

Appendix N

Response to Comments Document



SECTION 1.0

Comments on the Final EIS

Fifteen comment letters (including emails) were received during the Draft EIS comment period as summarized in **Table 1-1**. Three speakers submitted comments at the public meeting on January 16, 2013 as summarized in **Table 1-2**.

**TABLE 1-1
COMMENT LETTERS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT EIS**

Comment Letter #	Agency/Organization	Signature	Date
Federal Agencies			
1	U.S. EPA Region IX	Kathleen Goforth	2/4/2013
Local Agencies			
2	County of Sacramento, Department of Community Development	Catherine Hack	2/4/2013
3	Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District	Kevin Combo	Not Dated
4	SMUD	Rob Ferrera	2/4/2013
Businesses			
5	RCH Group, Owners Group Representative	Jeffrey Pemstein	2/4/2013
6	Foothill Associates	Kenneth Whitney	Not Dated
Individuals			
7		Russ Hood	12/24/2012
8		Sondra Armour	1/2/2013
9		Amy Sterzik	1/15/2013
10		Sharon King	1/15/2013
11		Robert A. Helms Jr. and Billie Joe Helms	1/28/2013
12		<i>Individual Comment Letter Rescinded</i>	1/31/2013
13		Vivien Spicer Johnson	2/3/2013
14		<i>Individual Comment Letter Rescinded</i>	2/3/2013
15		Sharon King	2/5/2013

**TABLE 1-2
COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING**

Speaker Order	Name
A	Marlene Robillard-Ramatici
B	Betty Reed
C	Vivien Johnson

The comments received are presented on the following pages. The comment letters and the public meeting transcript have been annotated in the margins to identify individual comments and provide an organized format for responses in **Section 2.0**.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

FEB 04 2013



Mr. Marc Fugler
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District
1325 J Street, Room 1350
Sacramento, California 95814-2922

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Elverta Specific Plan Project, Sacramento County, California (CEQ #20120388)

Dear Mr. Fugler:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Elverta Specific Plan Project pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

EPA provided comments on the Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Statement (ADEIS) on August 31, 2012. While we appreciate efforts by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to coordinate with our agency throughout the environmental review process, several of the key issues EPA has raised have not yet been addressed. We continue to have concerns about the potential cumulative impacts to Waters of the U.S. and air quality associated with the project, particularly when considered in concert with the multiple housing, transportation, and other development projects proposed in Sacramento and Placer Counties. These impacts represent a daunting cumulative burden that would be difficult to mitigate.

While we understand that the aquatic functions of resources on the project site have been degraded over several decades, we remain concerned that filling vernal pools removes the opportunity for restoration. Restoration opportunities are of significant value given California's estimated 80-90% loss in vernal pools by 2005, as compared to habitat that existed in the baseline period of 1976-1995.

We have rated the DEIS as Environmental Concerns – Insufficient Information (EC-2) (see enclosed EPA Rating Definitions) based on the absence of a clear project need; cumulative water and air quality impacts; and uncertainty over whether mitigation consistent with the 2008 Compensatory Mitigation Rule can be achieved. We are also concerned that the No Action Alternative does not appear to be thoroughly analyzed. Recommendations to address these issues, as well as additional concerns, are provided in our attached detailed comments.

Please note that, as of October 1, 2012, EPA Headquarters no longer accepts paper copies or CDs of EISs for official filing purposes. Submissions after October 1, 2012 must be made through the EPA's new electronic EIS submittal tool: e-NEPA. To begin using e-NEPA, you must first register with the EPA's electronic reporting site - https://cdx.epa.gov/epa_home.asp. Electronic submission does not change requirements for distribution of EISs for public review and comment, and lead agencies should

1-1

still provide one hard copy of each Draft and Final EIS released for public circulation to the EPA Region 9 office in San Francisco (Mail Code: CED-2).

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cont.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS, and are available to discuss our comments. If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-972-3521, or contact Jen Blonn, the lead reviewer for this project. Jen can be reached at 415-972-3855 or blonn.jennifer@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Martyn Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Office (CED-2)

Enclosures: Summary of the EPA Rating System
EPA Detailed Comments

Cc via email:

Terry Adelsbach, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mike McKeever, Sacramento Area Council of Governments
Larry Robinson, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

U.S. EPA DETAILED COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT, SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 4, 2013

Purpose and Need

Section 1.4 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), entitled Purpose and Need, does not appear to establish the project need. A DEIS must explain the “underlying purpose and need to which the [Lead] Agency is responding in proposing the alternatives, including the proposed action” (40 C.F.R. 1502.13). The need statement should enable resource agencies and the public to understand why a project is being pursued that would significantly adversely impact the environment. Referencing other documents where the project need may be explained is not sufficient. In addition, we are concerned that the project purpose may be overly specific in that it calls for development within *north-central* Sacramento County. In the absence of a clearly defined need, it is not possible to determine whether or not this is the appropriate scope.

1-2

Recommendations for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS):

- Augment section 1.4 to clearly explain the project need in the context of other reasonably foreseeable development projects in the area, and clarify the remaining needs for additional housing and commercial development that the Elverta project could help address. Please include a table which clearly provides population growth, housing, and jobs demand projections from all data sources that are used in the analysis, and ensure that data are used from the most recent Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sacramento County General Plan. Display data on housing that would be provided by the Elverta project as well as other reasonably foreseeable projects in the area.
- Unless the project need must be met within north-central Sacramento, modify the project purpose to include the broader geographic region in which housing needs could be met.

Analysis of Alternatives

The DEIS states that development on the 563 acre area, comprised of parcels that are currently participating in the Clean Water Act Section 404 (CWA 404) permitting process, is assessed at the project level. The DEIS also includes a programmatic level assessment of the full build out of the 1,745 acre plan area, which also includes parcels that are not currently participating in the CWA 404 process. Alternative D, the No Action Alternative, presents a plan for development under a scenario in which a CWA 404 permit is not issued. It calls for development of 530 residential units on 547.3 acres within participating parcels, and 827 units on 1413.7 acres at full build out. The environmental analysis often states that Alternative D has comparatively “less” impacts to resources; however, actual impacts are seldom fully described. Generally stating that Alternative D could result in adverse impacts which would be, “...subject to local land use approvals and those measures contained in the 2007 EIR...” (p.4.9-6) is not sufficient for meeting the disclosure requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

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Recommendation for the FEIS:

Analyze and clearly describe impacts from Alternative D, including acreages and other quantitative measures of impacts. For examples of where this information is missing, see the following sections: Biological Resources (p.4.4-18), Hazards and Hazardous

Materials (p.4.9-6), Hydrology, Water Quality and Flooding (p.4.10-12), Noise (p. 4.12-8), Indirect Impacts (p.4.15-5), and Cumulative Impacts (p.4.16-3).

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cont.

Required Information Under NEPA

The following elements are required by Section 102(2) of NEPA and do not appear to be in the DEIS: (1) the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and (2) any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.

1-4

Recommendation for the FEIS:

Ensure that all components of NEPA Section 102(2) are addressed in the FEIS.

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts analysis identifies proposed and locally approved development projects, including East Antelope Specific Plan, Placer Vineyard Specific Plan, Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan, and Sutter Point Specific Plan. The Placer County Conservation Plan and the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan are not discussed. We are aware that draft documents for both projects include projections of approximate levels of development and impacts to the aquatic resources in Placer and Sacramento Counties. While we recognize that EISs have not yet been published for these two projects, adding information from their planning processes to the FEIS would provide for a more complete discussion of likely cumulative impacts. In addition, while p. 4.16-4 states that the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB) is the geographic scope for the cumulative air analysis, several reasonably foreseeable projects located within this area are not mentioned. We note that the Suncreek and Folsom South of U.S. Highway 50 Specific Plans included a more comprehensive list of projects.

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EPA is also concerned that quantitative water quality, habitat, and air quality impacts associated with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects are not provided. It is therefore not possible to clearly understand cumulative impacts. EPA is aware that much of this information is readily available through other U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) environmental documents.

1-5c

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- Discuss the approximate levels of development and impacts projected for the Elverta cumulative impacts area (as defined in section 4.16) that are being considered within the Placer County Conservation Plan and the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan processes.
- Provide quantitative data on impacts to Waters of the U.S., including vernal pool impacts, for the reasonably foreseeable projects listed on p 4.16-3.
- Provide a table with criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions estimates from all applicable reasonably foreseeable future actions located within the geographic scope of the cumulative air analysis (where information is readily available). Include construction and operational phases, the project size (in acres), and the number of residential units planned as part of each project.

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- Clarify which reasonably foreseeable projects were used to analyze cumulative impacts on groundwater supplies and traffic conditions; provide quantitative information on the relative impact from each of the projects to the extent that it is available through other Corps environmental documents.

1-5g

Aquatic Resources

EPA is concerned that, "...it is anticipated that there would be a net loss of wetland function within the project site watersheds due to lack of mitigation opportunities and available mitigation banks within the project site watershed" (p.4.16-7). Under Alternative A (Applicant's Preferred Alternative) and under Alternative C, "all of the 27.57 acres of jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. within the participating parcels and backbone infrastructure would be filled," including 11.23 acres of vernal pools (p.4.5-1). In addition, Alternative B would fill 22.98 acres of jurisdictional waters and 6.98 acres of vernal pools (p.4.5-6). We understand that the aquatic functions of resources on the project site have been degraded over several decades. While the proposed project includes on-site creation and enhancement of certain wetland types, on-site mitigation is not proposed for vernal pools. Filling vernal pools removes the opportunity for restoration, which is significant given California's estimated 80-90% loss in vernal pools by 2005, as compared to habitat that existed in the baseline period of 1976-1995.

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Mitigation Credits & Ratios

The strategy for mitigating impacts to aquatic resources presented in the DEIS is unclear. Mitigation Measure 4.1a calls for the purchase of habitat creation credits at Corps and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) approved mitigation banks for all direct and indirect effects to habitat for federally listed vernal pool species. There are many projects seeking approval in Sacramento County and Placer County, creating considerable competition for existing credits. The DEIS does not demonstrate that necessary mitigation credits would be available; nor is EPA aware of sufficient available mitigation credits.

1-6b

Further, Mitigation Measure 5.1 states that "[t]he project proponent would ensure that any loss of Waters of the U.S. would be compensated for by restoration or creation of waters at a ratio no less than 1:1." Text on p. 4.5-2 explains that a ratio greater than 1:1 may be necessary to account for the method of compensatory mitigation, the likelihood of success, differences in functions, and temporal losses, among other reasons. This position does not appear to be tied to a mitigation measure, and details on how ratios would be determined are not provided. Table 4.5-3 provides an onsite creation to impact ratio of 0.9 to 1 for Alternative A. The 0.9:1 ratio is inadequate to offset losses of wetlands and other Waters of the U.S., particularly in light of the national and State no-net-loss policies. It is unclear how a mitigation ratio would be achieved that is consistent with the 2008 Compensatory Mitigation Rule and the Corps South Pacific Division's recently issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for establishing mitigation ratios.

1-6c

In addition, it is unclear whether the Corps intends to allow mitigation credit for wetlands created in drainage ways that primarily have a water quality polishing function. Such wetlands are "treatment wetlands" and credit should not be given for these features due to the likelihood of low water quality. Credit can, however, be given for wetlands created downstream of wetlands that have the primary polishing function, including stream corridors. As an example, this issue was addressed for the recently permitted Rio del Oro project.

1-6d

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- EPA recommends that the Corps conduct a comprehensive analysis of mitigation resources in order to assess whether this project, and the others currently seeking CWA Section 404 permits in the area, have access to sufficient compensatory mitigation resources. Provide clear information and detailed locations on available, approved mitigation credits that could be used for (1) currently participating parcels and (2) full build out including currently non-participating parcels. | 1-6e
- Ensure that the mitigation strategy proposed within the FEIS is consistent with Mitigation Measure 5.1 by revising or clarifying proposed mitigation ratios that are less than 1:1, including the 0.9:1 ratio proposed for Alternative A on p. 4.5-5. | 1-6f
- Provide a statement of how mitigation ratios are consistent with the Mitigation Ratio SOP or, if not consistent, a justification for why there is a deviation from the SOP. | 1-6g
- Commit to avoid introducing any untreated or unpolished stormwater into any wetlands for which onsite compensatory mitigation credits would be issued. | 1-6h

Out-of-Kind Mitigation

In addition to purchasing mitigation credits, the DEIS states, "...the applicant is proposing to replace some wetland habitats, such as vernal pools and wetland swales, with increases in other types (such as seasonal wetlands) or the introduction of new wetland types (such as freshwater marsh)..." (p. 4.5-5). Out-of-kind mitigation is the lowest ranking form of compensatory mitigation according to the soft hierarchy in the 2008 Compensatory Mitigation Rule. This form of compensation, therefore, should only be allowable under outstanding circumstances. | 1-7

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- Commit to replace all of the vernal pools in the project area through the purchase of in-kind credits from a mitigation bank (approved by Corps, FWS, and other authorities on the interagency review team) or through in-kind creation, restoration, or enhancement. Remove text which proposes out-of-kind mitigation.
- If the Corps does not act on EPA's above recommendation and chooses to allow out-of-kind mitigation for vernal pools, describe the outstanding circumstances that make out-of-kind of mitigation acceptable.

Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)

Page 1-8 states, "This Draft EIS includes information regarding the Applicant's Preferred Alternative and alternatives that the [Corps] will use in making its determination of the LEDPA and factual determinations." It is unclear if the Corps intends to use supplemental information in making these determinations. EPA believes that the alternatives analysis in the DEIS does not contain sufficient detailed information for the Corps to identify the LEDPA in compliance with the 404(b)(1) Guidelines (Guidelines). Necessary information includes, but is not limited to, an avoidance and minimization analysis and description of how costs, logistics and technical feasibility were used to eliminate alternatives with lesser impacts to wetlands. Disclosure of this information is critical to the decision-making process because only the LEDPA that achieves the basic project purpose, while not causing or contributing to significant degradation of the aquatic ecosystem, can be permitted by the Corps. | 1-8

Recommendation for the FEIS:

Include a 404(b)(1) Alternatives Analysis in order to demonstrate the project’s compliance with the Guidelines and support the identification of the LEDPA by the Corps. The Alternatives Analysis should demonstrate that the proposed project is avoiding and minimizing damage to waters to the maximum extent practicable.

1-8
cont.

Impacts on Waters of the U.S.

The proposed construction phasing (Table 2.3) schedules project buildout from 2013 to 2032. Without phased grading, we are concerned that vernal pools and other Waters of the U.S. could unnecessarily be filled for a future housing demand that may not occur. In addition, it is unclear whether direct on-site and indirect off-site impacts to biological and aquatic resources from roadways and other backbone infrastructure were fully assessed.

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1-9b

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- Limit grading to areas where construction is scheduled within five years.
- Clarify whether all roadways and other backbone infrastructure across the entire site (including participating and non-participating parcels) were analyzed at the project level. If not, provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis at the highest level that can be determined at this stage in the project; discuss where and how compensatory mitigation for these impacts would occur.
- Augment the description and analysis of indirect impacts from off-site roadway improvements so that it includes acreages, locations, and other specific information on impacts to biological and aquatic resources.

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Stormwater

The DEIS relies on permitting conditions under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to protect stormwater for all alternatives in section 4.10. Details on the NPDES program and the specific permit conditions that would be committed to are not included, and this documentation does not support the claim that impacts would not be significant.

1-10a

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- Specify how the NPDES permit would ensure that stormwater quality is not degraded, and identify specific Best Management Practices that would be incorporated into the permit.
- Clarify which agency would approve the Comprehensive Drainage Plan that is called for in Mitigation Measure 10.2 on p. 4.10-7.

1-10b

Floodplain Impacts

Under Alternatives A and C, approximately 10 acres of development is proposed within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated 100-year floodplain. The DEIS states that, “...the project proponent would acquire a Letter of Map Revision from FEMA...” and, “The updated extent of flooding...would not interfere with the proposed housing on site” (p.4.10-8). Coordination with FEMA is not discussed, and the likelihood that FEMA would revise their floodplain designation is unclear.

1-11

Recommendation for the FEIS:

Describe past coordination with FEMA regarding development within the 100-year floodplain, and commit to only begin construction in the 100-year floodplain area *after* FEMA has issued a Letter of Map Revision stating that the area to be developed is no longer considered within the 100-year floodplain.

1-11
cont.

Air Quality

The project site is located in a federally designated nonattainment area for ozone and particulate matter smaller than 10 and 2.5 microns (PM10 and PM2.5). EPA is concerned with long-term health impacts from emissions from induced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) that would result from the development of up to 2,456 new housing units under the proposed project, and up to 6,190 new housing units under full build out of the plan area.

1-12a

Criteria Air Pollutants & General Conformity

The DEIS states that the project is below the de minimis threshold for EPA's general conformity rule (p. 4.3-4). Operational emissions (p. 4.3-6) do exceed the de minimis threshold, and are not included in the conformity analysis. We recognize that the Corps has historically asserted that operational emissions from development projects are not included in the conformity analysis because the Corps lacks continuing program authority to control them. We believe that a full discussion of the Corps' rationale for excluding operation emissions is needed in order to better document that all applicable emissions are included in the conformity analysis.

1-12b

In addition, the DEIS (p. 3.3-7) cites the general conformity rule incorrectly. The general conformity rule was revised April 5, 2010 (75 FR 17257). The EPA deleted the provision in 40 CFR 93.153 that required federal agencies to conduct a conformity determination for regionally significant actions where the direct and indirect emissions of any pollutant represent 10 percent or more of a nonattainment or maintenance area's emissions inventory for that pollutant.

1-12c

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- If the Corps chooses not to include operational emissions in the conformity determination, discuss the rationale for excluding these emissions.
- Include a draft general conformity determination in the FEIS, either as a detailed summary or as an appendix.
- Update p. 4.3-1 so that it also lists the nonattainment status of PM2.5 and includes the de minimis level of 100 tons per year.
- Revise footnote #2 in Table 4.3 so that it correctly lists the federal PM2.5 de minimis threshold.
- Remove the outdated general conformity provision from the top of p. 3.3-7.
- Commit to implement the recommendations from the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* that are listed on p. 4.3-9 of the DEIS.
- Augment Mitigation Measure 3.3 so that it requires the project proponent to have an air quality management plan approved by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) *before* construction begins.

1-12d

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1-12h

Automobile Transportation

Mitigation measures for traffic impacts call for widening roadways. Several of these mitigation measures are stated to be inconsistent with the General Plan, have potential adverse environmental effects, be unfunded, and be outside of the project proponents' authority to implement. In addition, we are concerned with the rationale behind the indirect air quality impacts discussion, which states, "Proposed roadway development and modifications would reduce congestion and improve traffic flow. This would reduce emissions from the idling vehicles at these intersections and roadway segments resulting in improved conditions. These impacts are therefore considered less than significant." Long term increases in traffic volumes that could result from widening roadways are not discussed.

1-13a

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- Commit to partner with the county and SACOG to develop and implement a plan for mitigating transportation impacts that is consistent with regional planning goals and minimizes long-term air emissions *before* construction begins.
- Analyze and discuss the potential for long term increases in traffic volume, and associated air emissions, which could result from implementation of the mitigation measures in section 4.14 that call for widening roadways. Consider whether alternative mitigation measures are needed, such as those recommended for transit coordination below.

1-13b

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs) & Sustainability

EPA is concerned with the levels of GHGs from operations under each action alternative, ranging from 132,411 to 138,959 metric tons/year of CO₂e. As described in the DEIS, these emissions "would impair the state's ability to implement [California Assembly Bill] 32" (p.4.3-11). Further, the DEIS explains that operational emissions from the action alternatives would "conflict with local regulations pertaining to GHGs" (p.4.3-12). The majority of operational GHGs are attributed to on-road vehicles. We recognize that impacts to GHG emissions are not unique to the Elverta project; the many development projects proposed in the region share this impact, further exacerbating the concern.

1-14a

EPA recognizes that project proponents would be required to develop a GHG Reduction Plan, which would be approved by the County in consultation with SMAQMD. The plan would incorporate green building and development measures, with the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 30 percent from business as usual 2006 emission levels. We are pleased to see this commitment and the list of measures (Appendix J) that project proponents may include in their plans. Collaborating with transit agencies to integrate transit, such as a bus rapid transit system, into the overall site design appears to be an additional opportunity that could significantly lower long term emissions from the project.

Recommendations for the FEIS:

- To further minimize GHG emissions from on-road vehicles and assist the region in complying with air quality standards, we recommend that the FEIS include a strong commitment for project proponents to partner with local transit agencies to accommodate transit access by removing "if warranted" from Mitigation Measure 14.7. Neighborhood design should include development of transit routes to maximize

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| ridership, and bus stops should be identified early so that they can more easily be incorporated into streetscapes. | 1-14a
cont. |
| • Consider using a grid pattern for roadways to reduce the travel distance for vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians for local trips. Grid patterns can also make more trips possible to complete without use of a vehicle. | 1-14b |
| • Modify Mitigation Measure 3.7b so that it requires the proposed GHG Reduction Plan to be approved by SMAQMD in addition to the County, and also requires the GHG Reduction Plan to be approved <i>before</i> construction. | 1-14c |
| • Consider obtaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development (ND) Certification for the project area or a portion of it. LEED-ND certification provides independent, third-party verification that a neighborhood development project is located and designed to meet high levels of environmentally responsible, sustainable development, with principles that are in line with the Sacramento Region Blueprint’s growth principles. | 1-14d |
| • Consider obtaining LEED certification for homes, schools, and commercial buildings. | |
| • Consider exceeding CALGreen standards in priority areas by meeting “optional” standards, including those for: pollutant control, indoor air quality, renewable energy, energy and water conservation, and low impact development. | 1-14e |
| • Consider recycled materials that could be used to replace raw materials for particular infrastructure components. Some options include tire-derived aggregate, crushed recycled concrete, recycled asphalt pavement, and rubberized asphalt concrete. | 1-14f |
| • Consider creating a policy to use locally sourced materials to reduce air emissions from transport. | 1-14g |

Public Safety

Mitigation Measure 9.6 recommends that water supply wells, septic tanks, leach lines, and cisterns within the project area “should” be properly destroyed when their use ceases, but does not include a commitment. Failure to properly close such features could pose a public hazard.	1-15
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Recommendation for the FEIS:

Strengthen Mitigation Measure 9.6 on p. 4.9-6 to state that the measure “shall” be implemented (rather than “should”) within each parcel before construction is complete.

Department of
Community Development
Lori A. Moss, Director



Divisions
Building Permits & Inspection
Code Enforcement
County Engineering
Planning & Environmental Review

February 4, 2013

via e-mail
marc.a.fugler@usace.army.mil

Mr. Marc Fugler, Senior Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District
1325 J Street, Room 1350
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Elverta Specific Plan Draft EIS

Mr. Fugler:

Thank you for providing the County of Sacramento the opportunity, as a cooperating agency, to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Elverta Specific Plan Project.

2-1

The Planning and Environmental Review Division of the Sacramento County Department of Community Development, in coordination with the Sacramento County Department of Transportation (SacDOT) has reviewed the ADEIS and respectfully provides the following comments. As a content note, when we comment on an issue that exists in more than one alternative, we will generally only be commenting in reference to Alternative A. Please understand our comment applies to all other instances of use in other alternatives or elsewhere in the document.

If the Applicant's preferred alternative or the Corp's reduced impacts alternative are chosen, the County anticipates that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will be required due to the revisions to the Drainage Master Plan and Land Use Plan necessitated by those alternatives. The Applicant has advised the County that it is their desire our CEQA analysis tier off of the analysis and technical studies of the EIS. Therefore, some of our comments indicate changes the County would need in order to fully utilize the EIS in the CEQA process but do not necessarily mean that it is the County's opinion that the EIS analysis is inadequate.

2-2

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Overall Comment on Transportation Analysis: As discussed in our comments on the ADEIS, the transportation analysis is inconsistent with the current adopted Sacramento County General Plan and the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This has multiple effects on the analysis, but in particular it means that many of the roadway width assumptions are incorrect. The DEIS analysis assumes full funding of roadways with only partial funding, or widening of Dry Creek Road to four lanes when the General Plan shows this roadway as a two-lane facility. These facts are likely to mean that the County cannot rely on the traffic analysis of the DEIS in the subsequent EIR that we expect will be required.

2-3

Appendix F Page F-2 Figure 3.14-1: The scope of the traffic study did not include some of the intersections and roadway segments that were previously evaluated under the approved Elverta Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report. Below is a list of the intersections and segments that were not evaluated within the EIS. Please include these facilities in the EIS or provide justification for not including them.

2-4

Intersection:

- Rio Linda Boulevard and Q Street
- Rio Linda Boulevard and Elkhorn Boulevard
- Marysville Boulevard and Elkhorn Boulevard
- Rivergreen Drive and Elverta Road
- Bellingrath Drive and Elverta Road

Roadway Segments:

- 24TH Street: Q Street and U Street
- Rivergreen Drive north of Elverta Road
- Bellingrath Drive north of Elverta Road

Page 3.3-12 Section 3.3.2.3 Local: Comments on the ADEIS indicated that the local regulatory setting section should be updated to include Policy LU-115, which states: “It is the goal of the County to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This shall be achieved through a mix of State and local action.” This is still absent from the DEIS.

2-5

Page 3.3-12 Section 3.4.1.4 Sensitive Habitats: Comments on the ADEIS indicated that this section did not completely describe the County’s policies related to tree protection and mitigation. It was noted that policies CO-138 through CO-141 were of particular importance. The Regulatory Setting section 3.4.2 has been amended to list all of these policies, but the actual text only describes policy CO-138.

2-6

Page 4.3-2 and 4.3-11 Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Methodology and Assumptions, and Impact 3.7: In comments on the ADEIS, we indicated that Sacramento County had an approved GHG analysis methodology and significance criteria. Our comments were quite lengthy on this point, and it is with some disappointment that we see none of these comments were incorporated into the DEIS. We recognize that the Corps has the discretion to choose a quantification methodology, independent of what the County uses and recommends, but had nonetheless hoped the analysis would be revised to use outputs from the transportation analysis rather than URBEMIS. As communicated to you as part of the ADEIS comments, the consequence is that the County is unlikely to be able to rely on the data in the DEIS, and will have to perform an entirely new analysis for the DEIR which will subsequently be required. This is unfortunate.

2-7

Setting aside the methodology differences, the fact that the County significance thresholds were not reported, much less used, is of serious concern. The DEIS states as one of the significance criteria: “Any potential conflicts with applicable Sacramento County plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHG’s”. Given the stated significance criteria, it is an error for the DEIS not to mention the approved significance thresholds in use by the County. The significance thresholds were first published as part of the EIR for the 2030 General Plan, and implementation of them was recommended via a mitigation measure (Measure CC-2 of the FEIR for the 2030 General Plan), as a means of reducing the impacts of continued growth in Sacramento County. The thresholds have since been updated several times, and the latest version was provided to you. The significance thresholds should be included in the EIS, and if the choice is made again not to use them, some explanation of this choice should also be included.

Page 4.3-4 Impact 3.2 Effects from Construction Emissions with Respect to SMAQMD Criteria:

In our experience with Specific Plans, it may not be feasible to limit grading to 15 acres a day given the size of the plan area and that different builders within the plan area may be constructing at one time. Similarly a coordinated dispersion modeling effort between different builders may not be feasible. We respect the Corps' independent judgment but wish to advise that the County would likely choose to characterize this impact as Significant and Unavoidable for CEQA purposes. We found significant and unavoidable impacts for this topic in the original Elverta Specific Plan EIR.

2-8

Page 4.3-9 Mitigation Measure 3.5: Reduce Potential TAC Exposure to Sensitive Receptors:

As a point to consider, the installation of perchloroethylene dry cleaning machines in California was prohibited as of January 1, 2008. Furthermore, existing machines are not permitted to share a wall with sensitive uses, and all converted machines and machines 15 years and older are required to be removed from service. The Air Resources Board indicates that these rules mean that all existing machines will be out of service by January 1, 2023. A website for this information is: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/dryclean/dryclean.htm>. It may be worth taking this information into account in the FEIS.

2-9

Page 4.3-12 Evaluation of Criterion D. See comment on Page 3.3-12 above. The County does not necessarily believe that the Elverta Specific Plan would conflict with the *CAP Strategy and Framework Document*. The document in question lays out a pathway for the building of a community-level Climate Action Plan. It is not a plan with which an individual project must demonstrate compliance, and it is written in such a way that trying to determine project-level "compliance" is simply not possible. To date, the Community Actions portion of the second phase of the CAP process has not been completed (<http://www.green.saccounty.net/default.htm>). A conclusion that the Elverta Specific Plan conflicts with the *CAP Strategy and Framework Document* is speculative; an analysis of this kind should not be included. Our advice would be to rely instead on the County's established GHG thresholds in the evaluation of Criteria D, rather than the inapplicable *CAP Strategy and Framework Document*.

2-10

Page 4.4-6 Mitigation Measure 4.2: Perform Pre-construction Surveys for Western Spadefoot:

The measure calls for examining all suitable habitat in the Specific Plan by transects and locating all possible spadefoot aestivation burrows. Then it calls for the hand excavation of all possible burrows and relocation to a CDFG approved (now called California Department of Fish and Wildlife, or CDFW) site. We emphasize that we have serious concerns regarding this measure. There is no discussion within the text related to the feasibility of this measure, nor are there any details provided regarding the protocol for the excavation and relocation process. An EIS needn't contain certain process details if there is an existing permit process or mandatory protocol in effect to which the document refers, but there is no such protocol for western spadefoot excavation and relocation. Thus, at least some of the details need to be included in the discussion and the measure. Going stepwise through our questions:

2-11

- The measure specifies that a qualified biologist must perform the surveys, but does not do so for the excavation and relocation process; this could be implied, but should be specified.
- The measure specifies the use of hand tools, but what steps are taken to ensure that an individual isn't inadvertently harmed during this process – and what steps are to be taken if inadvertent harm occurs?
- The species is known to occur within small mammal burrows. How will the excavating staff person avoid disturbing or harming a burrowing mammal while looking for a western spadefoot toad?
- Once captured, how is the individual transported?

- Are captured individuals kept for any period of time, and under what conditions?
- How are the species relocated? Are any steps taken to ensure or monitor survivorship?

2-11
cont.

Our questions reflect the fact that we have never seen this measure employed before. The only measures for relocation we have encountered have involved the collection of eggs and larvae prior to destruction of breeding pools, which is a much simpler undertaking involving netting, locating them in tanks, and introducing them into new pools – usually all within the same day. If many of the details we have requested are not known or finalized until a plan is worked out with CDFW, then it is recommended that – at a minimum – the measure be amended to indicate that an excavation and relocation plan will be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval prior to any activities. Also, the measure should include a provision which allows for CDFW to deny the request for relocation of adults, or which otherwise allows for the possibility that the measure is infeasible. Otherwise, should there be no suitable relocation site, or should CDFW deny the request, it will be impossible to comply with the measure.

Page 4.4-11 Impact 4.7: Loss of native Oaks and Other Protected Trees: As discussed previously, this section omits multiple General Plan policies which protect trees and tree canopy. Between them, the General Plan and the Tree Ordinance protect native oak trees, other non-oak natives, riparian habitat, and tree canopy in general (regardless of whether the canopy is made up of native or non-native trees). All trees in Sacramento County are afforded some kind of protection. This section should be amended to reflect this fact. We also note that the mitigation measure states that “sensitive tree resources” will be protected, but does not define this term, and that no mitigation is provided for the inevitable tree removal despite the fact that the Tree Ordinance and General Plan Policy requires it.

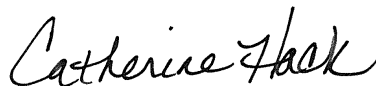
2-12

Page 4.9-4 impact 9.5: Exposure to Contaminated Soils from Agricultural Practices: The mitigation measure requires testing for arsenic and lead, both heavy metals, without any supporting analyses as to why it is necessary, and only at historic orchards.

2-13

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments on the DEIS. If you have any questions please contact Todd Smith at (916) 874-8043 or toddsmith@saccounty.net.

Sincerely,



Catherine Hack
Environmental Coordinator

**Department of Community Development
Planning and Environmental Review Division**

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FIGHTtheBITE.net

US Army Corp of Engineers, Sacramento District
1325 J Street Room 1350
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Attn: Mark Fulger

Re: **Elverta Specific Plan (SPK-2004-323)**

The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Elverta Specific Plan.(Plan). After careful review the District noted that the current Plan, Appendices, and subsequent mitigation for proposed Alternatives A-D fail to address the potential impacts to mosquito control and public health from vector borne diseases.

In order to avoid creating public health threats through the establishment or maintenance of mosquito and other vector breeding habitats, the EIS and prospective EIR will need to address that any mitigation, restoration, and/or implementation of any aquatic habitats including but not limited to; wetlands, riverine habitats, stormwater master plans shall explicitly recognize the obligations imposed on land-owners and managers by the California Health and Safety Code. (sec. 2000 et. seq.).

The District requires that any proposed project or mitigation must consider and utilize measures to avoid and minimize impacts to mosquito control activities in regards to public health and welfare. To the extent that the management of any private, state, or federal lands may produce mosquitoes, the responsible party must recognize and comply with its obligations under state law to not develop or keep mosquito breeding sources on its property.

If not properly constructed, managed or maintained, poorly designed and maintained facilities and systems may breed mosquitoes which can have an adverse effect on public health and welfare and may have a direct impact to local economies.

3-1

The District has developed and adopted a Mosquito Reducing Best Management Practices (BMP) Manual which can be downloaded from the District's website at: http://www.fightthebite.net/download/ecomagement/SYMVCD_BMP_Manual.pdf. Please review and implement the District's BMPs for design and maintenance guidelines of all proposed projects to reduce or prevent the breeding of mosquitoes.

3-1
cont.

The District is facing new challenges with shrinking revenues, coupled with the costs of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other environmental compliancy and regulatory issues.

Failure to address these issues and potential mosquito breeding sources during the planning and construction process may result in enforcement actions to the landowner after the project has been completed. The District has the authority to abate a public nuisance as defined in the California Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section § 2010 and may pursue enforcement actions pursuant to Sections § 2060 of the (HSC) which can involve civil fines of up to \$1000/per day.

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (916) 405-2093.

Sincerely,

Kevin Combo
Ecological Management Department
Sacramento Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District
kcombo@FightTheBite.net

Powering forward. Together.



February 4, 2013

Mr. Marc Fugler
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District
 1325 J Street, Room 1350
 Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

Subject: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Elverta Specific Plan Project

Dear Mr. Fugler,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Elverta Specific Plan Project. The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) is the primary energy provider for Sacramento County, the proposed project location. SMUD's vision is to empower our customers with solutions and options that increase energy efficiency, protect the environment, reduce climate change impacts, and lower the cost to serve our region. As a Responsible Agency, SMUD's goal is to ensure that the construction and operation of the proposed Elverta Specific Plan Project limits the potential for significant environmental effects on SMUD facilities, employees, and customers.

SMUD's active participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process ensures that our community power requirements are integrated into the planning and environmental review process. Our NEPA involvement is consistent with SMUD's strategic directives and core values, which call for us to ensure a safe environment for its employees and customers (Policy SD-6) and to promote environmental leadership through community engagement, improved pollution prevention, energy efficiency and conservation, and conservation (Policy SD-7).

Based on SMUD's review of the DEIS and our understanding of the proposed project we feel that any issues pertaining to our current infrastructure and any need for future infrastructure have been considered at an appropriate level at this time.

SMUD would like to be kept apprised of the planning, development, and completion of this project. Should any changes stated in this DEIS occur SMUD is interested in communicating with the project proponents for future planning purposes. Please ensure that the information included in this response is conveyed to the project planners and any project proponents.

4-1



Future NEPA documents should be sent to the attention of the Environmental Management Department at the following address:

4-1
cont.

Sacramento Municipal Utility District
Attention: Rob Ferrera
Environmental Management
6201 S Street, MS B203
Sacramento, CA 95817

Environmental leadership is a core value of SMUD and we look forward to collaborating with you on this project. Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on this DEIS. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (916) 732-6676.

Sincerely,



Rob Ferrera
Environmental Specialist
Environmental Management
Legislative & Regulatory Affairs
Sacramento Municipal Utility District

February 4, 2013

Mr. Marc Fugler, Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Sacramento District
1325 J Street, Room 1350
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS) FOR THE ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN WETLANDS PERMIT – ID: SPK-2004-00323

Dear Marc:

On behalf of the Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group, we want to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS referenced above. As you know, we appreciate the efforts of the Corps and its consultants to produce this document, in advance of issuing both a 404 wetlands permit for the overall backbone infrastructure to serve the Specific Plan as well as individual wetlands permits for various properties within the Plan Area.

Provided below are the collective comments of the participant Ownership Group for your review and consideration. Our comments are ordered to follow the format of the DEIS, starting with the Alternatives (Project Description) through to the topical areas.

A. ALTERNATIVES (PROJECT DESCRIPTION)

1. **Development in Phases:** As a general comment, we wish to express that the Elverta Specific Plan, like many and similar large scale specific plans, will be developed in several phases. For the project to be feasible and successful, both from a development perspective and in the creation and implementation of prescribed mitigation measures, the overall mitigation program needs to be outlined in manageable increments. For example, the proposed Drainage Master Plan for Elverta is designed to be implemented in increments as each individual property develops rather than the entire system being needed at the initial stage, even though only a portion of the improvements are actually needed from an impact standpoint. This should be clarified throughout the entire document. 5-1

2. **Parcel Not Identified as Participating.** It is not clear in this document that the 80-acre Winn Communities (formerly Country North) parcel APN #203-0010-014 is "participating." The first complete sentence at the top of page 1-7 says, "An additional parcel within the Plan area does not contain jurisdictional waters of the U.S., but is considered participating for infrastructure purposes." There are no other references in the document to this parcel as participating as part of the overall backbone infrastructure. Further, there are exhibits that show the "participating parcels" for items other than wetlands applications, but do not show the Winn parcel. For example, Figure 2-1a shows the project proponent's Preferred Alternative for land use, and does not include that property. There are also a number of other exhibits which call out the "Participating Parcels" with red lines. We suggest that this parcel should be included in all of those, even though an individual application has not been filed for that parcel. 5-2



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3. Analysis of Off-site Impacts. Section 2 discloses the need for off-site sewer and roadway facilities to serve the project, but it is not as clear as it could be throughout the impacts analysis that those facilities were, in fact, assumed as part of the total impact evaluation. We assume that they were included, but the Final EIS should be clarified where appropriate to make that point explicit.

5-3

4. Detention (page 2-8). This sentence implies that there is no land specifically allocated for detention and may misinform a reader that there is no detention planned for the project area. In fact substantial detention is provided within the drainage/riparian corridors. (Refer to Exhibit 2-1b) Additionally, we request that a description be added regarding how the Participating Parcels (Phase 1) will provide all the necessary detention on participating property and do not rely on obtaining offsite easements nor offsite improvements. The system has been designed to operate independently, and the EIS could be clarified to make that point explicit.

5-4

5. On Page 2-13, the costs described for identified roadway improvements (including improvements to the freeway facilities) would be allocated to the project applicants on a "fair share" basis. This was the approach taken by the County in its certified EIR for the Plan area, and should also be reflected in the subsequent chapters of the Final EIS describing mitigation to avoid any confusion regarding the relative responsibilities for implementing the identified mitigation.

5-5

6. Water (Page 2-16). Components of the major water distribution facilities include a description of the Northridge (now Sacramento Suburban Water District) Transmission Pipeline and recycled water facilities. While these are accurate statements relative to the 2007 approved Specific Plan, the water supply picture in the area has substantially improved since 2007 due to the State's adoption of greater conservation requirements, which have resulted in substantially reduced demand factors and less pressure on planned supplies. We suggest that these developments in the water supply environment be acknowledged in the Final EIS. We also suggest revising the first full sentence at the top of page 2-16 to read "The primary components of the major water distribution facilities planned to service the project site are likely to consist of the following:".

5-6

B. AIR QUALITY

1. Air Quality Impact 3.5: The DEIS concludes that because existing and new residents would be occupying the site concurrently with on-site construction activities, short-term construction activities could expose sensitive receptors to TAC emissions (primarily diesel particulate matter) at levels exceeding applicable standards because of the close proximity of on-site diesel equipment to residences. Therefore, the DEIS concludes the impact would be significant and adverse.

5-7

This analysis does not explain how the short-term nature of the construction emissions is likely to or could possibly meet the 70-year cancer risk or the hazard index criteria provided in the TAC significance thresholds at pages 4.3-1 to 4.3-2 of the DEIS. If there



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was modeling performed that indicates the construction emissions could exceed these thresholds, the DEIS should reference it.

5-7
 cont.

For the operational impacts, the DEIR concludes that due to SMAQMD's permitting requirements, stationary sources of TACs would not result in significant toxic air emissions. Operational emissions of TACs would come primarily from school buses and diesel-fuel delivery trucks, which can be controlled through idling restrictions, but because proposed on-site commercial land uses and their proximity to sensitive receptors haven't been identified yet, the DEIS concludes the impact is significant and adverse.

5-8

The DEIS concludes that the potentially significant impact is fully mitigable through measures addressing the modernity of the diesel engines used on-site, minimizing idling, and taking proximity to sensitive receptors into account in considering future commercial land uses within the plan area. We agree these measures are likely sufficient to reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level, but if there is data or guidance from SMAQMD that would enable the EIS drafters to quantify the effectiveness of these measures, we believe such additional information would be helpful to provide in the Final EIS.

2. Impact 3.7 GHG Emissions and Climate Change: The DEIS concludes that GHG emissions would be cumulatively significant and unavoidable, primarily because of the size of the development and its related substantial GHG emissions. The analysis acknowledges several of the energy efficiency requirements the project would have to incorporate, but still concludes that the project's emissions would be large. The project would be subject to the air quality mitigation measures to develop and implement an AQMP, and would have to incorporate a number of construction GHG emissions from a list, as feasible. (MMs 3.3, 3.7a.) The project would also have to prepare GHG Reduction Plan to be approved by the County, in consultation with AQMD, which incorporates Green Building and Development Measures as listed in Appendix J.

5-9

Each tentative map, CUP, etc. would have to demonstrate in this plan that it can achieve a 30 percent reduction from business-as-usual 2006 emissions levels or an alternative threshold determined in consultation with the County and SMAQMD. (MM 3.7b.) The DEIS concludes, but does not explain, that the impact is still significant after mitigation. While we do not disagree with this conservative conclusion, the project proponents would like to include in the record their proposal to develop and adopt, with the County's input, a Sustainability Plan that addresses the use of energy saving and "green" development practices throughout the Plan area, on a voluntary basis.

C. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. On Page 4.4-1 there appears to be a discrepancy in the DEIS's conclusion on the amount of vernal pool crustacean impact acreage in that the DEIS overstates the impact as compared to the analysis submitted in the 404 permit and in the Biological Assessment (BA). This includes a difference between the acreage of total occupied

5-10



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habitat (28.93 acres in the Permit application versus 30.86 acres in the DEIS) as well as impact acreage (2.52 acres in the Permit application versus 3.50 acres in the DEIS). This discrepancy should be revised in the Final EIS to reflect the correct information in the Permit application and BA.

5-10
 cont.

2. Impact 4.1. The DEIS concludes that the vernal pool habitat loss is significant but mitigable on a project-level, and cumulatively significant and unavoidable because of the scale of regional losses. We do not disagree with these conclusions but believe the Final EIS should provide up-to-date information regarding potentially suitable and available mitigation bank credits. The Owners Group will provide a current list of such credits shortly. Additionally, the Owners Group requests that the Final EIS provide further recognition of the wetlands being created on-site through the proposed Drainage Master Plan.

5-11

3. Mitigation Measure 4.1a, which deals with impacts to vernal pools, identifies the amount of impacts to vernal pools in the aggregate. Impacts are not identified on a parcel-by-parcel basis. This measure could be incorrectly interpreted to require that all the mitigation must be implemented at one time. We request a minor, but important, revision to this mitigation measure to specify that mitigation is incremental (on a parcel by parcel basis), to avoid the possibility that someone could incorrectly determine at some future point that all of the mitigation is due at one time, regardless of the timing of individual parcel development.

5-12

The mitigation measure has language that says, "Compensation for each participating parcel must be approved by the USACE and FWS prior to initiation of construction activities." It could be inferred from this language that each parcel may be able to mitigate on its own schedule; however, it is not entirely clear. Similarly, the Final EIS should clarify the timing of the backbone infrastructure mitigation.

5-13

4. Correct Identification of Avoided Wetlands. There are a number of exhibits in the DEIS that identify waters of the U.S. on properties that are not participating. One of these includes the 80-acre Winn Communities parcel, for example, which is shown to have "Avoided Wetlands" on Figures 4.5-1, 4.5-2 and 4.5-3. These figures are labeled "Potential Effects to Waters of the U.S." To our knowledge, this property has a verified delineation which indicates that there are not any jurisdictional wetlands. Please clarify that the waters on that site are "non-jurisdictional."

5-14

There are also other examples of wetlands and vernal pool habitat in other exhibits shown on properties that are not part of this application. Examples are the properties west of 16th Street owned by the Elverta Owners Group and the 80-acre property owned by Gibson Ranch LLC (to the south). Both sites are shown to have heavy wetlands and vernal pool concentrations. Please clarify the source of that information, which is believed to be inaccurate.

5-15



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- 5. Mitigation Measure 4.5b. We suggest adding the following to the end of the mitigation measure after "*However, for project impacts over 40 acres; the County will require preservation, through conservation easement or fee title, of one acre of suitable habitat for each acre developed.*", with language that reads "*The County may deem the requirement satisfied by purchase of the requisite mitigation acres at an approved Mitigation/Conservation Bank within the project's service area or through a turnkey mitigation solution that achieves the same performance standards with an approved mitigation banking company.*"

5-16

D. HYDROLOGY

- 1. Page 3.10-7 states that groundwater levels in the vicinity of the project have been historically declining at the rate of 1.5 feet per year. Data from well log monitoring available from a Groundwater Storage Study prepared by Placer County Water Agency in December of 2005 determined that groundwater levels began to stabilize about 1980. By 2005 all three wells that were monitored along the Placer/Sacramento County line have shown stabilized ground water elevations, implying that the basin is in a state of equilibrium. This page should be revised in the Final EIS to provide the correct, up-to-date information regarding basin trends.

5-17

- 2. Page 4.10-2 begins a description of LID (low impact development) measures as yet undefined that will lessen impacts to water quality. Care should be taken to make sure any future LID measures are practical and economically feasible. We propose to revise the fourth full sentence in the first paragraph on page 4.10-3 to state: "The specific LID, BMPs, and other measures employed would be determined during the permitting process, based on economic and practical feasibility and effectiveness."

5-18

- 3. Table 4.10-1 on Page 4.10-5. This Table shows in the Northern Sheds B2, 600 UP, and 702 UP that the developed flows exceed the existing flows. These sheds are in the Agricultural Reserve (Ag Res) area in the northwest corner of the Plan Area. The 2002 Master Plan and the current update show the potential increase due to Ag Res development to quantify the magnitude of the increase between pre and post development. The report indicates that the Ag Res development would need to provide mitigation to reduce this impact, but does not specify the method to accomplish this since these are very large parcels and could individually address the small increase from an individual lot.

5-19

For the B and C Sheds, there are two locations reported that show an increase, particularly in the 10 Year event. The Master Drainage Report that ESA prepared for the DEIS was based upon an earlier version of the hydro-modification drainage proposal (dated June 10, 2011). At that point in time, the Master Plan consultant (CBEC) had not completed its analysis nor had it fine-tuned the hydro-modification requirements to fully mitigate flows from particularly the 2- through 10-year events. Since that point in time, a great deal of additional work has been done, which fully mitigates at every compliance point and in each of the three events analyzed.

5-20



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We strongly encourage that this Table be revised showing no increased values in any event at any location in the Final EIS. The data in the current Drainage Master Plan provides strong support for this change in the Final EIS.

5-21

4. Mitigation Measure 10.2 on page 4.10-7. We believe this measure should be revised to indicate that the Drainage Master Plan has been designed to fully mitigate drainage impacts for both the Phase 1 and ultimate build-out of the Specific Plan. As currently worded, this mitigation measure could be interpreted to read that another "Comprehensive Drainage Plan" is needed. We do not believe that is correct or necessary, because of the updates made to the Drainage Master Plan. Our contention is that the intent is the Drainage Master Plan is to be implemented through construction drawings.

5-22

5. On Page 4.10-12, please revise the last sentence of the paragraph describing Impact 10.3 to read that "...no impact would occur either on-site or off-site".

5-23

E. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

1. Traffic – Chapter 4.14: The traffic mitigation measures do not specify the timing of the implementation of the identified improvements, and Mitigation Measure 14.3 proposes the widening of SR99 between I-5 and Elkhorn to provide an additional lane, without specifying any fair-share arrangement. The DEIS does go on to note, however, that the feasibility of this improvement is uncertain due to potential right-of-way acquisition difficulties, lack of authority, and lack of funding.

5-24

We request that the traffic mitigation measures be revised in the Final EIS to be consistent with the measures previously adopted by the County, which specified both the timing for on-site and off-site road and intersection improvements, and responsibility for fair-share contributions to both sub-regional/regional roadways and freeway facilities.

Other specific examples in the DEIS where information is incorrect or lacking include the following:

5-25

- Page 3.14-1. Elverta Road is a two-lane, east-west arterial from Garden Highway to "west" of Watt Avenue (not east).
- Page 4.14-2. The criteria for determining an impact on a Caltrans freeway segment for a segment that is currently operating at an unacceptable level of service (LOS F) is only 10 or more additional trips.
- Page 4.14-8 begins a long list of transportation mitigation measures that use language which starts with the verbs "widen or install," implying some form of project-related construction. The impression that these improvements are part of the project would be incorrect. These measures should instead refer to a "fair share contribution" to any improvements not contained within the project itself. In addition, some reference to Sacramento County's Transportation Development Fee Program may be appropriate to indicate a mechanism for such improvements to be fully funded.

5-26

5-27



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- Mitigation Measure 14.3 calls for widening State Route 99 between I-5 and Elkhorn Boulevard to provide one additional lane in each direction. The County's previous MMRP called for the project proponents to provide their fair share of funding this improvement. However, that fair share language is not in the new mitigation measure, which could give the incorrect impression that the project proponents are solely responsible for the very considerable cost of that improvement. 5-28
- Page 4.14-15. Mitigation Measures 14.6 a, b & c require the widening to provide one additional lane of State Route 99. As explained immediately above, the Owners Group believes a clarifying explanation of the project's fair-share responsibility for this improvement should be added to avoid the mistaken impression that the project would be solely responsible for this expensive improvement. We have provided an example of comparable mitigation from a neighboring jurisdiction's EIR (Placer Vineyards) that we believe provides an appropriate framework for this improvement. 5-29

The approach taken in the County's 2007 EIR, which was a stepwise approach tied to the number of residential building lot maps issued (Mitigation Measures TC-1 and TC-2), has been changed in this EIS to a blanket approach listing various freeway segments, interchanges, intersections and roadway segment improvements. The new list of improvements, many of which appear to be similar to the previous requirements, would pose a difficulty of implementation if they are inconsistent as to timing and share of responsibility as compared to the County's mitigation measures. Of note, Mitigation Measure 14.2a requires payment of a fair share toward the planned construction of a grade-separated State Route 99/Elverta Road interchange, which appears to be the only improvement in the DEIS that suggests the project proponents' contribution to these improvements is limited to their "fair share." 5-30

We request that the traffic mitigation be broadened, in consultation with the project proponents, to include clearer and more definitive language specifying the phasing, timing and fair share contributions so as to avoid singular or unnecessary burdens on any one specific property. Similar to other large projects in the region, the mitigation measures need to include language that facilitates the payment of County Regional Transportation and sub-regional/Plan specific fees that are designated in a public facilities finance plan or other forms of agreement. The Owners Group is ready and willing to work with the EIS consultant and the Corps on these revisions.

F. NEW MITIGATION MEASURES

The following are either entirely new mitigation measures proposed in the DEIS that were not included in the suite of mitigation measures adopted by the County in 2007, or else they are sufficiently different from County-adopted mitigation on the same issue to warrant notice and comment. We are requesting clarification on how these mitigation measures will be administered and implemented, especially in circumstances where they may be in conflict with the County's previously adopted mitigation measures. 5-31



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Please note that rather than repeat all of the mitigation measures, we have simply referred to each by its number contained in the DEIS.

5-31
cont.

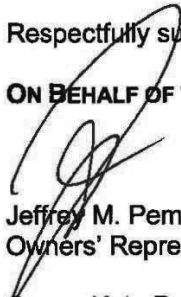
Mitigation Measure 2.4
Mitigation Measure 3.6
Mitigation Measure 3.7a
Mitigation Measure 4.1b
Mitigation Measure 4.1d
Mitigation Measure 4.3
Mitigation Measure 4.4c
Mitigation Measure 4.6
Mitigation Measure 9.4
Mitigation Measure 12.4

Mitigation Measure 3.2a
Mitigation Measure 3.7
Mitigation Measure 3.7b
Mitigation Measure 4.1c
Mitigation Measure 4.2
Mitigation Measure 4.4b
Mitigation Measure 4.5b
Mitigation Measure 4.7
Mitigation Measure 10.2

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and concerns. We look forward to your responses and to completing the wetland permitting process.

Respectfully submitted,

ON BEHALF OF THE ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN OWNERS GROUP


Jeffrey M. Pernstein
Owners' Representative

C: Kate Dadey, US Army Corps of Engineers
Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group, et al
Sabrina Teller, Legal Counsel, Remy, Moose and Manly
Bruce Barnett, Barnett Environmental
Jim Ray, MacKay and Soms
Jennifer Wade, ESA
file



1640 LEADHILL BOULEVARD, SUITE 230, ROSEVILLE, CA 95661 (916) 782-4427



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING • PLANNING • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Marc Fugler
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District
1325 J Street, Room 1350
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

Dear Mr. Fugler:

I am writing in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Elverta Specific Plan Project. A 2004 report prepared by Foothill Associates -- Countryside West ±137 Acre Site Wetland Delineation Report -- is cited in the DEIS as contributing to the wetland mapping of this non-participating parcel.

In reviewing Figure 3.5-1 of the DEIS titled "Potentially Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S.", we noted that the distribution of wetlands on the Countryside West site was markedly different than that mapped in our 2004 document. Further, the extent and density of wetlands also greatly exceed what we mapped in our work.

While this may simply be an artifact of raster graphics and the scale of the map, I want to clarify that the representation of wetlands on this property is not consistent with my recollection of our mapping.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Kenneth D. Whitney, Ph.D.

6-1

From: [Russ Hood](#)
To: [Roberta MacGlashan](#); [Wolter, Ted](#); [Fugler, Marc A SPK](#)
Cc: [Donna Pruner](#); [Maureen Hood](#)
Subject: Elverta Specific Plan
Date: Monday, December 24, 2012 3:17:10 PM

Hi Roberta,

I cc'd you on an earlier email I sent to Marc Fugler regarding the Elverta Specific Plan. My particular beef was with the number of proposed units for Alternative A, i.e., '6190' which had previously been applied only to the higher density Alternative C with its increase of 25% from the original 4950.

7-1

Since my email, Marc's office generously mailed me the 2012 ESP EIS on CD, which I have just begun to read. I now see where the Corps got their information: on page 2-2 of the ESP Project DEIS, it reads,

"Elverta Specific Plan Full Buildout (Cumulative / Program-Level)

Upon full buildout of the Elverta Specific Plan, Alternative A would include up to 6,190 residential units on 1,340.2 acres, with the same density ranges as those for the participating parcels." This same number also appears on the Table 4.7-1 for all of the alternatives. While this certainly explains why Marc Fugler would be using this inflated number, it begs the question for me—since when? This is news to me.

Admittedly I have not been as involved with this process as I once was, but I thought I had been on the mailing list of those community residents who wanted to be kept informed regarding any significant changes. Nowhere in these or other documents do I find an explanation of the process that lead to an increase of 25% for all of the 'alternatives,' and I am highly suspicious of a change of this magnitude just appearing in tables and paragraphs, when it's obvious that those who favor Alternative D (not seriously considered an alternative: No Permit Alternative (No Action)) or to those who favor the smallest urban footprint that an increase of 25% for all of the alternatives is definitely a significant change.

Clearly the number 4950 is meant to be replaced by 6190, even though one can still find the former figure applied to Alternatives A and B on previous DEIRs; or, at least the absence of this change. On page ES-2 of the 2012 DEIS each of the first three alternatives are summarized with no mention of this change for Alternatives A and B, leaving one to assume it remains at 4,950 units for these two alternatives. Only Alternative C mentions the change,

7-2

"Alternative A – Applicant's Preferred Alternative

Alternative A, the Applicant's Preferred Alternative, proposes the development of a mixed use, mixed density master planned community within the Elverta Specific Plan area. The Applicant's Preferred Alternative requires Section 404 permits from the USACE for proposed fill of 27.57 acres of waters of the U.S. At the project-level, Alternative A includes urban and agricultural residential development; commercial uses; parks and open space; as well as areas allocated for drainage/riparian corridors and major roads. For the program-level analysis, these land uses/areas would be developed further, as well as the development of schools and detention areas." (no mention of a change to 6190 units!)

"Alternative C – Approved Specific Plan with 25% Density Bonus

Alternative C would develop the project site with the same land use layout as the Approved Specific Plan analyzed in the previously prepared Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment Environmental Impact Report (2007). However, the residential density would be increased from 4,950 units to 6,190 units. The 25% density bonus is consistent with County policies for projects which incorporate energy savings and energy efficiency measures. The geographic location of planned land use types is similar to Alternative A and B. However, the drainage/riparian corridors are substantially different than those proposed for Alternatives A and B. This alternative requires Section 404 permits from the USACE for the proposed fill of 27.57 acres of waters of the U.S."

Frankly I have no idea where this project is in terms of its being implemented. The CD reads, "ESP Project, Environmental Impact Statement," but the table of contents reads, "ESP Project Draft EIS." So, is it a draft, or not? Have these numbers been adopted and voted upon, or can they be changed, or were they ever changed (properly)?

If these numbers are not set in stone yet, they are being dipped in fast-drying concrete as I write this. I would appreciate someone whose job it is to know this entire process to contact me and slowly walk me through how this happened, and if it hasn't happened, I would like to express a strong desire to keep the number 4950 for Alternatives A and B; otherwise, 'we' just have Alternative C, Alternative C, or Alternative C to choose from.

Thanks Roberta,

p.s. (Marc, would you kindly include this email within the public comment section?)

Happy Trails,
Russ Hood

From: sondraarmour@aol.com
To: Fugler, Marc A SPK
Subject: Elverta Specific Plan Area
Date: Wednesday, January 02, 2013 4:56:11 PM

Hello Marc,

Thank you for returning my call today regarding my questions on the Elverta Specific Plan, I'm sorry I missed you.

I own 10 acres at 1801 Kasser Road, within the Specific Plan. I am not a participating property in your study. I'm concerned that if just a few properties within the plan develop that my property may be impacted with drainage issues or become permanent wetlands by default in order that the participating parcels may be allowed to fully develop their land and mine will be devalued as a result.

| 8-1

The notice I received informs me of a public meeting but does not specify where or when. Your message said that there will be a meeting on January 16th, from 4-7. Can you please let me know where the meeting will be so that I may attend if possible.

| 8-2

I'm also very interested to know if your project is from new interest in the Specific Plan or if the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has just now gotten to your evaluations from the Environmental Impact report of several years ago. Basically I'm interested in knowing if the developers are showing renewed interest.

| 8-3

Thank you in advance for your response,

Sondra Armour
916-215-6446 cell
916-874-9370 work

From: [amy j sterzik](mailto:amy_j_sterzik)
To: Fugler, Marc A SPK
Subject: Fw: US Army Corps of Engineer"s Meeting Jan 16, 2013
Date: Sunday, January 27, 2013 10:00:12 PM
Attachments: [Dear Barbara MacGlashan letter 2013.docx](#)

Dear Marc A. Fulger,

I am resending this email for your consideration. The first email was sent on January 15, 2013. I did not hear back from you. This is a written comment addressed to Barbara MacGlashan, referencing Public Notice SPK-2004-00323 to be submitted before February 4, 2013 Please respond upon receipt to Amy J Sterzik at cassanme@sbcglobal.net verifying submission.

Thank you.

--- On Tue, 1/15/13, amy j sterzik <cassanme@sbcglobal.net> wrote:

From: amy j sterzik <cassanme@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: US Army Corps of Engineer's Meeting Jan 16, 2013
To: MacGlashanR@saccounty.net
Cc: Marc.A.Fugler@usace.army.mil
Date: Tuesday, January 15, 2013, 11:55 AM

Dear Roberta MacGlashan,

Please see attached letter of concern. If you have any difficulties downloading the file please let me know and I will resend it.

Sincerely,

Amy J Sterzik

cassanme@sbcglobal.net <<http://us.mc827.mail.yahoo.com/mc/compose?to=cassanme@sbcglobal.net>>

January 15, 2013

Dear Roberta MacGlashan,

As a nine year resident of Rio Linda, CA, I am writing to you to voice my concerns in what has been a long and arduous process by the residents of Dry Creek Road in Rio Linda, CA. We have been advocating for the widening of 16th Street in our community, to help bear the burden of the increased traffic volumes that are expected by the Elverta Specific Project (ESP). Since 2006, as a community, we have been expressing numerous questions and concerns related to the ESP. The ESP is a large scale project proposed for approximately 1744 vacant acres north of Rio Linda. It is described in the US Army Corps of Engineer's web site as "a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community within the north-central Sacramento County area." The land uses are reportedly varied and include residential, commercial/office, schools, parks, drainage/riparian corridor, detention, open space and infrastructure, including roadways.

Approximately six years ago, the residents of Dry Creek Road attended several Board of Supervisors meetings in downtown Sacramento and met with Roger Dickenson who at the time was our district supervisor. We expressed our numerous concerns for the transportation and environmental impacts of the ESP on our small rural community. Several residents testified at these meetings citing the irresponsible but completely solvable issues that the current transportation routes around the project would bring. We were advised to help negate these issues by rallying to have the proposed four lane conversion of Dry Creek Road downgraded in the city's new General Plan update.

Since these meetings have taken place, the residents of Dry Creek Road have taken action. A petition was successfully sent to reduce the speed on Dry Creek Road from 45 mph to 35mph. Speed bumps were placed along Dry Creek Road resulting in a much safer roadway. Due to our efforts, it is my understanding, that Dry Creek Road has also been downgraded to a two lane road in the Urban Service Boundary on the new General Plan.

As a concerned community, we never asked for the ESP project to be abolished. We have only asked for the ESP group to conduct responsible business and to respect the growth within our community. A public notice was sent by the U.S Army Corps of Engineers recently stating that there are now new alternatives to be considered as additions to the ESP. Worryingly, these new alternatives include the foregoing choices (A) Applicant's Preferred Alternative; (B) Reduced Impact Alternative; (C) Approved Specific Plan with 25% Density Bonus Alternative; and (D) No USACE Permit/No Action Alternative. The Corps is conducting a public meeting for these on January 16, 2013, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Rio Linda Elverta Community Center for comments.

9-1

In 2006, I wrote a lengthy letter summarizing my concerns to the Corps. I regretfully never even got any kind of answers in return. I sited numerous studies that have been conducted showing that the traffic volumes projected for Dry Creek Road were above the city’s recommended allotments. One of these new proposed alternatives for the ESP will increase housing units from 4950 units to 6190 units. That should make the existing traffic noise and air studies null and void. Considering, if each of those households only has one car, that is 1240 more cars up and down Dry Creek Road each day. That is 2480 more trips up and down Dry Creek Road if those new residents only leave their homes to go to and from work each day. In reality we know that a typical residence has two to three vehicles with multiple adults going to work. Do the math with those numbers.

9-2

As far as public interest concerns, at a minimum, I would think the noise and existing traffic studies I mentioned in my past letter to the corps could not possibly justify this increase without a consideration of widening 16th Street. That is irresponsible growth in our “rural setting” community. It is bullying in the worst form of misuse of authority and disregarding the existing community. If responsible growth is to be obtained, 16th Street has to be considered as part of the new transportation plan. Given the existing tactics to widen portions of Dry Creek Road and portions of Raley Blvd., I think you will find that the largest volume containing roads will run in a zigzag pattern, with no continuity. There will be no direct route to I-80. How congested will the left hand turn lanes be at peak traffic hours while everyone is zigzagging from Raley Blvd to Dry creek Road? Won’t traffic patterns burden all the two lane streets that go east west in the community as people are going to try and race down them to avoid the congestion at these busy left hand turn lanes. The overall impact on the community for noise, air quality, and quality of life is devastating. The funding for widening 16th Street, the less impacting route, the most direct route, and the easiest alternative, except for financing has to be placed back on the books. This alternative provides a more direct route and a less intrusive route for future residents in the Elverta Specific Plan, as well as, saving the quality of life for our community as a whole. A price tag cannot be placed on that.

9-3

Please take a moment and read the attached letter I sent to the Corps a number of years ago. I think you find the community residents thinking is sound and the city’s studies provide the evidence based statistics for the widening of 16th Street. In summary, I ask you to help our cause in rallying for the widening of 16th Street to help in bearing the burden of the traffic implications of the new ESP. I think not only the old residents, but the new residents of the ESP will show appreciation for your consideration.

9-4

Thank you for your time and attention in this manner.

Amy J Sterzik

cassanme@sbcglobal.net

Letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

June 28, 2009

June 28, 2009

Dear Decision Makers at the Corp of Engineers,

The residents in Rio Linda, and Elverta, CA, have recently obtained some disturbing news regarding a project that the United States Army Corps of Engineers is working on in partnership with a 1,744-acre development project called the Elverta Specific Plan (ESP). On June 24, 2009 there was a meeting in Rio Linda, CA, regarding changes to this development project, prompted by the ESP developers themselves. The ESP proposed and received approval for building approximately 4,500 new homes in our rural community. Rio Linda, Elverta, and Sacramento County officials have approved this development, against a tremendous amount of public opposition. Since the inception of this project, the community residents have been involved in trying to have their voices heard by utilizing the appropriate avenues available to them. In February 1999, a citizens committee was formed to provide public input on the project over time and report to the developers directly. In 2006, the residents of the neighboring communities to the ESP project tried again to have their voices heard by meeting with the Broad of Supervisors District Representative, Roger Dickenson. For years, a large number of concerned residents have attended Rio Linda City meetings, Dry Creek Parkway meetings, and Rio Linda Water broad meetings. They have talked with Sacramento County senior planners, Sacramento County civil engineers, and Sacramento County community outreach personnel to comprehend and express the impact this development would have on our countryside community. Just recently, a collective group provided a colossal out crying to the Sacramento County Planning Commission at their meetings on June 8, and June 22, 2009, to have our voices heard, yet again, about transportation plans related to the ESP. Respectfully, in order for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to make an informed decision on whether to allow for backfill to the wetlands area within the ESP or not and allow for another 1,200 homes, would not be complete without some background information gathered from the neighboring residents that will be the most dynamically impacted by the wetlands infill. This information sheds light on the silent impacts our rural committee has been asked to endure and on the magnification of these problems if another 1,200 homes are to be added to the ESP. As residents, we ask that you thoroughly evaluate these issues and encompass them in your informed decisions about the wetlands in ESP.

The facts are as follows. Community officials, against public opposition, adopted the ESP project and the residents were asked to endure the potential loss of value to their homes and lifestyles without any mitigated measures to assist them in their adjustments. The 4,500 new homes in our rural community will be wonderful for the tax base, but only

9-5

when developed responsibly. The transportation routes to and from this development were over looked and ignored. Currently the two lane rural routes surrounding the community are not capable to bear the projected traffic congestion anticipated from the approved 4,500 homes without even considering the addition of 1,200 more homes. The ESP did an environmental impact report (EIR) early on in the development planning phases. In the final EIR, the noise summary on page 12-23 concludes that residential property lines on two on-site sections of Dry Creek Road (a proposed thoroughfare adjacent to the ESP) exceed Sacramento's General Plan standards and surpass the 65-dB noise level. It goes on to report traffic volumes are too high to allow residential driveway and curb cuts. Since Dry Creek Road has been suggested as this designated 4 lane arterial route to bare traffic from this project, it must be known that in just a one block radius directly adjacent to the ESP project between U Street and Q Street, there are approximately 45 driveways and private road entrances. This is not to mention the numerous schools located throughout the entire Dry Creek Road. The impact to these residents is insurmountable. In addition, the EIR on page 2-2 reports, project generated traffic will produce long term emissions of ROG and NOx that substantially exceed the Air District's significance threshold of 65 lbs a day for these pollutants under summer and winter conditions. The ESP EIR also reports on page 2-2 that, even with the benefit of a 15 % reduction in emissions anticipated with the Elverta AQ-15 Air Quality Mitigation Plan, the projects ROG and NOx vehicle emissions will remain far above the significance threshold.

9-5
cont.

Furthermore, the ESP developers and their associates, Dave Cook and Michelle McCormick, both spoke at meetings held in 2006 with a large number of Dry Creek Road residents and ensured them they would be "in the loop" for developments and changes to the ESP project. This has not occurred. In fact, the opposite has been transpiring. The ESP developers have been utilizing back door antics, for lack of a better word, to not only keep the residents in the dark, but also slowly take their proposed project and try to compose it into mammoth size portions. For example, on May 2009, at the Rio Linda-Elverta Community Planning Commission meeting, applicants of the Hodgson Company located in the groupings of landholders within the ESP quietly rezoned 132.1 acres from AG-5 (agricultural-Residential) to RD-20 (residential) (4.2 acre), RD-7 (residential) (53.6 acres), and RD-5 (residential) (74.3 acres). This was completed without the knowledge and adequate notification of adjacent project residents input. It was accomplished with complete disregard as to the impact on traffic congestion that scores of more homes will have on the surrounding neighborhoods. Another example is the blatant disrespect for responsible development in the issue that ESP has put before the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, by backfilling wetlands within the ESP in order to develop 1,200 more new homes.

In conclusion, I ask that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to not only evaluate the immediate issue before them of filling in a wetlands area, but I ask that the engineers to consider the bigger picture and the impact that those 1,200 new homes will add to the immense impact the neighboring residents have already been asked to absorb for the originally slated 4,500 homes. The traffic models required for this development have been placed on the back burner since the initiation of this project. ESP's clever planners

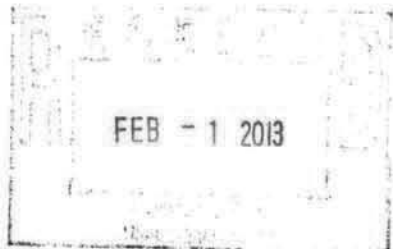
and developers have been able to keep the lime light off the traffic congestion issues that are pending with the 4,500 homes slated to go in as they slowly increase their project size. As a resident adjacent to the ESP, we never asked for cessation of the project, just responsible growth. As of now, the neighbor residents will carry all the burden of the ESP. They will lose their rural feel to their community impacting their lifestyles, have increased safety concerns due to the increase in traffic on the rural streets, likely see a drop in property values along the busy streets, and most importantly, as demonstrated by the facts in the EIR done by ESP, public health concerns will be a reality due to emissions and noise levels. So please, as you consider this project for approval, look beyond what it relatively appears as a small request and consider the massive impact these 1,200 new homes will have on our rural community. Hold developers of the Elverta Specific Plan responsible for environmentally conscience development and assist them in complying with smart growth measures in California. Let the voice of this small rural community finally be heard.

9-5
cont.

Sincerely,

Amy J Sterzik

cassanme@sbcglobal.net



January 15, 2013

To U.S. Army Core of Engineers,

My name is Sharon King. My family lives at 7420 Dry Creek Rd., Rio Linda, Ca 95673. Our home of 36 years is a few hundred yards south of the Elverta Specific Plan Project (ESP). Our home is in the 'Dry Creek Rd. between Q St. and U St.' segment in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, **Elverta Specific Plan Project, Draft Environmental Impact Statement.**

10-1

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report on the ESP has just been released; I question some of your modeling as your findings have an immense impact on my quality of life in the projected future.

Noise Impacts

I question Noise Impacts based on Dera's too few noise samples on Roadway section 'Dry Creek Road from Q St. to U St.'

10-2

Variables not addressed, therefore creating questions in the modeling or not addressed by the test sites are:

1. This segment was never tested by DERA in 2007, nor by the Corps at any time. The closest test site with similar traffic is from table 3.12-1
 - Since no test was done there will be no accurate base to compare decibel increase to in the future. Will more testing be done?

2. Why aren't the reference levels for us on 'Dry Creek Rd. between Q St. and U St.' not the same as those for the nearest and most similar segment, such as segment '50 feet from center of 16th Street north of U St.'? The closest test site with similar traffic is from table 3.12-1 **ST-4:**

10-3

50 feet from center of 16th
Street north of U Street
Tuesday 10/06/09
8:23 – 8:33 AM
5-minute Average
Noise Level, Leq's
53, 54
Airplane: 56 dBA
Powerline "buzz" 43dBA
ST-4:
50 feet from center of 16th
Street north of U Street
Tuesday 10/06/09
4:17 – 4:27 PM
5-minute Average
Noise Level, Leq's
61, 57
Wind 59 dBA "

3. The tests were done in 2007, road conditions have changed. Have these changes been taken into consideration?

10-4

- Since the tests were done, the Board of Supervisors reduced the Speed Limit on Dry Creek Rd. to a consistent 35 mph for its entire length (down from 45 mph in the test sections).
- Two Speed Tables were installed 'Dry Creek Road from Q St. to U St.'

- Signage for schools, Speed Limit signs, and Speed Table signs were installed on the section 'Dry Creek Rd. from Q St. to U St.'
- 4. Data for Dry Creek Rd. is from a segment with a bridge, a hard site with reflective vibrations, and 'Dry Creek Road from Q St. to U St.' is not near any bridge. How were these differences addressed? |10-4
|cont.
|10-5
- 5. How was the data collected from a site a 1 mile south 'Dry Creek Road from Q St. to U St.' supposed to represent our area? |10-6
- 6. There are two cross streets south of the segment 'Dry Creek Road from Q St. to U St.' and the northern most bridge, which generate more traffic down Dry Creek Rd. than what goes by 'Dry Creek Road from Q St. to U St.' (our area). (Q St. is the east/west connector of Watt Ave. to West 2nd. The other is O St., a connector from Dry Creek Rd. to downtown Rio Linda). How did you figure a base level of noise if it was never tested? |10-7
- 7. In addition, do the tests originally done by DERA in 2007 illustrate a constant decibel level for each 5 minute sample or intermittent decibel levels as a car passes quickly versus projected conditions where traffic is increases several hundred fold and is constant after the ESP build out? |10-8
- 8. How does DERA test results on **St-4 on Table 3.12-1** (50 feet from center of 16th Street north of U St.) of Leq (decibels) of 53, 54 am and 61, 57 pm become the Corps' Reference Noise Level (dBA Ldn) of 62.8 in the same segment on **Table 4.12-3**? |10-9
 - Is it an average(which would be 56.25 decibels).
 - What other factors are figured in?
- 9. Why doesn't the Corps address the difference between the decibels tested on segment '50 feet from the center of 16th St. north of U St.', which should be the same for 'Dry Creek Rd. between Q St. and U St.' and what is projected for 'Dry Creek Rd. between Q St. and U St.' on **TABLE 4.12-3**? |10-10

ATTENUATION DISTANCE TO 60 AND 65 DBA CONTOURS, ALTERNATIVE A, which is 70.4 decibels at the property façade at build out; the difference is a significant amount! And as stated in the Corps document in section **3.12 on Noise, Effects of Noise on People** "□ a 10 dBA change is subjectively heard as approximately a doubling in loudness, and can cause an adverse response."
- 10. Regarding **TABLE 4.12-3 ATTENUATION DISTANCE TO 60 AND 65 DBA CONTOURS, ALTERNATIVE A** |10-11

Most of the homes on 'Dry Creek Rd. from Q St. to U St.' are less than 62 feet from the center of the road to the "65 dBA Ldn Noise Contour". Even at 62 feet, the number of projected decibels are in **bold** and foot noted as (# 3. Attenuation rate assumed at 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance. Distance is bolded if attenuation is needed to reach the contour level which appears to be at 90+ feet) If so, residences will be significantly impacted by sound from proposed traffic increases caused by the ESP, since they are already within 62 feet of the roadway.

 - Is the Corps suggesting all houses less than 90 feet to the roadway in this area be purchased or moved?
- 11. The adjusted model, using segment '50 feet from center of 16th Street north of U St.' instead of a new test will show a **SIGNIFICANT, and DETECTABLE increase in noise levels**. Since rubberized roadways reduces decibels only 3-5 decibels (a non detectable amount according to |10-12

your document), sound walls are not acceptable in the Rio Linda Community Plan, and insufficient set backs are already established in this area; this will be a major alteration of the residents' (Our) environment. What other mitigation measures are available?

10-12
cont.

Air Quality Impacts

12. It is stated in the Corps' report that Sacramento area including the on and off site areas of the ESP do not meet the federal or state standards as it is. But The Corps suggests in 4.3-8 that pollution will decrease in the offsite/No Project area in the future since cars will become more efficient and less polluting. This is a ludicrous suggestion. The Corps is assuming everyone in this area will have money for newer and more efficient cars; not likely in Rio Linda/Elverta area. Also is the Corps playing down the fact that the cars, even if efficient, will be adding thousands of additional trips traveled/day with the increased 6000 plus households?

10-13

13. The report on 3.3-8 ARB, 2005 says "health risk is greatly reduced with distance." shows that homes in the affected offsite area should be set back to mitigate air quality issues. Is the Corps recommending that homes too close to the roadway should be moved or purchased?

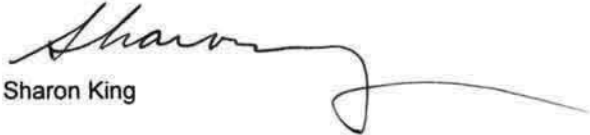
10-14

.....
Traffic and Transportation Impacts

14. The Corps' report recommends Dry Creek Rd. be 4 lanes, ignoring the currently adopted General Plan Update which has maps indicating Dry Creek Rd. should be down graded to a "collector". The County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to downgrade Dry Creek Rd. to a two lane Street. DOT and SACOG both agree that 16th Street should be looked at as an alternative north/south connector and not Dry Creek Rd. Shouldn't the Corps do more research in this area, and make less assumptions on which alternatives will be used?

10-15

Sincerely,



Sharon King

7420 Dry Creek Rd.

Rio Linda, Ca 95673

Phone: 916.991.4266

Email: sharonking5224@att.net

Cc: Dean Blank

Lauren Hocker

From: helmsbj2@aol.com
To: [Fugler, Marc A SPK](#)
Subject: Re: Public Notice SPK-2004-00323, Elverta Specific Plan Area NOA, DEIS
Date: Monday, January 28, 2013 7:44:39 PM

US Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: Marc Fugler
1325 J Street, Room 1350
Sacramento, CA 95815

27 Jan 2013

Re: SPK-2004-00323, Elverta Specific Plan Area NOA, DEIS

Comments related to 1.1.3 Corridor B.

We own two parcels within this Specific Plan. They are within the Corridor B drainage area (Parcel numbers 202-0080-057-0000 and 202-0080-059-0000.) Our parcels are downstream and adjacent to some of the Owners Group parcels identified in the proposed Phase 1 development. We are in the area where "the Elverta Owners Group deemed it impracticable to develop the [drainage] corridor in its entirety as part of Phase 1."

11-1

One of our parcels contains an engineered drainage ditch that currently handles seasonal runoff from corridor B. This seasonal drainage ditch was engineered for runoff from bare land upstream, not developed land with significant runoff. We access this parcel (for farming/plowing) by crossing the seasonally "dry" drainage ditch. Will this ditch continue to be dry 6-8 months of the year?

11-2

The Specific Plan NOA, DEIS 1.1.3 states, "Corridor B does not include full land owner participation, with only limited participation in the downstream reach. A couple of isolated participant properties without direct property connection to the proposed drainage corridor will need to be present project-specific Phase 1 mitigation proposals in order to be able to develop as part of the initial phase, as the Elverta Owners Group deemed it impracticable to develop the corridor in its entirety as part of Phase 1." This statement is a major concern to us. Whether the land owners are "Owners Group Participants" or not; there will be significant runoff from the development up stream. Whether the parcels are contiguous or adjacent to the current corridor B drainage path is irrelevant if the runoff from those developing parcels directly impact the volume of drainage in corridor B. It is a fact of gravity, the Owner's participants' land that is developed on the B Corridor side of the ridge will produce runoff into the B drainage corridor. The "downstream reach" of Corridor B needs to be further addressed and mitigation proposals on paper do nothing for potential flooding in the "downstream reach." Perhaps reconsideration is in order that it is "impracticable to develop the corridor in its entirety as part of Phase 1."

Please acknowledge receipt of this message to helmsbj2@aol.com.

Thank you for your consideration.
Robert A. Helms Jr.
Billie Joe Helms
916-802-5055

From: NCNews328@aol.com
To: [Fugler, Marc A SPK](mailto:Fugler_Marc_A_SPK@SacCounty.net); [Dadey, Kathleen A SPK](mailto:Dadey_Kathleen_A_SPK@SacCounty.net); macglashanr@saccounty.net; woltert@saccounty.net
Cc: ncnews328@aol.com
Subject: Elverta SP-Public Notice SPK-2004-00323
Date: Sunday, February 03, 2013 9:25:20 PM

My comments are listed below concerning many items I feel have not been addressed as well as they should be:

Vivien Spicer Johnson
PO Box 132; Elverta, CA. 95626
916-991-8529 - Email: ncnews328@aol.com

February 3, 2013

Marc Fugler
US Army corps of Engineers, Sac. Dist.
1325 J Street, Room 1350
Sacramento, CA. 95614
Marc.A.Fugler@usace.army.mil <<mailto:Marc.A.Fugler@usace.army.mil>>

Subject: Elverta Specific Plan Project Draft EIS

I attended the meeting of Jan. 16th, held at 4pm when most of our working residents were unavailable. I know staff said the information would run in a continuous loop until 7pm. It did not.

13-1

I have several concerns that I think you failed to address simply because of your introduction statement, "We have already studied this project and our assumption is there will be no negative impact." Why even hold a meeting?

13-2

How can you possibility show any figures that support this assumption when you know the biggest part of the land will be covered with paving for streets, concrete driveways and rooftops, not to mention paved patios, out buildings or pools?

13-3

1. Your maps only show to the edges of the project. You have taken current drainage ditches of around 15' in width or less and turned them into 100'+ wide ditches that simply stop at the edge of the project map. What happens when those ditches are suddenly reduced back to their original 15' widths? There are two streets, ElVerano and ElModena that will be flooded many times during the winter. I see no mention of building higher roads and longer bridges to span this increased flow across these streets. The wider ditches and faster water flow is also a safety hazard for children and farm animals. Are these ditches going to be fenced, the full length? Who will maintain these ditches?

13-4

2. On your maps it appears you have two large holding ponds, one at the north-east corner of Dry Creek Rd. & U Street, the other on the south side of Elverta Rd. at the western edge near Palliaday Rd. Taking this one first: there are several houses and structures just to the west of this pond. Those structures are all below road level. They will flood. Everyone knows water percolates down to the hardpan and then travels beneath the soil coming up when reaching soil that happens to be lower. Those houses are much lower than the road and will flood.

13-5

The second pond on the north-east corner of Dry Creek and U Street will cause several problems such as saturation of the soil causing dry-wells to fail, possible water-well contamination and the road base to deteriorate. I see no mention of sealing these ponds with clay to prevent soil saturation.

13-6

3. In addition I see no mention of maintenance responsibility for these ponds. The developer should be required to maintain both ponds forever. Why should my tax money go for this service? I did not create the need for these holding ponds. We have a "holding pond" on the east side of Rio Linda Blvd. just south of U Street. It turns into a mosquito hatchery in the spring and a weed infested dump site

13-7

the rest of the year. This holding pond was approved all because the development, between 6th Street and the Bike Trail just south of U Street needed to send the run-off water somewhere instead of on to all the existing homes . Holding ponds are also a safety hazard for small children, rarely are they fenced and that fence maintained.

13-7
cont.

To make the statement "our assumption is there will be no negative impact is to sound like those that say "what flood" when discussing north Natomas. I am referring to the flood of 1955 when levees broke way up north. The water came south between East Levee and the Levee holding the Sacramento River. The water came within a foot or two of the top of East Levee at Elverta Rd and it looked like an ocean. I know because I saw it with my own eyes. There were even white-caps due to the wind. There was an assumption made at that time, the levees would hold and protect the area. Sacramento even closed the flood gates at 12th Street.

13-8

4. Off site areas, property over 500' from the project boundaries, do not appear to have been addressed even though there will be a significant impact. The water flows west from the creek, the one that flows north/south along 28th Street, the golf course and Gibson Ranch. Paving over the area indicated in this project will cause flood problems several miles to the west. Your staff stated that the water would flow faster. We already have problems because the county does not enforce their own codes that are supposed to restrict filling and building structures in known water flow swales and flood plains. The problems created will be like those that happened when Roseville cleaned their creeks to keep them from flooding their residents. Cleaning allowed more water to flow through the creek faster into Rio Linda. Lots of flooding happened, all the way south through Rio Linda.

13-9

5. I do not see any indication of bridges being built over these wide drainage ditches. How will they be maintained? Will the county have to maintain them, again my tax money used for something I did not create.

13-10

6. What provisions are made for those whose homes end up within those wide drainage ditches? The flip answer given by the county senior engineer, George H. Booth, P.E., & C.F.M., "Oh they will just have to move. I'm sure they will be compensated." was very unprofessional and showed the lack of consideration for those of us that have lived in Elverta for 20,30,40 & 50 years. We have put our heart and souls into our property, stabilizing our communities and creating healthy environments for our children's children. Where is the caring concern for those of us already living here?

13-11

7. Groundwater does not appear to be addressed. What provisions are being made for private well owners in case of dewatering? The issue of a water source for this project is in question. The State of California has issued a requirement that projects of this size is to be supplied with 100% surface water. In addition all water districts are to reduce ground water consumption 20% by the year 2020. How has this been addressed?

13-12

At that meeting of Jan. 16th I heard several residents say that your figures were flawed and should be revisited. I agree. There will be very big impacts, off-site, you have not prepared to meet any expenses we might incur due to the damage caused from this project.

13-13

At the time this project was proposed for our community many banded together and hired legal council to fight this intrusion into our rural life style. Those people still live here and feel we are being ignored by all concerned.

I request you designate the project permit listed as "D". and not issue a permit to build in this obviously rural area.

A copy of this email is being sent to our Supervisor Roberta MacGlashan.

Vivien Spicer Johnson

Ccmacglashanr@saccounty.net <<mailto:Ccmacglashanr@saccounty.net>>

142277- News years - 2006 or 1

To the U.S Army Corps of Engineers.

PLEASE ADD
LETTER OF
COMMENTS I
SENT IN

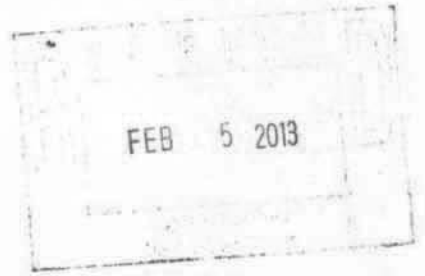
15-1

This is for Robert, who requested
copies at the Rio Linda / Elverta, ESP
meeting on Jan. 16th. He was working
on the drainage portions of the ESP.

Sincerely
Shamir

P.S.

These photos are not the flooding at its
worst but when I felt comfortable driving
in the area. Sometimes the whole intersection
is flooded.



.....
in this area before your current report was released. You can clearly see my concern.



View looking west down U Street at Dry Creek Rd.



View looking northwest at the intersection of U Street and Dry Creek Rd. In Rio Linda, Ca.



View looking west down U Street at Dry Creek Rd.

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ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT
DRAFT EIS PUBLIC MEETING
PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rio Linda Elverta Community Center
810 Oak Lane
Rio Linda, California 95673

wednesday, January 16, 2013
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

REPORTED BY: ELIZABETH A. WILLIS-LEWIS, RPR, CSR 12155
(2001-448873)

CONTACT INFORMATION

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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MARLENE L. ROBILLARD-RAMATICI, RESIDENT
7028 Dry Creek Road
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marlene-ramatici@live.com

BETTY REED, RESIDENT
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Rio Linda, California 95673

VIVIEN JOHNSON, RESIDENT
PO Box 328
Elverta, California 95626

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COMMENTS

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MS. ROBILLARD-RAMATICI: Pertaining to the issues -- the water issues retention on Dry Creek Road, my concerns are currently that the flow of water that they are proposing currently is going to create a flooding situation because Dry Creek already -- you know, this area floods anyway and it will land lock all of the residents along Dry Creek Road if it is a large flood because we have flooding. We have a 70-acre flood -- designated flood zone north of O Street on Dry Creek to Elkhorn. Well, not to Elkhorn, but there is a bridge and that is a designated flood zone area. When that floods and it overflows the roadway we can't get out that way so we usually head north, but that retention facility being there is not going to allow us any escape route. So that's my first concern.

My second concern is as the plan is currently laid out Dry Creek Road is the only connection to the specific plan in a north/south that connects to Elkhorn Boulevard or to a freeway access. And so with information that's been given to me, 16th Street is not going to go through until this project is completed, which then makes Dry Creek Road worst case scenario. All traffic will flow north onto Dry Creek Road. Dry

Creek Road currently houses, you know, our elementary schools and has access to elementary, high school, Dry Creek Elementary and the -- I don't know what the new name of the school is, but that's where all of our kids go to school. That is also the way the kids walk to school. There are no roadway improvements. There is no bike lane. It is all, you know dirt, gravel and unimproved roadway, which is very hazardous. As it stands right now the speed limit on that roadway is 35 miles an hour -- too high for a residential area and our only safety implementations that we have been able to get in place have been two undulations that were just put in last year.

I am also concerned -- giving worst case scenario is the pollutants from which the community will receive: Exhaust, diesel PM2.5, PM10, ozone. All of our sensitive -- most sensitive groups -- the elderly, our children and the residents who live in that 2-mile area -- that is going to be -- our traffic is supposed to, you know, explode. I think that's all for now. Those are the main issues as it stands right now. I want to review the plan. If I have more I will submit later.

One more thing, I would like to formally request that the February 4th deadline for comment be extended in lieu of -- extended past the February 4th deadline just because of the sheer volume and because there are other -- not just EIR issues, but there is also county issues that we're trying to manage and weigh to get the right information to the -- right to you.
(Comment 5:31 p.m. to 5:36 p.m.)

MS. REED: My concerns aren't, like, a big deal. I live on the east side of 16th. It is a one-lane road with no white line. 16th is the only way to get in and out of my street. It is a dead end at the

A-1
A-2
A-3
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B-1

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B-1
cont.

12 far end of U Street and 18th is the only other street
13 that would be a cross street, but it is also a dead end.
14 It goes down to some private property and then open
15 fields which butt up against Q Street. So if these
16 projects seal off U Street where we can't leave U Street
17 without contending with traffic on 16th what are we
18 supposed to do? That's like a cul de sac. You can't
19 get out. So commute hours -- are we going to be
20 landlocked until the traffic is over with or are we
21 going to be able to come in and out basically like we do
22 now? What are they going to do to help us get in and
23 out? I just want to know that if they don't make 16th
24 an easy access out are they going to go down to the
25 other end of U Street and open it up into North

0006

1 Highlands? The reason they haven't is because there is
2 creeks down there and they don't want to put bridges
3 in. But they got to give us some way to get out of
4 there without getting in a traffic nightmare. So that's
5 it.

(Comment 5:58 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

C-1

8 MS. JOHNSON: My concern is that there were too
9 many assumptions made. When you assume -- you know what
10 they say about when you assume -- and they said it too
11 many times up there. My concern is about the people.
12 Where these ditches are made wider their houses are
13 going to be lost. The county man said -- and his name
14 is -- he said, "Well, they will just have to move
15 then." His name is George Booth. Because there were
16 two couples here that their houses are going to be right
17 in the middle of this 200-foot drain. My concern is
18 because I live over here (indicating). This width of
19 this ditch -- they didn't extend it out. What is
20 happening here (indicating)? There is houses right here
21 (indicating).

22 "Should" is what the guy said. Well, we know
23 what "should" is. They don't say it will be protected.
24 Their houses will not be protected. Their house is
25 below Elverta Road by a couple, 3 feet. So sometimes

0007

1 the water is channeled, but the excess run-off here is
2 not -- it will flood them out. And the same thing for
3 here (indicating). This is going to create a monstrous
4 mosquito pond in the summertime or it could be a
5 hazardous thing for children. This main access
6 here (indicating) -- with not this being in writing,
7 16th Street -- this access on Dry Creek -- there is five
8 schools on Dry Creek. It's a little two-lane road. And
9 if they widen it they take everyone's front yard. So it
10 is ridiculous.

C-2

C-3

C-4

C-5

11 This is nothing but a development full of
12 greed. They don't even have an assured water supply to
13 this development. The State says they have to have 100
14 percent surface water. This water district does not
15 have any surface water. So how did it get this far
16 without an assured water supply? That's what I want to
17 know. Why did the county and all of us waste all of
18 this money without an assured water supply? I was very
19 disappointed in the presentation because you didn't have
20 handouts. You had no microphones. You had it in a
21 building that -- the acoustics are terrible. So you
22 should have had some microphones. You couldn't hear the

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23 people's questions. And to say all of this assumption
24 already when supposedly you are presenting it to us and
25 then they are going back and doing a study -- but they

C-5
cont.

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1 already say, "well, from our analysis there is no
2 negative effect." So they have already affirmed it
3 without studying anything.
4 To me that -- look at how much time is wasted.
5 waste of my day. I would have rather spent the
6 afternoon shoveling leaves. And like I say, I have
7 lived here a long, long time. I have seen the flood of
8 '55, but yet they put all those houses out there in
9 Natomas. You have got all this common sense gone.
10 People don't think about it. Just like this little
11 thing about the bike trail in my corner. 50 years they
12 have wasted the taxpayer's money when all it needs is a
13 culvert, but what do they do? The water stands, the
14 asphalt deteriorates. Then they come out and rake it
15 up. well, I have already raked it up because it is
16 crumbled all up. They come out and re-pack some more
17 down or else the person cuts the corner short and takes
18 out the street sign. So, like I say, I have lived at
19 that address 50 years. I know what I'm talking about.
20 That's all I have got to say.

C-6

(Comment 6:18 p.m. to 6:22 p.m.)

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0009

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

1
2
3 I, ELIZABETH A. WILLIS-LEWIS, CSR No.
4 12155, Certified Shorthand Reporter, attest:
5 That the foregoing proceedings were taken
6 before me at the time and place therein set forth;
7 That the testimony or statements made at
8 the time of the proceedings were recorded
9 stenographically by me and were thereafter transcribed;
10 That the foregoing is a true and correct
11 transcript of my shorthand notes so taken.
12 I further attest that I am not a relative
13 or employee of any attorney of the parties, nor am I
14 financially interested in this matter.
15 I declare, under the penalty of perjury of
16 the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing
17 is true and correct.

18
19 ss: January 16, 2013.

20
21
22 _____
ELIZABETH A. WILLIS-LEWIS, RPR, CLR
C.S.R. license number 12155
FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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24
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SECTION 2.0

Responses to Comments

The following section contains the responses to the comments included in Section 1.0 of this Appendix.

2.1 Comment Letters

Number	Response
Federal Agencies	
Comment Letter 1. Kathleen Goforth, U.S. EPA Region IX	
1-1	This comment provides a summary of the letter. See Responses to Comments 1-2 through 1-15 for specific responses. Electronic filing and distribution requirements are noted.
1-2	The purpose and need has been expanded on pages 1-7 to 1-8 emphasizing the need for the Proposed Action based on regional housing needs and planning efforts. The north-central Sacramento area has been specifically identified in the Sacramento County General Plan and the Rio Linda/Elverta Community Plan as an area where a planned community would occur to accommodate growth in the next 25 years in an orderly fashion.
1-3	The impact analysis for Alternative D - the No Permit Alternative is unique in that the Corps of Engineers would not take an action on the permit application. The discussion for Cultural Resources (pg 4.6-3), Hazards and Hazardous Materials (pgs 4.9-6 and 4.9-7), Hydrology, Flooding and Water Quality (pg 4.10-13) and Noise (pg 4.12-8) have been expanded to include additional explanation and analysis. As explained in Section 4.15, no indirect growth is anticipated from Alternative D, as it would rely on existing infrastructure and would not create new employment opportunities; no further discussion is warranted.
1-4	A discussion has been added to the Final EIS in Section 4.17 for (1) the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and (2) irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources.
1-5a	Currently both Placer County and Sacramento County are proposing habitat conservation plans which are still in draft form. There is the potential that both of these plans could provide mitigation strategies for the proposed development projects within the region, however the Project is outside of both plan boundaries. This information has been added to pg. 4.16-5.
1-5b	The geographic scope of cumulative impacts for each issue area was determined. For air quality the entire air basin is discussed and substantial development in the vicinity

Number	Response
	identified. Although all projects to be developed in the air basin are not listed based on the expansive geographic scope, the cumulative discussion included in the EIS does consider the Project's impact in the context of cumulative growth.
1-5c	Regarding water quality and habitat impacts the geographic context for cumulative impacts is very different than the available documents referenced by EPA (Suncreek, Folsom South of 50). Suncreek, Folsom South of 50 for example are located in rapidly developing watersheds where related projects have submitted Corps permit applications specifying the acreage of fill planned and regional planning (e.g. preparation of the South Sacramento HCP) is occurring to quantify area losses and mitigation. Elverta on the other hand is located in a watershed where larger specific plan areas are planned for eventual development but have not begun environmental review or permitting processes. Information for Sutter Pointe and the Placer Vineyard Specific Plan was added to pgs. 4.16-5 and 4.16-7 which have published CEQA documentation with respect to environmental impacts. Information for the remaining listed projects in the EIS, including quantitative impacts and timing of projects, was not available. Regarding air quality see response to comment 1-5b and 1-5f. It should also be noted that the referenced documents (Suncreek, Folsom South of 50) are Joint EIR/EIS documents and should not be held as standards for NEPA cumulative analysis as these documents have also been prepared to fulfill CEQA, State and local requirements which have different thresholds than NEPA and federal requirements.
1-5d	See Response to Comment 1-5a.
1-5e	Additional information is not currently available for the Sacramento County projects listed (Stackhouse, pers. comm., 2013) as the projects are still in initial phases of planning. Information for Sutter Pointe and the Placer Vineyard Specific Plan was added to pgs. 4.16-5 and 4.16-7.
1-5f	The quantification of criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions for all foreseeable projects in the air basin would be a monumental effort and would not further the cumulative analysis. The project exceeds the SMAQMD threshold only for ROG and NOx (ozone precursors) which is considered a significant direct and cumulative impact. Regional planning for foreseeable projects has been incorporated into the current ozone planning efforts including the 2009 Sacramento Metropolitan Area 8-hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (SMAQMD et al., 2008). The Elverta Specific Plan area was included in the Sacramento County General Plan and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and thus project emissions were accounted for along with cumulative projects in the basin. Thus, while the project exceeds emissions thresholds it is consistent with current plans to meet ozone attainment levels which in the long-term provide strategies for emissions reductions. Regional planning efforts have been added to the discussion on page 4.16-4.
1-5g	As explained on page 4.14-6, the cumulative traffic analysis considered the SACMET regional TDF model, which is based on the Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This analysis is not based on individual projects although individual projects are evaluated for their ability to affect the results of modeling if they are not consistent with the 2035 MTP. Quantification of the impact of the project when considered with cumulative projects is provided in Section 4.14 with additional information in Appendix F.
	Regarding groundwater, the projects considered include those within the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin. As with traffic, the analysis is not based on individual projects but regional planning efforts. As explained in Section 4.13, both RL/ECWD

Number	Response
	and Cal-Am have prepared Water Supply Assessments for the proposed project pursuant to SB 610, which are included in their entirety as Appendix WS-2 and WS-3 in the DERA EIR. Both Water Supply Assessments conclude that sufficient and reliable water supplies will be available to serve the water demands of the project in addition to the public water systems' existing and planned future uses during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry water years through 2030, assuming compliance with the long-term regional groundwater and surface water resource management efforts associated with the Water Forum Agreement, the Sacramento Groundwater Authority, and Community Plan Policy PF-8.
1-6a	Onsite mitigation for vernal pools is not proposed because the onsite and immediate offsite conditions are not conducive to the long term ecological viability for a preserved vernal pool system. As indicated by the CRAM, on-site conditions for vernal pools are poor when compared to reference sites, and surrounding development (as well as any on-site development) would continue to detrimentally impact any habitat created on-site (including impacts related to edge and inadequately upland buffers). Through this analysis, it was determined that there are better opportunities for vernal pool restoration offsite.
1-6b	There are several regional conservation, preservation, and mitigation banks which have been approved by the USFWS and/or the Corps. These include, but are not limited to, the Clay Station Mitigation Bank, the Van Vleck Ranch Mitigation Bank, Toad Hill Ranch Mitigation Bank and the Elsie-Gridley Multi-Species Conservation Bank. All banks are approved to sell vernal pool credits and authorized to sell Corps wetland mitigation credits. The project is in the service area of the proposed 300+ Deer Creek Mitigation Bank in Sacramento County and the proposed Locust Road Mitigation Bank in Placer County; both are in the entitlement process for vernal pool creation credits and wetland credits. There are potential opportunities such as the 646 acres at the proposed Apple Road Mitigation Bank as well. The project proponent will work with the USFWS and Corps to ensure that sufficient credits are available to satisfy the mitigation requirements. If credits are not available, the project proponent will implement turnkey mitigation at a USFWS and Corps approved site.
1-6c	The project proposes 0.9:1 creation but will be required to compensate to meet at least a 1:1 ratio. Language has been added on page 4.5-5 to clarify that the remaining compensation would be obtained through purchasing mitigation credits at an approved bank or restoring/creating habitat offsite.
1-6d	The primary water quality polishing would occur within water quality/sedimentation basins located at end-of-pipe discharge locations. These basins are located near but outside of the limits of the proposed drainage corridor. Basins are designed to fully mitigate the water quality impact of the project on the receiving drainage channels. Final mitigation would be subject to Corps approval however credit for treatment wetlands is not proposed.
1-6e	See Response to Comment 1-6b.
1-6f	See Response to Comment 1-6c.
1-6g	See Response to Comment 1-6c.
1-6h	See Response to Comment 1-6d.
1-7	The Applicant will be required to compensate for vernal pool losses in-kind as discussed in Mitigation Measure 4.1a. This would likely satisfy a portion of the

Number	Response
	mitigation necessary for waters of the U.S., but is subject to Corps approval.
1-8	Information regarding the alternatives that the Corps will use in making its determination of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative and factual determinations includes, but is not limited to, the EIS and the 404(b)(1) Alternatives Information Report. The 404(b)(1) Alternatives Information Report prepared by the Applicant has been added to this EIS as Appendix O.
1-9a	The project is phased and does not propose to grade all properties initially. Mitigation requires that compensation be approved prior to construction and fill of vernal pools and waters of the U.S. Should the project proponent choose to grade all participating parcels, mitigation for all parcels would need to be approved prior to grading work.
1-9b	Section 4.4 and 4.5 assess the direct and indirect impacts to biological and aquatic resources from on-site development of the participating parcels and the on-site roadways and infrastructure to serve these parcels. Off-site roadways and infrastructure are discussed in Section 4.15.2 and are assessed at the available level of detail for these improvements. Section 4.15.2 has been revised to provide additional detail regarding off-site improvements and potential indirect impacts to biological and aquatic resources. The direct and indirect impacts of full buildout of the Specific Plan area are addressed at the program-level in cumulative impacts, Section 4.16.
1-9c	See Response to Comment 1-9a.
1-9d	See Response to Comment 1-9b. Mitigation has been revised to clarify that compensation for roadways and infrastructure must be approved prior to development of the proposed roadways and infrastructure.
1-9e	See Response to Comment 1-9b.
1-10a	As discussed for Impact 10.1 in Section 4.10 of the Draft EIS, potential water quality impacts would be minimized through adherence to conditions of the applicable Phase 1 Stormwater NPDES Permit and the General Construction NPDES permit. The process for adherence to the conditions of these permits includes coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Board in order to identify the most appropriate best management practices that would be applied on site, as well as applicable monitoring requirements, stormwater discharge conditions, and various other stipulations discussed in the regulatory section of the Draft EIS for these permits. The commenter is perhaps familiar with a common method for evaluating potential stormwater impacts in environmental documents, where a moderate to long list of potential BMPs is provided. However, including a list of potential BMPs in no way guarantees or even informs which specific BMPs would be deployed on site. Instead, specific BMPs would be selected in coordination with the Regional Board prior to the initiation of project construction, to the extent needed (per NPDES permit requirements) to protect downstream beneficial use. Therefore, it is not the inclusion of an extensive list of BMPs (which may or may not be deployed on site) that ensures that water quality degradation would be minimized. To the contrary, it is adherence to the requirements of the conditions for discharge that would be applied under the applicable NPDES permits, and BMPs are only one facet of those requirements. No text revision is warranted.
1-10b	The proposed comprehensive Drainage Plan identified in Mitigation Measure 10.2 would be reviewed and approved by Sacramento County, which is now clarified on page 4.10-7.

Number	Response
1-11	The discussion of floodplains and the process for acquisition of a LOMR has been updated on page 4.10-8 of the final EIS and for cumulative impacts on page 4.16-10 of the final EIS. In accordance with County requirements under the National Flood Insurance Program, areas located in the floodplain could not be developed prior to removal of those areas from the floodplain. It should be noted that no participating parcels are located in the floodplain.
1-12a	The EPA expressed concern regarding long-term health impacts from Project development. Please see response to Comments 1-12b through 1-13b below.
1-12b	As noted by the EPA, general conformity determination was not developed for operational emissions of the Project as part of the Draft EIS since the Corps lacks continuing program authority to control them. The Draft EIS (page 4.3-1) states that general conformity with respect to the federal action will be determined in the Record of Decision.
1-12c	Per the EPA comment, the general conformity requirements discussion on page 3.3-7 of the Final EIS has been updated based on the conformity rule revision (75 FR 17257).
1-12d	Please see response to Comment 1-12b above.
1-12e	In regards to PM2.5, the federal de minimis threshold of 100 tons per year was added to page 4.3-1 and Table 4.3-1 (page 4.3-4) of the Final EIS.
1-12f	Please see response to Comment 1-12c above.
1-12g	The California Air Resources Board recommendations described on page 4.3-9 of the Draft EIS are implemented through Mitigation Measure 3.5 (Reduce Potential TAC Exposure to Sensitive Receptors).
1-12h	Mitigation Measure 3.3 was revised to specify that the AQMP shall be approved by the SMAQMD prior to construction for each area.
1-13a	The widening of roadways would not present a long-term increase in emissions in itself. As noted on page 4.15-4 of the EIS, the proposed roadway development and modifications would reduce congestion and improve traffic flow, which would reduce emissions from the idling vehicles at these intersections and roadway segments.
1-13b	Please see response to Comment 1-13a above.
1-14a	As noted by the EPA, Mitigation Measure 3.7b included in the EIS requires the incorporation of Green Building and Development Measures listed in Appendix J. Several measures in Appendix J address transit promotion and roadway network design in order to reduce on-road vehicular use, such as the "construction of transit facility/amenity (bus shelters, bicycle lockers/racks, etc.) for existing public and private transit"; and "design site and building placement to facilitate the expansion and use of alternative modes of transportation, and integrate the project site with the surrounding development and circulation pattern by creating street and pedestrian/bicycle access throughout the project site to enable trips without depending exclusively on major roads, secondary roads, or the automobile". Furthermore, the "if warranted" condition in Mitigation Measure 14.7 is in reference to providing additional transit facilities if needed.
1-14b	Although not specifically called out, roadway network design is an included strategy in Appendix J of the EIS. Please see response to Comment 1-14a above. In addition, the

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	adopted 2007 Elverta Specific Plan supports roadway design to reduce travel distance and promote alternative transportation.
1-14c	Mitigation Measure 3.7b was revised to specify that the GHG Reduction Plan shall be approved by the County prior to construction. SMAQMD would be consulted in the approval process.
1-14d	As described in Mitigation Measure 3.7b, "each increment of new development within the project site requiring a discretionary approval from the County (e.g., proposed tentative subdivision map, conditional use permit), would demonstrate that GHG emissions from construction and operation would be reduced by 30 percent from business-as-usual 2006 emissions levels, or an appropriate alternate threshold as determined in consultation with the County and SMAQMD". Appendix J includes a list of GHG reduction measures for energy efficiency, water conservation and efficiency, solid waste, and transportation and motor vehicles, that can be implemented to help meet this reduction goal, although the list is not intended to be exhaustive. Specific measures will be detailed and implemented in the GHG Reduction Plan, to be prepared by the applicant prior to construction.
1-14e	Please see response to Comment 1-14d above.
1-14f	Please see response to Comment 1-14d above.
1-14g	Please see response to Comment 1-14d above.
1-15	Mitigation Measure 9.6 has been revised on page 4.9-6 as recommended to state that the measures "shall" be implemented.
Local Agencies	
Comment Letter 2. Catherine Hack, County of Sacramento, Department of Community Development	
2-1	Comment noted.
2-2	Subsequent to the release of the Draft EIS an Addendum to the Elverta Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, a Revised Drainage Master Plan (Appendix A) and revised land use plan for the Elverta Specific Plan (reflecting the Applicant's Preferred Alternative) were submitted to the County for review and approval. On July 30, 2014, the County determined these revisions constituted minor amendments as underlying land uses approved in 2007 were maintained. As the County is preparing an Addendum and considers this a minor amendment it is unlikely that a Supplemental EIR will be required. The comment is noted regarding the desire to tier however the EIS has not been designed to satisfy CEQA requirements.
2-3	<p>While the EIS maintains assumptions based on earlier regional and local traffic planning documents, the analysis remains valid in looking comprehensively at potential operational traffic impacts. The operational impacts of traffic and transportation are evaluated for purposes of assessing indirect effects; however, Corps has no authority over enforcement of the mitigation measures related to operational traffic impacts.</p> <p>The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors received and certified the Final EIR and approved the Elverta Specific Plan and its companion Public Facility Finance Plan (PFFP) in 2007. Contained in those certified and approved documents are conditions of approval which prescribe the extent of certain roadway improvements, specifically Mitigation Measures TC-1 and 2. Those mitigation measure identify the extent of improvements to roadways, including Dry Creek Road, which are required through the</p>

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	<p>implementation of the Specific Plan. Additionally, the precise extent, timing and funding for various infrastructure improvements are to be finalized through the final implementation of a Development Impact Program for the Specific Plan, prepared in conjunction with the Sacramento County Department of Transportation and the County Infrastructure Finance Section. It has been clarified in the introduction to Section 4.14 that the local jurisdiction will ultimately refine and enforce mitigation for foreseeable traffic impacts through the implementation of the Development Impact Program for the Specific Plan.</p> <p>See response to Comment 2-2 regarding the need for a Supplemental EIR and tiering from the EIS analysis.</p>
2-4	<p>The commenter identifies that several study facilities analyzed in the Elverta Specific Plan DEIR were not analyzed in the EIR. It should be noted that the EIS is not required to include the same study facilities as the DEIR. The DEIR was used to scope the analysis for the EIS; however, the referenced study locations were omitted from the EIS analysis for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rio Linda Boulevard/Q Street Intersection – The Rio Linda Boulevard/U Street intersection was analyzed in the DEIR, but not carried forward into the EIS because no impact was identified in the DEIR and because the project was not close to triggering an impact at the intersection. • Rio Linda Boulevard/Elkhorn Boulevard – Not carried forward into the EIS because no impact was identified in the DEIR and because the project was not close to triggering an impact at the intersection. • Marysville Boulevard/Elkhorn Boulevard – Not carried forward into the EIS because no impact was identified in the DEIR and because the project was not close to triggering an impact at the intersection. • Rivergreen Drive/Elverta Road & Rivergreen Drive north of Elverta Road – Included in DEIR analysis because a direct connection was proposed to Rifle Ridge Drive, which connected to Rivergreen Drive and Bellingrath Drive. This connection is not part of the participating properties, so they were excluded from the project-level analysis in the EIR. • Bellingrath Drive/Elverta Road & Bellingrath Drive north of Elverta Road – Included in DEIR analysis because a direct connection was proposed to Rifle Ridge Drive, which connected to Rivergreen Drive and Bellingrath Drive. This connection is not part of the participating properties, so they were excluded from the project-level analysis in the EIR. • 24th Street – Q Street to U Street – 24th Street is closed to through traffic north of Q Street.
2-5	This policy was added to the Final EIS on page 3.3-12.
2-6	A summary of County Policies CO-139 to 141 has been added to page 3.4-7 as requested.
2-7	<p>The climate change analysis uses thresholds appropriate for an analysis pursuant to NEPA. We recognize that for many issues analysis at the State/local level would utilize different thresholds and that the EIS may not satisfy all of the requirements for the subsequent CEQA analysis. The EIS considers local policy in the GHG analysis, Criterion D. References to the Draft Climate Action Plan have been updated to CAP Strategy and Framework Document.</p>

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2-8	The EIS provides feasible mitigation for the proposed impact. Either grading would be limited to 15 acres per day or dispersion modeling should be implemented to ensure less than significant impacts.
2-9	Comment noted regarding perchloroethylene dry cleaning machines in relation to the potential exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants. Existing machines are being phased out of service and the installation of new machines in California is prohibited. Mitigation Measure 3.5 on page 4.3-10 of the Final EIS has been updated to reflect this.
2-10	The significance of Impact 3.7 including Criterion D was based on multiple criteria. This impact would be significant and adverse regardless of whether the County's methodology and threshold was used. The EIS methodology provides the necessary means to evaluate the criteria. Please see also response to Comment 2-7 above.
2-11	Mitigation has been revised on page 4.4-6 to include that a qualified biologist would conduct excavations and that if an aestivating toad is found, CDFW would be contacted prior to relocation.
2-12	The definition of landmark trees has been added to page 4.4-13. Mitigation has been revised to be the same as EIR Mitigation Measure BR-5 which was approved by the County and incorporated into the MMRP.
2-13	As discussed in Impact 9.5 the review of past agricultural activities in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment determined the potential for soil contamination. The Final EIS has been modified to add on pg 4.9-4 that land historically used for orchards may have lead and arsenic soil contamination associated with the use of lead arsenate pesticides. The mitigation measure matches County approved EIR Mitigation Measure TX-2.
Comment Letter 3. Kevin Combo, Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District	
3-1	The Corps recognizes the right of the SYMVCD under California Health and Safety Code to identify significant mosquito sources and present draft BMP Implementation Plans to the responsible parties. Impact 9.7 has been added to the Final EIS regarding potential health hazards associated with mosquito-borne diseases.
Comment Letter 4. Rob Ferrera, SMUD	
4-1	The comment is noted and the Environmental Management Department has been added to the project mailing list.
Businesses	
Comment Letter 5. Jeffrey Pemstein, RCH Group, Owners Group Representative	
5-1	The comment regarding phasing is noted. Where applicable the EIS utilizes mitigation approved by the County through the previous EIR process which may or may not have taken an incremental approach. The mitigation language in the Final EIS does not preclude an incremental approach. Mitigation for biological resources was revised to note that mitigation would be handled separately for each parcel. Finalization of a comprehensive drainage plan however is something that would occur and be required by the County prior to the development of any one parcel and thus an incremental approach is not needed.
5-2	As stated on page 1-1 "Within the Plan area are 563 acres owned by several individual landowners who have filed applications with the Corps for Section 404

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	permits. This area, referred to as the participating parcels, is shown in Figure 1-3. " As the Winn Property APN 203-0010-014 has not submitted an application to the Corps it is not considered a participating parcel. It is recognized that the property owner is part of the Elverta Owners Group and will seek a separate process for development. The property is included in the cumulative analysis or full buildout of the Specific Plan. Page 1-7 has been revised to remove language regarding an additional parcel participating for infrastructure purposes. An application has been submitted for infrastructure and roadways and these areas are included in the project-level analysis.
5-3	Off-site roadways and infrastructure are discussed in Section 4.15.2 and are assessed at the available level of detail for these improvements. Section 4.15.2 has been revised to provide additional detail regarding off-site improvements and potential indirect impacts to biological and aquatic resources.
5-4	Language was added to the Detention subheadings in Section 2 to clarify that this classification is in addition to detention provided by the Drainage Corridor. Additional language was added to pg. 2-10 to clarify that water quality and detention requirements would be fully met by improvements within the participating parcels for the first phase of development.
5-5	The mitigation measures in Section 4.14 (including Mitigation Measure 14.3) have been updated to be consistent with measures previously adopted by Sacramento County, relative to fair-share contributions. Language has also been added to the introduction of the section which clarifies that the Corps does not have authority over enforcement of mitigation measures related to operational traffic impacts. Many of the mitigation measures are required as conditions of approval, as part of the previous County approval and CEQA process, specifically Mitigation Measures TC-1 and TC-2 of the Certified Final Environmental Impact Report. Mitigation measures are subject to refinement by the County and will be finalized through the implementation of a Development Impact Program for the Specific Plan, prepared in conjunction with the Sacramento County Department of Transportation and the County Infrastructure Finance Section..
5-6	Page 2-17 has been updated to include clarifications regarding the proposed water supply system.
5-7	As noted in the Draft EIS, short-term construction could result in a potential significant and adverse exposure of on-site residential receptors to toxic air contaminants during construction based on proximity rather than duration of activities. However, measures are included in Mitigation Measure 3.5 which would minimize pollutant emissions and exposure and would reduce the impact to less than significant.
5-8	Since the specific sources of toxic air contaminants during Project operations are unknown at this time, a quantification of measure effectiveness is infeasible. However, land use compatibility measures included in Mitigation Measure 3.5 are based on recommendations for the appropriate proximity of sensitive receptors to sources of air toxics as provided by the California Air Resources Board.
5-9	The commenter states that "the project proponents plan to develop and adopt, with the County's input, a Sustainability Plan that addresses the use of energy saving and green development practices throughout the Plan area, on a voluntary basis". Comment noted.
5-10	The EIS differs from the current version of the BA in that the BA considers recent

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	surveys from 2009-2010 which did not indicate presence of vernal pool crustaceans in some aquatic features previously identified as suitable habitat. The EIS is slightly more conservative and assumes suitability of features where presence was indicated prior to 2008. Final impact acreage and mitigation is subject to USFWS approval. Mitigation has been revised on page 4.4-2 to note that mitigation requirements may be reduced or increased based on consultation and permit conditions by the Corps and USFWS.
5-11	Regarding available mitigation banking credits see Response to Comment 1-6b. On-site wetland creation is recognized in Section 4.5, Aquatic Resources. Vernal pools created in drainage corridors are not anticipated to qualify as suitable habitat for vernal pool species; however final mitigation requirements will be determined in continuing discussions with the Applicant, Corps and USFWS.
5-12	Mitigation has been revised on page 4.4-2 to clarify that compensation for an individual parcel must be approved by the Corps and USFWS prior to construction activities on that parcel. Mitigation has been revised to clarify that compensation for backbone infrastructure must be approved prior to the construction of backbone infrastructure.
5-13	See Response to Comment 5-12.
5-14	These figures are based on the 2012 preliminary jurisdictional delineation map. The EIS figures shows aquatic features outside of the participating parcels as avoided wetlands. These resources were field and photo-interpreted and were used only in the analysis of cumulative impacts. For the cumulative analysis all interpreted features were assumed to be jurisdictional to provide a worst-case analysis.
5-15	See Response to Comment 5-14.
5-16	Mitigation language has been revised on page 4.4-12 to state that the County may deem the requirement satisfied by purchase of the requisite mitigation acres at an approved Mitigation/Conservation Bank within the project's service area or through a turnkey mitigation solution that achieves the same performance standards with an approved mitigation banking company.
5-17	The discussion of groundwater levels on page 3.10-7 of the Final EIS has been updated to include a brief discussion of groundwater level trends through 2005. The groundwater study referenced by the commenter has also been included in the references list for Section 3.10 of the Final EIS.
5-18	We understand the identified concerns regarding the deployment of LID measures and BMPs on site. Specific measures would be identified in coordination with applicant/developer as appropriate, however, final determinations for the application of specific measures rests with regulating agencies. For example, BMPs deployed on site in support of water quality management would be determined in coordination with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Therefore, to ensure feasibility, the applicant would need to negotiate with implementing agencies during the permitting and project design process. No further updates to the EIS are warranted.
5-19	Table 4.10-1 has been modified to indicate that the volumes shown assume development of Northern Shed areas; however that additional flood and drainage mitigation would be required for development of non-participating parcels in these areas.
5-20	Table 4.10-1 has been modified in accordance with revised drainage plan documentation. Because 2-year and 10-year flood flows are not required for

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	compliance with applicable regulations, these have been removed from Table 4.10-1.
5-21	See Response to Comment 5-20.
5-22	One concern that is mitigated by Measure 10.2 is that drainages and other proposed features need to be designed so as to ensure that unanticipated localized ponding or flooding would not occur, including at a fine scale that must be addressed through engineering or construction level drawings. However, the commenter is correct that much of the work for completion of Mitigation Measure 10.2 has already been completed. Therefore, Mitigation Measure 10.2 has been updated to indicate that the Comprehensive Drainage Plan would include a finalized version of the Drainage Master Plan plus construction level drawings for the proposed facilities.
5-23	The discussion in the EIS has been updated on page 4.10-13 to clarify that no impact would occur on site or off site.
5-24	Traffic – Section 4.14 – The mitigation measures in Section 4.14 (including Mitigation Measure 14.3) have been updated to be consistent with measures previously adopted by Sacramento County, relative to fair-share contributions.
5-25	<p>Page 3.14-1 – The text has been updated and now reads as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elverta Road is a two-lane east-west arterial from Garden Highway to just west of Watt Avenue. Elverta Road bisects the project site and provides direct access to the project site and internal project site roadways. Elverta Road intersects SR 99 at an at-grade signalized intersection.
5-26	Page 4.14-2 – No change was required.
5-27	Page 4.14-8 – The mitigation measures in Section 4.14 (including Mitigation Measure 14.3) have been updated to be consistent with measures previously adopted by Sacramento County, relative to fair-share contributions. The use of the verbs “widen or install” is consistent with previously adopted language by Sacramento County. Except as noted in Section 4.14, consistent with the policy of Sacramento County Department of Transportation, the costs of direct impacts are the entire responsibility of the project whereas the costs of cumulative impacts are based on fair-share.
5-28	Mitigation Measure 14.3 – The mitigation measures in Section 4.14 (including Mitigation Measure 14.3) have been updated to be consistent with measures previously adopted by Sacramento County, relative to fair-share contributions.
5-29	Page 4.14-15 – Mitigation Measure 14.3 – The mitigation measures in Section 4.14 (including Mitigation Measure 14.3 a, b & c) have been updated to be consistent with measures previously adopted by Sacramento County, relative to fair-share contributions.
5-30	Traffic – Section 4.14 – The mitigation measures in Section 4.14 (including Mitigation Measure 14.3) have been updated to be consistent with measures previously adopted by Sacramento County, relative to fair-share contributions.
5-31	None of the Biological Resource Mitigation Measures (4.1 - 4.7) are in conflict with the County approved mitigation measures. Mitigation Measures 4.1 through 4.5 are more detailed measures than those described in the EIR but do not conflict. Mitigation Measure 4.6 does not include preconstruction floristic surveys where the corresponding measure in the EIR (BR-9) states that surveys will be conducted. The

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	measure in the EIS does not conflict with this measure but rather assumes presence of special-status plant populations precluding the need for floristic surveys. Mitigation Measure 4.7 has been revised to be the same as EIR Mitigation Measure BR-5 which was approved by the County and incorporated into the MMRP.
Comment Letter 6. Kenneth Whitney, Foothill Associates	
6-1	Reference to Foothill Associates was removed from the document as the 2004 delineation is not relied upon for the aquatic resources setting and impact analysis. The EIS relies upon the Preliminary Jurisdictional Delineation from 2012.
Individuals	
Comment Letter 7. Russ Hood	
7-1	The project has assumed 6,187 units since the 2009 Notice of Intent, the start of the public notification for the NEPA process. The commenter is most likely referring to this being a change from the previous CEQA process (CEQA alternatives considered in the EIR). The increase is based on the Applicant's commitment to meet energy savings criteria. The 25% increase over the dwelling unit cap of 4,950 units, would be consistent with existing Zoning Code provisions for a density bonus for energy efficiency. The 25% increase was assumed in order to analyze a worst case scenario for environmental impacts.
7-2	The commenter is correct that the number of units has changed since the EIR/CEQA process. Alternatives A and B in the executive summary do not state the number of units but it also does not state they would be the same as the previous EIR or Specific Plan. This area is meant only to be a summary of the overall development and potential fill of waters. For clarification the residential units have been added to the summaries in the Final EIS on page ES-2.
7-3	It is a Draft EIS. There is a summary of the environmental process for NEPA at the end of Chapter 1 of the EIS. The numbers are based on the Applicant's permit applications and coordination with the Corps and County. See Response to Comment 7-1.
Comment Letter 8. Sondra Armour	
8-1	We have reviewed existing and proposed conditions explicitly for the parcel located at 1801 Kasser Road. As shown on Figures 2-1b, 2-3b, 2-4b, and 2-5b in Chapter 2 of the EIS, the property with APN No. 203-0010-013 would be zoned Agricultural Residential, and would not be included within any of the proposed drainage or detention corridors. Additionally, as shown on Figure 3.10-3 in Section 3.10 of the EIS, the parcel in question is not located within a FEMA-defined 100-year floodplain. Under the project and alternatives, floodplains would not extend onto the parcel in question. Finally, as discussed for Impact 10.2 in Section 4.10 of the EIS, drainage within areas that would be developed would be routed into the proposed drainage corridors, which would be designed to accommodate anticipated stormwater and flood flows. Stormwater and flood flows from proposed developed areas therefore would be prevented from flowing north to the parcel in question. The property would not become flooded or otherwise experience any increase in flood conditions on site, nor would it be used as a wetland, drainage corridor, nor with any use that would be inconsistent with Agricultural Residential zoning.
8-2	Comment noted. The commenter was informed of the meeting location by the Corps.

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8-3	The preparation of the EIS is a result of discussions with the Applicant and the submission of Section 404 permit applications.
Comment Letter 9. Amy Sterzik	
9-1	The comments regarding the project history are noted.
9-2	The updated Sacramento County General Plan now foresees 16 th Street as a primary access road over Dry Creek Road.
9-3	The Sacramento County General Plan now assumes that 16 th Street would be widened and would provide the most direct route. Dry Creek Road is proposed to remain a two-lane road.
9-4	See Response to Comment 9-3.
9-5	See Response to Comment 9-3 regarding widening of 16 th Street. The other issues discussed in the attached letter are not relevant to the EIS such as the meetings between 2006 and 2009.
Comment Letter 10. Sharon King	
10-1	Comment noted.
10-2	Noise monitoring data included in Table 3.12-1 provides information regarding the major sources of noise in the Project area, based on short-term observation and visitation to multiple locations around the Project site. No additional noise testing will be done. This data, however, does not determine noise impacts. For noise impacts associated with on-road traffic, see Impact 12.4 and Table 4.12-3 in the EIS. This analysis is based on traffic volumes on the roadway network provided by Fehr and Peers and the Federal Highway Administration Traffic Noise Model to determine projected noise levels in 2035 with and without the Project. As depicted in Table 4.12-3, projected noise levels from the addition of Project traffic versus without the Project would result in less than 3 dBA increases (the typical level that represents the minimally perceptible increase in noise) on each of the modeled roadways.
10-3	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-4	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-5	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-6	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-7	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-8	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-9	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-10	Please see response to Comment 10-2 above.
10-11	The Corps is not suggesting that all houses less than 90 feet to roadways in the Project area be purchased or moved. Please see response to Comment 10-2 above regarding on-road traffic noise impacts.
10-12	Please see Impact 12.4 and Mitigation Measure 12.4 included in the EIS.

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10-13	The Corps does not assume that everyone in the Rio Linda/Elverta area will be purchasing newer and more efficient cars. However, with regulations requiring automakers to develop vehicles to meet stricter emissions limits, the future mix of vehicles on the roadway network will improve as older vehicles are exchanged for newer models. On-road traffic air pollutant emissions are addressed in Impacts 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 of the EIS.
10-14	The California Air Resources Board land use proximity distances are advisory rather than requirements. However, it should be noted that according to Appendix F of the EIS, none of the analyzed roadways would exceed the volumes identified by the Air Resources Board as posing potential substantial risk (i.e., 50,000 on rural roads or 100,000 on urban roads). The Corps is not recommending that homes along roadways be moved or purchased.
10-15	See response to Comment 2-3.
Comment Letter 11. Robert A. Helms Jr. and Billie Joe Helms	
11-1	We have reviewed existing and proposed conditions explicitly for the parcel numbers indicated by the commenter. As shown on Figures 2-1b, 2-3b, 2-4b, and 2-5b in Chapter 2 of the EIS, the property would be located, in part, within or in close proximity to proposed drainage corridors. However, as shown on Figures 2-1a, 2-3a, 2-4a, and 2-5a of the Draft EIS, installation of drainage corridors would be limited to areas owned by participating property owners. Therefore, drainage corridors would not be constructed on the properties identified by the commenter unless the commenter later decided to participate in the planned development. With respect to drainage and flooding, as discussed in Section 4.10 of the EIS under Impact 4.10-2 for each alternative under the Project Phasing header (for example, see page 4.10-5 of the EIS), the proposed drainage corridors were designed to convey stormwater and floods even in the event that non-participating properties are never developed. The project applicant would be required to maintain existing or lower rates of discharge from all developed parcels, and as discussed for Impact 4.10-2 and as modeled in the Storm Drainage Master Plan, the volume of water downstream of participating parcels would not increase above existing conditions. In many cases flow rates would decrease. For additional information regarding updates to the stormwater analysis provided in the EIS, please refer to response to comments 5-19 to 5-22.
11-2	Under the project and alternatives, there would not be an increase in flows along the drainage referenced by the commenter. Therefore, access to the parcel would not be affected and the area would remain dry during similar periods as compared to existing conditions. With respect to potential for runoff from upstream to result in increased runoff on the parcels identified by the commenter, please refer to response to Comment 11-1. Increases in stormwater or flood flows along the commenter's properties would be avoided under the project and alternatives.
Comment Letter 12. Individual Comment Letter	
	At the request of the commenter, this letter was rescinded and will not be included in the Final EIS.
Comment Letter 13. Vivien Spicer Johnson	
13-1	The public was afforded opportunities to submit comments at the public meeting or in writing throughout the 45 day comment and review period. The meeting was held from 4 to 7 pm when many working residents would be able to attend. A Powerpoint presentation was presented by Corps staff and following the presentation slides were

Number	Response
	shown on a continuous loop for approximately 30 minutes. As no new attendees came to the meeting and staff were available to answer questions there was no need to continue to run the presentation.
13-2	The quote submitted by the commenter cannot be verified. The public was encouraged to submit comments in writing or to record comments with the court recorder present at the meeting.
13-3	The EIS analysis including drainage analysis assumes paving with the Specific Plan. It also takes into consideration the proposed drainage features, including the proposed drainage corridor which will treat and detain stormwater. As discussed in Section 4.10 and Appendix A of the EIS, the resulting flows post-development will meet or improve upon existing conditions during regulated storm events (100-year flood).
13-4	<p>El Verano Avenue and El Modena Ave are located 0.15 and 0.5 mile west of the western boundary of the project area, respectively. The commenter asserts that these areas would be flooded many times during the winter as a result of the project, and expresses concern that flows from very wide stormwater/flood conveyance facilities would be routed into much smaller drainages, which may not have sufficient capacity to carry flows from upstream without flooding.</p> <p>As discussed in EIS Section 4.10, Hydrology, Flooding, and Water Quality, the drainage facilities that the commenter refers to include drainage and riparian corridors and detention basins. As discussed on page 4.10-4 of the EIS, storm drainage conveyance and flood control would be built in to drainage corridor design. Based on hydrologic modeling completed in support of the project, project implementation would result in a net reduction of flows in comparison to existing conditions during flood events, as discussed on page 4.10-5 of the EIS. Table 4.10-1 on that page indicates that downstream conditions associated with Corridors B, C, and D would in all cases experience a net reduction in 100-year flood flows. Thus, as described within the EIS, discharge from the proposed drainage corridors would not result in a net increase in downstream flooding.</p>
13-5	The proposed detention basins and drainage corridors would be designed and installed in accordance with applicable regulations, in order to ensure that offsite flooding would not be exacerbated. There is no evidence to suggest that the indicated structures would flood. To the contrary, drainage flows from the project would be contained within developed areas and associated drainage corridors. With respect to the commenter's assertion that water could percolate from flood corridors and surface and cause flooding elsewhere, please refer to response to Comment 13-6.
13-6	The commenter asserts that a proposed detention pond would cause saturation soils, which would cause dry wells to fail, as well as possible water well contamination and deterioration of road base. The commenter appears to be assuming that water would seep from the proposed drainage management corridors and detention ponds and spread laterally under berms and other control structures, thereby affecting structures on the land side of the berms. However, it is extremely unlikely that this type of effect would occur. All berms and other drainage/flood control structures would be constructed in accordance with federal, state and local requirements for drainage and flood control facilities. The proposed facilities would be designed so as to prevent seepage underneath or around the proposed berms because, among other issues, significant seepage under berms could contribute to berm failure. Additionally, the proposed drainage corridors and detention ponds would only carry or convey major flood flows during limited periods. Large volumes of standing water would not remain

Number	Response
	in these facilities over extended periods of time, thereby further lessening the likelihood of seepage.
13-7	See Response to Comment 13-10 regarding maintenance responsibility. Mosquito issues have been added to Section 4.9. Drainage features are not proposed to have steep slopes to reduce the risk of hazards to people.
13-8	The comments regarding past flooding in Natomas are not specific to the project or its environmental impacts and thus are outside of the scope of the EIS analysis.
13-9	The commenter asserts that the project would cause flood problems several miles to the west of the project site. However, the project would not cause a net increase in flood flows downstream of the project site; see response to comment 13-4 for additional discussion. With respect to county codes and building requirements, all project facilities would comply with all applicable county building, floodplain, and other country requirements as applicable to the project. With respect to potential for (according to the commenter) increased flow rates to cause flooding downstream, please see response to comment 13-4.
13-10	Potential funding sources for the maintenance of drainage corridors within the project area have not yet been finalized. However, based on currently available information, we believe that funding would be provided by the developer and/or via fees on residents, and that the County would not be responsible for maintaining the facilities.
13-11	Non-participating parcels would not be required to install drainage corridors on their property, and would not be subject to increased flooding or stormwater inundation, as compared to existing conditions. These concerns are addressed in Section 4.10 of the Draft EIS under Impact 4.10-2, under the header, Project Phasing. As discussed therein, the proposed drainage corridors were designed so as to function even if non-participating properties are never developed. As discussed for Impact 4.10-2, the project would not result in increases in flood flows along non-participating parcels.
13-12	Potential impacts on groundwater are addressed in Draft EIS Section 4.13, Public Services, Utilities, and Recreation. As discussed on pages 4.13-1 to 4.13-3, adequate groundwater supplies would be available to serve the project, and the proposed land use scenarios would not significantly affect groundwater supplies in the area. The commenter indicates that California requires that projects of a size similar to the proposed project must be supplied with 100% surface water, and that all water districts are required to reduce groundwater consumption by 20% by 2020. We are not aware of any laws that include these stipulations. Without further information, we cannot comment further.
13-13	Comments noted. The commenter does not specify how figures are flawed and thus no revision is warranted.
Comment Letter 14. Individual Comment Letter	
14-1	At the request of the commenter this letter was rescinded and will not be included in the Final EIS.
Comment Letter 15. Sharon King	
15-1	Comment noted. The flooding shown in the areas identified in these photos would not be increased or exacerbated as a result of implementation of the project. These areas are located outside of the project area. As discussed in Impact 4.10-2 in the EIS, all potential increases in stormwater flows and flooding would be contained within

Number	Response
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	participating parcels within the project area. Increases in flooding or stormwater discharge offsite would not occur as a result of the project. Please refer to Impact 4.10-2 for additional discussion.
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2.2 Public Meeting Speakers

Number	Response
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A. Ms. Robillard Ramatici

- | | |
|-----|--|
| A-1 | Potential for offsite flooding would not be increased as a result of project implementation. As discussed in Impact 4.10-2 in the EIS, all potential increases in stormwater flows and flooding would be contained within participating parcels within the project area. Increases in flooding or stormwater discharge offsite would not occur as a result of the project. Please refer to Impact 4.10-2 for additional discussion. Also, for additional information regarding updates to the analysis of stormwater on site, please refer to response to comments 5-19 to 5-21. |
| A-2 | The traffic section 4.14 analyzes impacts to roadways including Dry Creek Road. Most traffic to and from the site utilizes Elverta Road which provides the primary access to I-5 and I-80 (Figure 3.14-7 of Appendix F). Proposed mitigation for Dry Creek Road would improve the roadway and intersections along the roadway to acceptable levels however the feasibility of the measures is subject to County approval. |
| A-3 | Please see response to Comments 10-13 and 10-14 above in regards to on-road vehicle emissions and impacts. |
| A-4 | The Draft EIS was available for a 45-day review and comment period. Comment extensions were considered on an individual basis. |

B. Ms. Reed

- | | |
|-----|---|
| B-1 | It is unclear where the commenter lives according to the description; however, it is assumed that 16th Street is the primary access point of concern. The traffic section 4.14 analyzes impacts to roadways including 16th Street and intersections along this street. Proposed mitigation for 16th Street would improve the roadway and intersections along the roadway to acceptable levels however the feasibility of the measures is subject to County approval. Mitigation includes a traffic signal at 16th Street/Elverta Road; however other intersections did not meet signal warrants. The updated County General Plan proposes extension of 16th Street south of Q Street for improved connectivity. No changes are proposed to U or 18th Street at the locations of concern. The primary proposed access routes to surrounding areas are Elverta Road, Elkhorn Boulevard and 16th Street. |
|-----|---|

C. Ms. Johnson

- | | |
|-----|--|
| C-1 | Please see response to comments 13-4 and 13-11. |
| C-2 | Mosquito issues have been added to Section 4.9. The drainage corridor is not proposed to have steep slopes to reduce the risk of hazards to people and children. |
| C-3 | Widening is subject to County approval. The updated County General Plan proposes to extend 16th Street south of Q Street. This measure in addition to the mitigation in the EIS would reduce traffic impacts along Dry Creek Road. |

- C-4 The commenter indicates that the state requires that water supply to the proposed action must be 100% surface water, and that asserts that there is no assured water supply for the proposed action. With respect to water supply source, we are not aware of any regulation or requirement stipulating that water supplied for the proposed action (or any other development in California) must be derived entirely from surface water. Without additional information, we cannot further address this concern, but anticipate that the commenter may have spoken incorrectly on this subject. With respect to water supply availability for the proposed action, as stated on page 4.13-3 of the EIS, both RL/ECWD and Cal-Am have prepared Water Supply Assessments (WSAs) for the project, pursuant to SB 610 (Appendix WS-2 and WS-3 of the EIR). Both WSAs concluded that sufficient water supply would be available to support the project in addition to other existing and planned future users, including during multiple dry water years through 2030.
- C-5 Copies of the Notice of Availability were available along with CDs of the EIS. A copy of the EIS was available for review along with presentation boards. The purpose of the meeting was to receive comments on the EIS which was accomplished. The public was directed to mail in comments or provide oral comments to the court recorder present at the meeting. Corp and consultant staff was also available to answer general questions but directed the public to submit any concerns or detailed questions to the court recorder or comments via mail. Regarding assumptions, the EIS includes substantial technical analysis and supporting studies for the impact conclusions.
- C-6 The comments regarding flooding and the bike trail are not specific to the project or its environmental impacts and thus are outside of the scope of the EIS analysis.

Appendix O

404(b)(1) Alternatives Information Report



ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN

404(b)(1) Alternatives Information Report

Prepared for:

United States Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District

March 2015

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1. Introduction

The applicant is requesting authorization by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act to modify jurisdictional waters of the United States within the 1,745 acre Elverta Specific Plan (Plan Area). The CWA 404 application to the Corps (March 2012) involves the issuance of one (1) permit to the County of Sacramento for construction of the back-bone infrastructure necessary to accommodate Phase 1 development and 13 additional, separate permits for individual, builder-based development plans.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) requires that project proponents obtain a permit from the Corps for activities that result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. The CWA requires the Corps, when issuing the permit, to follow the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) guidelines under Section 404(b)(1). The EPA's guidelines prohibit discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. if a practicable alternative to the proposed project exists that would have less adverse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative would not have other significant adverse environmental impacts.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Corps with information regarding the availability of practicable alternatives to the proposed Elverta project. A majority of the information from this report has been taken from the 2012 Draft EIS, previously prepared by and expanded upon for the Elverta Specific Plan by Environmental Science Associates, Inc. (ESA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District.

This alternatives information report will objectively evaluate the practicability of several alternatives to the proposed project and provide the Corps with information to use in evaluating the proposed project permit application for compliance with Section 404(b)(1) (guidelines) and in the determination by the Corps of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).

2. Project Purpose

The overall project purpose is the development of a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community within the north central Sacramento County area.

3. Background

The County has been undergoing continuous growth, and increased housing needs have been identified as part of planning efforts addressed in the Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP), Sacramento County General Plan and Rio Linda/Elverta Community Plan. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments has adopted the 2013 to 2021 RHNP which anticipates the need for 104,970 housing units in the region, with 13,844 housing units needed in unincorporated Sacramento County.

The Sacramento County General Plan (Land Use Element) identifies the need for development of existing planned communities within the Urban Policy Area, such as Elverta, to accommodate growth in an orderly fashion. As explained further in the Land Use Element regarding planned communities:

“[t]hese areas contain a large amount of vacant land and represent the greatest potential for realization of short-term development, helping to accommodate a portion of anticipated population growth expected over the next 25 years, as well as providing additional commercial and retail amenities, business and employment opportunities, parks, open space, schools and all the public facilities and infrastructure necessary to support the ultimate population. These growth areas have been carefully planned over many years with input from the public,

County staff, the Board of Supervisors, and other public and private organizations. Build out of these existing new growth areas will help to maintain a contiguous land use pattern while avoiding leapfrog development beyond the urban fringe”
(Sacramento County, 2011).

The Rio Linda/Elverta Community Plan (RLECP) identified the need for a development that “emphasizes traditional, small-town mixed-use retail and residential land use patterns in the urban areas, encourages buildout of agricultural-residential areas [developments that avoid the appearance of urban subdivisions through incorporating open space in their design], and maintains agricultural and open space” (Sacramento County, 1997). The locally approved Plan proposes a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community in north-central Sacramento County to meet this need.

The Proposed Action is necessary to meet regional housing needs in an orderly fashion as planned in the Sacramento County General Plan and RLECP. The participating parcels within the Elverta Specific Plan area have the potential for development of 2,454 units by 2022, which would satisfy 17.7% of the total housing need for the unincorporated area of Sacramento County (13,844 units) identified in the 2013 to 2012 RHNP.

3.1 Project Background

3.1.1 Rio Linda-Elverta Community Plan

The Rio Linda – Elverta Community Plan was adopted in 1998 after nearly 10 years of community forums. One result of the Community Plan was the designation of a 1,744-acre site for urban development, now known as the Elverta Specific Plan Area. The adopted Community Plan states that the maximum unit count associated with the newly designated Urban Policy Area will be 4,950 homes spread across a range of residential densities varying from AR 1-5 to RD 20. Of that total, 4,500 homes were allocated to a 1,190-acre urban portion of the plan, with the remaining 450 homes included within the 643-acre large lot agricultural residential buffer.

3.1.2 Elverta Specific Plan 2007 Approved Land Use Plan

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors initiated the preparation of the Elverta Specific Plan on September 9, 1998 through the adoption of Resolution No. 98-1068. Early the next year, eleven citizens of the community were appointed to a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) composed of property owners within the Specific Plan area,

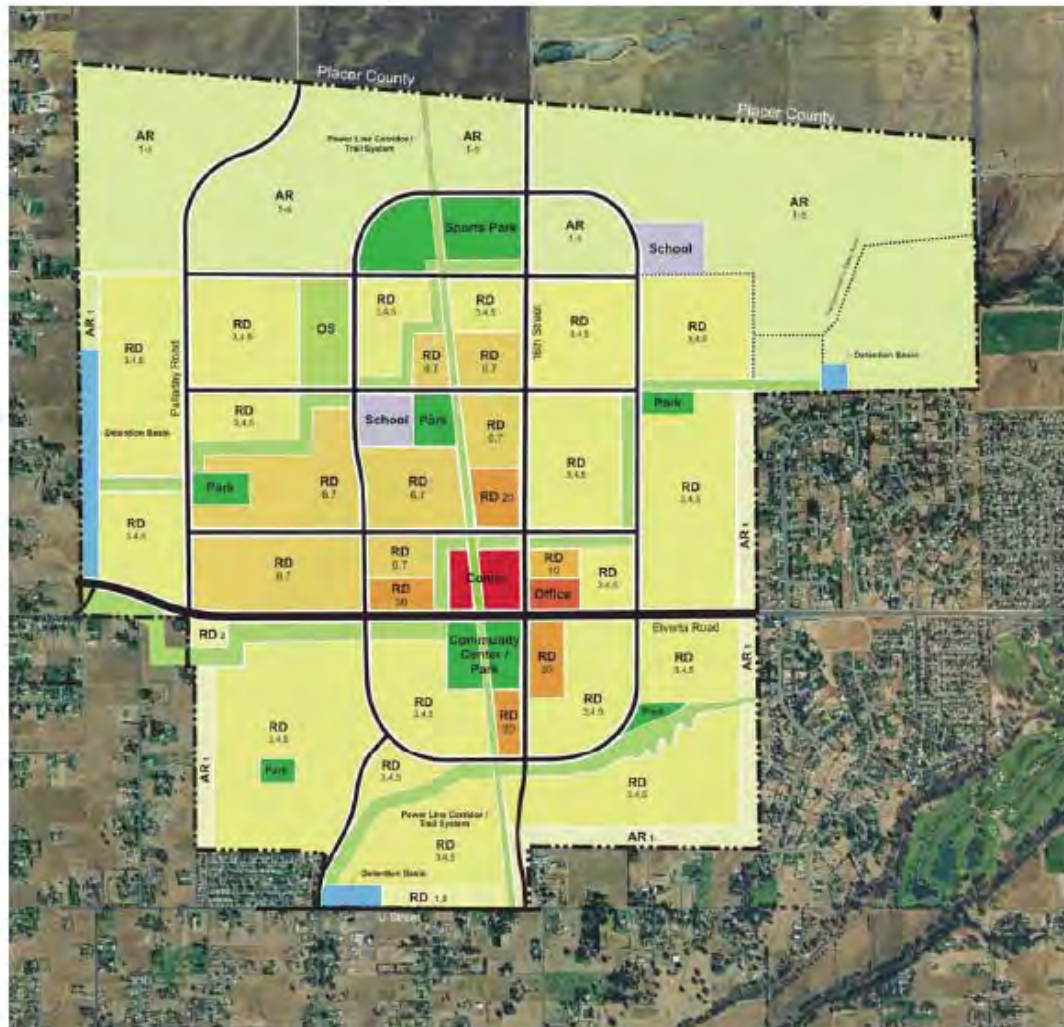
surrounding property owners, representatives from the Elverta Community Planning Advisory Council and representatives from the Rio Linda & Elverta Recreation & Park District, Placer County Municipal Advisory Council and Rio Linda-Elverta Library Foundation.

CAC-sponsored public meetings were held during the first half of 1999. A workshop was conducted before the County Board of Supervisors (June 16, 1999, following CAC endorsement of the plan, to highlight work to date and identify perceived issues. During the workshop, the Board directed staff to proceed with the preparation and processing of a Specific Plan. Four additional CAC meetings were conducted to formulate ancillary neighborhood design principles and guidelines and to develop roadway cross-sections and associated descriptions. Technical studies and an infrastructure / financing plan were also prepared in support of the Draft Specific Plan document.

On September 6, 2000, the Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft Elverta Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Additional changes to the project resulted in a revised NOP being released for public review in January 2001. A Draft EIR for the Elverta Specific Plan was released in May 2003.

The land use plan analyzed in the original Draft EIR was refined in the later part of 2003 in response to a variety of new issues. While the total plan holding capacity of 4,950 dwelling units remained constant, the distribution of land uses changed to create a more diverse community with a better defined “mixed-use town center.” The resultant plan embodied a variety of “smart growth” principles, such as connectivity and diversity, while maintaining certain distinct elements of the existing community such as unencumbered accessibility throughout the Specific Plan area by the local equestrian community.

The CAC held six hearings on the Draft Specific Plan from October 2003 through August 2004, to receive and consider public input. Primary points of discussion included traffic,



Land Use	Acreage	Land Use	Acreage
Agricultural Residential (AR) 1-5	502.3	Office / Professional	4.4
Agricultural Residential (AR) 1	49.5	Commercial	15.0
Residential Development (RD) 2	3.2	Community / Sports / Neighborhood Parks	73.3
Residential Development (RD) 1, 2	6.9	Elementary School	20.2
Residential Development (RD) 3, 4, 5	662.7	Drainage / Trails	101.3
Residential Development (RD) 6,7	161.7	Detention / Joint Use	
Residential Development (RD) 10	7.0	Powerline Corridor*, and Trail System	16.3
Residential Development (RD) 20	38.8	Open Space	18.4
		Major Roads - Other	74.3
		Total	1,744.6

*Includes 15.66 acres of powerline corridor acreage in park, RD 20 and Commercial (where conditions are subject to or within said land use designation). (Total acreage note outside 10.66 acres)
Total Plan Holding Capacity of 4,950 Dwelling Units



NOT TO SCALE

land use changes, drainage requirements, parks and trails, infrastructure and financing, and wetlands impacts. At the Commission's hearing on January 13, 2004, the Commission voted to accept the Refined Plan (*Figure 1*) as the preferred land use plan. Refinements associated with the preferred plan required that the EIR be re-circulated for additional public review. In light of this, a new NOP was issued for review at the end of March 2004.

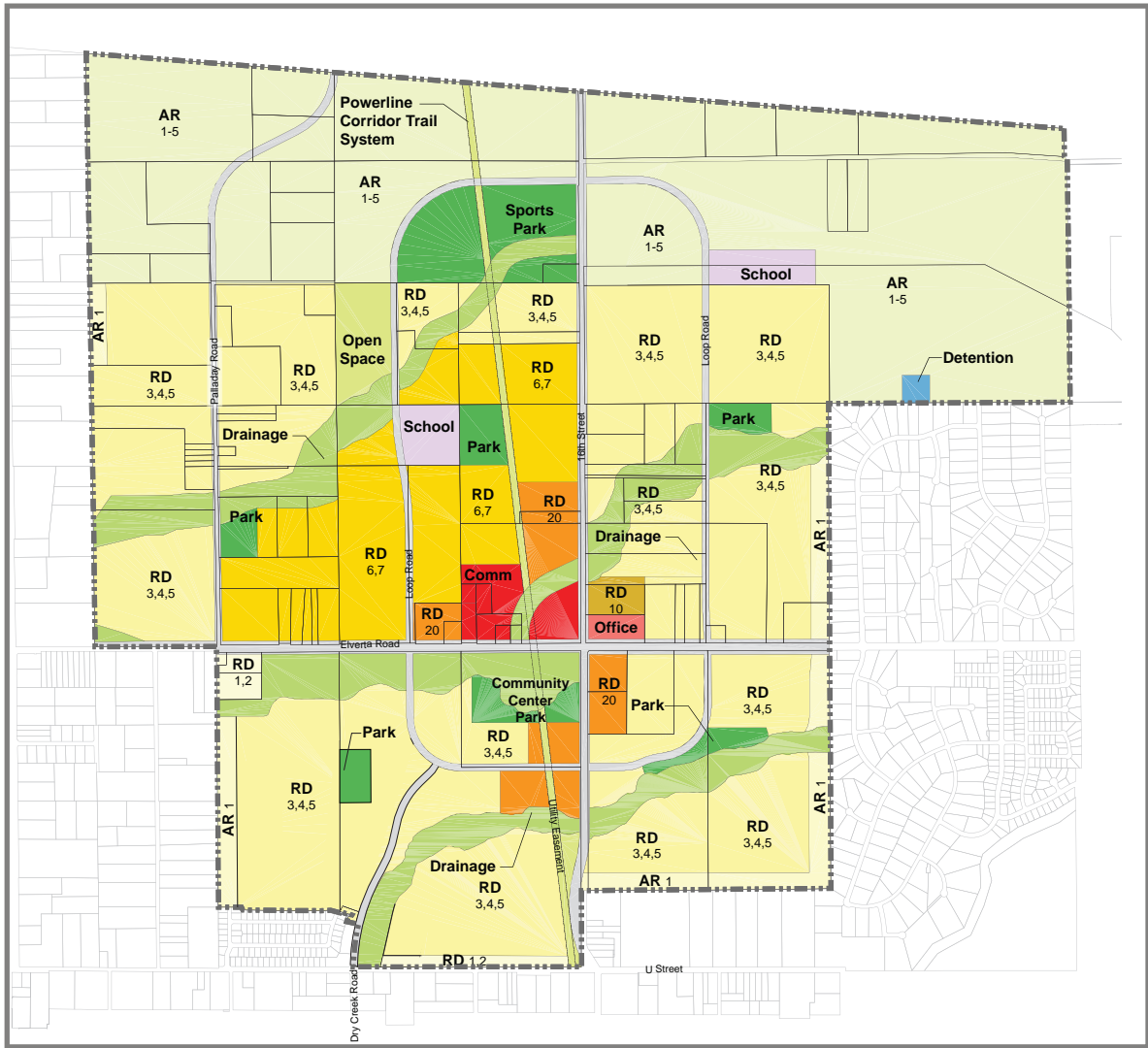
During the 45-day public review period, a workshop was held with the Policy Planning Commission to identify and address any outstanding issues that might have arisen since the last public hearing in August of 2004. The Policy Planning Commission recommended approval of the revised plan on February 28, 2006 and directed DERA to prepare a Final EIR, which was released for public comment in May 2007.

The County Board of Supervisors reviewed the Elverta Specific Plan at five public hearings between May 8 and August 8, 2007. The Board of Supervisors certified the Final EIR on May 30, 2007, adopted the findings of overriding considerations and approved the General Plan Amendment. On August 8, 2007, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Elverta Specific Plan, community plan amendment, zoning ordinance amendment, rezones, and financing plan.

3.1.2 Elverta Specific Plan 2014 Approved Land Use Plan

Participating land use ownership within the Specific Plan has changed significantly since the 2007 approvals due to economic conditions. The current Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group initiated consultation with the natural resource agencies in 2009 to obtain U.S. Clean Water Act, Section 404 and 401 permits for implementation of the project approved by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. The regulatory agencies found the 2007 County-approved land plan to be unacceptable due to the loss of wetlands and removal of native drainage corridors.

A more biologically sound alternative to the 2007 County-approved land use plan was presented to resource agencies (Corps, FWS, EPA) in 2009 (Alternative A). In this new



Land Use	Acres	Land Use	Acres
Agricultural Residential (AR) 1-5	506.5	Commercial	17.5
Agricultural Residential (AR) 1	44.5	Elementary School	20.2
Residential Development (RD) 1,2	11.0	Parks / Trails / Open Space / Recreation	
Residential Development (RD) 3,4,5	606.9	Community / Sports / Neighborhood Parks	71.3
Residential Development (RD) 6,7	165.2	Drainage / Trails	152.7
Residential Development (RD) 10	5.7	Detention / Joint Use	25.8
Residential Development (RD) 20	42.5	Powerline Corridor / Trail System / Open Space	25.8
Office / Professional	4.4	Total	249.8
		Major Roads - Other	70.4
		Total*	1,744.6



* Includes 10.68 acres of powerline corridor acreage in park, RD 20 and commercial land use statistics where corridor is adjacent to or within said land use designations (total acreage nets out these 10.68 acres).

alternative (*Figure 2*), the proposed drainage corridors were widened and realigned to more closely follow underlying drainage patterns and to accommodate riparian habitat creation and enhancement along these drainages, superior to what is found in the Plan Area today.

The Corps initiated preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) concurrent to development of a new Drainage Master Plan (*Attachment A*). The draft EIS was released for public comment in December 2012. Clean Water Act, Section 404 and 401 permit applications were submitted to the Corps and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for the (13) individual landowners and the backbone infrastructure in October 2011 and June 2012 respectively, at which time we were also finalizing the Revised Drainage Master Plan.

The revised Drainage Master Plan (DMP) was submitted to Sacramento County for review and approval in late October 2013. The County determined through an administrative approval on July 30, 2014 that the land plan and DMP submitted in 2013 was able to maintain the underlying land uses approved in 2007 and capture the loss of dwelling units by applying a multiplier to increase densities (while still maintaining the cap of 4,950 dwelling units) that was acceptable to the County and the Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group (*Attachment B*). Figure 2 is now the County approved land use plan.

3.2 Regulatory Background

The Elverta Specific Plan is a County-initiated project intended to provide a framework for “smart growth” urban development in an otherwise non-urban area of the County. The latest approvals by the County, which include an updated Land Use map and Drainage Master Plan, represent nearly 20 years of County activities and community oversight. When the Elverta Specific Plan was initiated, the County’s Rio Linda-Elverta Community Plan was updated to incorporate the Specific Plan Area. A Specific Plan was prepared and an owners group was assembled to advance the project towards completion.

The applicants for the Elverta Specific Plan (“Participating Parcels”) include the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and a group of property owners collectively known as the Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group. Of the 104 Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) within the Plan Area, the current Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group controls 13 APNs, involving roughly 563 acres of the 1,745 acre Plan Area.

The Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group has applied for permits to discharge dredged and/or fill materials into waters of the U. S. under the authority of the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The 404 permitting involves a single, comprehensive, County-sponsored permit for the construction of the backbone infrastructure necessary to serve the Phase 1 development within the Plan Area, as well as 13 (bundled) Standard Individual and Nationwide (#29 – Residential Development) Permits for the various Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group development plans that constitutes the Phase 1 development of the Specific Plan Area. Landowners not part of the Elverta Specific Plan Owners Group will need to subsequently secure any necessary permits for their respective developments.

The 404(b)(1) guidelines provide substantive criteria used by the Corps in evaluating discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. For Standard Individual Permits, the Corps conducts an Alternatives Analysis to determine a Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) consistent with Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines. An alternative is considered practicable if it is available and capable of being implemented, taking into consideration costs, existing technology, environmental impacts, and logistics as related to the overall project purpose. In addition, an area not presently owned by the applicant that could reasonably be obtained, utilized, expanded, or managed in order to fulfill the basic project purpose may be considered as part of this practicable alternative.

The 404(b)(1) guidelines require that four criteria be satisfied in order for the Corps to make a decision that a proposed discharge is in compliance. These include:

1. *The discharge must be the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative.*

Alternatives need to evaluate a range of options to the proposed project, in terms of environmental effects, practicability and consistency with the overall project purpose.

2. *The discharge must not violate any water quality standard, toxic effluent standard or jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species.*

Mitigation measures need to be developed to insure that water quality and toxic effluent standards will not be violated. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted regarding potential effects to federally listed species.

3. *The discharge must not result in a significant degradation of the waters of the US.*

Water quality impacts and potential impacts need to be minimized through implementation of water quality management and erosion control plans as approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the local planning jurisdiction.

4. *Unavoidable impacts to the aquatic ecosystem must be mitigated.*

Efforts must first be directed at avoiding and reducing impacts to waters of the United States prior to the evaluation of potential compensatory mitigation measures. Mitigation may be applied only to unavoidable impacts.

To comply with this guidance, we do not attempt to substitute mitigation for avoidance.

Unavoidable impacts to wetlands and/or “other waters of the United States” will be mitigated by either on-site construction of compensation wetlands, through the purchase of appropriate mitigation credits from agency-approved sources, or by a combination of mitigation measures acceptable to the regulatory agencies.

4. Project Description

The Elverta Specific Plan is located on approximately 1,745 acres in northern Sacramento County, California. A regional location map is provided as *Figure 3*. The Plan area is bounded by U Street to the south, Gibson Ranch Park to the east, the Sacramento County/Placer County line to the north and rural residential properties to the west. The location corresponds to Township 10 North, Range 5 East, Sections 9, 10, 15, 16, 21 and 22 of the Rio Linda United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map (1980).

A total of 563 acres within the Elverta Specific Plan area are owned by 13 separate landowners who have filed applications with the USACE for Section 404 permits. This area, referred to as the “participating parcels”, and is shown in *Figure 4*. *Figure 5* shows the locations of all parcels within the Elverta Specific Plan.

As noted earlier in this report – in the Project Background section (3.0) – both the local (Rio Linda-Elverta) community and the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors desire to implement a development plan that creates a mixed-use, mixed-density community with the Project Components outlined below. The local community has been vocal about its need for future housing and the County and Sacramento Area Council of Governance (SACOG) has identified the Plan Area (PA) area as a “smart growth” area. Additionally, through nearly 20 years of meetings and discussions by all parties involved (with the regulatory agencies being involved since 2009), it has been determined that the PA should include 4,950 permanent residences at full buildout.

4.1. Project Components

The Project, as approved by the County of Sacramento, reflects a balance between land uses of urban, rural, and natural. The components of the Specific Plan that create this include:

4.1.1. Residential

The Sacramento County approved Plan Area (Figure 6) contains 4,950 units on 1,340 acres of residential land uses, ranging in density from 20 units per acre in and around the

Community (Town) Center to 1-5 acres per unit in the agricultural-residential component of the plan. The Plan intends this range of residential densities within the PA to provide for a variety of housing types at various price points. Likely home types will include conventional single-family detached homes on large and small lots, duets, town homes, row houses and apartments.

The Elverta Specific Plan (ESP) strives to create a Plan with smart growth principals, neighborhood identity and energy efficiency. The ESP calls for the use of short blocks and seamless neighborhoods with a high degree of connectivity. Shaded streets with reduced widths would add to the overall energy efficiency of development.

4.1.2. Community (Town) Center

A community or town center, planned at the corner of Elverta Road and 16th Street, will include indoor recreation, meeting rooms, administration, an outdoor play area, and an outdoor amphitheater.

4.1.3. Commercial/Professional Offices

Planned commercial and office facilities are intended to complement the Community Center in a pedestrian-oriented environment. In addition to providing a platform for retail sales and professional services, the complex will serve as urban open space with outdoor plazas and gathering areas, mini-parks and links to community trails.

4.1.4. Neighborhood Schools

Two 10-acre neighborhood elementary schools would service the needs of students in both the Elverta and Center School Districts. School sites are located along the proposed Loop Road to provide for convenient vehicular access. Pedestrian access via Neighborhood trails along the drainage corridors connect each school site to their respective neighborhoods. The Elverta District school site would share both facilities and parking with the adjacent neighborhood park to maximize use.

4.1.5. Neighborhood Parks

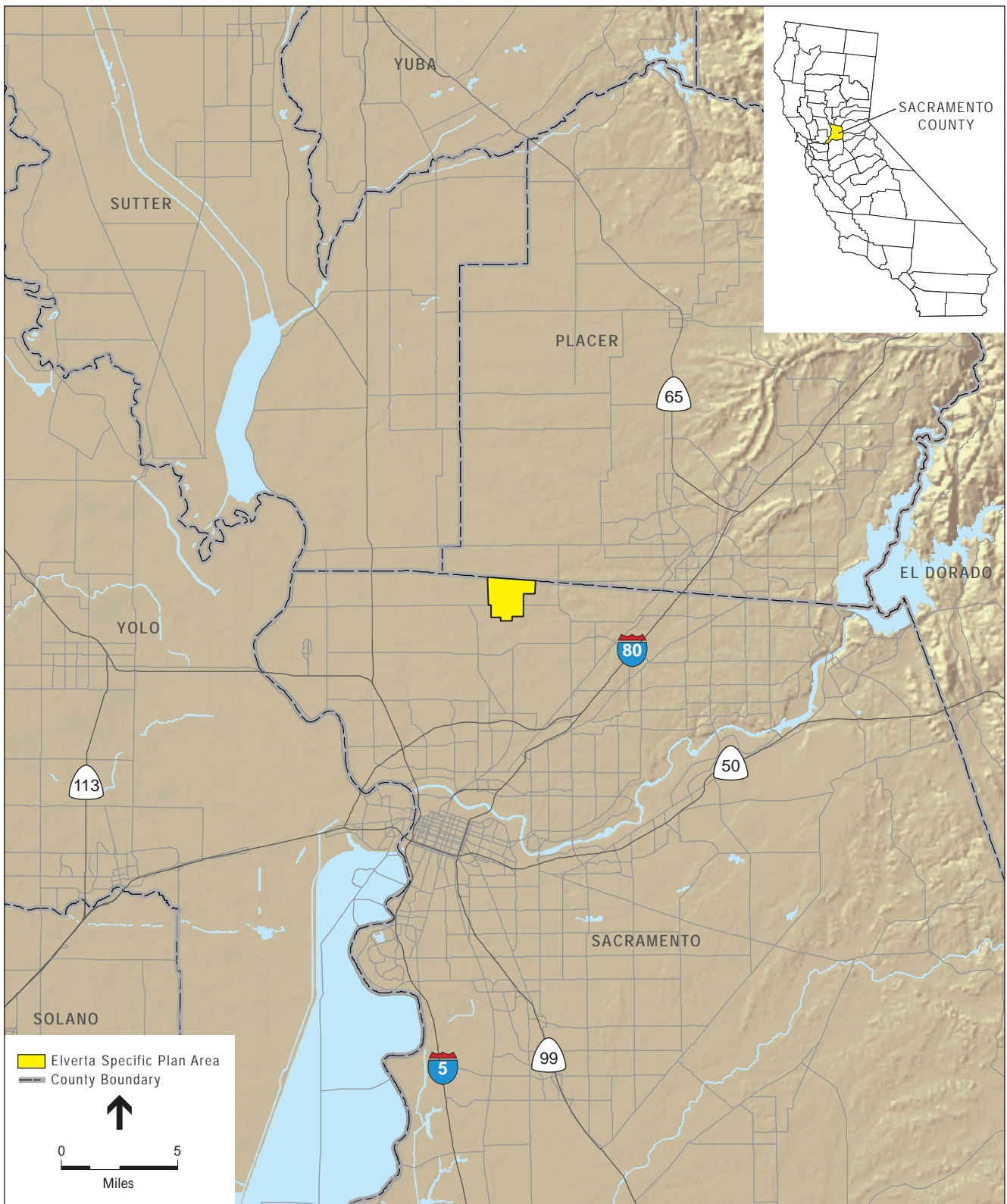
Neighborhood parks are planned to incorporate a list of programs and facilities prepared by the Rio Linda / Elverta Parks and Recreation District. Foremost among these facilities is a roughly 14-acre Community Center / Central Park and a 38-acre Sports Park. The Plan also calls for five (5) other neighborhood parks and inclusion of small, mini- and / or pocket parks as integral components of neighborhood design.

4.1.6. Trail System

The Elverta Specific Plan (ESP) plans an extensive, 11-mile network of on- and off-street pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian trails that primarily follow the loop road, Elverta Road, 16th Street, multi-purpose drainages and the power-line easement. Secondary trails occur between neighborhoods.

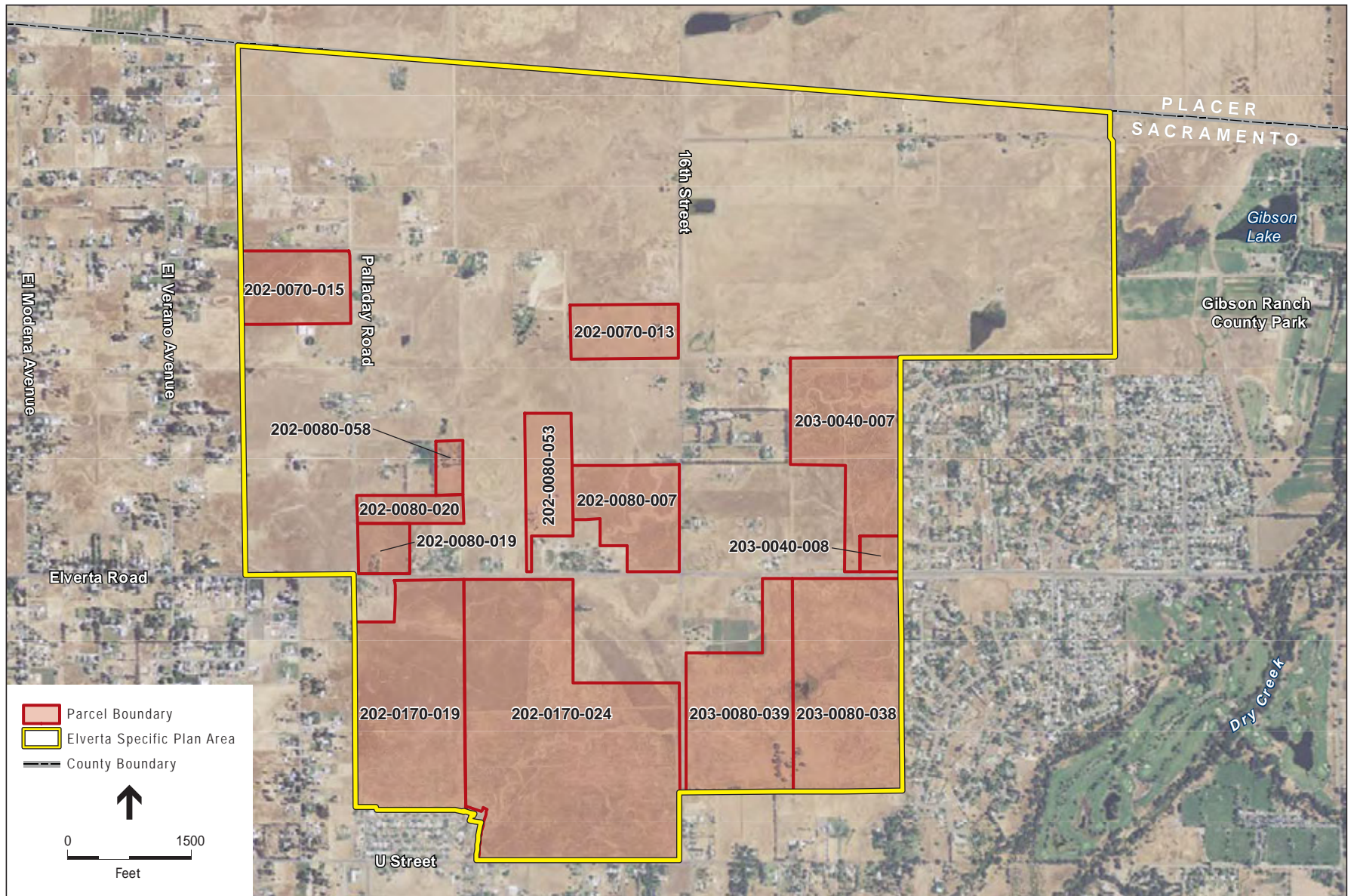
4.1.7. Open Space

The Plan contains over 181 acres of open space within multi-purpose drainage corridors that will support enhanced habitat, passive recreation, multi-use trails, and water quality treatment. In combination with planned parks, roughly 11% of the site has been planned for open space and recreation.



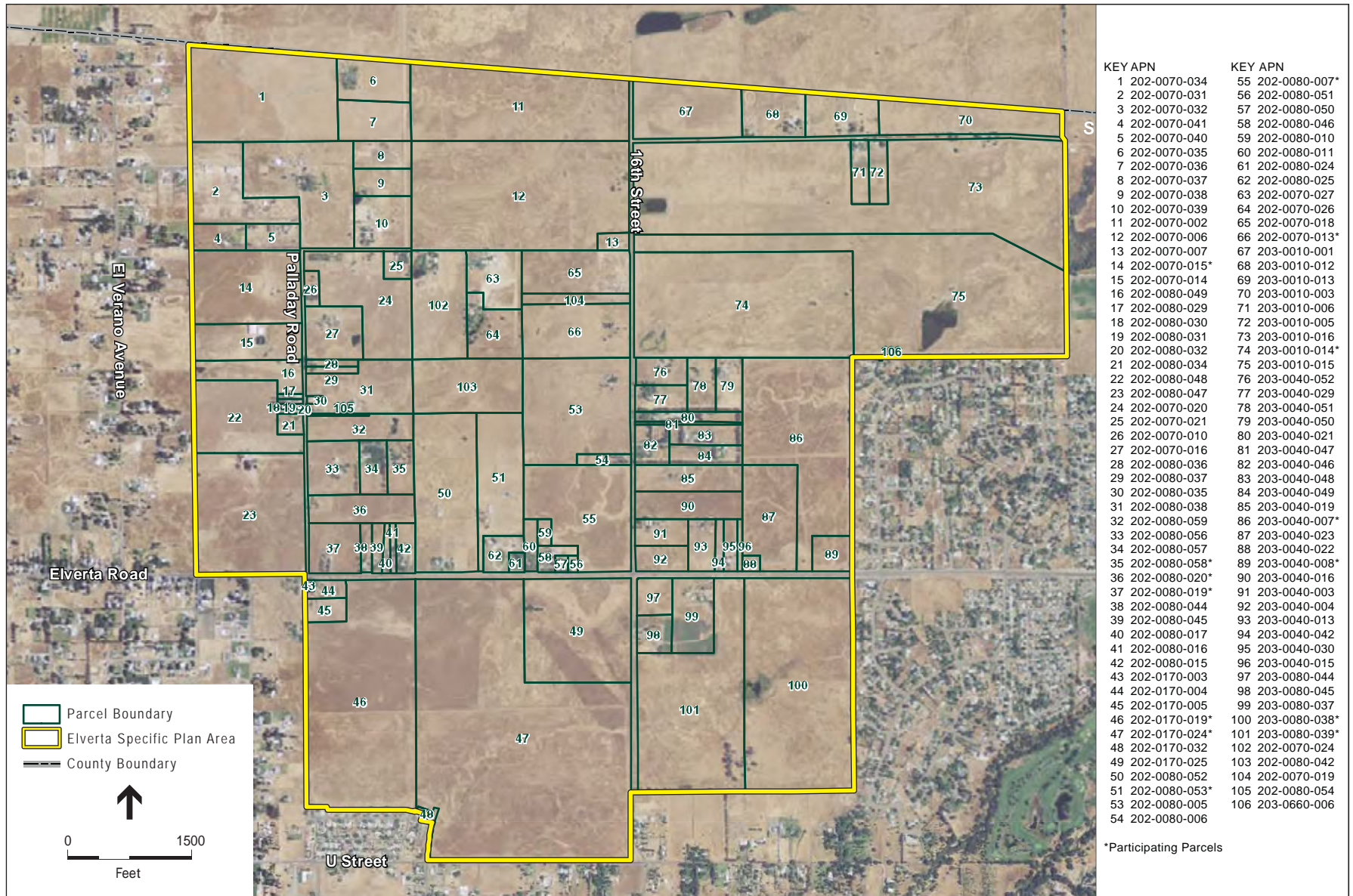
SOURCE: ESRI, 2006; ESA, 2011; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 3
 Regional Location Map



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 4
 Participating Parcels



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESA, 2011; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 5
 Elverta Specific Plan Parcel Locations

5. Environmental Setting

The ESP Area is generally flat, with an elevation change of roughly 35 feet from east to west, and drains from the northeast to the southwest with a small portion draining to the northwest into Placer County. Most of the land has been shaped by some form of current and / or past agricultural activity allowing for the cultivation of crops, development of fish farms, or livestock grazing. Grading required for some of these needs (e.g. rice) has resulted in artificial landforms that have historically held water for periods of time. Significant landscape features are, for the most part, man-made in terms of planted windbreaks along roads, individually landscaped homes and the transmission towers bisecting the property from northwest to southeast.

Existing watercourses include four intermittent drainage swales, one in the northwestern portion of the ESP and three central to the project site. All onsite intermittent watercourses drain toward Steelhead Creek (NEMDC).

Figures 6 and 7 illustrate existing site features and adjacent land use patterns.

5.1. Wetland Classifications

Aquatic resources found within the Plan Area illustrated in *Figure 8* include the following:

5.1.1. Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are topographic depressions underlain by an impermeable or semi-permeable hardpan that are inundated during periods of rain and remain saturated through spring. Vernal pools can be found scattered throughout the Plan Area.

5.1.2. Seasonal Wetlands

Seasonal wetlands are ephemeral low-lying areas that accumulate water from rainfall and other forms of surface runoff. Inundation periods are relatively short in duration and commonly support non-native annuals, as well as sometimes-perennial hydrophytic species. Seasonal wetlands occur throughout the Plan Area and are often in close association with vernal pools, seasonal wetland swales and ephemeral drainage courses.

5.1.3. Seasonal Wetland Swales

Seasonal wetland swales are features that do not exhibit a high water mark and are genuinely associated with ephemeral drainage courses. Plant species associated with this feature are similar to those associated with seasonal wetlands.

5.1.4. Seep

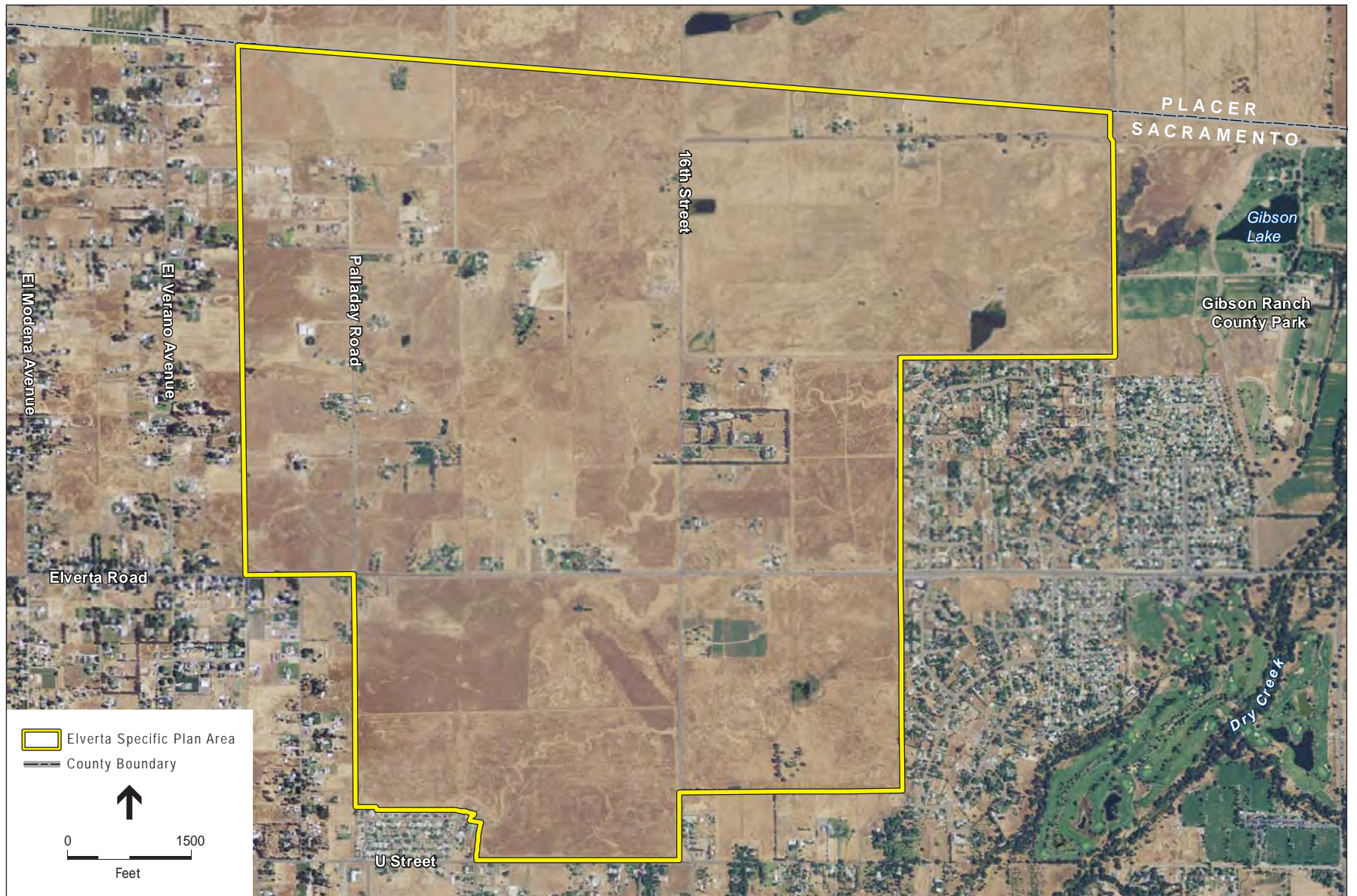
Seeps are surficial groundwater discharges that occur either on a seasonal or perennial basis. A very small seep (.003 acres) occurs along 16th Street just to the north of where 16th Street intersects with Elverta Road.

5.1.5. Ditches

Ditches are constructed channels historically used to either convey water or surface runoff. For the most part, the ditches have fallen into disrepair and are no longer used for agricultural purposes. Plant materials found in ditches involve upland species such as Vasey's coyote thistle, Carter's buttercup, creeping spikerush and annual hairgrass.

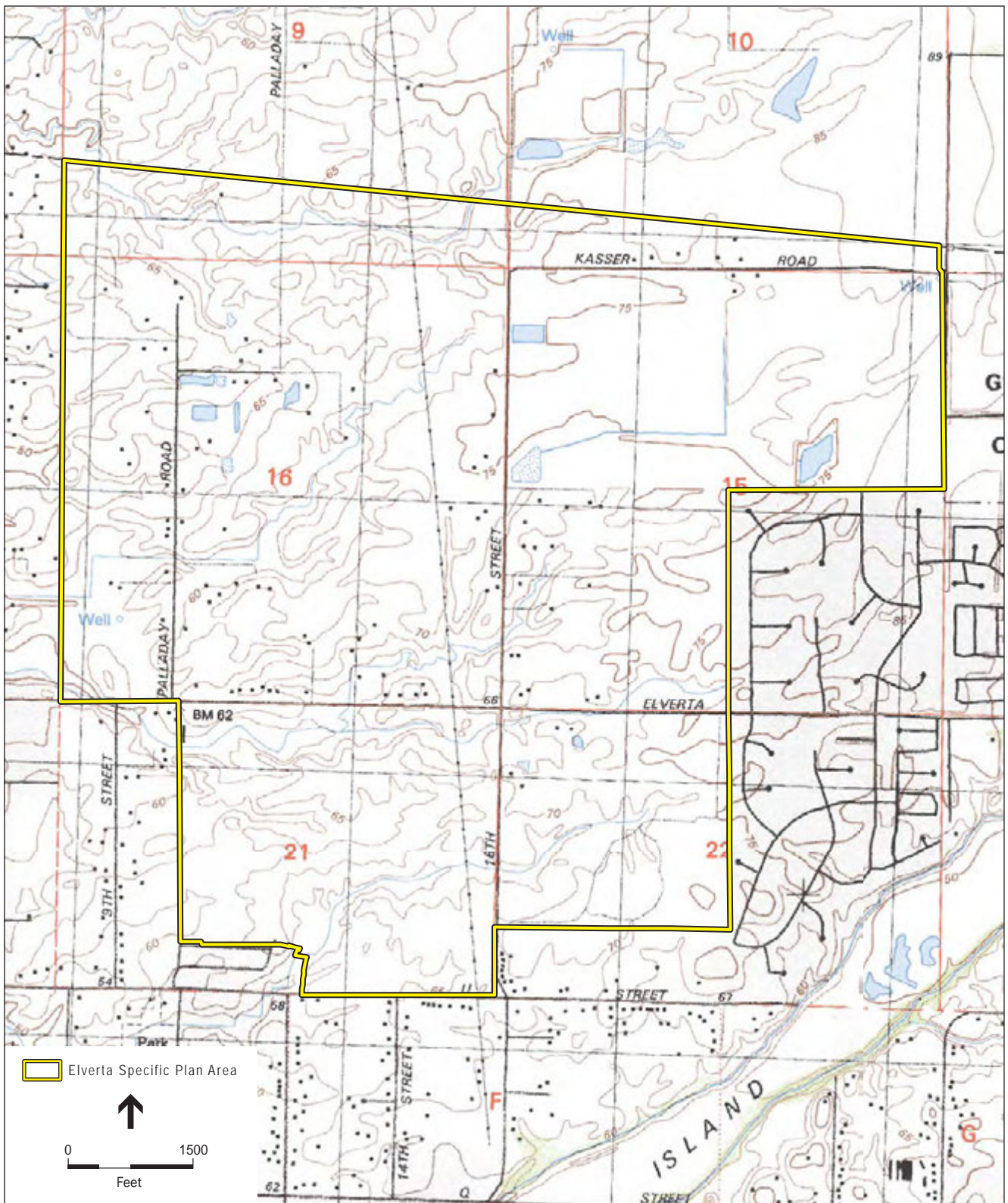
5.1.6. Ponds

Ponds are created depressions or impoundment areas used to store water for grazing animals and usually exhibit a high water mark. Vegetation associated with ponds typically occur in the shallow margins and include willow, cottonwood, cattail, hyssop loosestrife, pennyroyal, dock, spikerush and Vasey's coyote thistle.



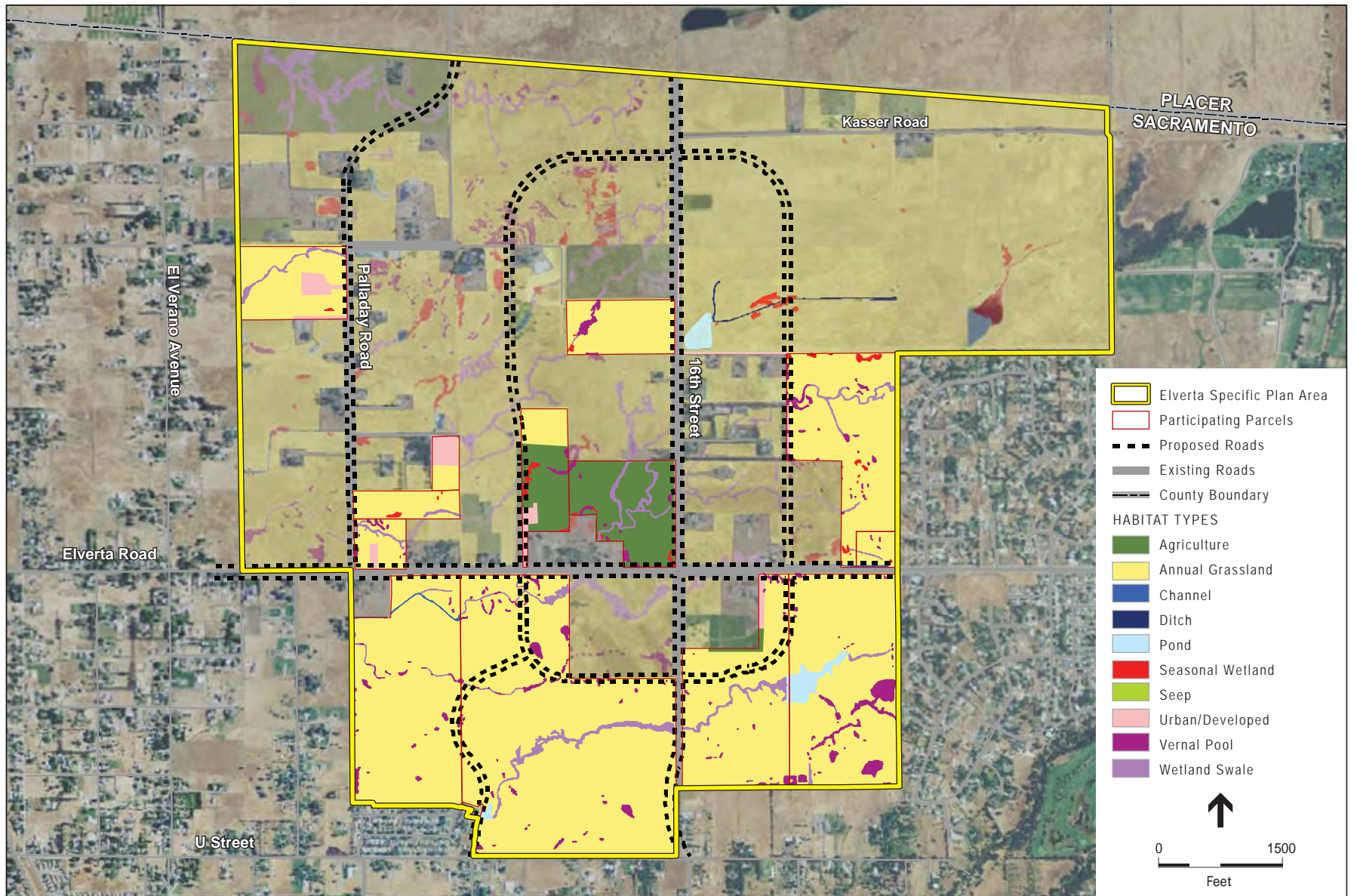
SOURCE: ESRI, 2009; NAI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2011; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan EIS
Figure 6
 Aerial of Project Site



SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle (Rio Linda, CA 1992); ESA, 2011; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 7
 USGS Site Topography



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan

Figure 8
Habitat Types within the Project Site

6. Plan Alternatives

This Alternatives Information report includes a detailed discussion and comparison of development alternatives that were analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS). These alternatives include both on-site and off-site alternatives.

The four off-site alternatives examined include:

- Placer Vineyard;
- Sutter Point,
- Panhandle
- Natomas Joint Vision Area

Alternatives in Yolo County were ruled out for overriding logistical (floodplains, habitat, existing land uses, etc.) and political constraints. Additionally, development in Yolo County would not meet the stated purpose and need for development in north central Sacramento County.

The four on-site alternatives examined include:

- Alternative A – Applicant’s Preferred Alternative
- Alternative B – Reduced Impact Alternative
- Alternative C – Approved Specific Plan with 25% Density Bonus
- Alternative D – No Permit (No Action) Alternative

As noted in the Project Background section of this report, Alternative C is no longer the approved Specific Plan land plan; Alternative A was approved by Sacramento County in late 2014. However, for simplification purposes, this report will assign title to each Alternative as it is described in the 2012 Draft EIS (ie: Alternative A, Alternative B, Alternative C, and Alternative D respectively).

7. Off-Site Alternatives

Alternative sites considered for this report were evaluated in terms of strict criteria of proximity/location, size, services, availability, and logistics. Aside from the locations that follow (*Figure 9*), there are no other approved areas in northern Sacramento able to accommodate a development program such as that proposed for the Plan Area. In addition, there are no other non-approved lands of sufficient size that could be reasonably assembled to accommodate a mixed-use planned community similar in scope to that proposed for the Plan Area. The criteria for which the off-site alternatives were evaluated with are as follows:

- *Meeting the Project Purpose:* The overall project purpose is a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community within the north central Sacramento County area.
- *Logistics:* Land availability is a strong driver of alternative practicability and therefore alternative site locations are limited to vacant or undeveloped lands between 1,250 and 1,500 acres in size in order to meet the Project Purpose of providing a large number of housing units to northern Sacramento County residents.
- *PA Costs:* Available alternative sites that meet locational criteria and have access to major roadways may not be practicable due to the extent of required improvements (costs), parcel patterns that do not allow for phased development (shape, characteristics, adjacent land uses), political realities and incompatible adjacent land uses (farms, landfills, other non-compatible land uses), among other considerations.
- *Environmental Impacts:* For a project alternative to be considered environmentally superior to the proposed/preferred project, it needs to demonstrate that it has less impact on waters of the U.S and/or federally listed plant or animal species.
- *Other:* Any other site specific constraints that can be quantified such as the amount of dirt needed, the number of culverts, fencing at open space, etc.

7.1. Placer Vineyards

Placer Vineyards is a 5,230-acre, mixed-use, planned community that, at full build-out, could include up to 14,132 homes at varying densities, a major 434 acre employment center, 166 acres of retail commercial, and 920 acres of parks and open space. The project abuts the Plan Area to the north, across the Placer County line, meeting both locational and sizing criteria. Existing transportation corridors (Base Line and 16th Street) bisect the project site meeting the service requirement, although an urban level of services is not currently present at the site. This development area is, however, in Placer County and would not meet the stated purpose and need for development in north-central Sacramento County.

7.2. Sutter Point

The Sutter Point Specific Plan is a 7,528-acre mixed-use community planned to accommodate up to 17,500 new homes, close to 50 million square feet of industrial and retail space and close to 1,000 acres of community facilities. The plan area is just to the north of the Sutter County / Sacramento County line approximately five (5) miles from the Plan area. Highway 99 bisects the project site, making way for the provision of services, although a level of services necessary to support the planned development does not currently exist on the subject site. This development area is in Sutter County and would not meet the stated purpose and need for development in north-central Sacramento County.

7.3. Panhandle

The Panhandle is an area of land located approximately five (5) miles west of the Plan Area in unincorporated Sacramento County. The Panhandle site meets the locational criteria of the Project purpose, but is limited by its size (roughly 600 acres) to provide a large, mixed-use development. The City of Sacramento is also proposing to annex the Panhandle, and therefore the need to provide a development within north central Sacramento County would not be met. Given the size and planning constraints associated with the site, this alternative cannot be considered any further.

7.4. Natomas Joint Vision Area

The Natomas Joint Vision Area is a roughly 20,000-acre assemblage of lands in unincorporated Sacramento County just to the north of the City of Sacramento, directly south of the Sutter Point Specific Plan, and approximately five (5) miles west of the Plan Area.

A Draft Concept Plan for the area identifies between 6,000 and 7,000 acres of the total 20,000 acres available for urban development. The Natomas Joint Vision Area therefore meets the criteria (size, services) as a viable alternative to the Plan Area. In general, parcels within the Joint Vision Area are large and regularly shaped that would allow for the assemblage of acreage sufficient in size to accommodate a development program similar to that planned for the Plan.

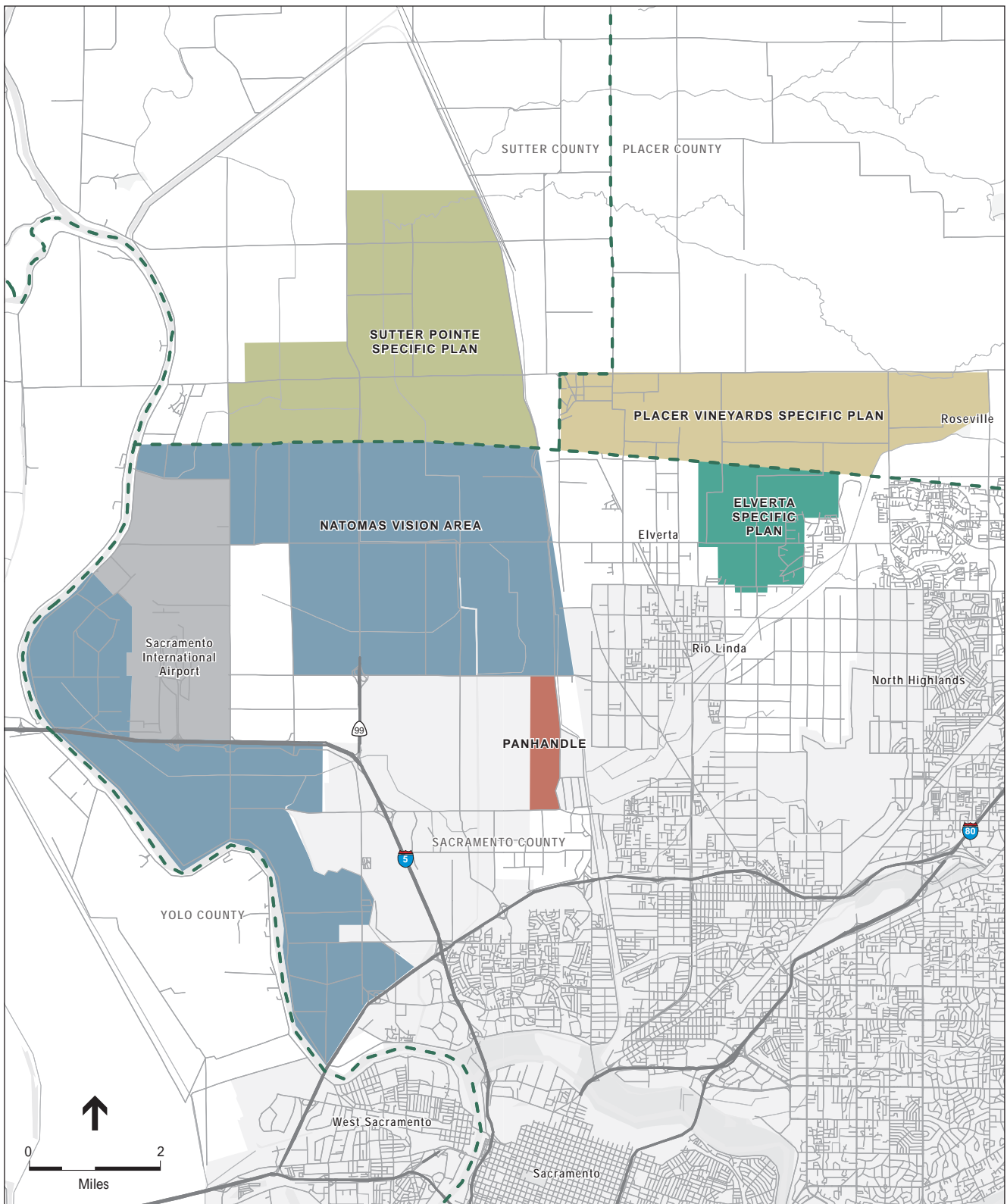
The Natomas Joint Vision Area contains a variety of wetland features and other waters of the U.S., including seasonal wetlands, freshwater marsh, and riparian habitat. The site also contains suitable habitat for federally and state listed species, including the giant garter snake, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, and Swainson's hawk. It is likely that a development of a size similar to that proposed within the ESP would result in significant and adverse impacts to wetlands and listed plant and animal species. All of the lands within the Natomas Joint Vision Area fall within the boundary of the North Natomas Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and are subject to an additional development fee of \$38,133 / acre without land dedication (habitat mitigation) or \$20,633 with land dedication.

Additionally, the Joint Vision Area land available for urban development is not currently entitled for urban uses and would require a lengthy approval process through either the County or City of Sacramento to secure the requisite entitlements for the Plan Area (roughly 20 years), making near term use of lands for residential development unlikely. Additional logistical constraints such as HCP fees and the costs involved in securing necessary entitlements, as well as the uncertainty of actually attaining entitlements for the properties make is a less than desirable alternative to meet the stated Project Purpose.

7.5. Summary of Off-Site Alternatives

Of the off-site alternatives that have been evaluated, two of the sites (Placer Vineyards, and Sutter Point) did not meet the Project purpose (growth areas within northern Sacramento County) and were considered unavailable. One site (the Panhandle) did meet the locational criteria but was not of sufficient size ($\pm 1,500$ acres) to accommodate the planned development program using similar densities. One site (North Natomas Vision Area) met most of the criteria for a viable alternative, but is not considered a viable alternative. The North Natomas Vision Area contains wetlands, freshwater marsh, and riparian habitat to the extent that development of this alternative would fail to reduce potential effects to wetlands and aquatic resources in comparison to the proposed project. Additionally, the site would not be available for development in the foreseeable future given the lack of entitlements and the amount of time it will likely take to attain an urban level of entitlements for the property.

Upon review of Alternatives off-site alternatives listed above, none can be identified as a viable alternative to the Elverta Specific Plan Area.



SOURCE: DeLorme Street Atlas, 2000; MacKay & Soms, 2010; ESA, 2011; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan EIS

Figure 9
 O site Alternatives

8. On-Site Alternatives

On-Site alternatives are considered similar to off-site alternatives, however on-site alternatives focus only on the Participating Parcels. A review of the following factors to determine the practicability of an on-site alternative is based upon:

- *Meeting the Project Purpose:* The overall project purpose is a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community within the north central Sacramento County area. *Table 1* compares land use types within each of the Alternatives.
- *Logistics:* This criterion considers whether or not infrastructure can be extended to serve the alternative land use plans in a practicable manner that conforms to County development standards and if it is capable of supporting the proposed land uses and circulation requirements to ensure a successful, sustainable new community given the County specified unit count of 4,950 and the density mix.
- *Plan Area costs (infrastructure needs, community needs, County needs):* To be deemed practicable based on this criteria, an alternative's per-acre residential development cost could not be substantially more than that of the proposed project, nor could it be substantially more than the overall per-acre development costs of similar competing projects in the region.

Cost estimates included herein entail improvement and fee program costs to develop fully improved sites. Backbone infrastructure development costs include on- and off-site infrastructure costs for items such as roadways, utilities, drainage and public infrastructure required to serve and/or provide public benefit to the entire project area. In-tract development costs are development costs to construct local improvements to serve individual parcels and/or lots. Fee program costs are impact and connection fees to the various local agencies and districts that provide to, or are impacted by development of the Specific Plan. Collectively, these costs are the sum of improvement costs and fees expended prior to, or at time of building permit. Building permit fees and structure costs are not considered in this report.

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

	APPLICANT'S PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	REDUCED IMPACT ALTERNATIVE	APPROVED SP WITH 25% DENSITY BONUS	NO PERMIT ALTERNATIVE
ELVERTA PARTICIPATING PARCELS IMPACTS TO WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES				
<i>Total acres of WOUS impacted</i>	27.57 acres	22.98 acres	27.57 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Acres of wetlands impacted (including vernal pools)</i>	23.01 acres	18.42 acres	23.01 acres	0.00 acres
TOTAL ACRES OF WOUS AVOIDED	0.00 acres	4.59 acres	0.00 acres	27.57 acres
<i>Acres of wetlands avoided (including vernal pools)</i>	0.00 acres	4.59 acres	0.00 acres	23.01 acres
<i>Wetland preserve acres</i>	0.00 acres	0.00 acres	0.00 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Does the alternative have significantly less adverse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem than the proposed project</i>	N/A	Yes	No	Yes
ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN IMPACTS TO WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES				
<i>Total acres of WOUS impacted</i>	88.21 acres	69.04 acres	88.21 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Acres of wetlands impacted (including vernal pools)</i>	72.23 acres	53.77 acres	72.23 acres	0.00 acres
TOTAL ACRES OF WOUS AVOIDED	0.00 acres	19.17 acres	0.00 acres	88.21 acres
<i>Acres of wetlands avoided (including vernal pools)</i>	0.00 acres	18.4 acres	0.00 acres	72.17 acres
<i>Wetland preserve acres</i>	0.00 acres	0.00 acres	0.00 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Does the alternative have significantly less adverse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem than the proposed project</i>	N/A	Yes	No	Yes
ELVERTA PARTICIPATING PARCELS PROJECT PURPOSE				
<i>Net developable acres ("NDA")</i>	433.5 acres	335.1 acres	484.1	435.5 acres
<i>Change in NDA compared to Proposed Project</i>	N/A	- 98.4 acres	+ 50.6 acres	+2.0 acres
<i>Residential acres</i>	422.6	331.4 acres	470.3 acres	435.5 acres
<i>Rural Residential acres</i>	41.9 acres	23.7 acres	49.5 acres	451.8 acres

<i>Low Density Residential acres</i>	302.1 acres	221.9 acres	343.4 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Medium Density Residential acres</i>	64.6 acres	50.8 acres	67.2 acres	0.0 acres
<i>High Density Residential acres</i>	14.0 acres	30.6 acres	10.2 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Very High Density Residential acres</i>	0.0 acres	4.4 acres	0.0 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Commercial acres</i>	11.2 acres	0.0 acres	13.8 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Office acres</i>	0.0 acres	3.9 acres	0.0 acres	0.0 acres
<i>School acres</i>	19.5 acres	9.9 acres	20.2 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Residential units (total)</i>	2,454 units	2,454 units	2,454 units	530 units
<i>Rural Residential units</i>	63 units	39 units	76 units	530 units
<i>Low Density Residential units</i>	1,618 units	1,271 units	1,676 units	0 units
<i>Medium Density Residential units</i>	458 units	413 units	475 units	0 units
<i>High Density Residential units</i>	315 units	583 units	229 units	0 units
<i>Very High Density Residential units</i>	0 units	147 units	0 units	0 units
<i>Does the alternative provide sufficient development potential to achieve the overall project purpose?</i>	Yes	No	Yes	No
ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT PURPOSE				
<i>Net developable acres ("NDA")</i>	1,380.5 acres	1,098.3 acres	1,471.7 acres	N/A
<i>Change in NDA compared to Proposed Project</i>	N/A	- 282.2 acres	+ 91.2 acres	N/A
<i>Residential acres</i>	1,340.2 acres	1,069.9 acres	1,432.1 acres	N/A
<i>Rural Residential acres</i>	545.2 acres	436.3 acres	558.7 acres	N/A
<i>Low Density Residential acres</i>	607.7 acres	380.2 acres	665.9 acres	0.0 acres

<i>Medium Density Residential acres</i>	143.9 acres	146.3 acres	161.7 acres	0.0 acres
<i>High Density Residential acres</i>	43.4 acres	74.1 acres	45.8 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Very High Density Residential acres</i>	0.0 acres	33.0 acres	0.0 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Commercial acres</i>	17.1 acres	14.6 acres	15.0 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Office acres</i>	3.7 acres	3.9 acres	4.4 acres	0.0 acres
<i>School acres</i>	19.5 acres	9.9 acres	20.2 acres	0.0 acres
<i>Residential units</i>	6,190 units	6,189 units	6,190 units	827 units
<i>Rural Residential units</i>	629 units	498 units	639 units	827 units
<i>Low Density Residential units</i>	3,480 units	2,081 units	3,470 units	0 units
<i>Medium Density Residential units</i>	1,138 units	1,189 units	1,138 units	0 units
<i>High Density Residential units</i>	943 units	1,320 units	943 units	0 units
<i>Very High Density Residential units</i>	0 units	1,101 units	0 units	0 units
<i>Does the alternative provide sufficient development potential to achieve the overall project purpose?</i>	Yes	No	Yes	No
COST				
<i>Total Development Cost for the Elverta Participating Parcels</i>	\$193,942,436	\$198,911,365	\$203,352,073	\$391,287,169
<i>Total Development Cost for the Elverta Specific Plan</i>	\$617,191,179	\$604,705,341	\$666,094,787	N/A
<i>Does the alternative have development costs that are reasonable for this type of development?</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Conclusion: Is the alternative the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative?</i>				

SOURCE: Participating Parcel's 404 Permit Application, DEIS 2010, 404 b (1) Analysis, Table 9.1 Elverta Specific Plan

A cost-per-acre of development for each specific land use alternative was derived from an average of cost estimates for similar Northern California projects with approved plans. *Table 2* compares cost details of each of the Alternatives.

- *Environmental Impacts:* For a project alternative to be considered environmentally superior to the proposed/preferred project, it needs to demonstrate that it has less impact on waters of the U.S and/or less impact on federally listed plant or animal species. *Table 1* compares impacts to waters of the U.S. within each of the Alternatives.

- *Other (implications to individual landowners, non-participants):* This includes whether the alternative impacts any one landowner more than another, given the fact that the plan involves both those owners currently participating in the 404 process (the applicants) and those not currently participating. Other factors to be considered into the cost analysis include:
 1. *Single loaded roadways.* At preserve and open space edges, development will likely be required to have single-loaded roadways adjacent to that land use.
 2. *Dirt import to elevate residential areas.* The existing drainages within the Plan Area are generally ill defined and very shallow. To achieve flood protection dirt will need to be brought into the plan area.
 3. *Drainage culverts.* When a proposed roadway is identified to cross waters of the U.S. that are to be preserved, it will need to bridge such features via natural substrate/open bottom culverts. Culverts can substantially add to overall development costs.
 4. *Fencing at Preserve and Open Space areas + rural fencing for non-developed parcels.* All preserve and OS areas will require post & cable or other suitable fencing to separate developed land uses from the preserve / OS areas.

8.1. Alternative A – Applicant’s Preferred Alternative

Alternative A consists of urban and agricultural residential uses at various densities; commercial uses; parks and open space; as well as areas allocated for drainage/riparian corridors, detention, and major roads. Proposed development of the participating parcels is

TABLE 2: DEVELOPMENT COST DETAIL

	PROPOSED PROJECT	ORIGINALLY APPROVED ALT.	MINIMAL IMPACT ALT.	NO IMPACT ALT.
IMPACTS TO WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES				
<i>Loop Road</i>	0.50 acres	0.50 acres	0.50 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Elverta Road</i>	0.46 acres	0.46 acres	0.46 acres	0.00 acres
<i>16th Street</i>	0.11 acres	0.11 acres	0.11 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Dry Creek Road</i>	0.10 acres	0.10 acres	0.10 acres	0.00 acres
<i>Palladay Road</i>	0.08 acres	0.08 acres	0.08 acres	0.00 acres
DEVELOPMENT COSTS*				
<i>Net Density = Dwelling Units / Residential Acre (Participating Parcels)</i>	5.8 du/ac	7.4 du/ac	5.2 du/ac	1.0 du/ac
<i>Net Density = Dwelling Units / Residential Acre (Elverta Specific Plan)</i>	4.6 du/ac	5.8 du/ac	4.3 du/ac	0.6 du/ac
<i>Backbone Infrastructure per Developable Acre**</i>	\$284,058	\$399,566	\$248,611	\$638,451
<i>In-Tract Development Costs per Developable Acre***</i>	\$162,013	\$179,896	\$161,062	\$260,679
<i>Additional Drainage Costs per Developable Acre****</i>	\$1,007	\$27,016	\$1,216	-\$652
<i>Total Base Line Cost per Developable Acre</i>	\$447,078	\$606,478	\$410,889	\$898,478
PARTICIPATING PARCELS COSTS				
<i>NDA</i>	433.8 acres	335.3 acres	484.1 acres	435.5 acres
Total Development Costs	\$193,942,436	\$203,352,073	\$198,911,365	\$391,287,169
ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN COSTS				
<i>NDA</i>	1,380.5 acres	1098.3 acres	1471.7 acres	N/A
Total Development Cost	\$617,191,179	\$666,094,787	\$604,705,341	N/A

* SOURCE: "Elverta Specific Plan Development Alternatives" May 2009

** Backbone infrastructure development costs include on- and off-site infrastructure costs for items such as roadways, utilities, and public infrastructure required to serve and/or provide public benefit to the entire project area.

*** In-tract development costs are development costs to construct local improvements to serve individual parcels and/or lots.

**** Additional costs for single-loaded streets along the open space/drainage corridor frontages, drainage culverts, and open space fencing.

summarized in *Table 3* and shown in *Figure 10*. Proposed build-out of the Specific Plan under Alternative A is summarized in *Table 4* and shown in *Figure 11*.

Alternative A includes 2,454 residential units on approximately 423 acres, ranging in gross density from a high of 20 units per acre to a low of one unit per acre in the agricultural residential component of the land plan. This range of residential densities would allow this alternative to provide for a variety of housing types at various price points.

The County, in an administrative approval process, approved Alternative A on July 30, 2014. The County made the determination that the Alternative A land use plan and project density was similar enough in nature to the 2007 plan that no Board action was necessary, or that the EIR needed to be re-circulated.

8.1.1. Project Purpose

Alternative A provides a land use plan that allows for the development of a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community. This Alternative allows for the desired mix of residential densities, with higher densities centered around the Town Center at the intersection of Elverta Road with 16th Street. Additionally, the proposed, enhanced drainage corridors create a nice open space amenity, as well as opportunities for valuable riparian habitat within the ESP. Alternative A meets the Project Purpose.

8.1.2. Logistics

Alternative A is a modification of Alternative C and very similar in terms of land uses, street alignment, corridor alignment, etc. Minimal adjustments to the backbone infrastructure developed for the 2007 County-approved Project were made to provide proper service. Alternative A is similar to Alternative C, in that residential densities achieve the County and Community desired count and mix. Alternative A meets the logistical requirements of the Project.

8.1.3. Costs

With a “net” residential density of 5.81 units/acre, backbone infrastructure improvement costs for Alternative A were calculated at \$284,058 per developable acre. In-tract development costs amount to an additional \$162,013 per developable acre. Additional costs for single-loaded streets along the open space/drainage corridor frontages, drainage culverts, and open space fencing amount to another \$1,007/developable acre, for a total Cost of \$447,078 per developable acre. The amount of \$447,078 is used as the baseline cost of comparison for this analysis. Alternative A meets the cost requirements of the project.

8.1.4. Environmental Impacts

The Participating Parcels would be fully developed under Alternative A, impacting 27.57 acres of Corps-jurisdictional wetland and “other waters of the U.S.” including: 1.70 acres seasonal wetlands, 10.08 acres wetland swale, 1.1.23 acres of vernal pool, 0.46 acres drainage ditch, 3.80 acre pond, 0.30 acre stream channel. Alternative A also proposes resource avoidance in areas where avoidance of such resources can easily be incorporated into the layout of the low density Ag-Res development.

Alternative A proposes habitat replacement and enhancement along the proposed multi-use drainage corridors to mitigate for adverse impacts to wetlands and other waters. The establishment of valuable riparian habitat within the ESP will greatly enhance habitat in the Plan Area today. The multi-use corridors will be designed to incorporate topographic variations (benches, ponds) within the channel for the specific purpose of resource / habitat creation and enhancement. The increased width associated with the corridors is also anticipated to provide for increased functionality that will be able to accommodate increased drainage flows, recreational opportunities and higher value habitat. Drainage Master Plan Corridor Landscaping Planset is Attached (*Attachment C*).

8.1.5. Other

Alternative A proportionally distributes open space requirements and infrastructure costs amongst the various property owners within the Plan Area. Alternative A aligns the proposed drainage corridors with the area's existing drainage patterns, incorporates these multiple-use corridors into very wide open spaces, and establishes and enhances riparian and seasonal wetland habitat within these corridors.

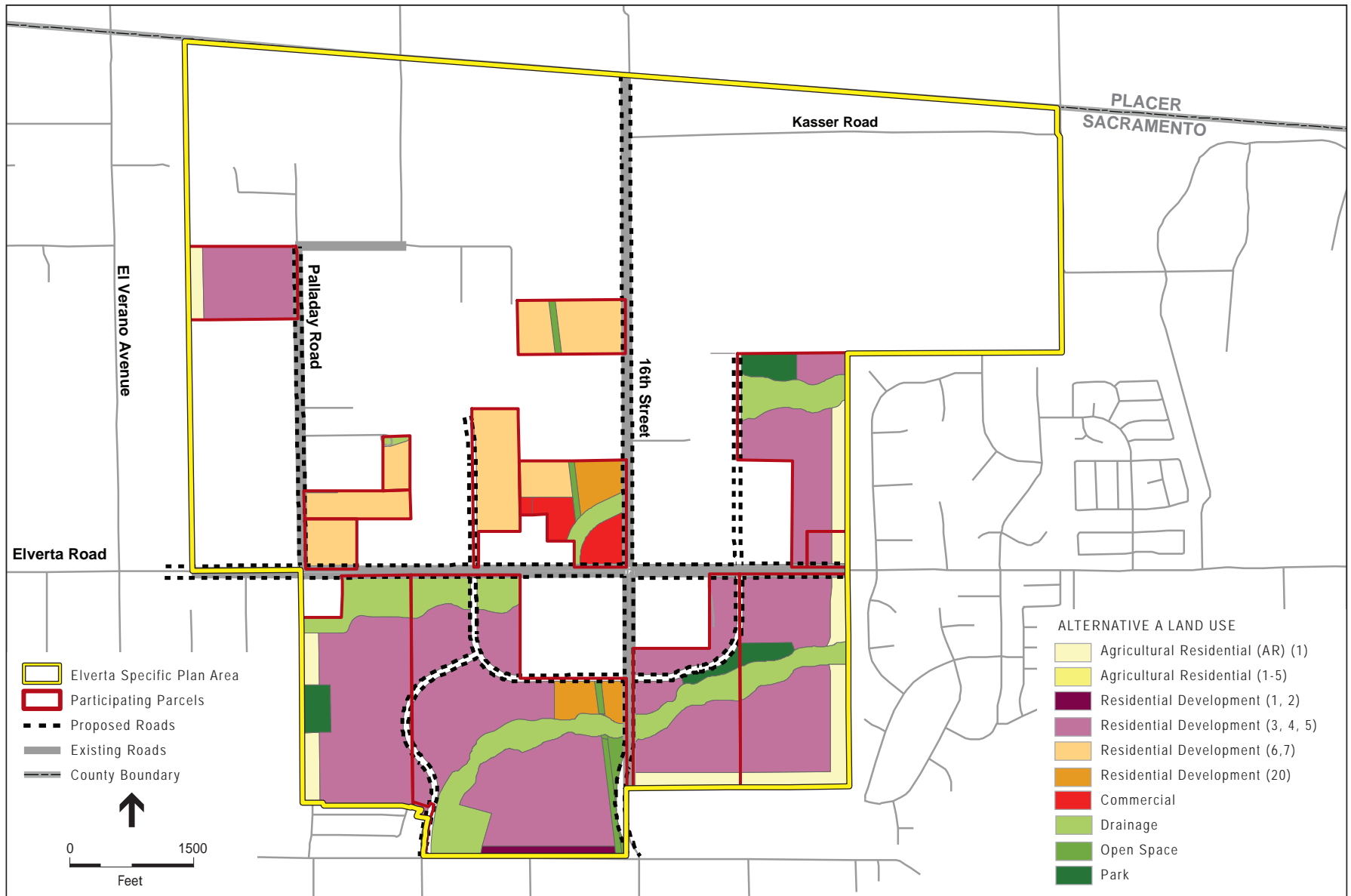
8.1.6. Summary

Alternative A satisfies the criteria established for the Project Purpose by providing a land use plan that allows for the development of a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community with a mix of residential densities. Additionally, infrastructure and drainage costs would be reasonable for a project of this size.

The required backbone infrastructure improvements required to serve Alternative A are nearly identical to those identified under the "Originally Approved Project" and do not include atypical types or amounts of improvements compared to similar projects in the region (such as greater than typical amounts of protective wetland fencing, single-loaded streets, fill dirt requirements, or similar).

Alternative A is the land plan currently approved by Sacramento County and would not require any additional entitlements, avoiding any logistical constraints.

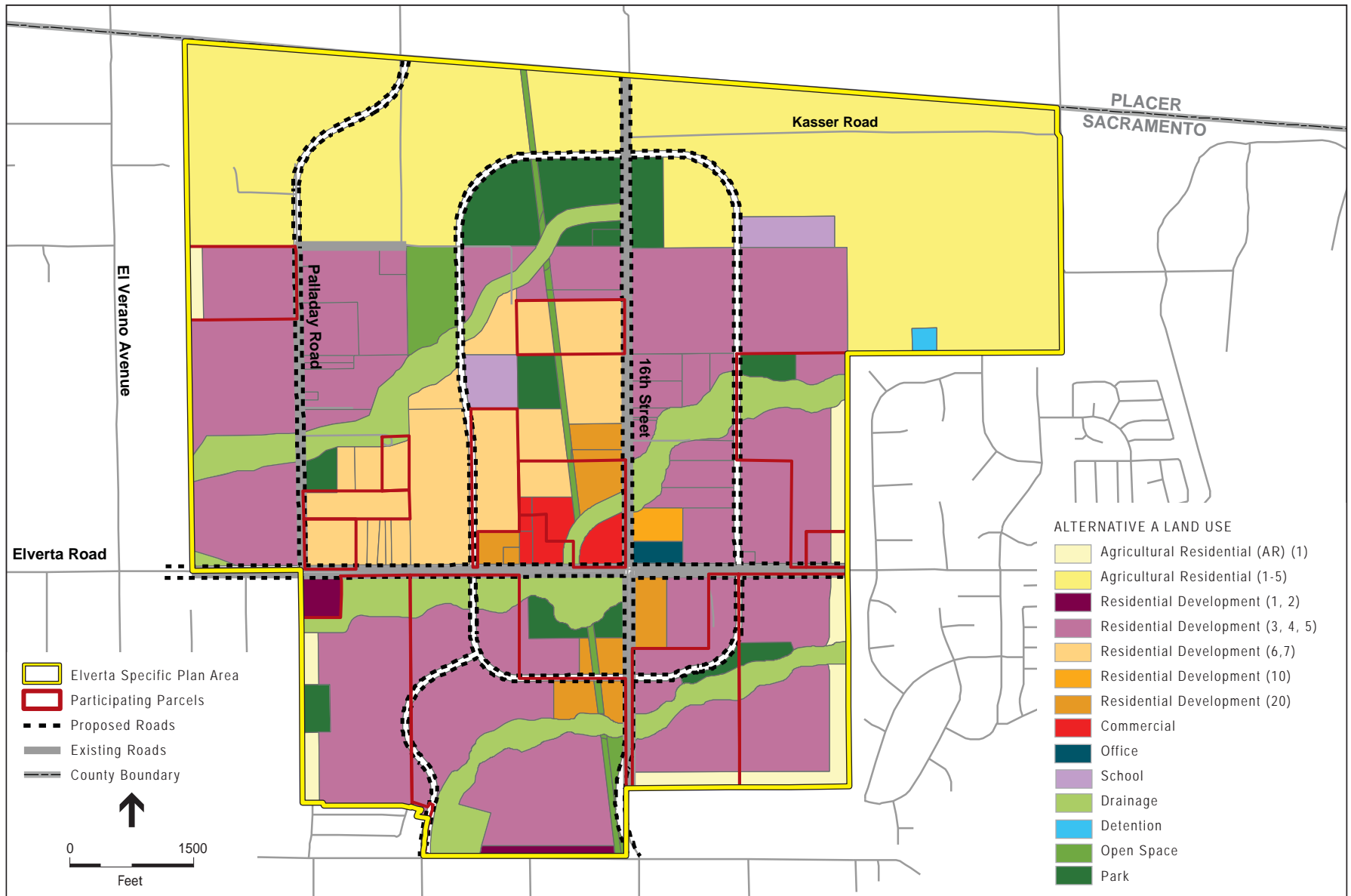
Alternative A allows for the creation and enhancement of resources within the multi-purpose corridors that will result in more diverse and higher quality habitat than currently exists in the ESP. Modifying the alignment and amount of acreage within the corridors required some minor land use changes to the 2007 Project originally approved by Sacramento County – most notably a rearranged Town Center, which would now be bisected by the proposed Drainage Corridor B.



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan

Figure 10
Alternative A – Applicant's Preferred Alternative
Participating Parcels



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan

Figure 11
Alternative A – Applicant's Preferred Alternative
Full Plan Buildout

**TABLE 4
ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN FULL BUILDOUT - LAND USE**

Land Use Types	Alternative A Applicant's Preferred		Alternative B Reduced Impact		Alternative C Approved Specific Plan		Alternative D No Permit	
	Area (acres)	Units	Area (acres)	Units	Area (acres)	Units	Area (acres)	Units
AR 1	41.6	53	19.9	25	49.5	63	706.5	544
AR 1-5	499.3	563	411.1	463	502.3	563	707.2	283
RD 1,2	4.3	13	5.3	10	6.9	13	--	--
RD 2	5.5	9	5.5	14	3.2	9	--	--
RD 3,4,5	602.2	3,471	374.7	2,067	662.7	3,461	--	--
RD 6,7	143.9	1,138	146.3	1,189	161.7	1,138	--	--
RD 10	5.7	70	36.8	451	7.0	70	--	--
RD 20	37.7	873	37.3	869	38.8	873	--	--
RD 30	--	--	33.0	1,101	--	--	--	--
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL	1340.2	6,190	1,069.9	6,189	1,432.1	6,190	1,413.7	827
Commercial	17.1	--	14.6	--	15.0	--	--	--
Office	3.7	--	3.9	--	4.4	--	--	--
School	19.5	--	9.9	--	20.2	--	--	--
Park	72.0	--	79.1	--	73.3	--	--	--
Drainage/Riparian Corridor/Trails/Power Line Corridor/Joint Use	166.9	--	317.2	--	98.9	--	--	--
Detention	2.1	--	2.1	--	8.0	--	--	--
Open Space	31.1	--	25.3	--	18.4	--	--	--
Major Roads/Other	78.9	--	78.9	--	74.3	--	330.9	--
Wetlands/Habitat Avoidance Area	--	--	143.7	--	--	--	--	--
Total Elverta Specific Plan Land Uses	1,744.6	6,190	1,744.6	6,189	1,744.6	6,190	1744.6	827

NOTE: Based upon the implementation of an Energy Efficiency Model, a 25% residential density bonus is permitted therefore a maximum of 6,190 residential units is assumed for the entire plan area, which is 25% greater than the 4,950 units identified in the approved Elverta Specific Plan (see Table 2-2)

SOURCE: RCH Group 2010, 2011; Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012.

**TABLE 3
ELVERTA PARTICIPATING PARCELS - LAND USE**

Land Use Types	Alternative A Applicant's Preferred		Alternative B Reduced Impact		Alternative C Approved Specific Plan		Alternative D No Permit	
	Area (acres)	Units	Area (acres)	Units	Area (acres)	Units	Area (acres)	Units
AR 1	41.9	53	19.9	25	49.5	63	431.5	345
AR 1-5	--	--	3.8	4	--	--	115.8	185
RD 1,2	5.3	10	5.3	10	6.9	13	--	--
RD 3,4,5	296.8	1,618	216.6	1,271	336.5	1,676	--	--
RD 6,7	64.6	458	50.8	413	67.2	475	--	--
RD 10	--	--	11.7	143	--	--	--	--
RD 20	14.0	315	18.9	440	10.2	229	--	--
RD 30	--	--	4.4	147	--	--	--	--
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL	422.6	2,454	331.4	2,454	470.3	2,456	547.3	530
Commercial	11.2	--	--	--	13.8	--	--	--
Office	--	--	3.9	--	--	--	--	--
School	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Park	14.2	--	15.5	--	10.8	--	--	--
Drainage/Riparian Corridor/Trails/Power Line Corridor/Joint Use	82.8	--	137.0	--	34.8	--	--	--
Detention	--	--	--	--	8.0	--	--	--
Open Space	7.9	--	6.3	--	1.1	--	--	--
Major Roads/Other	25.2	--	25.2	--	24.8	--	16.3	--
Wetlands/Habitat Avoidance Area	--	--	44.5	--	--	--	--	--
Total Land Uses	563.6	2,454	563.8	2,454	563.6	2,457	563.6	530

NOTE: Based upon the implementation of an Energy Efficiency Model, a 25% residential density bonus is permitted therefore a maximum of 6,190 residential units is assumed for the entire plan area, which is 25% greater than the 4,950 units identified in the approved Elverta Specific Plan (see Table 2-2)

SOURCE: RCH Group 2010, 2011; Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012.

8.2. Alternative B – Reduced Impact Alternative

Alternative B, or the Reduced Impact Alternative, would also include the development of a large scale, mixed-use development within the project site. The geographic locations of planned land uses for Alternative B are similar to those of Alternative A. However, Alternative B would avoid developing some areas of the project site to reduce impacts to waters of the U.S. This alternative proposes to fill approximately 22.98 acres of waters of the U.S.

Alternative B proposes urban and agricultural residential development of various densities; commercial uses; parks and open space; as well as areas allocated for drainage/riparian corridors, detention, and major roads. Alternative B also includes avoided areas that would not be developed. Proposed development is summarized in *Table 3* and shown in *Figure 12*. Proposed development upon full buildout of the Specific Plan under Alternative A is summarized in *Table 4* and shown in *Figure 13*.

8.2.1. Project Purpose

Alternative B provides a land use plan that allows for the development of a large scale, mixed-use, mixed-density, master-planned community and allows for a mix of residential densities. Additionally, proposed drainage corridors create an open space amenity to the Plan Area. Alternative B meets the Project Purpose.

8.2.2. Logistics

Alternative B would require that the Plan Area be re-entitled to account for the density increases needed by the County, most of which would occur along 16th Street and Elverta Road in the form of additional acreage requirements and the introduction of a new very high-density (RD-30) category. In addition, the Town Center would need to be relocated to properties east of its currently approved location.

Alternative B is a modification of Alternative A and similar in terms of land use, street alignment, corridor alignment, etc., such that minimal adjustments would be necessary to the backbone infrastructure. However, Alternative B does not meet the land use mix standards set by the County or the Elverta - Rio Linda Community.

Alternative B includes 583 high-density units and 147 very high density units, which comprise of nearly one third of all proposed units. Alternative B includes 137 acres of Drainage Corridor, which comprises of nearly one quarter of the total acreage. Furthermore, these drainage corridors would need to be engineered and constructed by the developer, which would be an expensive cost initial cost. Alternative B does not meet the logistical requirements of the Project.

8.2.3. Costs

With a “net” residential density of 7.4 du/acre, backbone infrastructure improvement costs for Alternative B were calculated at \$399,566 per developable acre. In-tract development costs amount to an additional \$179,896 per developable acre. Additional costs for single-loaded streets along the open space/drainage corridor frontages, drainage culverts, and open space fencing amount to another \$27,016/developable acre, for a total Cost of \$606,478 per developable acre, equivalent to a 36% increase in total development cost/acre over Alternative A (=1.36 x cost of A). Alternative B does not meet the cost requirements of the project.

8.2.4. Environmental Impacts

Under Alternative B. Alternative B would impact 22.98 acres of waters of the U.S., avoiding approximately 4.59 acres or 16 percent of the wetlands and other waters of the U.S. within the Participating Parcels proposed for development under Alternative A.

Alternative B replaces / enhances resource acres and impacts to wetlands and other waters. The area of replaced / enhanced resources will follow the natural drainage of the site in the modified, multi-use drainage corridors and will greatly enhance habitat in the

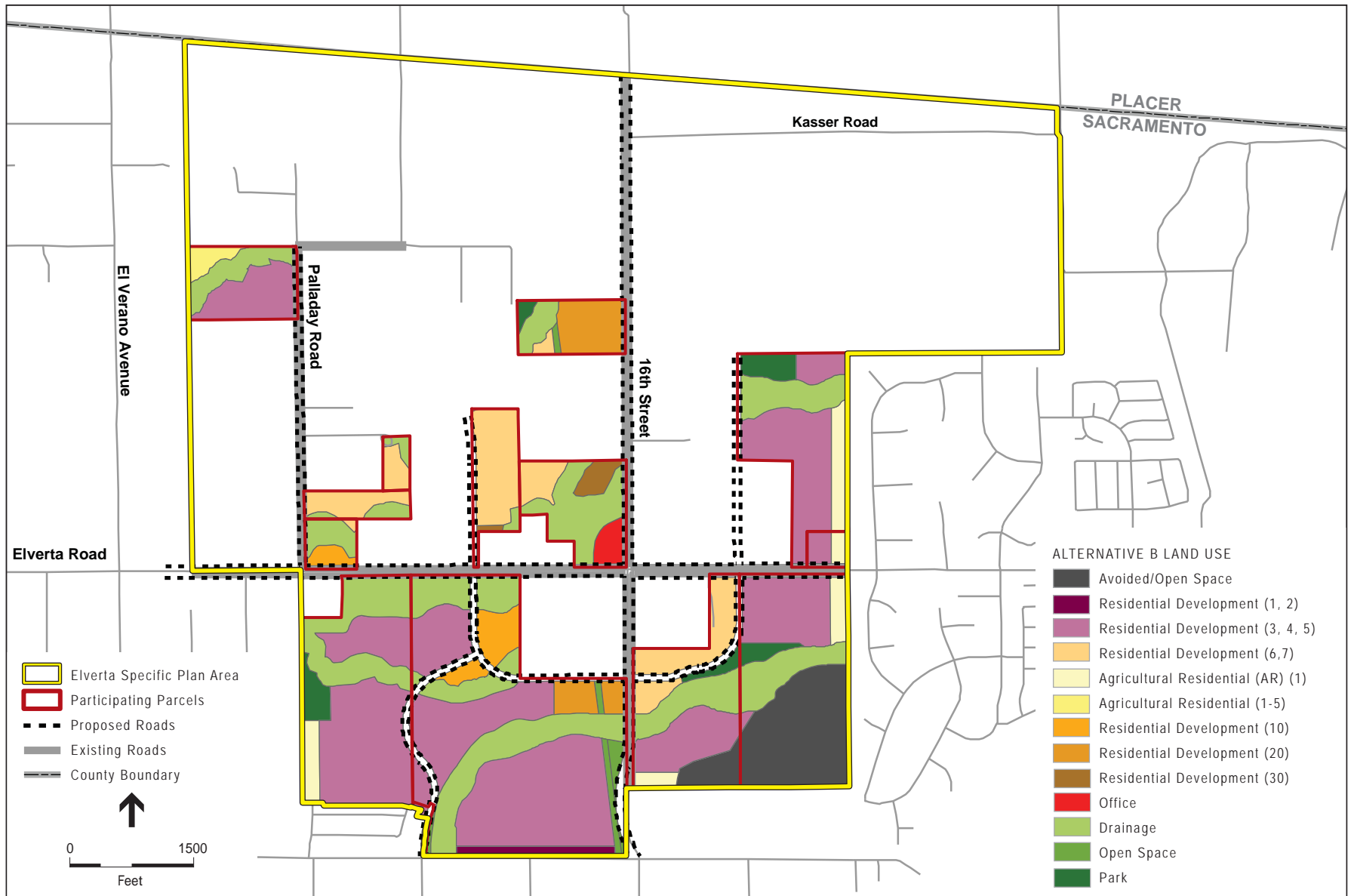
Plan Area today. The multi-use corridors will be designed to incorporate topographic variations (benches, ponds) within the channel for the specific purpose of resource / habitat creation and enhancement. The increased width associated with the corridors is also anticipated to provide for increased functionality that will be able to accommodate increased drainage flows, recreational opportunities and higher value habitat. Alternative B meets the environmental impact requirements of the project.

8.2.5. Other

Alternative B does not proportionally distribute open space requirements and infrastructure costs amongst the various property owners within the Plan Area and would therefore have a negative effect on many of these property owners due to their inability to develop part or all of their lands currently approved for development. Many of these constraints are a result of the expanded drainage corridors that leave little or no room to conventionally develop Participating Parcels at normal densities. In addition, changes in land use within participating parcels would not support the County or Community needs. Furthermore the current Specific Plan did not envision the need to transfer densities of this magnitude, and as such does not contain a mechanism sufficient in scope or scale to transfer the development rights of properties impacted by this alternative. Alternative B does not meet this requirement.

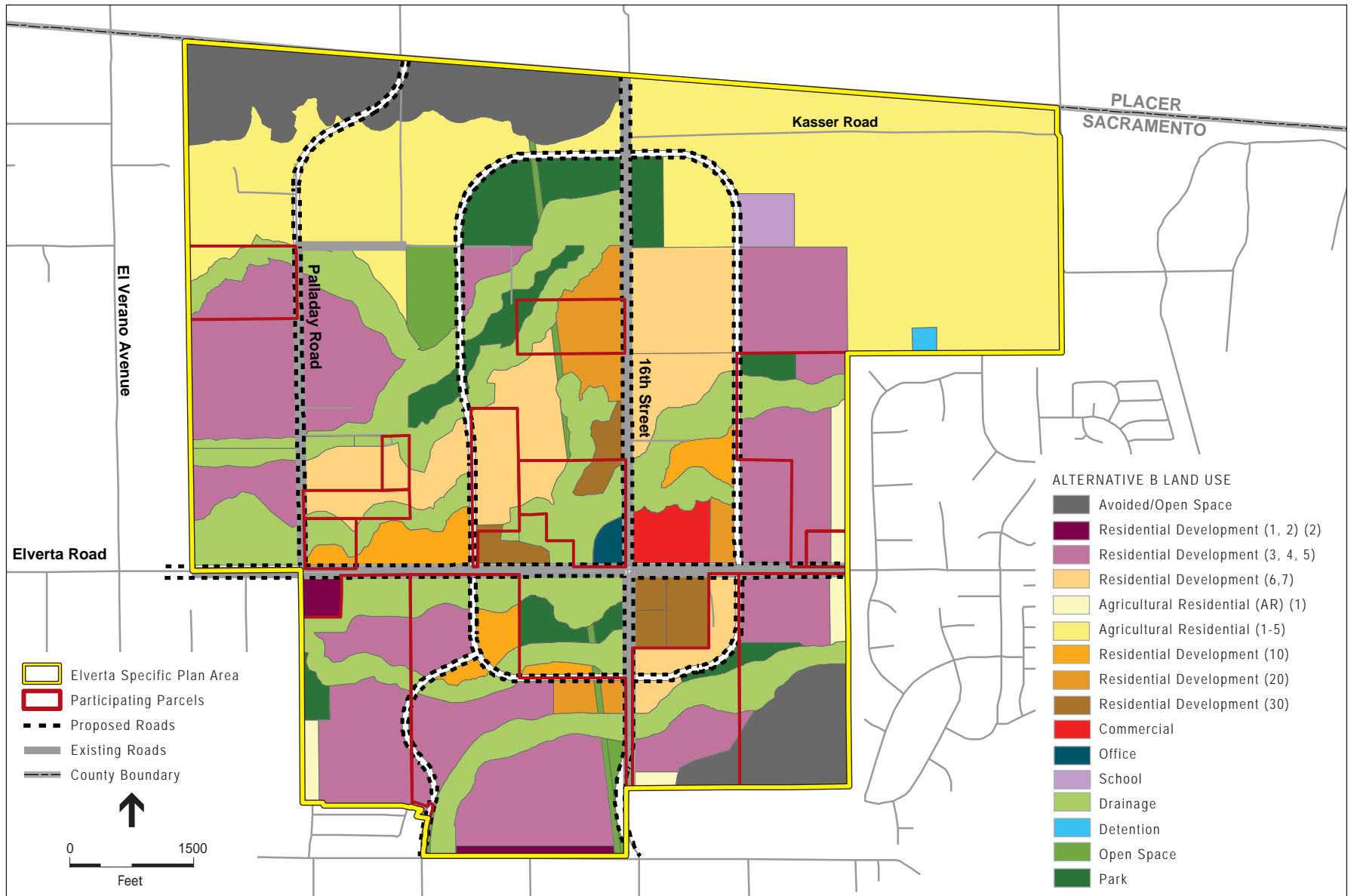
8.2.6. Summary

Alternative B satisfies the criteria established for the Project Purpose and environmental impacts of the site. However, this alternative would require larger portions of land dedicated to the expanded drainage corridors. These changes would require increasing densities on the remaining developable land, such that Alternative B would not maintain the strategies outlined in the Specific Plan and would require a Specific Plan Amendment, an amendment to the EIR, a new Drainage Master Plan, and more community meetings. Logistically, this could take up to 10 years, but more importantly the densities of this alternative would be such that it would be too costly to construct, unmarketable, and politically infeasible.



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 12
 Alternative B – Reduced Impacts Alternative
 Participating Parcels



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 13
 Alternative B – Reduced Impacts Alternative
 Full Plan Buildout

8.3. Alternative C – Approved Specific Plan with 25% Density Bonus Alternative

Alternative C, or the Approved Specific Plan with 25% Density Bonus Alternative, would develop the project site with the same land use layout as the 2007 Approved Specific Plan analyzed in a previously prepared EIR. However, the residential density would be increased by 25% from 4,950 units to 6,190 units. Participating parcels include 2,456 residential units on approximately 470 acres. The geographic location of planned land use types are similar to Alternatives A and B. However, the drainage/riparian corridors would be substantially different than for those two alternatives, as they would be more trapezoidal in shape and smaller in overall size and conform to the originally approved Master Drainage Plan associated with the 2007 approved EIR. Similar to Alternative A, Alternative C proposes to fill approximately 27.57 acres of waters of the U.S. In addition, Alternative C has supporting master plans, has a certified EIR and meets the goals and objectives of the County and local community.

Development of participating parcels is shown in *Table 3* and *Figure 14*. Proposed development upon full build-out of the Specific Plan is summarized in *Table 4* and *Figure 15*.

8.3.1. Project Purpose

Alternative C provides a land use plan that allows for the development of a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community. Additionally, the drainage corridors create an open space amenity to the Plan Area. Alternative C meets the Project Purpose.

8.3.2. Logistics

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved Alternative C in 2007. There are no adjustments necessary to the backbone infrastructure plans in order to be able to provide proper service. As Alternative C has been approved, therefore residential densities to achieve the County and Community desired count are met. Alternative C meets the logistical requirements of the Project.

8.3.3. Costs

Backbone infrastructure improvement costs for Alternative C were calculated at \$248,058 per developable acre. In-tract development costs amount to an additional \$161,062 per developable acre. Additional costs for single-loaded streets along the open space/drainage corridor frontages, drainage culverts, and open space fencing amount to another \$1,216/developable acre, for a total Cost of \$410,889 per developable acre, equivalent to a 8% decrease in total development cost/acre over Alternative A ($=0.92 \times$ cost of A). Alternative B does meet the cost requirements of the project.

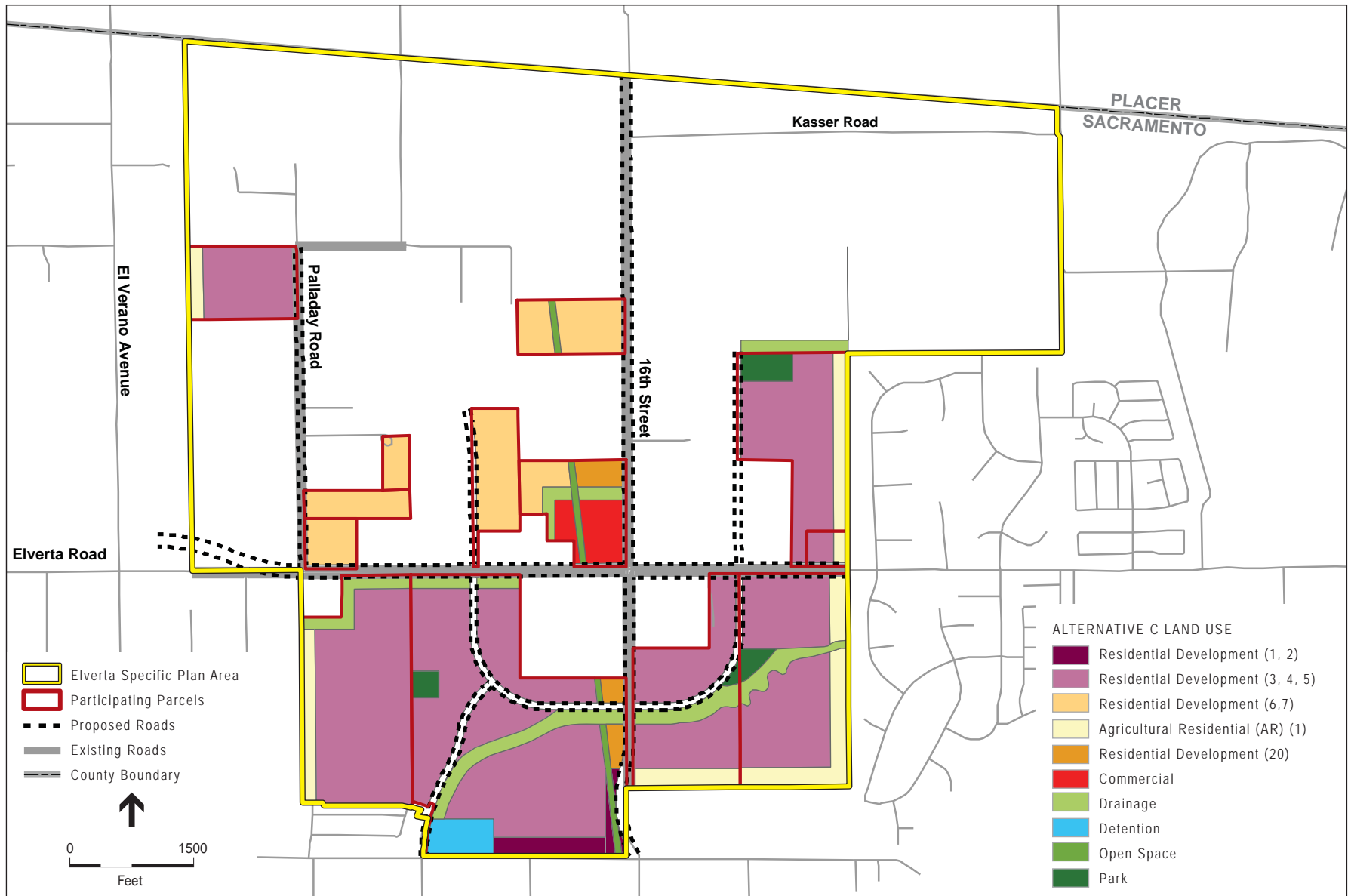
8.3.4. Environmental Impacts

Under Alternative C the participating parcels would be fully developed and would impact 27.57 acres of jurisdictional features including: 1.70 acres seasonal wetlands, 10.08 acres wetland swale, 1.1.23 acres of vernal pool, 0.46 acres drainage ditch, 3.80 acre pond, 0.30 acre stream channel. Additionally, this Alternative proposes to avoid resources only in an area designated for agricultural residential densities, where avoidance of such resources can easily be incorporated into the layout of the low density Ag-Res development.

Alternative C does not replace / enhance resource acres and impacts to wetlands and other waters. Natural drainage corridors are realigned in a concrete trapezoidal manner to coincide with parcel ownership boundaries . Alternative C does not meet the Environmental Impacts requirements.

8.3.5. Other

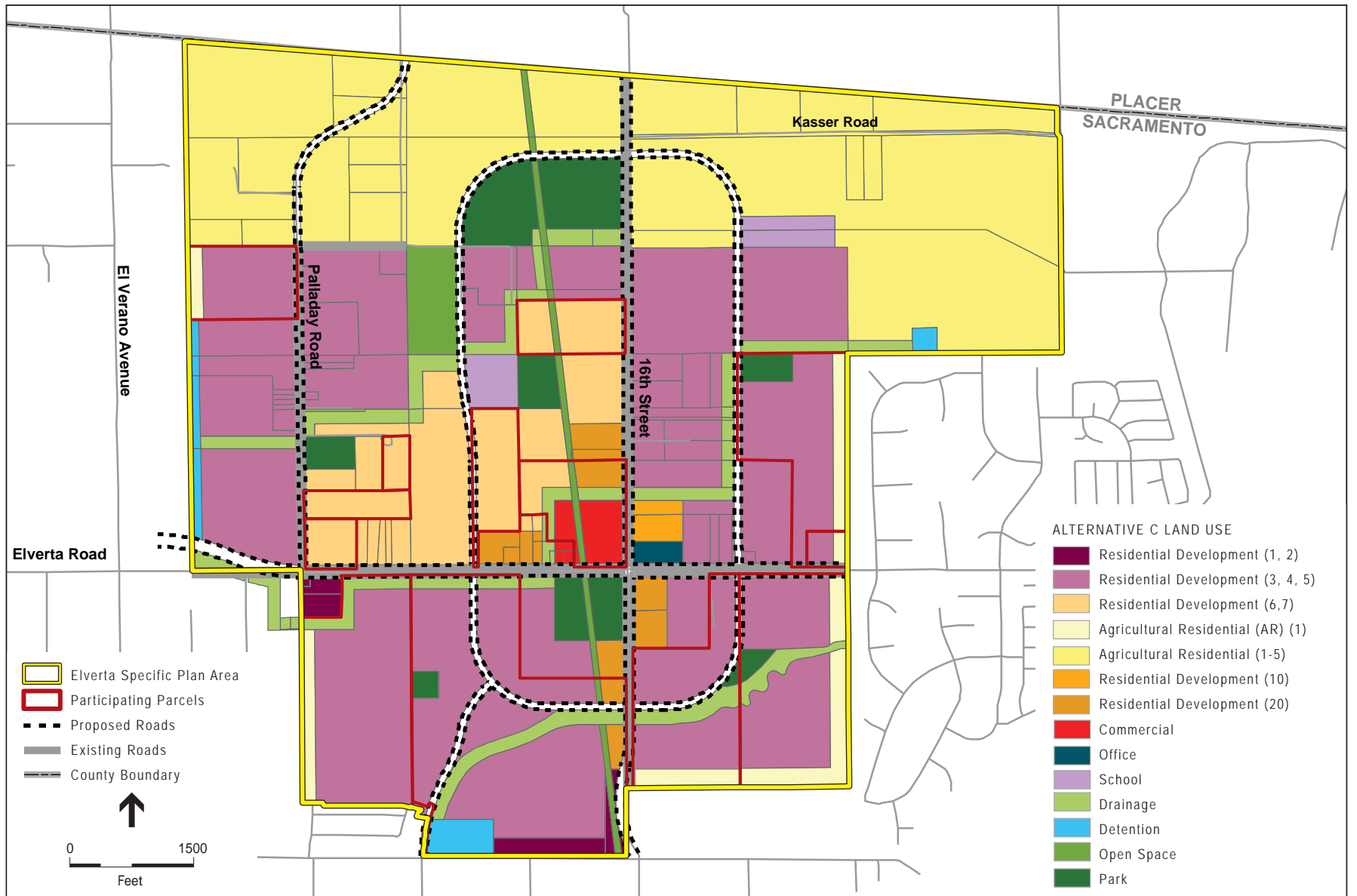
Alternative C does not involve any other factors that would make it less than desirable as related to criteria associated with the Project Purpose. Alternative C would allow for maximum development opportunities, but minimum passive open space via drainage corridors.



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan

Figure 14
Alternative C – Approved Specific Plan Alternative
Participating Parcels



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 15
 Alternative C – Approved Specific Plan Alternative
 Full Plan Buildout

8.3.6. Summary

Alternative C satisfies the criteria established for the Project Purpose by providing a land use plan that allows for the development of a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community with a mix of residential densities. Because Alternative C has been approved, this alternative would not require a Specific Plan Amendment, an amendment to the EIR, a new drainage corridor master plan, or any more community meetings. Logistically, this is the best alternative.

However, Alternative C does not allow for the creation and enhancement of resources within the multi-purpose corridors that will result in a diverse and high quality habitat, therefore this alternative cannot be considered superior to the others.

8.4. Alternative D – No Permit (No Action) Alternative

Alternative D, or the No Permit Alternative, avoids all jurisdictional wetlands and other waters of the U.S., and assumes a 25-foot buffer would be provided around all wetland swales and a 10-foot buffer around all other jurisdictional wetlands. This development alternative would not require a USACE Section 404 permit, as no jurisdictional features would be filled. To avoid wetland features, approximately 70 percent of the developable land under Alternatives A, B and C would no longer be available for development.

Development within the participating parcels is shown in *Table 3* and *Figure 16*. Proposed development upon full buildout of the Specific Plan is summarized in *Table 4* and *Figure 17*.

8.4.1. Project Purpose

More than 70% of the available land would be taken out of development to avoid all jurisdictional resources on-site, including wetlands / habitat avoidance areas and residual lands deemed undevelopable due to such factors as isolation and the need to cross resources for both access and the extension utilities. Alternative D does not meet the project purpose of offering a range of Land Uses.

8.4.2. Logistics

Alternative D would require that the Plan Area be re-entitled and would not meet the County or Community density needs.

The existing pavement section of this alternative would likely accommodate the additional traffic spawned by the three isolated development areas, given the density and proximity to other roads that would help to alleviate additional traffic. The one large developable area along 16th Street, abutting the County Line, would require roadway improvements along both 16th Street and Elverta Road to accommodate the increase traffic associated with the development of the area as illustrated. This would necessitate the possible bridging of resources to allow for roadway / utility expansion as well as the potential need to bore under resources for the expansion of required utilities; both of which are substantially more costly than traditional construction techniques.

This alternative would also require additional storm drainage water quality / detention basins to provide water quality facilities on both sides of protected features. Smaller developable and accessible areas may also require that storm water be pumped to another basin due to the lack of sufficient acreage to accommodate its own basin. This alternative would also likely require additional sewer and water costs such as pump stations, force mains and boring / jacking of lines to avoid impacts to waters of the US.

As noted above under the No Permit Alternative, it will not be feasible to construct any type of a new transportation network beyond the urban footprint of the development area in the northeast corner of the Specific Plan. Roadways that under lower-density type development would otherwise be small neighborhood roads under the No Federal Action alternative will now need to accommodate all of the traffic from the highly concentrated and dense development, thus requiring some of these “in-tract” roads to be upsized, possibly to 4 lanes. In addition, under this alternative, 16th Street becomes the main transportation artery of the plan area. Without any other major transportation connections to the surrounding land uses being possible, 16th Street would need to be upsized to a 6-lane thoroughfare.

To mitigate the development impacts on storm water volume and quality, detention and treatment basins will need to be excavated at the downstream ends of the development areas. As the preserved natural drainages that these proposed basins will need to discharge to are very shallow in character, small drainage pump stations will be required to drain the 2 larger detention basins just west of 16th Street. This will then mitigate the need for import fill dirt to raise the development area above the flood elevations within the natural drainages.

Logistically Alternative D is not practicable.

8.4.3. Costs

With a “net” residential density of 11.6 density units/acre, backbone infrastructure improvement costs for the No Permit Alternative were calculated at \$638,451 per developable acre. In-tract development costs amount to an additional \$260,679 per developable acre. Additional costs for single-loaded streets along the open space/drainage corridor frontages, drainage culverts, and open space fencing amount to a net reduction of cost over Alternative A of \$652/developable acre, for a total No Permit Alternative Cost of \$898,478 per developable acre, equivalent to an 101% increase in total development cost/acre over the Approved Project (= 2.01 x cost of Alternative A).

8.4.4. Environmental Impacts

The No Permit Alternative is the superior environmental alternative in that no waters of the U.S. or special status species are adversely affected.

8.4.5. Other

This alternative would have a substantial negative effect on a majority of the participating parcels due to their inability to develop lands currently entitled for development. Although the adopted Specific Plan allows for the transfer of development rights from one parcel to another, it did not envision a transfer of the magnitude required to

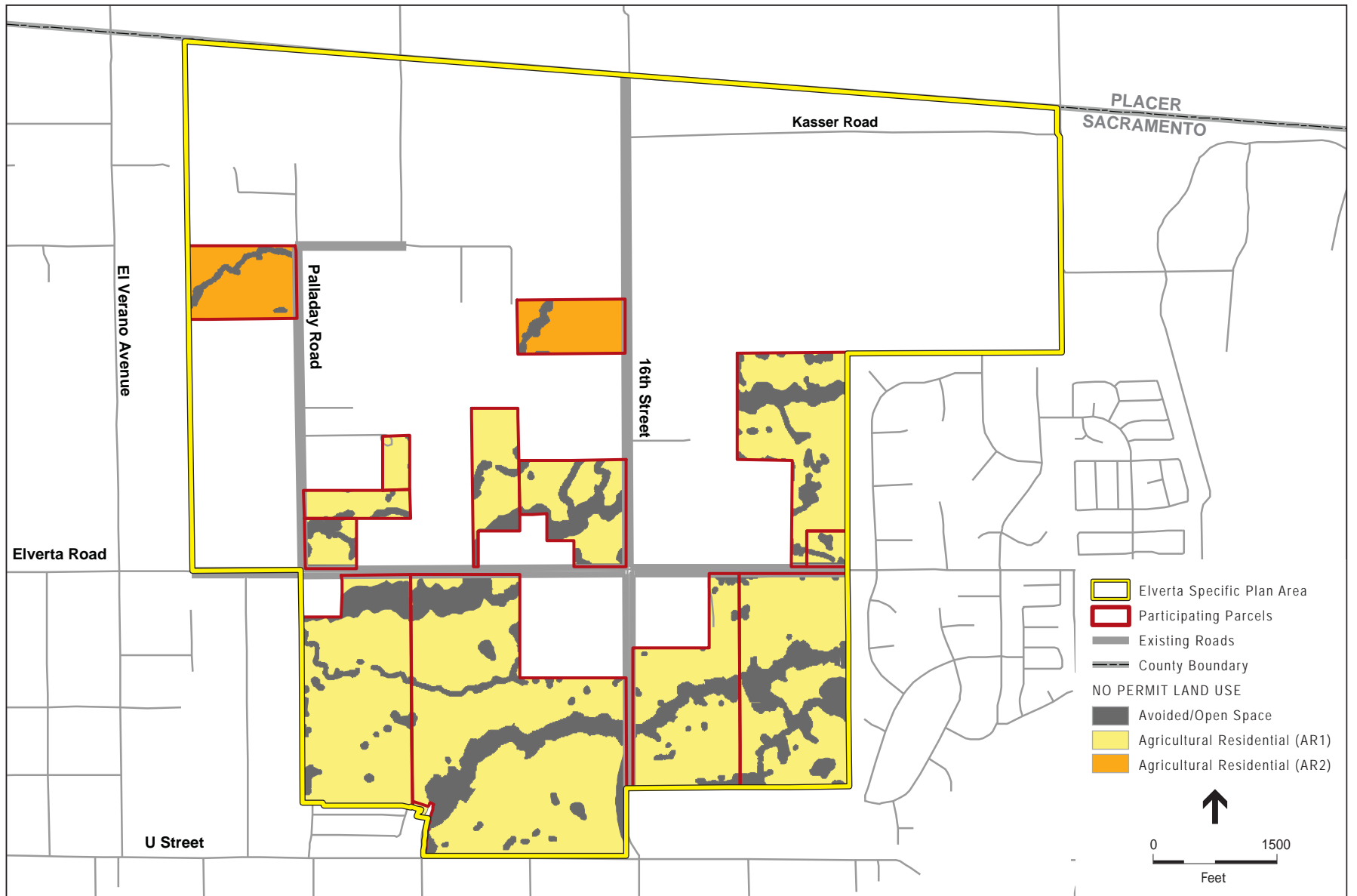
implement this alternative. Furthermore, even if all of the parties involved in a transfer (donor and receptor) did come to agreement, the County (Planning Director) would need to make the following findings:

- That the transfer of units would not result in increased impacts beyond those identified in the Elverta Specific Plan EIR; and
- That the adjustments in density and units would not significantly affect planned infrastructure, roadways, schools, and other public facilities, or Plan area assessment districts.

Implementation of the No Permit Alternative would likely necessitate that the Specific Plan be rescinded and that the process be re-initiated with a new plan and new direction; a process that is not in concert with the Project Purpose of providing for near-term new housing opportunities in Northern Sacramento County. Such a process would be very costly and very time consuming given the fact that the last approval process took well over 10 years with a much lower density project.

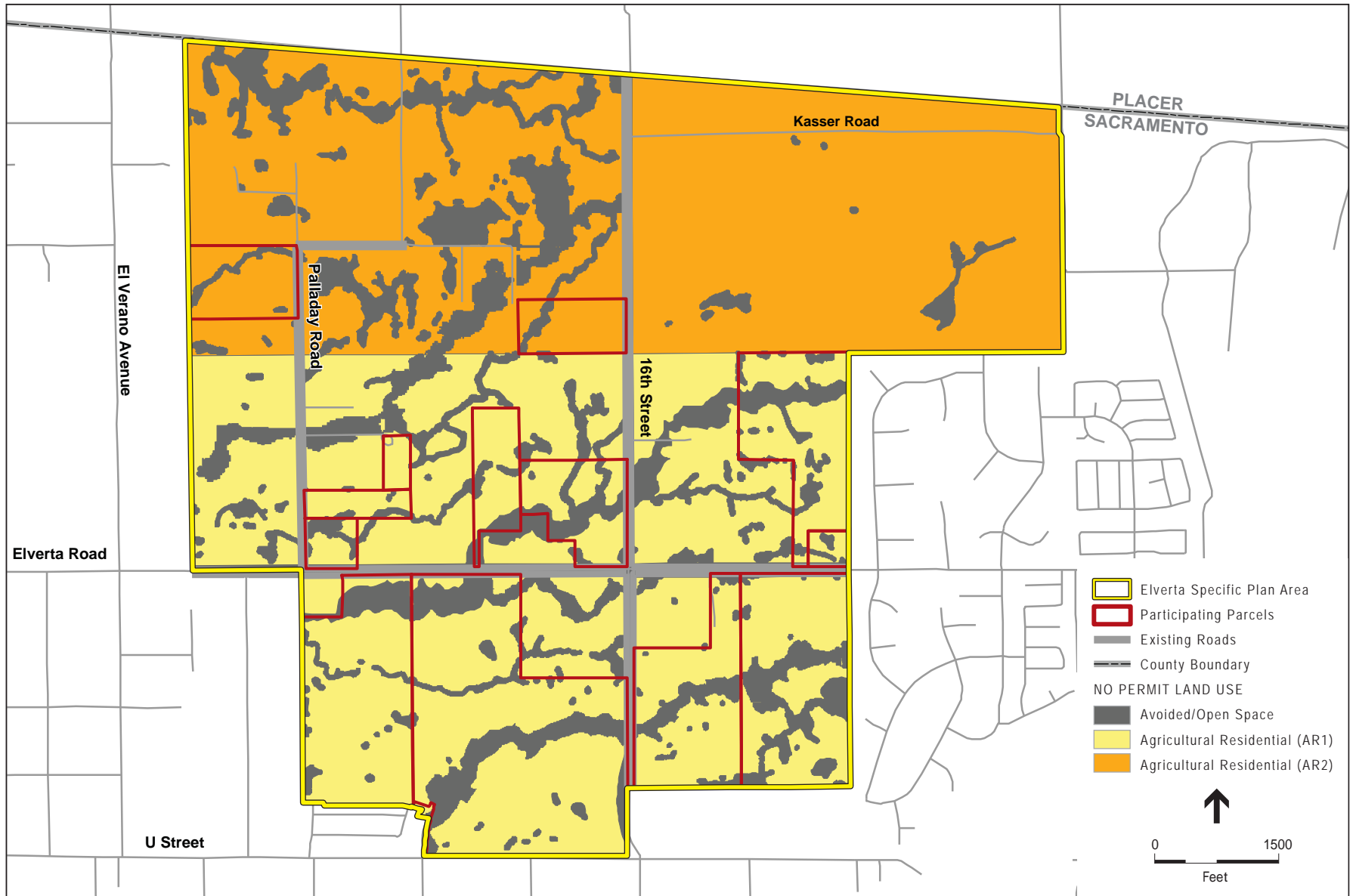
8.4.6. Summary

Alternative D is considered infeasible, as it does not meet the project purpose of offering a large scale, mixed-use, mixed-density community. Additionally Alternative D is logistically infeasible as it has high development costs relative to the density and would need new County and State entitlements.



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 16
 Alternative D – No Permit Alternative
 Participating Parcels



SOURCE: NAIP, 2009; ESRI, 2009; RCH Group, 2010; ESA, 2012; and Elverta Specific Plan Project DEIS 2012

Elverta Specific Plan
Figure 17
 Alternative D – No Permit Alternative
 Full Plan Buildout

9. Conclusion

Each of the alternatives considered in this report (Alternative A – Applicant’s Preferred Alternative, Alternative B – Reduced Impact Alternative, Alternative C – Approved Specific Plan with 25% Density Bonus, and Alternative D – No Permit (No Action) Alternative) were considered by a series of criteria described in section 8 of this report. While each alternative has superior qualities individual to each plan, each Alternative must be compared as a whole.

Project Purpose: Alternative A, B, and C satisfy the criteria established for the Project Purpose by providing a land use plan that allows for the development of a large scale, mixed use, mixed density master planned community with a mix of residential densities.

Logistics: Alternative A and C meet the logistical criteria established. Alternative A and C are very similar in terms of land uses, street alignment, corridor alignment, etc., therefore there are minimal or no adjustments necessary to the backbone infrastructure plans developed for the 2007 County approved Project in order to be able to provide proper service. Additionally, because Alternative A is accordingly similar in nature to Alternative C, residential densities to achieve the County and Community desired count and mix are not compromised.

Alternative B is similar in land use to Alternative A, however it does not meet the logistical criteria as it would increase density such that it would require a lengthy approval process including: amending the certified EIR, conducting community meetings, creating a new drainage master plan, and getting County approvals; all of which could take up to 10 years. Alternative D is not similar to Alternative A, B, or C in terms of land use, but much like Alternative B, Alternative D would require a lengthy approval process. In addition, neither Alternative B or D could achieve residential densities or mix to achieve the County and Community needs; therefore these could not meet the logistical criteria as they would not be able to achieve local agency approval.

Cost: Alternative D would be the most cost prohibitive, and it does not provide the density to support the cost. Alternative C would be the least expensive, then Alternative A.

Alternative B would be cost prohibitive and not be a feasible. Alternative A and C are cost feasible from a development standpoint.

Environmental Impacts: Alternative A and C would have the highest and same impacts to wetlands of 27.57 acres. Alternative B impacts 22.98 wetland acres; Alternative D impacts 0.00. Alternative A and B propose to replace / enhance resource acres and impacts to wetlands and other waters through natural drainage corridor creation. The area of replaced / enhanced resources would follow the natural drainage of the site in the modified, multi-use drainage corridors and will greatly enhance habitat in the Plan Area today. The difference between Alternative A and B is that Alternative B proposes more drainage corridor land use, thus more replaced resources.

Other: Alternative A and C proportionally distributes open space requirements and infrastructure costs amongst the participating parcels, Alternative B and D do not. In order for the project to be feasible, there must be land to be conventionally develop at standard practice densities. In addition, Alternative A and C would support the County or Community needs of a mix of housing options, Alternative B and D would not.

Summary: Looking cumulatively at the criteria for assessment, Alternative A is the superior alternative as it allows for natural drainage corridor enhancement and a variety of densities as envisioned by the County and local community. Additionally, Alternative A has a County approved land plan and drainage master plan; therefore no entitlements would be necessary.

Alternative B satisfies the criteria established for the Project Purpose and environmental impacts of the site. This alternative would require large portions of land dedicated to drainage corridors, and would require increasing densities such that Alternative B would not maintain the strategies outlined in the Specific Plan. Alternative B would require a Specific Plan Amendment, an amendment to the EIR, a new drainage corridor master plan, and more community meetings. Logistically this alternative would be too costly to construct, unmarketable, and politically infeasible.

Alternative C meets all of the project criteria and would be the best option from a development standpoint, however it does not propose to enhance or replace lost drainage habitat / corridors. Because of the cumulative environmental impacts associated with Alternative C, it cannot be considered.

Alternative D is considered infeasible as it does not meet the project purpose of offering a large scale, mixed-use, mixed-density community. Alternative D has high development costs relative to the density and would need new County and State entitlements.

Attachment A – Drainage Master Plan, October 2013 (see Final EIS Appendix A)

Attachment B – Elverta Specific Plan August 2007 Minor Amendments memorandum, July 2014

**Department of Community
Development
Lori A. Moss, Director**



Divisions
Administrative Services
Building Permits & Inspection
Code Enforcement
County Engineering
Economic Development & Marketing
Planning & Environmental Review

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: July 30, 2014
TO: File
FROM: Leighann Moffitt, Planning and Environmental Review (PER) Director
SUBJECT: Elverta Specific Plan August 2007 Minor Amendments
Request: Determine that the proposed land use designation amendments to the Elverta Specific Plan August 2007 are considered to be minor amendments.

I. BACKGROUND

The County Board of Supervisors adopted the Elverta Specific Plan (Plan) August 20, 2007. Understanding that changes would likely occur in the future, provisions were included in the Plan addressing amendments to changing land use designations, design criteria, and development standards/policies. Plan Section 10.5 "Specific Plan Amendments" identifies the criteria to be evaluated when determining whether an amendment to the Plan would be processed as a minor or a major amendment.

This request includes changes to the land use designations for a number of properties due to the reconfiguration of the drainage corridors. At their April 8, 2014 hearing, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors considered and approved the following:

1. Addendum to the Elverta Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (PLNP2013-00046)
2. Revision of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP)
3. Revision of the Drainage Master Plan (DMP)

The changes to the DMP were a result of consultations with state and federal environmental agencies. Although the original alignment was generally followed, the corridors were re-designed and widened to incorporate a more natural configuration, include storm water quality features to address erosion, and provide for more habitat-friendly wetland features.

With the redesign and widening of the drainage corridors, the land use designations for a number of parcels need to be updated. The following statement was included in the staff report presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 8, 2014 “the minor changes to the land use caused by the revisions to the DMP will be addressed administratively as a separate action by PER.”

II. DISCUSSION

This request to consider the land use designation changes as a “minor” amendment to the Plan was received from a group of property owners within the Plan area. The properties included in this amendment represent 62% (1,082 acres) of the acreage in the Plan.

The approved Plan land use designation map is included as Attachment A. The proposed land use designation changes are included as Attachment B. Attachment C provides identification of the specific properties to be amended.

The changes include an increase in the acreage for parcels designated as “Drainage/Trails/Detention/Joint Use” (+51.4 acres) and a decrease in the acreage for parcels designated RD 3, 4, 5 (-55.8 acres). Table 1 provides a summary of the 2014 requested land use designation changes by acreage, in comparison with the 2007 Plan acreages.

The applicant also provided information regarding changes in the residential holding capacity resulting from the land use changes. The dwelling unit capacity information provided by the applicant was for the properties that are being amended, and not for the entire Plan area. Given the land use designation changes, there will be 134 fewer dwelling units than previously projected in the 2007 Plan. Table 2 provides a summary of the dwelling unit capacity resulting from the 2014 land use designations in comparison with the 2007 Plan dwelling unit holding capacity (for those properties proposed to be amended).

III. DETERMINATIONS AND FINDINGS

The applicant is requesting that the proposed land use designation changes be considered a “minor” amendment based on the direction provided in the 2007 Plan. Following is an excerpt from the 2007 Plan, including the criteria to be considered when making a determination of whether a request is a “minor” or “major” amendment. An analysis, including a determination and finding, is provided for each of the criteria.

“Minor amendments may be reviewed and acted upon by the County Planning Director or Zoning Administrator, and shall be considered minor when it is determined that it does not have a significant impact on the character of the Plan. The Planning Director shall make a written determination as to whether or not a requested amendment is minor based upon the following criteria:”

1. *“That the proposed adjustments to the Development Standards or Design Guidelines are offset by the merits of the proposed design and do not significantly*

change the anticipated physical characteristics, goals, and intent of the Specific Plan;”

Determination: The proposed amendments are consistent with the approved DMP. The land use designations have been adjusted to reflect the realignment and widening of the drainage corridors. Some of the properties previously designated for residential, commercial, and park uses are proposed to be designated as “Drainage/Trails/Detention/Joint Use” for those portions of the properties that will now accommodate the drainage corridors. Other properties are proposed to increase densities slightly to offset the loss of dwelling units resulting from land now needed for drainage purposes.

Finding: The physical characteristics of the Plan were changed with the approval of the DMP. The changes in the land use designations will bring the Plan into conformance with the DMP, and are not considered the action that changed the physical characteristics. The goals and intent of the Specific Plan are being met by providing consistency between all of the sections of the Plan.

2. *“Proposed changes to the alignment of arterial and local streets, if adopted, would not substantially alter the land use or circulation concepts set forth in the Specific Plan;”*

Determination: There are no changes to the alignment of arterial and local streets proposed with this request.

Finding: There would be no substantial alteration of the land use or circulation concepts set forth in the Plan.

3. *“Proposed changes to land use diagram shapes or to the alignment of collector and secondary streets would maintain the general land use pattern and/or provide an improved circulation system consistent with the intent and direction of the vision, goals, and policies of the Specific Plan;”*

Determination: The proposed land use designations will change the diagram shapes. However, the changes are consistent with the approved DMP which modified the land use diagram by realigning and widening the drainage corridors, within the existing drainage corridor alignments. The approved DMP widens and modifies the existing natural channels instead of creating deep, narrow linear channels. The original channel design contained the entire 100-year floodplain event in a 200 foot-channel. The approved DMP will accommodate the same event with corridors as large as 500 feet wide. Even under the original drainage plan, the existing conditions impacted the adjacent and nearby properties. The approved DMP also follows the existing channel locations in a meandering pathway, and includes much wider drainage corridors to allow for a naturalized floodplain. This change in design has resulted in some deviations for the developable areas along the drainage corridors, and has in fact decreased the net

developable area. The land use designation amendments requested as a result of the revisions to the drainage corridors are all proposed within a specific property, by increasing or decreasing the acreage impacted by the new drainage corridors on that respective property. The amendments are not being requested for properties that were not impacted by both the original, and the revised drainage corridor plans.

Finding: The properties impacted by the revisions to the drainage corridors (approved DMP) were previously impacted by the original drainage corridor features and alignments. The approved DMP follows the existing channel locations in a meandering pathway, and includes much wider drainage corridors to allow for a naturalized floodplain, thus impacting the same properties that were impacted under existing conditions. The land use designation changes are considered minor amendments as they will bring the land use diagram into compliance with the approved DMP and are proposed for those properties that under existing conditions were impacted by the drainage corridor alignments. There are no changes proposed that are not related to the approved DMP. This proposal maintains the general land use pattern and circulation system consistent with the intent and direction of the vision, goals, and policies of the Specific Plan.

4. *“The proposed change is not expected to increase environmental impacts beyond the levels identified in the EIR;”*

Determination: The request to change the land use designations is in conformance with the approved DMP. Approval of the DMP included preparation, and subsequent adoption, of an Addendum to the Elverta Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (PLNP2013-00046) and revision of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP). The staff report prepared for the Board of Supervisors consideration (April 8, 2014) for the DMP, Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report, and MMRP included the following: “the minor changes to the land use caused by the revisions to the DMP will be addressed administratively as a separate action by PER.”

The most significant changes to the Plan are a 51.4 acre increase in the properties designated “Drainage/Trails/Detention/Joint Use” and a 55.8 acre decrease in the properties designated “RD 3, 4, 5.” Please see Table 1 for a complete summary of the land use designation changes.

Finding: The proposed land use designation changes are not expected to increase environmental impacts beyond the levels identified in the Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report adopted April 8, 2014 for the DMP.

5. *“The proposed change would not result in an increase in the total maximum number of units proposed in the Specific Plan and will comply with the criteria for modification of the land use diagram and minor density adjustments; and”*

Determination: The holding capacity for the Plan is 4,950 dwelling units. The amendments to the land use designations proposed with this request identified all of the properties in the Plan. However, the applicant only submitted holding capacity data for those properties impacted by the DMP and amendment request (1,082 acres). A comparison of the approved dwelling units with the proposed dwelling units, for the amended properties, is provided on Table 2. The land use designation changes result in 134 fewer dwelling units than previously approved. This reduction is a direct result of the re-designation of a number of the properties to accommodate the re-aligned and widened drainage corridors. The Plan provided for a holding capacity of 3,022 dwelling units in the area impacted by the DMP; and the proposed amendments result in a holding capacity of 2,888 dwelling units in this same area. The remaining area could accommodate 2,062 dwelling units, and not exceed the total holding capacity of 4,950 dwelling units for the Plan area.

Finding: The holding capacity of 4,950 dwelling units encompasses the entire Plan area, of which this amendment is a part. The proposed land use designation changes will not result in an increase in the total maximum number of dwelling units proposed in the Plan, and in fact will result in a decrease in dwelling units originally allowed within the areas impacted by the approved DMP. Although approval of the DMP caused a decrease in the developable land area, the approval did not decrease the holding capacity of 4,950 dwelling units provided for throughout the entire Plan area. A decrease in the holding capacity (134 fewer dwelling units) resulting from the revisions to the DMP could provide for future opportunities to increase densities elsewhere in the Plan area. The proposed land use designations amendments will comply with the criteria for modification of the land use diagram and minor density adjustments.

6. *“The proposed change would not significantly reduce the number of acres designated for high density residential.”*

Determination: The Plan designates 38.8 acres for high density residential (RD 20). The proposed land use designations increase by 3.7 acres the area designated RD 20, for a total of 42.5 acres. Table 1 provides a comparison of the acreages, by land use designation, for the approved Plan and the proposed changes. A minor (3.7 acres) redistribution of density is proposed with this request due to the loss of developable acreage resulting from the realignment and widening of the drainage corridors. Several properties that were previously identified in the Plan as RD 3, 4, 5 are proposed to be re-designated RD 20.

Finding: The proposed changes will not significantly reduce the number of acres designated for high density residential, and will in fact increase the properties designated for high density residential by 3.7 acres.

IV. CONCLUSION

It is determined, based on the information and findings provided in this memo, that the request for the proposed land use designation amendments be determined to be “minor” amendments per the Elverta Specific Plan August 20, 2007 Section 10.5 “Specific Plan Amendments” is approved. Further, the Elverta Specific Plan August 20, 2007 states that: “No review by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors is required, unless the findings of the Planning Director or Zoning Administrator are appealed.”

TABLE 1
Elverta Specific Plan Amendment
Comparison of Land Use Designations

Elverta Specific Plan Land Use Designation	(1) Elverta Specific Plan August 20, 2007 (Final Plan) acreage	(6) From Applicant July 2014 “Figure 2: Amended Specific Plan” (Proposed Plan) acreage	Difference Between Final Plan (1) and Proposed Plan (6) acreage
AR 1-5	502.3	506.5	+4.2
AR 1	49.5	44.5	-5.0
RD 2	3.2	0	-3.2
RD 1, 2	6.9	11.0	+4.1
RD 3, 4, 5	662.7	606.9	-55.8
RD 6, 7	161.7	165.2	+3.5
RD 10	7.0	5.7	-1.3
RD 20	38.8	42.5	+3.7
Office/Professional	4.4	4.4	0
Commercial	15.0	17.5	+2.5
Community/Sports/ Neighborhood Parks	73.3	71.3	-2.0
Elementary School	20.2	20.2	0
Drainage/Trails/ Detention/Joint Use	101.3	152.7	+51.4
Powerline Corridor/ Trail System	16.3	0	-16.3
Powerline Corridor/ Trail System/Open Space		25.8	+25.8
Open Space	18.4	0	-18.4
Major Roads/Other	74.3	70.4	-3.9
Total	1,755.3*	1,744.6	
Powerline corridor	- 10.68	0	-10.68
Actual Total	1,744.6	1,744.6	0

*Note on plans: “Includes 10.68 acres of powerline corridor acreage in park, RD 20, and commercial land use statistics where corridor is adjacent to or within said land use designations (total acreage nets out these 10.68 acres).”

TABLE 2
Elverta Specific Plan Amendment
Comparison of Dwelling Units

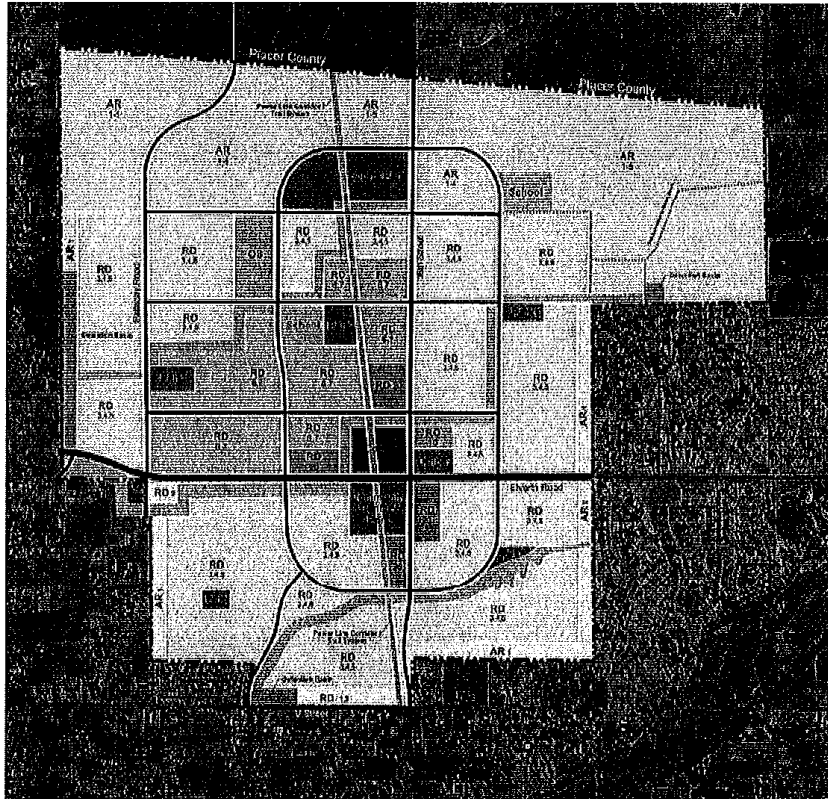
Elverta Specific Plan Land Use Designation	Approved # of dwelling units	Proposed # of dwelling units	Change in # of dwelling units
AR 1-5	194	194	0
AR 1	44	40	-4
RD 1, 2	19	17	-2
RD 3,4,5	2,211	2,050	-161
RD 6,7	218	218	0
RD 10	10	10	0
RD 20	263	359	+96
Commercial	63	0	-63
TOTAL	3,022	2,888	-134

Attachment A
Elverta Specific Plan August 20, 2007

Zoning Code of Sacramento County

Chapter 8
Article 1

608-13.2



Land Use	Acres	Land Use	Acres
Agricultural Residential (AR) 1-5	602.3	Office / Professional	4.4
Agricultural Residential (AR) 1	48.5	Commercial	15.0
Residential Development (RD) 2	3.2	Community / Sports / Neighborhood Parks	73.3
Residential Development (RD) 1, 2	6.9	Elementary School	20.2
Residential Development (RD) 3, 4, 5	682.7	Drainage / Trelle	101.3
Residential Development (RD) 6, 7	161.7	Detention / Joint Use	
Residential Development (RD) 10	7.0	Powerline Corridor*, and Trail System	16.3
Residential Development (RD) 20	38.8	Open Space	18.4
		Major Roads - Other	74.3
		<small>*Includes 1000 acres of powerline corridor in AR, RD 10 and Commercial zones and 1000 acres of powerline corridor in AR, RD 10 and Commercial zones. (1000 acres not within 1000 acres)</small>	
		Total	1,744.6
		<i>Total Plan Housing Capacity of 4,950 Dwelling Units</i>	

SDL:sdl:jrc
or alt Elverta SP

Attachment B
 Elverta Specific Plan Amendment Proposed Land Use Designation Changes

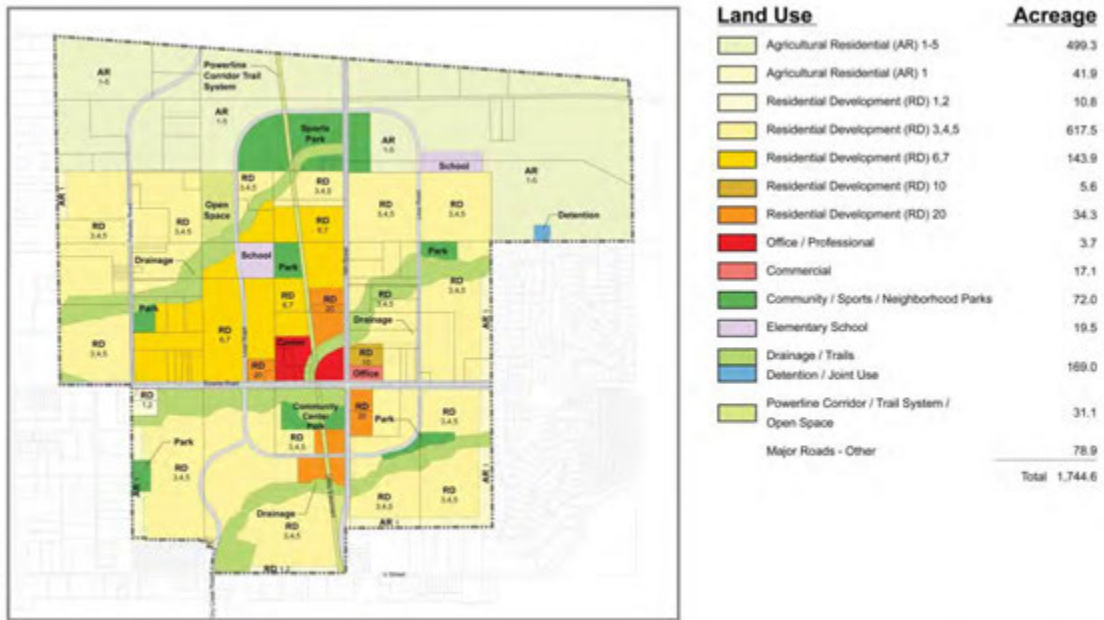


FIGURE 2: AMENDED SPECIFIC PLAN
ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT



Attachment C
 Land Use and Holding Capacity for Amended Specific Plan Area Properties

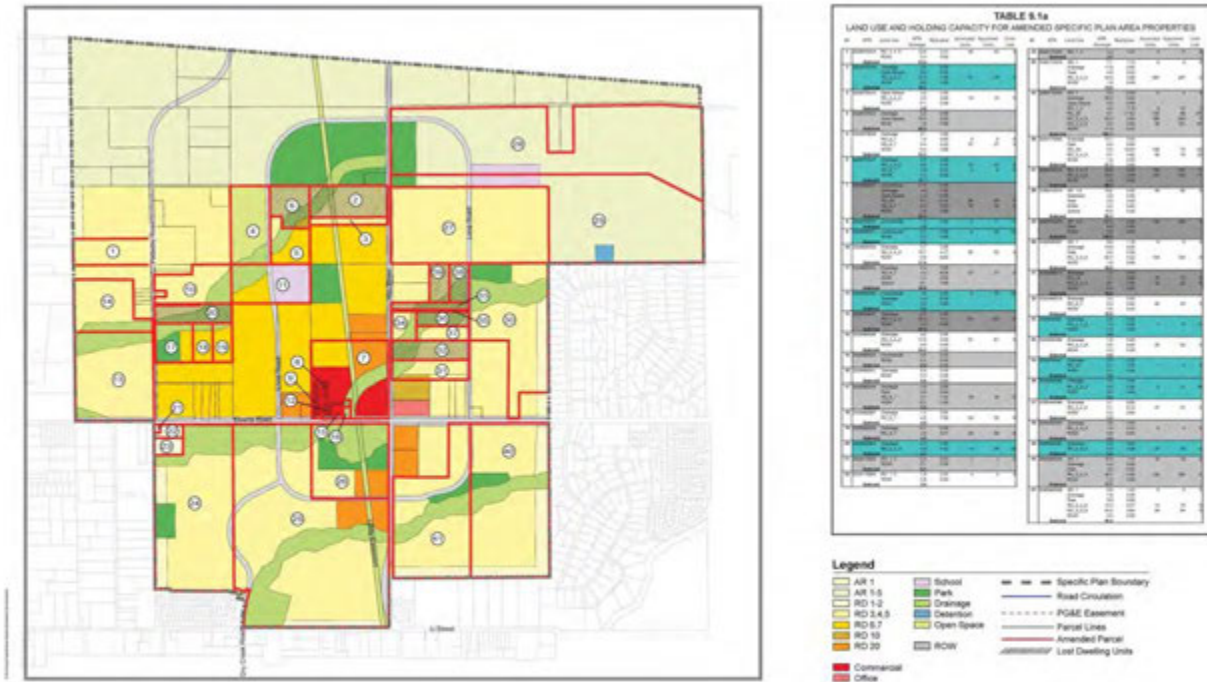


FIGURE 3: AMENDED PARCELS
ELVERTA SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT



Attachment C – Corridor Landscaping Planset (see Final EIS Appendix K)

Attachment D – Elverta Specific Plan Development Alternatives; Infrastructure Opinion of Cost

Elverta Specific Plan

Development Alternatives

Infrastructure Opinion of Cost

May 2009

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(1) Backup for specific categories is not provided if the construction cost is estimated to be substantially the same as the Approved Specific Plan

I. Executive Summary

Elverta Specific Plan ~ Alternatives Cost

This study supports the analysis of development costs for the Approved Elverta Specific Plan and three alternative land use plans, a.k.a. the Preferred Alternative, the No Federal Action Alternative, and the Minimal Impact Alternative.

Cost estimates herein are improvement and fee program costs to develop fully improved residential lots, multi-family building sites, commercial, and office BP sites. Site development costs include:

- ≠ **Backbone infrastructure cost.** These improvements are described as on-site roadways, utilities, and public facilities that serve and/or provide benefit to the entire project area. In addition, the cost to provide off-site mitigation measures, i.e. infrastructure improvements are part of backbone infrastructure.
- ≠ **In-tract cost** to construct local improvements to serve individual parcels an/or lots
- ≠ **Fees** including impact and connection fees to the various local agencies and districts that provide service to, or are impacted by the Specific Plan.

Collectively, these costs are the sum of improvement costs and fees expended prior to, or at time of building permit. Building permit fee and structure cost is not part of this estimate.

The backbone improvement cost is detailed by each improvement type and utility system for each specific alternative plan. The Base Line Cost (BLC) is defined as the cost to construct the Approved Plan. The BLC was adjusted by plus and/or minus costs of the various improvements specific to the three alternatives that differed from the BLC. In summary, the alternative plans varied from the Approved Plan as described in the following matrix:

Plan Description	Total SP Acres	(1) Total Developed Acres	Residential Units	Residential Acres	Residential Density (du/acre)
Approved Plan	1743.6	1471.7	4950	1432.1	3.45
Preferred Plan	1743.6	1381.2	4529	1340.2	3.38
No Federal Action	1743.6	486.0	4709	456.4	10.3
Minimal Impact Plan	1743.6	1091.2	4499	1062.7	4.23

- (1) excludes parks, drainage/detention facilities, power line corridor, open space, wetlands, residual land, and major roadways

In-tract costs vary by land use and by alternative. The BLC was established for each land use type from historical data of similar projects in the Sacramento region. Costs were adjusted for inflation to 2009 levels. The per acre development cost generally increases as the unit density per acre increases. Plus and/or minus cost was factored for alternatives that would:

- ≠ produce more or less single loaded roadways adjacent to open space and/or drainage corridors
- ≠ dirt import to elevate parcels in the Minimal Impact Alternative
- ≠ added drainage culverts at major road crossings
- ≠ fencing at open space and preserve areas

Tables and summaries follow this narrative, and include per unit for each specific land use, and per sf development cost for commercial, and office/BP.

Elverta Specific Plan

Basis of Land Development Cost per Acre

I. The Elverta Specific Plan has four alternative land use plans

1. The Approved Specific Plan
2. The Preferred Alternative
3. The No Federal Action Alternative
4. The Minimal Impact Alternative

II. Introduction to the Base Line Development Cost (BLC) per Acre

The Approved Plan contains a mix of land use densities that range from one unit per acre to 20 units per acre. The Approved Plan was therefore selected as the Base Line Cost (BLC) to compare to the other three alternatives. A cost per acre development for each specific land use was derived from an average of cost estimates for similar Northern California projects with approved plans. Costs for comparison projects were adjusted to 2010 levels using the Engineering News Record cost index factors.

Once the BLC was developed, the Approved Specific Plan was compared to the remaining three alternative plans. Although the development areas (acres) varied significantly in the No Federal Action and Minimal Impact Alternatives compared to the Approved and Preferred Alternatives, the per acre development cost for specific land use densities was judged to be consistent for all alternatives.

Other factors in the alternative plans, however, would impact on-site development costs. Identified additional costs include:

1. **Single loaded roadways.** At preserve and open space edges, development will likely have single loaded roadways adjacent to that land use. The Approved Plan length of edge was the BLC and the other three alternatives were a greater or lesser length. Multi-family parcels (RD 20/30) and commercial / BP parcels adjacent to OS and preserve areas will not have single loaded roads at those edges.
2. **Dirt import to elevate residential areas.** The Minimal Impact Plan has development adjacent to OS and preserve areas. These areas contain the drainage ways which are generally very shallow. Achieving flood protection and elevating building pads for minimum protection will be difficult, particularly in the western part of the Plan area. A quantity of one foot of imported dirt is estimated to elevate all residential parcels. Commercial and BP parcels have a design standard that allows finish floor elevations one foot lower than residential finish floors. Those parcels are therefore excluded from the imported fill estimate.
3. **Drainage culverts.** The No Federal Action and Minimal Impact Alternatives both require additional drainage culverts at major roads.
4. **Fencing at Preserve and Open Space areas + rural fencing for non-developed parcels.** All preserve and OS areas will require post & cable or other suitable fencing to separate developed land uses from the preserve / OS areas.

TABLE 2

Elverta Specific Plan Cost per Acre Summary for Project Alternatives (4)

	A (1)	B (2)	C (2)	D (2) (3)	B + C + D (2)	(2)	
Alternative	Net Developable Acres	Backbone Improvement (\$ / acre)	In – Tract Development (\$ / acre)	Other Imp. Costs (\$ / acre)	Total Imp. Cost (\$ / acre)	Alternative Differential to Approved Project (\$ / acre)	Percent (%) Differential to Approved Project
Approved Plan	1471.7	248,611	161,062	1,216	410,889	0	0
Preferred Alternative	1381.2	284,058	162,013	1,007	447,078	36,189	108.8%
No Federal Impact Alt.	486.0	638,451	260,679	(652)	898,478	487,589	218.7 %
Minimal Impact Alt.	1091.2	399,566	179,896	27,016	606,478	195,589	147.6 %

(1) Net developable acres excludes parks, open space, habitat, trails/joint use, power line corridor, and major roads

(2) Per developable acres

(3) Other costs include plus and/or minus adjustments for:

- ≠ **Non-lot frontage roads** at open space and drainage corridor interface. The alternatives compared to the Approved Plan (the base line length) may have greater or lesser length. A lesser length would contribute to a negative per acre cost in this category
- ≠ **Imported fill.** Since local drainage corridors are generally shallow and will not be excavated with the Minimal Impact Alternative, only the Minimal Impact Alternative is estimated to require imported fill to elevate above the flood plain
- ≠ **Drainage culverts.** The No Federal Action and Minimal Impact Alternatives are estimated to require additional culverts.
- ≠ **Fencing.** All four alternatives are estimated to require varying lengths of fencing at open space and preserve interfaces with other plan area land use.

(4) See **Table 3** for Development Cost per Acre calculation detail.