also considered key old-growth forests. According to the U.S. Forest Service, most old-growth forests in California are on federal property. Despite the sensitive ecological, political, and economic nature of old-growth forests, these forests are decreasing in size, and management needs to address the amount, distribution, value, use, and quality of these forests in the coming decades.

Mendocino County contains many special-status plant and wildlife species. **Table 4-A** lists special-status plant and wildlife species found in Mendocino County. The biological communities with the highest numbers of special-status species are the forests and aquatic ecosystems, including wetlands and streams, and communities in the coastal zone. They provide habitats for many of the most sensitive and well-known fish, birds, and mammals. The biological communities with the least number of special-status species are the grassland, urban, and agricultural communities. However, within these broad categories, there are sensitive habitats such as wetlands and serpentine soils that support a variety of special-status species.

**TABLE 4-A**  
**SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES IN OR POTENTIALLY OCCURRING**  
**IN MENDOCINO COUNTY**

Plants		
North Coast sand-verbena* Blasdale's bent grass* McDonald's rock-cress Sonoma manzanita	Round-headed Chinese houses* Mendocino (=pygmy) cypress Snow Mountain willowherb Oregon fireweed	Anthony Peak lupine Milo Baker's lupine Mendocino bush-mallow Northern microseris

Pygmy manzanita Hopland (=Raiche's) manzanita Marsh sandwort Marsh milkvetch Point Reyes blennosperma Small groundcone Thurber's reed grass Swamp harebell California sedge Livid sedge Deceiving sedge Green sedge Oregon coast Indian paintbrush* Humboldt Bay owl's-clover Mendocino coast Indian paintbrush* Rincon Ridge ceanothus Vine Hill ceanothus Howell's spineflower* Whitney's clarkia (=Whitney's farewell-to-spring) Davy's clarkia	Supple daisy Red Mountain (=Kellogg's) buckwheat Menzie's wallflower* Stinkbells Roderick's fritillary Mendocino gentian Yarrow-leaf (=manyleaf, dark-eyed) gilia* American manna grass Glandular dwarf-flax (=western flax) Bolander's horkelia Point Reyes horkelia* Thin-lobed horkelia Water howellia Burke's goldfields Contra Costa goldfields Colusa layia Stebbins' lewisia Coast lily Western lily Baker's meadowfoam	Baker's narvarretia Northern adder's tongue Gairdner's yampah North Coast phacelia* Bolander's pine Mayacamas popcorn-flower† Northcoast semaphore grass Nuttall's pondweed Dwarf alkali grass Great burnet Red Mountain stonecrop Point Reyes checkerbloom Maple-leaved checkerbloom Marsh checkerbloom Red Mountain catchfly (=campion) Seashore (=coast, =beach) starwort* Dune (=camphor) tansy* Beaked tracyina Showy indian clover Marsh violet
<b>Wildlife</b>		
<b>Invertebrates</b>		
Sandy beach tiger beetle Brownish dubiraphian riffle beetle Black abalone*	Pomo bronze shoulderband snail Leech's skyline diving beetle Lotis blue butterfly	Behren's silverspot butterfly* California freshwater shrimp <i>Scaphinotus behrensi</i> (ground beetle – no common name)
<b>Amphibians and Reptiles</b>		
Tailed frog Loggerhead turtle* Green turtle* Olive ridley sea turtle*	Northwestern pond turtle Leatherback turtle* Del Norte salamander Northern red-legged frog	California red-legged frog Foothill yellow-legged frog Southern torrent (seep) salamander
<b>Fish</b>		
Green sturgeon Tidewater goby Russian River tule perch River lamprey Pacific lamprey	Navarro roach Gualala roach Coho salmon – central CA coast Coho salmon, So OR/No CA	Central California Coastal steelhead Northern California steelhead Summer-run steelhead trout California coastal chinook salmon
<b>Mammals</b>		
Point Arena mountain beaver California red tree vole Pale big-eared bat Pacific western big-eared bat	Steller (=northern) sea-lion* California wolverine American (=pine) marten Pacific fisher	Long-eared myotis bat Fringed myotis bat Long-legged myotis bat Yuma myotis bat
<b>Birds</b>		
Northern goshawk Tricolored blackbird Grasshopper sparrow Short-eared owl American bittern Marbled murrelet Aleutian Canada goose Rhinoceros auklet* Vaux's swift Western snowy plover Olive-sided flycatcher	Hermit warbler Yellow warbler Short-tailed albatross* Snowy egret White-tailed kite American peregrine falcon Tufted puffin* Common loon Bald eagle Yellow-breasted chat Loggerhead shrike	Lewis' woodpecker Long-billed curlew Ashy storm-petrel* Osprey California brown pelican* Purple martin Bank swallow Rufous hummingbird Allen's hummingbird Northern spotted owl California thrasher

Notes:

\* Restricted to coastal or marine habitat. The County's Coastal Element contains policies to protect coastal species.

† Believed extinct.

Source: Background Report for the County of Mendocino General Plan Update, January 2003.

Some of the special-status species potentially occurring in Mendocino County: Coho salmon, Western lily, marbled murrelet

#### 4-10 Freshwater and Marine Resources

Coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout habitats are found in large portions of Mendocino County. The status of these and other species is of concern to federal, state, and local resource agencies. The primary threats to these species include sedimentation caused by erosion in the watersheds, high water temperatures exacerbated by loss of riparian cover, invasive plants and fish, and blockage of fish passage due to incorrectly designed and installed culverts and dams. Moreover, predation of juvenile salmonids by invasive fish and the illegal harvest of adult salmonids are intensified in areas of fish blockage, because the fish cannot escape as easily. Since all land use activities have the potential to impact water quality and other downstream resources, these impacts should be considered during the process of planning and designing land use and development.

Amphibians are negatively impacted by the direct loss of habitat, particularly wetlands and forests, and habitat degradation in the form of water quality impacts and the loss of migration corridors. Some amphibian species are heavily preyed upon by bullfrogs, an invasive species that may be spread inadvertently when ditches and ponds are constructed.

#### 4-11 Forest Resources

As described in the Development Element, approximately 46 percent of Mendocino County is in National Forest land managed by the U.S. Forest Service and in private Timber Protection Zones. Other forests are located on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management and other public agencies. Historically, Mendocino County has been one of California's leading counties in timber production. However, harvest volumes in Mendocino County have been decreasing since the mid-1950s, reflecting the conversion of old-growth forests to younger stands of timber and reliance on smaller trees. Increasingly stringent enforcement of regulatory requirements under the Endangered Species Act, State Water Resources Control Board rules, and the Timber Harvest Plan process has further affected the industry, along with protest of logging practices in State and National Forests, increased scrutiny, and litigation. More recently, the influence of global markets has affected timber prices and consequently harvest rates.

Timber production in the county in 2005 was 120,841,000 board feet with a market value of \$53,913,800 (Table 4-B and Figure 4-3), which decreased to 110,168,000 board feet valued at \$53,378,700 in 2006. The approximately 8 percent decrease in harvest yields essentially represents 100 percent extraction from private lands, because of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's inability to harvest timber from the Jackson Demonstration State Forest. Mendocino County was ranked fifth among California counties in 2006 in timber production, behind Humboldt, Siskiyou, Shasta, and Plumas counties. However, it ranked second in total timber value, due to the high value of redwood. The most productive timber forests in Mendocino County are the Douglas fir and redwood forests. The combined effects of soils and climate have created conditions that produce high growth rates for both species.

**TABLE 4-B  
MENDOCINO COUNTY TIMBER PRODUCTION, 2000-2006**

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Average
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								Annual Production
Timber Production (1000 board feet)	156,101	117,596	97,722	112,568	109,548	120,841	110,168	117,792

Notes: "Board feet" is the quantity of timber cut and scaled.

Source: Mendocino County Crop Report, 2006.

When compared to other harvested products, timber has made a relatively reduced contribution to total value of output. According to the county's 2006 crop report, while the dollar value of timber harvests was approximately \$86.5 million, the value of the county's fruit and nut production was approximately \$106.7 million. The value of one fruit product—wine grapes—was greater than that for timber (\$87.7 million). **Figure 4-3** shows the trends in dollar value of production for timber and wine grapes.

The forests of Mendocino County have other uses and values, including recreation, tourism, watershed protection, habitat conservation, special-status species recovery areas, scenic value, harvesting of non-timber resources, and carbon sequestration.

And while there is debate, both scientific and political, on sustainable management practices for forests, this General Plan is based on the premise that addressing the needs and requirements of biological communities and human influences is critical in evaluating management practices for Mendocino County. Limiting erosion of the highly erodible soils found in the county; protecting watersheds, special-status species and sensitive habitats; and limiting potential for wildfires are some of the important considerations in the sustainable management of Mendocino County forests.

#### 4-12 Open Spaces, Rural Landscapes, and Scenic Resources

As discussed in this element and in Chapter 3.0, the Development Element, Mendocino County is a predominantly rural county. Most of the land in the county is in forest or in agricultural production. Both forest and agricultural lands are considered open spaces that add to the quality of life of county residents and attract tourists. The various state and county parks protect areas with scenic value, particularly redwood groves. The coast is considered a scenic resource, and policies in the County's Coastal Element are designed to protect its scenic value. Some ecological communities in the county provide unique scenic value, most notably the pygmy forests.

#### Land Trusts

Land trusts or conservancies are nonprofit public-benefit corporations that work to conserve natural resources through education, planning, site-specific projects, or acquisition of land in fee title, conservation easements or by other means. Voluntary conservation easements recorded between the land trust and property owner restrict development rights to the extent necessary to protect biological, ecosystem, watershed, agricultural, forestry, open space, visual, public recreation or access, cultural or historic values. The land trust has the responsibility to preserve those conservation values set forth in the easement. Financial incentives for landowners are provided by the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 and other laws and funding sources. While conservation easements do not require local governmental approval, occasionally they have been incorporated into projects to reduce development impacts.

Many open space and scenic areas in Mendocino County are protected under easements managed by land trusts. The number of land trusts with interests in Mendocino County has significantly increased in recent years. Those with a local focus or known to be active in the county as of 2007 include:



- Anderson Valley Land Trust: Twelve conservation easements in Anderson Valley totaling just less than 1,000 acres (20 to 100 acres each).
- California Institute of Man in Nature: Jug Handle Farm and Nature Center south of Fort Bragg.
- Caspar Community: Community planning to conserve resources and facilitate public access in the Caspar area; was involved in acquisition of Caspar Headlands.
- Comptche Land Conservancy: Comptche viewshed - Two conservation easements (55 and 120 acres reserving commercial timber rights to owner; backup is Pacific Forest Trust on 120 acres).
- Coastal Land Trust: Manages two dedicated easements for trails to Pacific Ocean from Navarro Viewpoint, north of Albion; owns two parcels at Seaside Beach, north of Ten Mile River.
- Golden State Land Conservancy: Four conservation easements, 6,000+ acres, Mendocino County.
- Inland Mendocino County Land Trust: One conservation easement, 187 acres, Redwood Valley. Emphasis on farmlands.
- Mendocino Land Trust: Six conservation easements totaling 1,440 acres in Ukiah, Hopland, Anderson Valley, and South Coast areas; four points of public access.
- Moat Creek Managing Agency: Accepted two offers to dedicate land at a bluff south of Point Arena.
- Pacific Forest Trust: Conservation easements on 10,765 acres in Mendocino County, including Sinkyone Wilderness Park and Leonard Lake Reserve.
- Redwood Coast Land Conservancy: Coastal areas, Navarro River to Russian River, Sonoma County.
- Westport Village Society: Westport community and Headlands, assisted in Headlands acquisition. Interest in area from Ten Mile River to Rockport.

The County's Scenic Highways Element, adopted in 1977, recommended the designation of SR 1 through the county and SR 162 from Longvale to Inspiration Point as official state scenic highways, upon completion of corridor studies to characterize scenic qualities and corridor boundaries. Several communities also recommended local protection of the natural character of their scenic corridors. The Laytonville community proposed local scenic highway designation on several roads in the area, while Anderson Valley citizens desired local ordinances to ensure scenic protection of the valley. However, as of 2007, no scenic designations had been adopted for any roads or highways in Mendocino County. Two State Scenic Byways pass through the forests of Mendocino County: the North Central Coast Heritage Corridor on SR 1 and the Tahoe-Pacific Heritage Corridor encompassing sections of SR 20 and U.S. 101.

The Eel River (shown in the photo at right) was designated as both a federal and California Wild and Scenic River, one of several rivers in the state "which possess extraordinary scenic, recreational, fishery, or wildlife values" and are to be "preserved in their free-flowing state, together with their immediate environments, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the State." A management plan has not been prepared by the State Resources Agency.

## Resource Management Goals

The following are the County of Mendocino's Goals related to the topics addressed in this Resource Management Element. These Goals are based on the Planning Principles contained in Section 2 of this General Plan; all of the Policies and Objectives in this Element are in turn based on these Goals.

<b>Goal RM-1 (Watersheds)</b>	Land uses, development patterns and practices that facilitate functional and healthy watershed ecosystems.
<b>Goal RM-2 (Water Supply)</b>	Protection, enhancement, and management of the water resources of Mendocino County.
<b>Goal RM-3 (Water Quality)</b>	Land use development and management practices that protect or enhance water quality.
<b>Goal RM-4 (Ecosystems)</b>	Protection and enhancement of the County's natural ecosystems and valuable resources.
<b>Goal RM-5 (Ecosystems)</b>	Air quality throughout Mendocino County that meets or exceeds all state and federal standards for all persons.
<b>Goal RM-6 (Biological Resources)</b>	Protection, enhancement and management of the biological resources of Mendocino County and the resources upon which they depend in a sustainable manner.
<b>Goal RM-7 (Marine Resources)</b>	Protection and restoration, and enhancement of Mendocino County's freshwater and marine environments.
<b>Goal RM-8 (Energy)</b>	Safe and reliable energy sources emphasizing conservation and renewable sources to meet County and regional needs.
<b>Goal RM-9 (Agriculture)</b>	The protection of agriculture as a basic industry important to the economy and quality of life of the county by maintaining extensive agricultural land areas and limiting incompatible uses.
<b>Goal RM-10 (Forestry)</b>	Protection and enhancement the integrity of the county's diverse forest resources.
<b>Goal RM-11 (Soil Resources)</b>	Protection, enhancement, and management of the soil resources of Mendocino County.
<b>Goal RM-12 (Mineral Resources)</b>	Mineral resources conserved and used in a manner compatible with environmental, social, and economic objectives.
<b>Goal RM-13 (Visual Character)</b>	Protection of the visual quality of the County's natural and rural landscapes, scenic resources, and areas of significant natural beauty.
<b>Goal RM-14 (Dark Sky)</b>	Protection of the qualities of the County's nighttime sky and reduced energy use.

## **Resource Management Policies**

The following are the County of Mendocino’s Development policies related to the topics addressed in this Resource Management Element. These policies implement the Goals shown earlier in this Element, and are accompanied where necessary by specific actions to implement the policy. Policies in this Element address the following general topics:

### **Water**

Watershed Policies .....	4.0-30
Water Resources Policies .....	4.0-30
Water Quality Policies .....	4.0-31

### **Biology and Ecology**

Ecosystems Policies .....	4.0-32
Air Quality Policies.....	4.0-33

### **Energy**

Energy Resources Policies .....	4.0-35
Soil Resources Policies .....	4.0-37
Mineral Resources Policies.....	4.0-38
Biological Resources Policies.....	4.0-39
Fisheries Policies.....	4.0-42

### **Natural and Rural Landscapes**

Agricultural Resources Policies .....	4.0-43
Forest Resources Policies.....	4.0-45
Open Spaces, Rural Landscapes, and Scenic Resources Policies.....	4.0-47
Dark Sky Policies.....	4.0-48

## **Water Resources**

### **Watershed Policies**

Policy RM-1: Protect stream corridors and riparian habitat as development occurs.

Policy RM-2: Promote and participate in watershed restoration and enhancement projects.

Policy RM-3: Work cooperatively with property owners, agencies, and organizations to develop and support programs that maintain the integrity of stream systems for flood control, aquatic habitat, and water supply.

Policy RM-4: Promote and support public outreach and education programs pertaining to watershed and water resources stewardship.

Action Item RM-4.1: Develop a Riparian Systems Management Plan to facilitate coordination and cooperation between organizations and individuals responsible for the diverse functions – flood control, storm water management, groundwater stewardship, aquatic habitat protection/enhancement – occurring in watersheds throughout the county.

Policy RM-5: Promote and encourage land use activities that maintain or improve channel elevation and banks for rivers and streams in the county.

### **Water Resources Policies**

Policy RM-6: Promote sustainable management and conservation of the County's water resources.

Policy RM-7: Promote the incorporation of efficient indoor plumbing fixtures in new development and redevelopment. Where appropriate, promote drought tolerant landscaping and the implementation of other water conservation best management practices.

Policy RM-8: The development and implementation of new water conserving technologies should be encouraged as a means of reducing water demands.

Policy RM-9: Continue to seek and advocate for dependable water resources necessary to support all sectors of the economy and other beneficial uses.

Policy RM-10: Work with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations to develop and protect water supplies in a manner that is consistent with adopted General Plan policies, recognizing sustainable yields and protections for the environment.

- Promote and support the development of water storage facilities.
- Promote wastewater reclamation and reuse for irrigation, landscaping, and other appropriate uses.
- Support detailed water supply yield studies of all significant ground water basins in the County.
- Protect existing groundwater recharge areas from sediment, chemical inputs, and other negative effects of development.

- Protect existing groundwater recharge areas from sediment, chemical inputs and other negative effects of development.
- Protect the formation of ground water management areas by existing water districts or the County, where the competition for the available groundwater resource is resulting in groundwater quantity impairments to existing users.
- Investigate and pursue opportunities to prevent the loss of existing water supplies, including the Eel River diversions through the Potter Valley Project.

Policy RM-11: Local water resources should be reserved for in-county use.

Policy RM-12: Existing water uses shall have priority over new water uses.

Policy RM-13: Maximize the use of existing water supplies while proceeding with the development of new water supplies.

Policy RM-14: No new development shall be allowed unless a water supply acceptable to the County is available.

### **Water Quality Policies**

Policy RM-15: Promote the incorporation of project design features that will improve water quality by minimizing impervious surface areas, maximizing retention of storm water runoff, and/or utilizing riparian systems as a water treatment mechanism for protecting or enhancing water quality.

Policy RM-16: Promote integration of storm water best management practices that mimic natural hydrology into all aspects of development and community design, including streets and parking, homes and buildings, parks, and public landscaping.

Policy RM-17: Promote and support agricultural best management practices that protect or enhance surface and groundwater quality.

Policy RM-18: Support public and private programs to reduce water contamination and improve the water quality in county rivers and streams, specifically those which do not meet federal water quality standards.

## **Biology and Ecology Resources**

### **Ecosystems Policies**

Policy RM-19: Recognizes the economic and ecological values and benefits provided by our natural landscapes including our wildlands and forests. The County's goal is to prevent fragmentation and loss of our oak woodlands, forests, and wildlands and preserve the economic and ecological values and benefits. (*Working Draft #4-1a*)

Policy RM-20: Protect the County's natural landscapes by restricting conversion and fragmentation of timberlands, oak woodlands, stream corridors, and other natural environments.

Policy RM-21: Prevent fragmentation and loss of our oak woodlands, forests, and wildlands and preserve the economic and ecological values and benefits.

Policy RM-22: Protect, use and manage the County's farmlands, forests, water, air, soils, energy, and other natural resources in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner. *(Working Draft #4-1b)*

Policy RM-23: Conserve, restore and enhance natural resources, sensitive environments, and ecological integrity. *(Working Draft #4-1c)*

Action Item RM-23.1: Identify and maintain resource corridors to support biodiversity and healthy natural processes. *(Working Draft #4-1c)*

Policy RM-24: Use conservation and open space easements, growth boundaries, tax incentives, and other tools to:

- Protect, restore, and enhance significant resource values.
- Reduce premature conversion of resource lands in and around community areas.
- Provide linkages between resource areas between natural resource area. *(Working Draft #4-1c)*

Policy RM-25: Reduce development of open space and agricultural land by encouraging multistory buildings. *(Working Draft #4-1c)*

Policy RM-26: Protect and enhance watershed ecosystems by supporting and integrating local, state, and federal requirements avoiding regulatory duplication.

Action Item RM-26.1: Advocate education, technical and financial assistance, collaboration, and best management practices to protect, enhance and manage the County's watershed, earth and biological resources. *(Working Draft #4-1d)*

### **Air Quality Policies**

Policy RM-27: The County shall work to maintain 'attainment status', where feasible, for state and federal air quality standards which are currently met, and toward attainment for currently exceeded standards. *(Working Draft #4-2a)*

Policy RM-28: Maintain Federal Clean Air Act, Class 1 air quality standards in Federal Wilderness Areas and work to reduce out-of-county transport of significant pollution that will impact other Class 1 areas.

Policy RM-29: Public and private development shall not exceed Mendocino County Air Quality Management District emissions standards. *(Working Draft #4-2a)*

Action Item RM-29.1: Work with resource and fire agencies to reduce outdoor burning impacts on populated areas. *(Working Draft #4-2a)*

Action Item RM-29.2: Decrease air pollutants through increased code compliance. *(Working Draft #4-2b)*

Action Item RM-29.3: Promptly refer complaints about fumes, smoke, dust and other potential stationary or non-point airborne pollutants to Mendocino County Air Quality Management District for investigation. *(Working Draft #4-2b)*

Action Item RM-29.4: Continue to participate in regional planning activities to maintain air quality goals and standards. *(Working Draft #4-2c)*

Policy RM-30: The County shall work to reduce or mitigate particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) emissions resulting from development, including emissions from wood-burning devices. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Policy RM-31: The County shall encourage the use of heating devices that reduce particulate emissions. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Policy RM-32: The installation of open wood burning fireplaces in new development shall be prohibited. Fireplace inserts or gas fireplaces are acceptable. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Action Item RM-32.1: Urge the Mendocino County Air Quality Management District to create incentive programs to install or retrofit Environmental Protection Agency EPA-certified wood-burning devices or natural gas fireplaces in place of traditional fireplaces and older wood-burning devices. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Policy RM-33: Reduce dust generation from unpaved roads. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Policy RM-34: Direct new development to community areas and limit development of rural resource lands. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Action Item RM-34.1: Adopt road standards that reduce impacts from unpaved roads. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Action Item RM-34.2: Consider imposition of an impact fee for development utilizing unpaved roads dedicated to funding projects that reduce emissions of particulate matter (i.e. paving or dust-suppression). *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Action Item RM-34.3: Work with agencies and organizations to develop programs to improve and reduce emissions from unpaved roads. *(Working Draft #4-2d)*

Policy RM-35: Reduce the effects of earth-moving, grading, clearing and construction activities on air quality. *(Working Draft #4-2e)*

Action Item RM-35.1: Strictly apply AQMD dust control standards to all applicable development. *(Working Draft #4-2e)*

Policy RM-36: Reduce or mitigate emissions of ozone precursors to maintain attainment of state and federal ozone standards. *(Working Draft #4-2f)*

Policy RM-37: New development should be focused within and around community areas to reduce vehicle travel. *(Working Draft #4-2f)*

Action Item RM-37.1: Implement transit- and pedestrian-oriented land use and site design strategies. *(Working Draft #4-2f)*

Policy RM-38: Encourage the use of alternative fuels, energy sources and advanced technologies that result in fewer airborne pollutants. *(Working Draft #4-2f)*

Action Item RM-38.1: Work with local and regional agencies in the North Coast Air Basin, particularly in Sonoma County, to monitor and reduce the creation of ozone that could be carried by air currents into southern Mendocino County. *(Working Draft #4-2g)*

Policy RM-39: Reduce or eliminate exposure of persons, especially sensitive populations, to State-regulated Air Toxics. *(Working Draft #4-2b)*

Policy RM-40: Minimize the exposure of sensitive uses, such as residences, schools, day care, group homes or medical facilities to industrial uses, transportation facilities, or other sources of State-regulated Air Toxics. *(Working Draft #4-2b)*

Action Item RM-40.1: Urge the Mendocino County Air Quality Management District to create incentive programs for local businesses to retrofit or modify facilities, vehicles and equipment to reduce diesel exhaust and ozone precursor emissions. *(Working Draft #4-2b)*

Policy RM-41: Reduce potential health hazards from disturbance in areas classified as likely to contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA). *(Working Draft #4-2i)*

Action Item RM-41.1: Work with the Mendocino County Air Quality Management District to enforce standards for development within areas likely to contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos, including road construction, surface mining and grading operations. *(Working Draft #4-2i)*

Policy RM-42: Prohibit new road construction through areas with known Naturally Occurring Asbestos when feasible alternative transportation modes or routes are available. *(Working Draft #4-2i)*

Policy RM-43: Mendocino County acknowledges the real challenge of climate change and will implement existing strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and incorporate future measures that the State adopts in the coming years.

Action Item RM-43.1: Inventory existing and historical sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Mendocino County. Coordinate those efforts with other jurisdictions to ensure completeness and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Action Item RM-43.3: Create a greenhouse gas reduction plan for the County that sets specific reduction strategies and targets to meet.

Action Item RM-43.3: Reduce the County's own greenhouse gas footprint by adopting measures that reduce the consumption of fossil fuel energy resources.

## **Energy Resources**

### **Energy Resources Policies**

Policy RM-44: Identify, map and protect resources and areas that may provide opportunities for energy production, such as geothermal or reserves and solar easements. *(Working Draft #4-3a)*

Policy RM-45: Encourage research and development of distributed, renewable energy sources to meet current and increasing energy demands. *(Working Draft #4-3b)*



Action Item RM-45.1: Inventory and/or map solar, wind, tidal, geothermal, methane/landfill gas, biomass/biofuel, and micro-hydro resources.

Action Item RM-45.2: Encourage investment in distributed renewable energy resources either through incentives offered to commercial developers or under the Community Choice Aggregation model.

Action Item RM-45.3: Review all County, State, and federal law, codes, or policies that restrict the placement of distributed energy generating devices in the County and suggest changes wherever those restrictions are not supported by health, safety, or environmental concerns or where new technologies have rendered past concerns obsolete.

Action Item RM-45.4: Ensure that CC&Rs for new development projects comply with County policies supporting use of alternative energy sources such as solar or wind power and do not preclude the installation of these facilities.

Policy RM-46: Require the incorporation of energy conservation and renewable energy sources for public, residential, educational, institutional, commercial, and industrial facilities and uses. *(Working Draft #4-3c)*

Action Item RM-46.1: Incorporate renewable energy opportunities into new County facilities, and retrofit existing facilities. *(Working Draft #4-3c)*

Action Item RM-46.2: Periodically conduct energy audits of County facilities and operations and implement energy conservation measures. *(Working Draft #4-3c)*

Policy RM-47: Require the incorporation of strategies for renewable energy and energy conservation into development planning, design and operation, such as:

- Subdivision, lot orientation and building design for optimal heating, cooling and cogeneration opportunities.
- Facilities and operations that accommodate use of alternative and renewable energy transportation modes. *(Working Draft #4-3d)*

Policy RM-48: Energy efficiency shall be a major consideration in land use and transportation planning decisions. *(Working Draft #4-3e)*

Policy RM-49: High density residential and intense non-residential land uses should be located in areas that minimize transportation energy consumption and/or increase alternatives to single-occupant automobiles. *(Working Draft #4-3e)*

Policy RM-50: Protect the County's timber resources by discouraging the conversion of timberlands to housing or some other use that permanently precludes its use for timber production, or timber growing.

Policy RM-51: Promote transportation modes and systems that are energy-efficient, incorporate renewable energy sources, and increase alternatives to single-occupant automobiles. *(Working Draft #4-3e)*

Action Item RM-51.1: Create a timetable for all future structures to meet specific renewable energy standards to gain approval and permits.

Action Item RM-51.2: Determine a feasible transition to renewable energy use by all future development projects. (This work may be combined with the responsibilities of a Green Building Task Force.)

### **Soil Resources Policies**

Policy RM-52: Promote soil conservation practices by public and private land owners and managers. (*Working Draft #4-5a*)

Policy RM-53: Improve the understanding and use of soil conservation tools, including soil models and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soils surveys, during the development process. (*Working Draft #4-5b*)

Policy RM-54: Development shall be located, designed, constructed and managed as follows to protect soil resources, and minimize soil loss and erosion:

- Slopes over 15 percent: Limit land uses, densities, intensities and disturbances, vegetation removal, and hydrologic modifications on slopes exceeding 15 percent.
- Slopes 20 percent or more: Establish slope stability requirements for areas with, or directly adjacent to, slopes of 20 percent or greater within geologic units susceptible to slope failure and areas of mapped landslides.
- Slopes 30 percent or more: Discourage road and building site construction in areas that exceed 30 percent slopes or cross slopes. (*Working Draft #4-5c*)

Action Item RM-54.1: Prior to development, require evaluation of slope stability in areas with the potential for landslides, including structural foundation engineering and potential impacts to adjacent lands. The Building Official may waive this evaluation for existing single-family lots. (*Working Draft #4-5d*)

Policy RM-55: Discourage development in areas of known landslides or slopes where weak geologic materials are susceptible to landsliding. (*Working Draft #4-5e*)

Policy RM-56: Promote clustering and density transfers where appropriate to reduce soil loss and impacts to watersheds and fisheries. (*Working Draft #4-5f*)

Policy RM-57: Continue to identify and reduce soil erosion and sedimentation associated with lands, facilities and operations owned or operated by the County. (*Working Draft #4-5g*)

### **Mineral Resources Policies**

Policy RM-58: Environmental protection is a high priority during mineral extraction and associated processing operations, and in site reclamation. Recovery of mineral resources is not allowed when adverse environmental or social effects outweigh the public benefit. (*Working Draft #4-7a*)

Action Item RM-58.1: Identify and protect resources/areas that may provide opportunities for mineral extraction, including rock quarries and gravel. (*Working Draft #4-7b*)

Action Item RM-58.2: Continue to administer the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). *(Working Draft #4-7c)*

Action Item RM-58.3: Evaluate the effectiveness of Surface Mining and Reclamation regulations and project conditions in achieving County goals. *(Working Draft #4-7c)*

Action Item RM-58.4: Promote offstream terrace mining or hard rock quarrying operations over instream operations.

Policy RM-59: Restrict development that conflicts with the extraction of important mineral deposits when maps become available from the State Geologist under the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act. *(Working Draft #4-7d)*

Action Item RM-59.1: Restrict development that conflicts with the extraction of important mineral deposits when maps become available for the State Geologist under California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act. *(Working Draft #4-7e)*

Policy RM-60: Surface mining sites, especially those in areas with cultural, scenic or recreational values, shall be restored to harmonize with the natural environment. *(Working Draft #4-7f)*

Policy RM-61: Surface mining permits for large-scale low-grade nickel extraction from the Red Mountains east of Leggett shall be not be allowed by the County. *(Working Draft #4-7g)*

Policy RM-62: The County supports maintaining the Outer Continental Shelf as a petroleum reserve for use only in time of national emergency. *(Working Draft #4-3f)*

Policy RM-63: New onshore development directly related to offshore oil and gas development is not allowed in Mendocino County. *(Working Draft #4-3g)*

### **Biological Resources Policies**

Policy RM-64: Promote land uses and management practices that protect biological diversity and productivity. *(Working Draft #4-12a)*

Policy RM-65: New development shall protect sensitive environments and resource corridors. *(Working Draft #4-12b)*

Policy RM-66: The design of new development should emphasize the avoidance of sensitive resources and environments rather than their removal and replacement. *(Working Draft #4-12b)*

Policy RM-67: Discretionary development shall be designed or conditioned to achieve no net loss of sensitive resources. *(Working Draft #4-12b)*

Policy RM-68: Protection of existing sensitive resources is the highest priority. Onsite replacement or offsite replacement, protection or enhancement is less desirable. *(Working Draft #4-12b)*

Policy RM-69: Limit land use density and intensity within and adjacent to critical wildlife habitats, such as wetlands, deer wintering range, old growth forests and riparian corridors. *(Working Draft #4-12b)*

Policy RM-70: Maintain resource diversity and integrity by protecting and enhancing continuous resource corridors through project design. *(Working Draft #4-12b)*

Policy RM-71: Conserve native vegetation, critical habitats and soil resources through education, technical and financial assistance, cooperative endeavors, best management practices, and soils and vegetation management plans for development and resource uses. *(Working Draft #4-13a)*

Policy RM-72: Encourage land owners and managers to protect sensitive environments, and minimize the effects of recreation, tourism, agriculture and development on these resources. *(Working Draft #4-13a)*

Action Item RM-72.1: Work with agencies and organizations to educate the public about effective ways to protect sensitive environments. *(Working Draft #4-13a)*

Action Item RM-72.2: Seek private and public funding for fish habitat restoration programs such as E-Center Salmon/Steelhead Enhancement Program, County Fish and Game Advisory Committee, community salmon and steelhead rearing, and other efforts. *(Working Draft #4-13a)*

Action Item RM-72.3: Promote conservation easements to protect wildlife habitat, wetlands and other sensitive environments. *(Working Draft #4-13a)*

Policy RM-73: Require a permit for vegetation removal involving five (5) or more acres, assessing the following impacts:

- Grading and landform modifications including effects on site stability, soil erosion and hydrology.
- Effects on the natural vegetative cover and ecology in the project area.
- Degradation to sensitive resources, habitat and fisheries resources.
- Compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Visual impacts from public vantage points.
- Cumulative and growth-inducing impacts. *(Working Draft #4-13b)*

Action Item RM-73.1: Consider adopting an ordinance for the regulation of vegetation removal that includes an exemption for removal of exotic species.

Policy RM-74: Vegetation management and landscaping for public and private development should emphasize protection and continuity of natural habitats and hydrology. *(Working Draft #4-13c)*

Policy RM-75: Promote the conservation and use of native species or drought-tolerant, fire resistive and noninvasive vegetation. *(Working Draft #4-13c)*

Policy RM-76: In rural areas, promote vegetation and landscape management programs that protect wildlife and livestock habitat, control pest species including non-native species, reduce wildfire risk, and conserve water resources. *Working Draft #4-13c*

Policy RM-77: Protect ‘pygmy’ ecosystems (‘pygmy’ and “transitional pygmy” vegetation and soils) through the use of measures that include:

- Minimizing vegetation removal, disruption of vegetation continuity, and the introduction of water and nutrients due to human activity, sewage disposal systems, animals or agricultural uses.
- Limit subdivision of land on agricultural lands adjacent to “pygmy’ ecosystems, promote best management practices to minimize impacts. *(Working Draft #4-13d)*

Policy RM-78: Conserve and replant oak woodlands and stands of native oaks in community areas and developments. Protect oak woodlands in other areas through limitations on density and clustering. *(Working Draft #4-13e)*

Policy RM-79: Maintain and enhance the urban tree canopy, which creates a sense of open space. *(Working Draft #4-13f)*

Action Item RM-79.1: Review construction and landscaping site plans to ensure that healthy trees in community areas are not removed unnecessarily. *(Working Draft #4-13f)*

Policy RM-80: Conserve the County’s hillside vegetation by incorporating density transfers, clustering, small building sites, shared improvements and other measures that:

- Are compatible with the natural terrain and hydrology.
- Conserve continuous critical habitats, oak woodlands and natural vegetation.
- Minimize visual impacts. *(Working Draft #4-13g)*

Policy RM-81: Protect wildlife and livestock from depredation by domestic animals. *(Working Draft #4-13h)*

Action Item 81.1: Limit rural residential development and human intrusion, and mitigate development impacts in applicable areas. *(Working Draft #4-13h)*

Action Item 81.2: Enforce County laws regulating the depredation of wildlife by dogs or other domestic animals. *(Working Draft #4-13h)*

Policy RM-82: Conserve and enhance watercourses to protect habitat, fisheries, soils, and water quality. *(Working Draft #4-13i)*

Policy RM-83: Conserve and enhance streamside (riparian) vegetation through development design and standards. *(Working Draft #4-13i)*

Policy RM-84: Stream restoration and maintenance programs shall conserve riparian vegetation and the floodwater carrying capacity of river and stream channels. *(Working Draft #4-13i)*

Policy RM-85: Whenever possible, use riparian vegetation in conjunction with natural or appropriate structural materials to achieve a natural appearance. (*Working Draft #4-13i*)

## **Fisheries Policies**

Policy RM-86: Encourage public agencies and private property owners to protect fishery habitat and participate in fishery enhancement projects for coastal and inland waterways of Mendocino County. (*Working Draft #4-14a*)

Action Item RM-86.1: Work with organizations and agencies at all levels to formulate strategies and implement actions to improve watershed conditions, and fisheries habitat. (*Working Draft #4-14a*)

Policy RM-87: Support instream flows adequate to maintain and protect fisheries and beneficial uses. (*Working Draft #4-14b*)

Policy RM-88: Support implementation of fisheries and watershed management plans adopted by public agencies, such as the Summer Steelhead Management Plan for the Middle Fork Eel River and Mendocino County Salmon and Steelhead Management Plan. (*Working Draft #4-14c*)

Policy RM-89: Support the restoration of spawning and nursery habitat in the Eel River. (*Working Draft #4-14c*)

Policy RM-90: Water development plans (including surface or ground water resources, instream and streamside uses and infrastructure, hydropower, mining, bridges, docks, diversions, wells, etc.) shall obtain all required permits and include mitigation and enhancement features for fish and wildlife. (*Working Draft #4-14d*)

Action Item RM-90.1: Support State and Federal measures to protect and enhance the freshwater and marine ecology into the development process, such as:

- Stream corridor protection and restoration.
- Riparian vegetation protection and restoration.
- Erosion and sediment control measures.
- Surface mining controls. (*Working Draft #4-14e*)

Policy RM-91: Protection of the County's fisheries shall take priority over the short-term benefits of oil extraction. (*Working Draft #4-14f*)

## **Natural and Rural Landscapes Resources**

### **Agricultural Resources Policies**

Policy RM-92: Maintain extensive agricultural land areas and limit incompatible uses. (*Working Draft #4-15a*)

Policy RM-93: The County supports policies and programs to maintain and enhance the viability of agricultural operations and retention of agricultural land. (*Working Draft #4-15a*)

Policy RM-94: The County will work to protect important farmlands under the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. *(Working Draft #4-15b)*

Action Item RM-94.1: Work with the agricultural community to define locally important and unique farmlands and ensure they are appropriately zoned. *(Working Draft #4-15b)*

Policy RM-95: Support the diversification and expansion of the agricultural economic base. *(Working Draft #4-15c)*

Policy RM-96: Support environmentally sound agricultural operations through research, vegetation management programs, best management practices, and technical assistance for agricultural operators. *(Working Draft #4-15d)*

Policy RM-97: Land shall not be converted from the Agricultural Lands or Range Lands classifications to non-agricultural classifications unless all of the following criteria are substantiated:

- The project will not result in a need for unintended expansion of infrastructure in conflict with other policies.
- The project will not adversely affect the long-term integrity of the agricultural areas or agricultural uses in the area.
- The proposed use in the subject location will achieve the long-range objectives of the General Plan. *(Working Draft #4-15e)*

Action Item RM-97.1: Enforce County ordinances that protect agricultural lands and operations from nuisances, trespass, vandalism or theft, livestock predation, and contamination from abandoned or uncared for orchards. *(Working Draft #4-15f)*

Policy RM-98: Maintain land use compatibility and minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. *(Working Draft #4-15g)*

Policy RM-99: Discretionary projects shall not undermine the integrity and economic viability of agricultural operations by causing or contributing to piecemeal land use conversion, land fragmentation, urban encroachment, the introduction or concentration of incompatible uses on lands adjoining or within agricultural areas, or the extension of growth-inducing urban services such as public water or sewers. *(Working Draft #4-15h)*

Policy RM-100: Discretionary projects and parcels created by land divisions shall be designed and sized to be compatible with contiguous lands classified Agricultural Lands or Range Lands. Criteria include but are not limited to the following:

- The number of ownerships and land use intensities adjacent to parcels classified Agricultural Lands or Range Lands shall be minimized. *(Working Draft #4-15i)*

Policy RM-101: Projects shall be designed to reduce growth-inducing impacts and maintain a stable limit to urban development. *(Working Draft #4-15i)*

Policy RM-102: Building envelopes, clustered development, and commercial, industrial, civic, and sensitive uses shall be designed with buffers or setbacks from lands classified

Agricultural Lands or Range Lands. Buffers are defined generally as a physical separation of 200 feet with the potential for a reduced separation when a topographic feature, substantial tree-stand, landscaped berm, watercourse, or similar existing or constructed feature is provided and maintained. (*Working Draft #4-15i*)

Policy RM-103: Potential conflicts related to noise, dust, odor, pesticide use, spraying, burning, lights, late or early hour activities, vandalism and trespass, and other issues associated with agricultural operations shall be mitigated by the new discretionary project. (*Working Draft #4-15i*)

Policy RM-104: Residential uses and subdivisions shall maintain a ten (10) acre minimum parcel size adjacent to lands under active Williamson Act contracts which are classified Agricultural or Range Lands. Parcels classified with a smaller minimum parcel size, or zoned Planned Development or Clustering, may exceed these densities, provided that the criteria in policies RM-98 to RM-109 are also employed to reduce impacts. (*Working Draft #4-15i*)

Policy RM-105: Consistent with State funding, encourage the creation and renewal of Williamson Act contracts on eligible agricultural lands, including implementation of the Farmland Security Act. (*Working Draft #4-15j*)

Action Item RM-105.1: Continue to monitor and update the County's Williamson Act program for conformance with State law and the General Plan.

Action Item RM-105.2: Maintain land use classifications with minimum parcel sizes sufficient to meet County standards for Agricultural Preserves. (*Working Draft #4-15k*)

Action Item RM-105.3: Publicize provisions allowing small agricultural preserves with unique characteristics. (*Working Draft #4-15k*)

Action Item RM-105.4: Evaluate whether intensively farmed prime lands zoned Rural Residential-10 Acre Minimum or Remote Residential should be eligible for enrollment in Williamson Act contracts. (*Working Draft #4-15k*)

Action Item RM-105.5: Evaluate whether to modify the County Agricultural Preserves program to reflect the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. (*Working Draft #4-15k*)

### **Forest Resources Policies**

Policy RM-106: The County considers timber growing and harvesting to be the highest and best use of lands zoned Timberland Production. (*Working Draft #4-16b*)

Policy RM-107: Encourage maintenance of a timber supply which will have suitable diversified quality characteristics.

Policy RM-108: Encourage the forest agencies to continue their forest inventory program.

Policy RM-109: The County recognizes the importance of the infrastructure necessary to utilize timber as a product, and the County will, along with protecting the timber, protect the industrial zoning and the ability to provide for manufacturing facilities.



Policy RM-110: Maintain the 160-acre minimum parcel size for Timberland Production Zones. *(Working Draft #4-16b)*

Policy RM-111: Encourage enforcement of the State Forest practice Act and attendance regulations.

Action Item RM-111.1: Periodically review the County's forestry regulations to ensure consistency with the goals and policies of this General Plan.

Policy RM-112: Promote sustainable forest management practices (e.g., reforestation, timber stand improvement, stream corridor and water quality protection). *(Working Draft #4-16a)*

Policy RM-113: Encourage forest owners and managers to manage the county's diverse commercial timber resources, including hardwood resources, on a sustained yield basis. *(Working Draft #4-16c)*

Policy RM-114: Protect forest-growing stocks and timber supply, and provide infrastructure to support a diversified wood products industry. *(Working Draft #4-16d)*

Policy RM-115: Support agency monitoring of water quality, species of special concern, habitat connectivity, wetlands and riparian areas as barometers of forest health and productivity. *(Working Draft #4-16e)*

Policy RM-116: Support improved forest management through education, technical and financial assistance, cooperative endeavors, and best management practices. *(Working Draft #4-16f)*

Policy RM-117: Protect forest conservation and timber harvesting operations by minimizing conflicts posed by non-resource uses. *(Working Draft #4-16g)*

Policy RM-118: Prohibit rezoning and development of prime timberland (Site Classes I, II and III) classified for resource uses, including proposed resort uses, unless:

- The project is determined to be in the public interest, and
- State timber conversion permits are approved, and
- The project is consistent with land use, resource management, and other applicable General Plan goals and policies. *(Working Draft #4-16b)*
- Managing the property for timber production is no longer sustainable.

Policy RM-119: Discretionary projects and parcels created by new land divisions shall be designed and sized to be compatible with contiguous lands zoned Forestlands or Timberland Production.

Policy RM-120: Require parcel sizes on subdivisions of commercial timberland to be sufficient to provide for productive economic timber use and practical managements. Parcels split of TPZ lands shall also require provision for adequate timber access routes in conformance with a timber management plan.

Policy RM-121: The following guidelines shall apply to all projects (including land divisions) contiguous to lands designated as Forest Lands on the Land Use Map of this General Plan:

- The number of ownerships and land use intensities on adjacent parcels shall be minimized.
- Building envelopes, clustered development, and commercial, industrial, civic, and sensitive uses on non-resource lands shall be designed with buffers or setbacks. Buffers shall generally be defined as a physical separation of 200 feet with the potential for a reduced separation when a topographic feature, substantial tree-stand, landscaped berm, watercourse or similar existing or constructed feature is provided and maintained.
- Projects shall be designed to reduce growth-inducing impacts and maintain a stable limit to urban development.
- Potential conflicts related to noise, dust, chemicals, spraying, burning, vandalism and trespass, and other issues associated with forest management or timber operations shall be mitigated by the new discretionary project.
- Residential uses and subdivisions shall have a ten (10) acre minimum. Parcels classified with a smaller minimum parcel size, or zoned Planned Development or Clustering, may exceed these densities, provided that the criteria above are employed to reduce impacts. (*Working Draft #4-16i*)

### **Open Spaces, Rural Landscapes, and Scenic Resources Policies**

Policy RM-122: New development should incorporate open space and resource conservation measures, coordinated with the surrounding area. (*Working Draft #4-17a*)

Policy RM-123: Support land trusts and similar organizations in identifying and protecting lands and corridors with significant resource, recreational or scenic values. (*Working Draft #4-17b*)

Action Item RM-123.1: Continue to protect the scenic qualities of uplands and rural landscapes through measures such as Timberland Production and large lot zoning controls, clustering, the Williamson Act, the Forest Practices Act, and good management of public lands. (*Working Draft #4-17c*)

Policy RM-124: Protect the scenic values of the County's natural and rural landscapes, scenic resources, and areas of significant natural beauty. (*Working Draft #4-17d*)

Policy RM-125: State Route 1, State Route 162, and State Route 128, through the entire length of the County, are recommended for designation by the State of California as scenic highways.

Policy RM-126: Protect the outstanding values of designated river corridors within the State Wild and Scenic River System by limiting land use and site development impacts (including grading and vegetation removal). (*Working Draft #4-17e*)

Policy RM-127: Lakes, stream corridors, large reservoirs, and other water bodies have scenic values that shall be maintained or enhanced, and restored when necessary. (*Working Draft #4-17f*)

Policy RM-128: Maintain and enhance scenic values through development design principles and guidelines, including the following:

- Development scale and design should be subordinate to and compatible with the setting.
- Reduce the visual impacts of improvements and infrastructure.
- Minimize disturbance to natural features and vegetation, but allow selective clearing to maintain or reveal significant views. *Working Draft #4-17g*

Policy RM-129: Recognize the continuation of private property rights on private lands designated for open space, parklands or resource conservation. *(Working Draft #4-17h)*

### **Dark Sky Policies**

Policy RM-130: The County shall seek to protect the qualities of the nighttime sky and reduce energy use by requiring that outdoor nighttime lighting is directed downward and reduced to the level necessary for safety and convenience.

Action Item RM-130.1: Amend the County's Codes to incorporate standards for outdoor nighttime lighting that implement Policy RM-130.

## Planning Team

### Housing Element Implementation

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The Planning Team is responsible for implementing Housing Element-related programs and initiatives for the unincorporated portions of Mendocino County.

They are as follows:

[Residential R-3 Rezone Project](#)

[Inclusionary Housing Program](#)

[Green Building Task Force](#)

[Farmworker Housing](#)

Click on the links to learn more about each program or initiative. All programs are set forth in the Mendocino County General Plan [Housing Element](#).

## CHAPTER 6.0: COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC POLICIES

### Introduction

This section of the General Plan provides policies specific to a number of community areas in Mendocino County. The purpose of this section of the General Plan is to document those features that make each of these areas unique and to provide policies specific to the area.

Each section below includes a brief description of the community, including any specific community characteristics or features which are of particular importance in the area, and policies specific to the area.

The following general policies apply to all of the community areas:

Policy CP-A: All policies in this General Plan apply to the community areas, except where a policy for a community area is provided that may conflict with or be more specific than countywide policies. In the event of a conflict between policies specific to a geographic area and other policies, the area-specific policies shall supersede.

Policy CP-B: The County shall ensure that the special features in each community area shown in this General Plan shall be retained or enhanced, and shall consider these features in its review of any proposed development project.

## ANDERSON VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

The Anderson Valley community planning area lies along the State Route 128 corridor, extending generally from Yorkville to Boonville, Philo, and Navarro. Tourists visiting the valley travel on State Route 128, one of the principal routes to State Route 1 and the Mendocino Coast.

Boonville, the largest community in the Anderson Valley, encompasses a mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, offices, and lodging. The Boonville Airport is situated near Anderson Valley High School.

The Anderson Valley is shaped and defined by the Navarro River drainage, the largest coastal river basin in the County, as well as by the geology, geography, climate, and natural resources of the westernmost Coast Range. The area is tectonically active with some of the most easily eroded soils in the world. With its unique topography, major river system, and a climate strongly influenced by proximity to the ocean, Anderson Valley's natural beauty and rural character are its major assets.

Anderson Valley has seen change throughout its history and the last 20 years have been no exception. Historically, sheep ranching and other types of farming (including pear and apple orchards) formed the basis for the Valley's economy. In recent years, those agricultural activities have been replaced by a new crop: wine grapes, grown in the three official "appellations" of Anderson Valley, Mendocino Coast, and Yorkville Highlands. According to the Mendocino County Agriculture Commissioner, in 1981 there were an estimated 610 acres of grapes planted in Anderson Valley; by 1990 the figure was around 1,340 acres. By 2007, at least 2740 acres were planted, not including the vineyards on Greenwood Ridge and Fish Rock Road.

Timber production, while less prominent than in the past, remains important, with two mills located in Philo and several portable mills in operation. Dense stands of coast redwoods and Douglas fir dominate much of the south face of the Valley, and a large industrial timberland owner has extensive local holdings.

Recreation in the Anderson Valley centers on outdoor activities like kayaking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, and camping. Campgrounds at Hendy Woods State Park (S.P.), Dimmick S.P., Indian Creek County Park (C.P) and Faulkner C.P. augment private visitor-serving facilities. Wine tasting rooms and special wine events are a major focus of visitor-serving activity. A mid-sized brewery makes a variety of beers and hosts a large annual event. The annual three-day Mendocino County Fair and Apple Show, the Wool and Fiber Festival, and, increasingly, various annual music-related events bring large numbers of people into the community on weekends throughout the year.

Art and craft galleries, plant nurseries, a newly expanded Health Center, the all-volunteer AV Ambulance Service, the Community Park, a well-known weekly paper, a public radio station, the Anderson Valley Historical Society Museum, a lending library, farmers' market, cafes, stores, and other small businesses serve locals and visitors alike. For a relatively small community of approximately 4000 people, the economy and the available services are very diversified.

One problematic aspect of the local economy is the burgeoning drug trade. A long tradition of "mom and pop" marijuana cultivation has mushroomed into large commercial plantings of thousands of plants.

The Anderson Valley Unified School District serves (in 2008) more than 634 students at facilities in and near Boonville. The Anderson Valley Adult School and Mendocino Community College both offer courses regularly. The County Bookmobile stops regularly in several locations. The Anderson

Valley Cemetery District, a special district of Mendocino County, operates and maintains cemeteries in Yorkville, Boonville, and Philo. Mendocino County runs the Solid Waste Transfer Station outside Boonville.

Fire protection is provided by the Anderson Valley Community Services District (CSD), which operates a volunteer fire department that provides both fire protection and emergency response for medical incidents, rescue, and hazards within the District's boundaries and, through mutual aid agreements, to neighboring areas outside the District. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection maintains a station in Boonville that is staffed for fire protection during the fire season, approximately six months of the year.

Police protection is provided by the County Sheriff and the California Highway Patrol.

The Anderson Valley CSD also owns and operates the Boonville airport, owns the land and facilities of the Historical Museum, and maintains small lighting districts in Boonville and Philo. Its recreation committee supports a youth activities program, a teen center, and some adult sport and music classes.

The U.S. Post Office has staffed offices in Boonville, Philo, and Yorkville, and maintains a block of boxes in Navarro.

Boonville has a mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, agricultural, and civic facilities. Philo contains mixtures of residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial uses. Yorkville includes residential, limited commercial, and agricultural uses. Navarro contains residential and limited commercial uses, with much of the property in and around the community owned by a large industrial timber company. Floodgate, south of Navarro, is a long-established commercial area. Significant pockets of residential development lie in the hills east and west of Boonville; along Greenwood Road and at Sky Ranch near Cold Springs Mountain; between Philo and Navarro on the Holmes Ranch and Nash Ranch subdivisions; at the Yorkville Ranch; and in Rancho Navarro, a large subdivision located west of Navarro.

State Highway 128 is a primary route from U.S. 101 to the central Mendocino Coast, which is a population center and major tourist destination. It is the main road to Anderson Valley and virtually the only route for travel within Anderson Valley's communities. With the closure of lumber mills on the Coast, Highway 128 has become a major route for trucks hauling logs to mills in Ukiah and Cloverdale. It is the key transportation corridor for shipment of lumber and wood products milled in Philo and for other products such as grapes, apples and wine originating in Anderson Valley.

## **Anderson Valley Goals and Policies**

The following goals, policies and actions are specific to the Anderson Valley, and supplement the countywide goals and policies found elsewhere in this General Plan.

### **Anderson Valley Community Goals**

Goal CP-AV-1: Maintain and enhance the Anderson Valley's rural, agrarian character.

Goal CP-AV-2: Expand economic and housing opportunities in Anderson Valley consistent with the desired rural agrarian character of the valley.

Goal CP-AV-3: Focus development and community services within and around Boonville and Philo in a manner compatible with physical features and natural resources.

Goal CP-AV-4: Enhance the aesthetic appeal and economic viability of towns along the State Route 128 corridor.

Goal CP-AV-5: Preserve and enhance the historic character of Anderson Valley.

Goal CP-AV-6: Retain and restore historic buildings and sites throughout the Valley.

Goal CP-AV-7: Adequate police protection to help create a community free of drug and alcohol abuse.

Goal CP-AV-8: Expand and diversify existing economic ventures.

Goal CP-AV-9: A healthy, unimpaired Navarro River watershed system.

### **Anderson Valley Community Area Policies**

Policy CP-AV-1: The County shall concentrate new development in the four towns in the Anderson Valley (Yorkville, Boonville, Philo, and Navarro) and their immediate vicinities, and discourage most new retail development outside of the four towns.

Policy CP-AV-2: The County encourages the State of California to maintain Hwy 128 as a two-lane, rural roadway.

Action Item CP-AV-2.1: Work with CalTrans to create and maintain additional paved turnouts sufficient to facilitate passing.

Action Item CP-AV-2.2: Work with CalTrans to provide left turn lanes that do not diminish pedestrian safety.

Action Item CP-AV-2.3: Request CalTrans to work with the Community Services District to consider and, if appropriate, implement traffic calming measures in the towns of the Anderson Valley to create a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment.

Policy CP-AV-3: Establish places and facilities that create a sense of community, including small public gathering areas and benches in the towns of the Valley.

Policy CP-AV-4: Building designs shall reflect and incorporate the historic character of downtown Boonville.

Policy CP-AV-5: Retain and expand downtown Boonville as the commercial and social center of the community.

Policy CP-AV-6: If desired by the community, the County will facilitate the development of a regional plan for the Anderson Valley or for individual towns in the Valley.

Policy CP-AV-7: Continue to promote agribusiness through wine production and sales as a key tourist draw to the Anderson Valley.

Policy CP-AV-8: The County will encourage diverse agricultural endeavors, including sustainable local food production.



Policy CP-AV-9: Support Anderson Valley agriculturists and the tourism sector in developing a plan to unify and enhance efforts to expand the Anderson Valley economy.

Action Item CP-AV-9.1 Consider establishment of a Mendocino County visitor's center in the Valley.

Policy CP-AV-10: Accommodate tourism through the establishment and expansion of commercial uses suitable to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

Action Item CP-AV-10.1: The County will maintain, improve, and ensure public access to Faulkner and Indian Creek parks.

Action Item CP-AV-10.2: The County will encourage and work with the Anderson Valley Community Services District to identify new recreational opportunities and ways to expand and enhance recreation in the Valley.

Policy CP-AV-11: Services and infrastructure in the Anderson Valley should be available to serve the level of development planned for the area, and to reduce costs and preclude unplanned growth should be sized to accommodate only the level of development shown in the Development Management Element and described in these Community Policies.

Action Item CP-AV-11.1: The County will assist the Boonville and Philo communities in their efforts to provide necessary water and wastewater treatment services to support growth consistent with the land use patterns and densities established in the General Plan.

Policy CP-AV-12: The County encourages the Anderson Valley Community Services District to pursue the provision or management of water and/or wastewater treatment services.

Policy CP-AV-13: The County supports a community fire hydrant system in Boonville to facilitate economic development and public safety.

Policy CP-AV-14: The County encourages the Sheriff to provide a minimum of two resident Deputies in the Anderson Valley.

Policy CP-AV-15: The County encourages the California Highway Patrol to conduct adequate, regular patrols on the state highways in the Anderson Valley.

Policy CP-AV-16: The County supports efforts to protect sustainable, reliable water supplies for residential, commercial and agricultural uses without detracting from a healthy ecosystem.

*Note: Please see the **Water** policies in the **Resource Management Element** of this General Plan for additional countywide policies related to this issue.*

Policy CP-AV-17: The County encourages the Community Services District to maintain the current Master Plan for Boonville Airport, but supports upgrades to the airport to accommodate economic development and emergency services.

*Note: Please see **Noise** and **Airports** policies in the **Development Element** of this General Plan for additional policies related to Boonville Airport and other airports.*

Policy CP-AV-18: The Navarro River watersheds should be protected to maintain the Anderson Valley's agricultural, timber, and other resources.

Action Item CP-AV-18.1: Working with local and state agencies, the County will expand efforts to implement the Navarro River Restoration Plan.

Policy CP-AV-19: Agricultural and resource zoning should be retained throughout the Anderson Valley, consistent with policies in the Development Element of this General Plan which identify appropriate zoning districts for General Plan land use classifications.

Policy CP-AV-20: Encourage conservation easements or similar mechanisms to protect outstanding natural and scenic resources and agricultural and open space uses.

*Note: Please see the **Agricultural Resources Policies** in the **Resource Management Element** of this General Plan for additional policies related to agriculture.*

Policy CP-AV-21: Hillside development that results in excessive grading, removal or disturbance of native vegetation in Anderson Valley shall be limited to the extent possible.

Action Item CP-AV-16.1: The County will work with property owners possessing Certificates of Compliance on rural resource lands and land trusts to encourage the transfer of development rights to community areas, clustering, or conservation easements as a means of conserving open space and resource lands.

# COVELO COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

The Covelo community planning area in Round Valley is accessed by State Route 162 and Round Valley Airport. This remote planning area borders the Mendocino National Forest.

Round Valley encompasses the town of Covelo with commercial, residential, and limited industrial uses. The core area of Covelo retains the historic character embodied by its older commercial buildings and residences. Most of the surrounding valley is devoted to agricultural uses (grazing lands, orchards) and rural residential home sites. The Round Valley Indian Reservation encompasses much of the north end of Round Valley, with forest and rangelands extending further to the north.

Residents have expressed interest in retaining Covelo's historic nature and the rural character of the valley, while increasing economic development and affordable housing opportunities. Some factors affecting community growth include limited vehicular access, distance to employment centers such as Willits and Ukiah, lack of a public water system, and limited wastewater capacity provided by the Covelo Community Services District.

## Covelo Goals and Policies

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to Covelo, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

### Covelo Community Goals

Goal CP-C-1: Conserve Round Valley's natural, visual and historical resources while maintaining agricultural operations including grazing lands.

Goal CP-C-2: Expand economic opportunities in Round Valley consistent with the desired rural character of the valley.

Goal CP-C-3: Maintain compact development patterns by focusing commercial, residential and community uses in Covelo.

### Covelo Community Area Policies

Policy CP-C-1: Preserve and enhance the established historic character of downtown Covelo.

Action Item CP-C-1.1: Enhance Covelo's downtown and incorporate beautification improvements through circulation, streetscapes, signage, landscaping and other means.

Policy CP-C-2: Retain and restore historic buildings and sites.

Policy CP-C-3: The design of new development should reflect the rural character of the Covelo community.

Policy CP-C-4: Discourage subdivision activity in the outlying Rural and Remote Residential lands, including transitions to Rangelands and Forests.

Policy CP-C-5: Encourage higher density residential uses, including affordable housing units, in or near the commercial centers as part of a mixed-use strategy.

Policy CP-C-6: Encourage improvements to existing residential structures.

Policy CP-C-7: Establish places and facilities that create a sense of community.

Action Item CP-C-7.1: Revitalize the commercial core of Covelo as the focal point of the community, with mixed-use potential for convenience retail, office and residential uses, focusing on the State Route 162 (Covelo Road) corridor and Greely Street.

Action Item CP-C-7.2: Consider installation of a central plaza or gazebo in the downtown.

Policy CP-C-8: Expand and diversify economic ventures.

Policy CP-C-9: The County encourages the expansion of commercial uses in Covelo.

Policy CP-C-10: Commercial uses should be focused near the established core areas along State Route 162.

Policy CP-C-11: Actively pursue light industrial manufacturing employers for Round Valley.

Action Item CP-C-11.1 Consider placement of a community signboard along State Route 101 at the State Route 162 intersection advertising services and special events in Round Valley.

Action Item CP-C-11.2 Designate the mill site northwest of the town center as a study area to consider a range of future land uses, including industrial, light industrial, commercial and other uses supporting jobs creation for local residents.

Policy CP-C-12: Increase economic and social ties with the Indian community.

Policy CP-C-13: Encourage joint-use opportunities with Round Valley Indian Reservation.

Action Item CP-C-13.1 Assist the Covelo Community Services District (CSD) in its efforts to serve future growth with water capacity consistent with the land use patterns and densities established in the General Plan.

Policy CP-C-14: Support a community fire hydrant system to facilitate economic and public safety.

Policy CP-C-15: Encourage the Covelo CSD to plan for the provision of a public water system.

Policy CP-C-16: Consider upgrades to the Round Valley Airport to support economic development and emergency services.

*Note: the map on the following page is an excerpt from the Land Use Map contained in the Development Element and is provided for informational purposes only. The Land Use Map in the Development Element should be consulted to determine the official land use policy of the County for this area.*

## **FORT BRAGG COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA**

The Fort Bragg community planning area includes the greater Ft. Bragg area, which includes the City of Fort Bragg and the surrounding unincorporated areas. Areas within the Coastal Zone are addressed in the County's Local Coastal Plan and in the Coastal Element of this General Plan. State Routes 1 and 20 provide the backbone circulation system.

The Mendocino Coast is very popular with tourists, who seek its coastal views and small town charm. The unincorporated areas around the City of Fort Bragg exhibit a mix of local and tourist-oriented commercial, residential and rural uses along with scattered commercial uses (primarily local service, highway-oriented, and tourist-related businesses). Noyo Harbor at the south end of Ft. Bragg remains a working harbor supporting the fishing industry and tourism.

Major factors affecting the future of community growth include reuse of the closed Georgia-Pacific Mill site within the City of Fort Bragg, the desire to protect agricultural uses that provide a sense of open space, pressure to develop housing and infrastructure to support development (especially given growth restrictions in the Coastal Zone), and limitations on water supply and wastewater systems.

While land use and resource protection of areas within the Coastal Zone are addressed within the County's Local Coastal Plan, development in the adjoining areas also affects coastal resources. Some of these areas of concern include impacts to State Route 1, watersheds and water resources, fisheries, habitats, and resource corridors.

### **Fort Bragg Goals and Policies**

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to Fort Bragg, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

#### **Fort Bragg Community Goals**

Goal CP-FB-1: Coordinate planning and development of the areas around the City of Fort Bragg in a manner that is comprehensive and recognizes the City's sphere of influence.

Goal CP-FB-2: Maintain compact development forms around the City of Fort Bragg and in the larger community planning area consistent with the desired rural character.

Goal CP-FB-3: Diversify the economy of the Fort Bragg area.

Goal CP-FB-4: Promote tourism, but not at the expense of quality of life or coastal resources.

Goal CP-FB-5: Facilitate the provision of housing for local workers.

#### **Fort Bragg Community Area Policies**

Policy CP-FB-1: The County shall coordinate planning and development with the City of Fort Bragg to create a unified strategy for urban development and the provision of services within and adjacent to the City.

Action Item CP-FB-1.1: Work with the City of Fort Bragg to develop a comprehensive plan for the old Georgia Pacific Mill Site that addresses impacts to the County and produces housing commensurate with need.

Policy CP-FB-2: The County shall discourage annexation of land to the City of Fort Bragg in a piecemeal or fragmented manner.

Action Item CP-FB-2.1: Work with the City to improve water and sewer service capabilities adjacent to the City to facilitate the production of higher density housing through annexations or other organizational means.

Policy CP-FB-3: Circulation patterns in the Fort Bragg area should be improved to facilitate local, through, and tourist traffic.

Action Item CP-FB-3.1: Investigate the feasibility of a north-south alternative to State Route 1 in the Fort Bragg/Mendocino area.

Policy CP-FB-4: The County supports improved pedestrian and bicycle access in the Fort Bragg area.

Policy CP-FB-5: The County shall work to reduce impacts to State Route 1 from development outside the Coastal Zone.

Policy CP-FB-6: The coastal environment and coastal resources should be protected through improved coordination of the Local Coastal Plan with other elements of the General Plan.

Policy CP-FB-7: New development should be located in less sensitive areas near the Coastal Zone as a strategy to reduce development pressure in the Coastal Zone.

Action Item CP-FB-7.1: Consider and mitigate impacts of development in areas outside the Coastal Zone that are oriented to coastal attractions and services.

Policy CP-FB-8: Coastal Element policies for environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHAs) shall be applied to all portions of development proposals which include areas within and outside the Coastal Zone boundary.

## **HOPLAND COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA**

The Hopland community planning area lies within the Sanel Valley along the State Route 101 corridor, the primary transportation link between Sonoma County to the south and the remainder of Mendocino County to the north. Hopland consists of a mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. The center of the community is situated adjacent to State Route 101, and consists of several historic commercial structures. "Old Hopland" is located along State Route 175 east of the Russian River.

Hopland is a community in transition, evolving from a primarily agricultural area to a community that now emphasizes the wine industry and encourages tourism. The core area of the community retains the historic character embodied by its older residences and commercial buildings. Hopland residents desire to retain Hopland's downtown and historic theme as a focal point, direct growth toward established communities where services and infrastructure are available, and protect the area's rural character. Maintaining these values will be a significant challenge as the Hopland area experiences increased growth pressures as a bedroom community for employment centers in Sonoma County, regardless whether the State Route 101 Hopland Bypass is constructed. Other major factors affecting future community growth include physical constraints posed by the narrow confines of the valley, the Russian River system and associated floodplain, State Route 101 and the North Coast Railway, a desire to protect agricultural lands, and potential limitations on availability of public water and wastewater services provided by the Hopland Public Utilities District.

### **Hopland Goals and Policies**

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to Hopland, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

#### **Hopland Community Goals**

Goal CP-H-1: Promote the Hopland area as a tourist-oriented community while enhancing its agrarian and historic character.

Goal CP-H-2: Focus development and community services within and around Hopland and Old Hopland in a manner compatible with physical and cultural features.

Goal CP-H-3: Maximize the compatibility of State Route 101 Hopland Bypass with Community Objectives.

#### **Hopland Community Area Policies**

Policy CP-H-1: The Council shall support established commercial and social centers in downtown Hopland and Old Hopland through the use of land use planning, circulation, and economic development activities.

Policy CP-H-2: Downtown Hopland should be retained and expanded as the commercial and social center of the community.

Policy CP-H-3: Enhance Hopland's downtown and expand beautification improvements through circulation, streetscapes, signage, landscaping and other means.

Action Item CP-H-3.1: Create a downtown plan that expands upon and integrates the concepts in the Development Element.

Policy CP-H-4: To preserve the existing commercial areas, new commercial development opportunities along the new State Route 101 corridor will be discouraged.

Policy CP-H-5: Preserve and enhance the established historic character and architectural themes of the Hopland communities.

Policy CP-H-6: Building designs shall reflect and incorporate the historic character of downtown Hopland and Old Hopland.

Policy CP-H-7: Historic buildings and sites shall be retained and restored.

Policy CP-H-8: Residential uses (including multi-family uses) shall be focused within Hopland and Old Hopland.

Policy CP-H-9: The land use densities and patterns of Hopland's outlying rural and remote residential lands shall be retained as shown on the Land Use Map of this General Plan.

Policy CP-H-10: The County supports the establishment of places and facilities in Hopland that create a sense of community.

Policy CP-H-11: The County supports expanded and diversified economic ventures in Hopland and the surrounding areas.

Action Item CP-H-11.1: Continue to promote agribusiness through wine production and sales as a key tourist draw to Hopland.

Policy CP-H-12: The County supports the establishment and expansion of commercial uses to meet the needs of residents and visitors alike.

Policy CP-H-13: To preserve the visual character of the area, the County shall limit the visual impacts of signs along roadways and in the community. Potential strategies for reducing the impact of signs include:

- Consolidate signs at community gateways.
- Encourage community signboards advertising multiple businesses, especially in the downtown.

Policy CP-H-14: The County shall prohibit the installation of new billboards along State Route 101 in Sanel Valley.

Action Item CP-H-14.1: Establish a sign amortization program to reduce existing billboards.

Policy CP-H-15: The County supports joint-use opportunities with the Hopland Sho Ka Wah Casino to increase economic and social ties with the Pomo Indian community.

Policy CP-H-16: The County supports the use of the North Coast Railway as part of the community's transportation system for rail-to-trail, passenger, or freight service.



Policy CP-H-17: The County shall seek to maximize the compatibility of the State Route 101 Hopland Bypass with community identity, convenient access to the downtown, and protection of economic ventures and agricultural resources. The design of the Bypass should provide on-off ramps for convenient access to commercial areas.

Action Item CP-H17.1: The County shall actively plan for changes in circulation and associated effects that will accompany the Bypass.

Policy CP-H-18: Maintain the existing land use patterns around the Bypass interchanges unless contiguous to the existing communities.

# LAYTONVILLE COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

The town of Laytonville and surrounding lands are located in Long Valley along State Route 101 in northern Mendocino County. The community of Laytonville encompasses a central business district (town center) with service commercial, public and residential uses. Long Valley is approximately five miles in length, and includes primarily rural residential and agricultural uses. Rolling hills in timberland production and large residential parcels surround the valley.

The Laytonville Area Municipal Advisory Committee (LAMAC) has identified a number of short- and long-term community goals, addressed below. Among the key goals is the construction of a public wastewater treatment system (replacing widespread use of septic systems) and provision of a stable public water supply through the Laytonville County Water District.

## Laytonville Goals and Policies

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to Laytonville, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

### Laytonville Community Goals

Goal CP-L-1: Retain the rural atmosphere and natural resources of Long Valley.

Goal CP-L-2: Promote Laytonville as a sustainable and livable community while retaining its unique rural character.

Goal CP-L-3: Enhance the aesthetic appeal of Laytonville along the State Route 101 corridor.

Goal CP-L-4: Focus development and community services in proximity to the town center of Laytonville.

### Laytonville Community Area Policies

Policy CP-L-1: The County will maintain the open, rural atmosphere of Long Valley and facilitate infill of the existing community by restricting the State Route 101 business district of Laytonville to the established town center of Laytonville.

Policy CP-L-2: The County shall support, encourage, and facilitate community planning in Laytonville.

Action Item CP-L-2.1: Continue to refer discretionary projects to, and consider recommendations of, the Laytonville Area Municipal Advisory Commission prior to taking action on the proposal.

Policy CP-L-3: The County supports improvements to the safety, efficiency, and appearance of the State Route 101 corridor through downtown Laytonville. Potential strategies include:

- Reducing traffic hazards associated with pedestrian crossings of State Route 101 in and around the downtown area.
- Establishing public parking areas with easy access to, but visually screened from, State Route 101.

- Accommodating highway visitor travel through visually enhanced on-street parking and streetscapes.
- Prohibiting tall solid fences, sound walls or similar barriers along State Route 101 in downtown Laytonville.
- Working with local businesses and Caltrans in planting native trees along State Route 101 in the commercial district of Laytonville.
- Working with Caltrans to install a public restroom facility or rest stop along State Route 101 near Laytonville, with adequate on-site public parking.
- Continue to work with Caltrans to ease the curve in State Route 101 at the north end of the Laytonville town center. The Council supports funding to remedy hazards associated with the curve, such as road realignment and improvements for pedestrian safety.

Action Item CP-L-3.1: Aggressively enforce zoning and other development standards as a means of improving community image and reducing blight in Long Valley.

Policy CP-L-4: The visual impacts of signs along roadways and in the Laytonville community shall be reduced to the extent possible. Potential strategies include:

- Consolidating signs at community gateways.
- Encouraging community signboards advertising multiple businesses, especially in the downtown.

Policy CP-L-5: The installation of new billboards along State Route 101 in Long Valley is prohibited.

Action Item CP-L-5.1: Establish a sign amortization program to eliminate existing billboards.

Policy CP-L-6: The County supports local industries which maintain Laytonville and Long Valley's unique and rural character.

Policy CP-L-7: Laytonville and Long Valley shall be maintained as a community with businesses that are unique or local to the County which entice people to get out of their vehicles; and provide a community scale and context compatible with surrounding uses(including building size restrictions).

Action Item CP-L-7.1: Establish building size restrictions to implement Policy CP-65.

Policy CP-L-8: The County will encourage and support locally owned businesses seeking public and private sources of funding.

Policy CP-L-9: The County encourages job creation and economic development through local sustainable, non-polluting light industries.

Action Item CP-L9.1: Consider creation of a light industrial park, factoring in aesthetics, proximity to the town center, infrastructure availability, access, and environmental constraints.

Policy CP-L-10: The County encourages new commercial uses to incorporate designs and provisions for generating their own renewable energy.

Policy CP-L-11: The County encourages the use of 'green' building practices for new development in the town center.

Policy CP-L-12: Only clean, non-polluting commercial businesses shall be permitted in the Laytonville area. Automotive service stations will be permitted in the town center as the only exception to this requirement.

Policy CP-L-13: The County supports and will work with agencies and local organizations to improve community services and amenities, including:

- Supporting youth activities and facilities, such as a skate park and after-school programs.
- Working with agencies and organizations to expand the range of programs available to seniors, including meals-on-wheels and medical services.
- Exploring beneficial community uses of the old Laytonville High School campus facilities and multiple uses of classroom and playfield facilities to meet the needs of the Long Valley community.

Policy CP-L-14: The County will work cooperatively with the Long Valley community to plan open spaces, parks and public gardens.

Policy CP-L-15: Alternative modes of access in the valley (e.g., walking, bicycling, and public transit) should be expanded and enhanced.

Action Item CP-L-15.1: Provide bicycle access improvements to allow movement through the town center, to the High School and other areas in Long Valley, including along Branscomb Road. Where practical, install Class I bicycle lanes.

Action Item CP-L-15.2: The County shall prepare a trails plan that provides for pedestrian access to key locations and features in the town center, and for trails to access key points in Long Valley.

Policy CP-L-16: The County supports construction efforts to provide necessary water storage to meet community fire-fighting needs and required fire flows.

Policy CP-L-17: The County will assist the Laytonville County Water District in its efforts to serve existing development and future growth consistent with the land use patterns and densities established in the General Plan, including the District's efforts to provide long-term, reliable water supplies.

Policy CP-L-18: The County supports the use of a domestic wastewater treatment system for Laytonville. A decentralized system with components managed and maintained by a public district is preferred by the County over other alternatives.

Policy CP-L-19: The County encourages the Laytonville County Water District to pursue the provision or management of a decentralized wastewater system and shall facilitate this process and support funding applications consistent with technical studies and General Plan objectives.

Action Item CP-L-19.1: Pursue study, design and construction of a wastewater treatment system serving Laytonville.

Action Item CP-L-19.2: The County shall continue to monitor the Laytonville Landfill and fully mitigate any impacts to groundwater resources, air quality and related environmental resources.

# POTTER VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

The Potter Valley community planning area lies north of State Route 20 and is accessed via Potter Valley Road. The Russian River bisects the valley. A downtown area located along Main Street near Powerhouse Road encompasses commercial operations, a school and other uses. The remainder of the area is mainly agricultural uses, with grazing lands, vineyards and orchards covering most of the valley floor. Residential ranchettes of 5 to 10 acre lots are situated in and around these farm sites. The valley floor rapidly transitions to upland forests and rural grazing lands.

## Potter Valley Goals and Policies

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to Potter Valley, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

### Potter Valley Community Goals

- Goal CP-PV-1: Expand economic opportunities in Potter Valley consistent with desired rural character of the valley.
- Goal CP-PV-2: Recreate the sense of community that has been eroded with the loss of jobs and lack of affordable housing opportunities in Potter Valley.
- Goal CP-PV-3: Maintain compact development patterns by focusing commercial, residential and community uses within the established community area.

### Potter Valley Community Area Policies

- Policy CP-PV-1: The County shall encourage mixed-use, commercial and public uses to locate within the Potter Valley community core area.
- Policy CP-PV-2: The County encourages mixed-use and infill development in the core area.
- Action Item CP-PV-2.1: Consider developing a “Central Park” off Main Street (located adjacent to the bridge to incorporate the river, or at the northeast corner of Eel River and Main) that would invite travelers to stop, rest, and visit the town, and provide a central gathering point for community festivals and events.
- Policy CP-PV-3: The County shall discourage subdivision activity in the outlying Rural and Remote Residential lands, including transitions to Rangelands and Forestlands.
- Policy CP-PV-4: Higher density residential uses, including affordable housing units, are encouraged in the commercial center as part of a mixed-use strategy.
- Policy CP-PV-5: The County supports the creation of economic opportunity, places and facilities that support a sense of community in Potter Valley.
- Action Item CP-PV-5.1: The County shall create a strategy to revitalize and expand economic opportunity in Potter Valley, including evaluation of commercial expansion and consolidation on Main Street.

Policy CP-PV-6: Planned land uses in Potter Valley should accommodate expansion of commercial, light industrial and resource uses to meet the needs of local residents and businesses.

Policy CP-PV-7: The County supports the expansion and diversification of agricultural operations, including orchards, grazing lands and vineyards.

Action Item CP-PV-7.1: The County shall actively pursue light industrial and manufacturing employers for locations on the periphery of the town center, near convenient access and services.

Action Item CP-PV-7.2: Investigate the placement of a community signboard along State Route 20 at Potter Valley Road advertising services and special events in Potter Valley. If determined to be warranted, install the signboard.

Action Item CP-PV-7.3: Install gateway landscaping as an indication of entry into the town from the south at the intersection of Main Street and Eel River.

Policy CP-PV-8: The County supports improved accessibility to and from State Route 20 by upgrading and maintaining Potter Valley Road.

Policy CP-PV-9: The County encourages the Potter Valley Community Services District to pursue the provision or management of water and/or wastewater treatment services.

Action Item CP-PV-10.1: The County will assist the community in efforts to provide water and wastewater treatment services to support future growth consistent with the land use patterns and densities established in the General Plan.

Action Item CP-PV-10.2: Pursue efforts to redevelop the old bridge on the north end of Main Street, including efforts to maintain its historical character.

Action Item CP-PV-10.3: Investigate undergrounding power lines on the west side of Main Street, and replacing the lights currently on the poles with attractive, unobtrusive street lights that reflect the cultural heritage of the community.

# REDWOOD VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

The Redwood Valley community planning area encompasses the town of Redwood Valley and the area north of State Route 20 via East Road, approximately eight miles northeast of Ukiah. Bisected by the Russian River and State Route 101, Redwood Valley maintains a modest commercial downtown area located at the intersection of East Road and School Way. South of downtown Redwood Valley is a strip of commercial shops. The remainder of the valley is mainly agricultural with residential ranchettes of 5 to 10 acres, as well as clusters of smaller parcels, situated in and around the valley.

## Redwood Valley Goals and Policies

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to the Redwood Valley area, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

### Redwood Valley Community Goals

Goal CP-RV-1: Focus new commercial development in the established downtown Redwood Valley area (along East Road), and new commercial and industrial development north and south of School Way. All new development should be located where public services and infrastructure are available

Goal CP-RV-2: Maintain a transition buffer between the existing commercial, industrial, and residential uses surrounding the downtown Redwood Valley core as generally described above, and resource lands outside this core area.

Goal CP-RV-3: Maintain the agricultural nature of the valley by retaining Agricultural zoning and avoiding incremental increases in rural residential densities.

### Redwood Valley Community Area Policies

Policy CP-RV-1: The County supports and promotes “Smart Growth” planning techniques and principles for the Redwood Valley.

Policy CP-RV-2: Mixed-use, commercial and public uses are encouraged to locate in the Redwood Valley downtown core area.

Policy CP-RV-3: The County shall promote economic infill opportunities that support infill and improve the aesthetic character of the Redwood Valley downtown core.

Action Item CP-RV-3.1: Consider redeveloping the commercial building façades on the buildings located on East Road.

Action Item CP-RV-3.2: Improve the aesthetics of areas surrounding the downtown, extending to State Route 20. Potential strategies include:

- Planting screening landscaping to reduce the visual impacts of the electric substation southeast of the downtown.
- Establishing a consistent architectural theme, compatible with the character of Redwood Valley, for commercial development south of the downtown.



Policy CP-RV-4: New industrial development in Redwood Valley should be located outside the downtown core in locations that minimize negative visual impacts and are compatible with existing and planned land uses.

Policy CP-RV-5: The County encourages redevelopment of the northwest corner of East Road and School Way, such as with a mixed retail commercial/residential project.

Policy CP-RV-6: Encourage streetscape improvements to the East Road street frontage to improve appearance and aesthetics, potentially including landscaping, pedestrian access, lighting, or other features on private property and in the public right of way.

Policy CP-RV-7: Parking to be relocated off of the East Road street frontage to improve aesthetics.

Policy CP-RV-8: The County encourages the Redwood Valley County Water District to evaluate the merits of a water conservation program for all customers and to pursue the provision or management of sewage treatment facilities. The County shall facilitate this process and support funding applications consistent with technical studies and General Plan objectives.

## **WILLITS COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA**

The Willits community planning area is located around the incorporated city limits of Willits in the Little Lake Valley. Much of the development in the Willits area is located along the State Route 101 and 20 corridors, with the exception of the approximately 6,000-lot Brooktrails Township development northwest of the City. Commercial services are located along State Route 101 within the City limits with industrial operations on outlying parcels. The remaining areas of Little Lake Valley are primarily used for agricultural and rural residential pursuits.

Major factors affecting future community growth include physical constraints posed by flooding in the Little Lake Valley, the Earthquake Fault Zone, the planned State Route 101 bypass of the City of Willits, limitations on public water or sewer services in Brooktrails, lack of water and sewer to serve other areas outside the City limits, and second access and other concerns associated with continued build-out of the Brooktrails Township, which was originally planned as a vacation home subdivision. Plans for the future development and provision of services to Brooktrails are detailed in the Brooktrails Township Specific Plan administered by the Brooktrails Township Community Services District in association with the County.

### **Willits Goals and Policies**

The following goals, policies, and actions are specific to the Willits area, and supplement the countywide goals and policies elsewhere in this General Plan.

#### **Willits Community Goals**

Goal CP-W-1: Coordinate planning and development of the areas around Willits in a manner that complements the City of Willits' role as the local center for services and civic life.

Goal CP-W-2: Plan for the development of the Brooktrails Township through implementation of the Brooktrails Township Specific Plan and resolution of infrastructure issues.

Goal CP-W-3: Adopt planning policies to govern new development opportunities along the preferred State Route 101 Willits Bypass route east of the City in advance of development demand.

Goal CP-W-4: Maintain the rural character of Little Lake Valley using "smart growth" principles including defining a stable limit to urban growth and avoiding a proliferation of rural ranchettes.

#### **Willits Community Area Policies**

Policy CP-W-1: Places and facilities that create a sense of community should be established in the Willits area.

Policy CP-W-2: The County will work with the City of Willits to create a unified community encompassing urban development both within and adjacent to the City.

Policy CP-W-3: Residential uses in the unincorporated area should be focused in areas south of the City of Willits and, as supported by necessary water and sewer service connections, in the Brooktrails Township.

Policy CP-W-4: The County shall seek to retain residential densities in the areas surrounding Willits at levels in place in 2007.

Policy CP-W-5: The County supports expanded and diversified economic ventures for the Willits area. Potential strategies include:

- Accommodate State Route 20 and 101 tourist-based traffic by establishing, expanding and redeveloping commercial uses suitable to meet the needs of residents and visitors.
- Support operation of the California Western Railroad Company Skunk Train as a significant tourist feature for the Willits area.

Policy CP-W-6: The County shall seek to maximize the compatibility of the State Route 101 Willits Bypass with community identity and the protection of economic ventures and agricultural resources.

Policy CP-W-7: The County shall actively plan for changes in circulation and associated effects that will accompany the State Route 101 Willits Bypass. The following concepts shall be included in the County's plans for the Willits area:

- Maintain land use patterns as they existed in 2007 around the Bypass interchanges unless contiguous to the City.
- Bypass ramp design should provide convenient access to downtown commercial areas while minimizing impacts on residential neighborhoods.
- Assuming the eastern State Route 101 Bypass alternative is approved, new development should be focused on the western side of the Bypass.
- If an alternative Bypass site is selected, the side of the Bypass closest to the City should develop first before permitting development to the "outside" of the Bypass.
- Create substantial green space buffers around the Bypass ramps reflecting a rural perspective and mitigating the visual impacts of new development where allowed.
- Avoid locating highway commercial uses (gas stations, fast food, convenience store, etc.) within green space buffers around the Bypass ramps.

Policy CP-W-8: The County supports improvements to the State Route 20 and 101 corridors in the suburban areas around the Willits City limits.

Action Item CP-W-8.1: Work with Caltrans to evaluate and support measures to reduce traffic hazards associated with pedestrian crossings of State Route 101.

Action Item CP-W-8.2: Establish public parking areas with easy access to, but substantially screened from State Route 20 and 101.

Policy CP-W-9: Minimize the visibility of parking areas, utilities and similar improvements.

Policy CP-W-10: Highway visitor travel should be accommodated through visually enhanced parking and streetscapes.

Policy CP-W-11: The County shall collaborate with the City of Willits in providing services, housing and economic opportunity to support a healthy community.

Action Item CP-W-11.1: Work with the City of Willits in planning for the efficient extension of water and wastewater services and annexation to facilitate compact development patterns, efficient service delivery, and affordable housing, consistent with County goals.

Action Item CP-W-11.2: Negotiate an equitable property tax revenue sharing agreement between the County and the City of Willits to facilitate annexations, ensuring that the County receives credit for the transfer of its regional housing needs allocation.

Policy CP-W-12: The County will support the Brooktrails Township Community Services District in its efforts to implement the Brooktrails Township Specific Plan, including the District's efforts to resolve major services and infrastructure problems and reduce the risk of wildfire in the urban-rural interface.

Action Item CP-W12.1: Organize an annual meeting with the City of Willits and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to ensure continuity of action and address planning issues of mutual concern.

## Coastal Program Update

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Mendocino County has not yet formally begun the process of updating its Local Coastal Program. However, the County is conducting a State Route 1 Corridor Traffic Study in order to prepare for initiation of the Coastal Planning process, likely to occur in 2009. This study is funded by the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) and will

serve as background information for the Local Coastal Program Update.

Staff is collecting information that will be used to update the Mendocino Town Plan, also in 2009.

Additional information will be posted as it becomes available.




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## GLOSSARY

**Aquifer Recharge:** Water that moves from the land surface or the unsaturated zone into the saturated zone. Recharge rates vary considerably with time and location.

**Brownfield:** Land with an existing or potential hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant, which affects its expansion, redevelopment, or reuse.

**Building Envelope** The physical "skin" of a building or the structural area containing all components that separate the indoors from the outdoors, the quality of which determines how well a building will function and how long it will last.

**Cogeneration:** A process that converts a fuel into both thermal (heat) and electrical energy by harnessing heat otherwise lost when energy is produced. The thermal energy may be in the form of steam, hot water, hot air, or any combination of the three. Cogeneration can also make use of natural gas, wood, agricultural waste, peat moss, and a wide variety of other fuels.

**Conservation and Open Space Easement:** A voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and land trust or government agency that protects the conservation values of a piece of land by permanently limiting its present and future uses. This flexible tool allows a landowner to retain ownership and use of his/her property. An easement can be established to protect all or part of a property that has significant agricultural, historic, scenic or wildlife habitat resources.

**Density Transfer:** A shift of density from one area to another area on the same parcel, or from one parcel to another parcel. Unless otherwise specified, the maximum overall density permitted by the General Plan shall not be exceeded.

**Gross Area / Net Parcel:** Gross area means all land within the boundaries of a legal parcel. Net parcel area is computed by subtracting from the gross parcel area the area of any portions of the lot, which will be subject to public easements for lot access, roadways, drainage or inundation.

**Land Trust:** A land trust is a non-profit conservation organization that directly protects land and resources in their community. A land trust purchases or accepts donations of land or conservation easements from private landowners. Properties protected by land trusts benefit the public by providing natural, scenic, recreational value. Land trusts may also work to preserve productive farmland and other significant open spaces.

**Liquefaction:** Liquefaction is a phenomenon in which the strength and stiffness of a soil is reduced by earthquake shaking or other rapid loading. Liquefaction occurs in saturated soils, that is, soils in which the space between individual particles is completely filled with water.

**Mixed-Use Development:** Properties on which various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional, and residential, are combined in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project with

## Glossary



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significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design. A "single site" may include contiguous properties.

Particulate Matter: A collective name for fine solid or liquid particles added to the atmosphere by processes at the earth's surface. Particulate matter includes dust, smoke, soot, pollen and soil particles.

Pygmy Ecosystems: Pygmy ecosystems and vegetation occur on old, relatively flat terraces with little nutrient run-off available from higher slopes. Pygmy soil is highly leached, very acid, nutrient-poor, and saturated (bog-like) year-round, with some iron-concreted hardpan.

Resource Diversity: The variety of plant and animal life in a particular habitat.

State Regulated Air Toxics: Air toxics are chemicals released into the air that are known or suspected to cause cancer, or other serious health problems, such as birth defects or reproductive effects. The federal Clean Air Act, as amended in 1990, lists 188 of these materials, called hazardous air pollutants. California air toxics legislation lists 729 of these substances, referring to them as toxic air contaminants, which the State regulates.

Sustainable: "Sustainable" means any process or activity which can be maintained over long periods of time without harm to community and depletion of resources. The concept of a sustainable community requires comprehensive, integrated, and regional strategies to achieve balance among social, economic and environmental systems.

Terrestrial Resources: Plant and animal species and the habitats that support these species, including tidal and non-tidal wetlands, ponds, lakes, and freshwater and brackish (mix of fresh and saltwater) and surface water bodies, and terrestrial habitats such as woodlands, fields and grassy areas.