

4.1 LAND USE AND GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

This section presents a summary of existing and planned land uses in the 2030 Study Area. It describes direct land use effects of proposed facility construction and indirect land use effects of providing water supply to future growth areas of the County. As a program-level analysis, this EIR evaluates the project's consistency with relevant County General Plan policies and other adopted plans that pertain to the 2030 Study Area (e.g., Water Forum Agreement [WFA]). Although the types of facilities and their general locations are identified (e.g., surface water diversion structure, water treatment plant), specific details and exact location of proposed facilities are unknown at this time, and therefore, these facilities were evaluated in this EIR at a more general, program level. As these facilities are proposed for implementation, their environmental effects will be considered at a more detailed, project level in light of the analysis presented in this program EIR.

Two water supply options included in 2002 Zone 40 WSMP (Freeport Regional Water Project and the Sacramento County Water Agency/City of Sacramento Joint Project) have been evaluated at a project level (Draft EIR/EIS for the Freeport Regional Water Project prepared by the Freeport Regional Water Authority [FRWA], August 2003, and the Final EIR for the City of Sacramento Water Facilities Expansion Project, November 2000). These documents are incorporated by reference into this EIR (see Chapter 1, Introduction). Copies of these documents are available for review at the Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment, 827 7th Street, Room 220, Sacramento, California 95814. The land use impacts described in those documents are summarized below, where appropriate.

This EIR addresses the relationship of the amount of future growth that would be facilitated by implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP to overall growth contemplated under the existing general plan, identifies the land use effects associated with that increment of growth, and the growth-inducing effect of the proposed WSMP. This EIR does not reexamine the impacts of growth on the environment anticipated to occur as a result of urban development consistent with adopted land use plans. These effects were appropriately evaluated and described in the Sacramento County 1993 General Plan EIR and Specific and Community Plan EIRs that designate planned urban land uses in the Zone 40 service area. The Sacramento County General Plan EIR is incorporated by reference in this EIR (see Chapter 1, Introduction). A copy of the General Plan EIR is available for review at the Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment, 827 7th Street, Room 220, Sacramento, California 95814.

The State CEQA Guidelines §15126(g) requires that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the State CEQA Guidelines as:

the way in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly, or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population

growth. It is not assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

Growth-inducing potential can be direct and/or indirect. Direct growth inducement would result from construction of new housing, for example. Indirect growth inducement could include establishment of substantial new permanent or short-term employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises) that could indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. Similarly, a project would have an indirect growth inducement effect if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service.

Water supply service is one of the chief public services needed to support urban development. Implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would increase the available surface water and groundwater supplies to serve urban growth that is planned and anticipated to occur in the 2030 Study Area. This EIR evaluates the extent to which provision of this water would remove an obstacle to further urban growth and development so that land uses approved by the local land use authorities could move forward. The indirect impacts associated with future growth facilitated by the project are described and mitigation guidelines recommended, where appropriate.

4.1.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

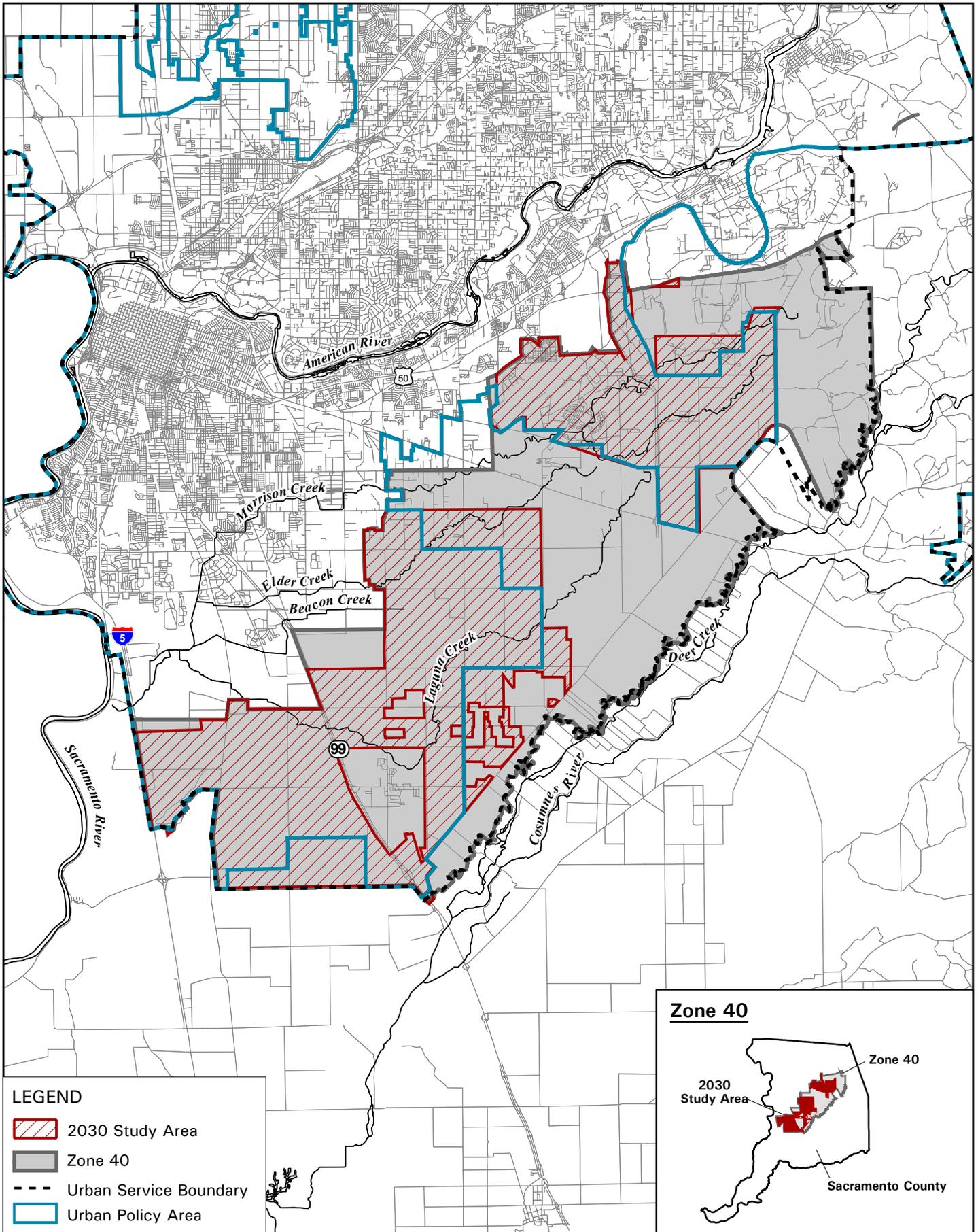
ZONE 40

Zone 40 covers a geographical area of approximately 86,000 acres in central Sacramento County. This area extends from the west near Interstate 5 (I-5) to the northeast in the vicinity of Douglas Road and Grantline Road (Exhibit 4.1-1). The Deer Creek floodplain and the southern boundary of Sacramento County's Urban Services Boundary (USB) border Zone 40 on the south.

The USB is defined in the 1993 General Plan as the ultimate extent of urban services in the unincorporated County. The Morrison Creek stream group crosses the central portion of Zone 40 in an east-west direction. The topography of Zone 40 is generally flat with a gradual upward incline to the east. Much of Zone 40 consists of rural land uses, including large and small farm operations and associated rural residences. Portions of the City of Rancho Cordova lie within the northeastern boundary of Zone 40, and portions of the City of Elk Grove lie within the southwestern boundary. Urban development in Zone 40 is concentrated in or near the cities and in the Mather/Sunrise area of the county.

Relationship between Zone 40, 2030 Study Area, and the Urban Policy Area

The 2030 Study Area is the area where development of industrial, commercial, office and residential land uses is expected to occur and where demand for water is expected to be



Sources: Sacramento County 2003, EDAW 2003

Zone 40

2002 Zone 40 Water Supply Master Plan EIR
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EXHIBIT 4.1-1



concentrated over the planning horizon of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP (2030). The 2030 Study Area consists of approximately 46,600 acres or a little more than half of the total area in Zone 40. The southern boundary of the 2030 Study Area generally coincides with Sacramento County's Urban Policy Area (UPA), which is the area anticipated to build out with urban development within the planning horizon of the General Plan (year 2024) (Exhibit 4.1-1).

Holding Capacity of the UPA

The UPA was established based on 1990 growth projections and an anticipated buildout of six dwelling units per acre. Using General Plan growth projections, County planners estimated a UPA holding capacity of 172,150 housing units. Population projections conducted in 1993 revealed a demand of 94,000 units for the 20-year period between 1990 and 2010. Beyond the UPA is the USB, which is the ultimate extent of urban service provisions, such as water service.

Subsequent to the 1990 population projections and adoption of the 1993 General Plan, significant planning and development occurred within the UPA. New development and specific planning areas have been approved in the Laguna area of Elk Grove, which is west of State Route 99 and north of the USB; in eastern Elk Grove, which is east of State Route 99; and in the Vineyard community area, which is north of Elk Grove in unincorporated Sacramento County. Additionally, a large private project, Rio del Oro, is proposed on Aerojet property just north of Douglas Road in the City of Rancho Cordova. Development densities for approved projects have averaged approximately 4.4 dwelling units per acre, below the proposed General Plan density requirement of 6.0 units per acre. As a result, housing to meet anticipated population growth now absorbs approximately one-third more land than average under 1993 General Plan assumptions.

Policy LU-76 of the County General Plan requires that a 20-year supply of land within the UPA be available to accommodate estimated growth for the unincorporated area. This policy requires a periodic review and expansion of the UPA to maintain an adequate supply of land to meet projected housing demands and establishes specific guidelines for calculating future growth and analyzing remaining capacity.

In a report titled *Staff Report to Board of Supervisors from the Department of Planning and Community Development* (October 2002), County planners examined holding capacity for the 25-year period between 2000 and 2025. That report superseded the earlier 1993 growth projections. According to the report, demand in the unincorporated County area was estimated at 85,505 dwelling units for the 25-year period while supply within the UPA could generate a holding capacity of only 80,952 units. The report also found that, based on absorption rates, the remaining unincorporated area has a land supply to accommodate only an additional 22 years of growth. With the requirement that the UPA hold a 20-year land supply consistent with LU-76, it is anticipated that within 2 years the UPA will need to expand. Where this expansion is to occur has yet to be defined, although the 2030 Study Area does include land outside the UPA, as described below.

SCWA's water supply needs in combination with other water supply needs in the region were evaluated in the 1999 Water Forum EIR. As an outcome of that process, SCWA agreed to a series of actions and commitments related to surface water diversions, dry-year supplies, fishery flows, habitat management, water conservation, and groundwater management. Based on SCWA's agreement to adhere to the requirements of the WFA, the water supplies contemplated in the EIR were used to calculate an area of development that could be served by these supplies. The EIR evaluated the provision of water for a 30-year planning period based on population projections. In preparation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP, the SCWA determined the land area of urban development that could be served by the firm water supplies negotiated under existing contracts in the WFA over a 30-year planning period.

Determination of Zone 40 2030 Study Area

The 2030 Study Area is calculated based on firm water supply to support development of 48,000 acres. This acreage figure includes four areas totaling 8,400 acres that are outside the current UPA boundary (Exhibit 4.1-1). Given the timeframe of the WSMP, the available firm water allocation, and the likelihood that the UPA will expand, pursuant to LU-76, the County Department of Water Resources identified four likely areas outside the UPA where potentially logical expansion might occur. The four areas were selected to be within the 2030 Study Area based on adjacency to the UPA, identification as an active project, and/or inclusion within newly formed cities.

Identification of these areas is an educated best guess. Whether these four areas actually convert from present land uses to urban development is the responsibility of the local land use authorities, who could decide to use the firm water allocation elsewhere, consistent with their land use policies and the water policies governing Zone 40 and SCWA. No firm water is identified or known to be available to provide water service beyond the 48,000-acre area addressed in the WSMP. Additionally, consistent with General Plan Land Use Policy LU-57, those lands already within the UPA will be provided water first, before water is provided to areas outside the UPA.

Described below are the four areas that are outside the UPA and within the 2030 Study Area.

1. Area between the UPA and USB West of State Route 99. This area, adjacent to the USB, is mostly within the City of Elk Grove. It is adjacent to the UPA on three sides and is west of the City of Elk Grove's approved Lent Ranch Mall. Included within this area are four specific plan areas (East Franklin, Laguna Ridge, Southeast, and Lent Ranch) and one comprehensive plan (South Pointe). It is designated urban development and agricultural-urban reserve on the County's Land Use Diagram. This area has few wetland features but provides foraging habitat for wildlife species and is near the County's dairy lands.
2. Area Adjacent to Historic Elk Grove. This area is designated agricultural-residential on the County's Land Use Diagram. It is west of State Route 99, bordered by the UPA on

two sides and within the boundaries of the City of Elk Grove. Included within this area are the Elk Grove Specific Plan and the Elk Grove Triangle Comprehensive Plan. The area is currently divided into numerous rural-residential parcels that limit agricultural viability and provide only marginal foraging habitat for wildlife.

3. Gap Area. The area is adjacent to the North Vineyard Station Specific Plan and the Vineyard Springs Comprehensive Plan areas in unincorporated Sacramento County. It is designated agricultural-residential, agricultural-urban reserve, and general agriculture (20 acres) on the County's Land Use Diagram. It has limited wetland features, of which most are in the agricultural-urban reserve portion.
4. Rio del Oro. This area, which is on property owned by Aerojet, is adjacent to the UPA on three sides. It is directly north of the Sunrise Douglas Specific Plan area and within the new city of Rancho Cordova. It is designated on the County's Land Use Diagram as extensive and intensive industrial, although an application has been submitted by Aerojet to convert the property to residential and commercial uses. Portions of the area contain vernal pool densities and values similar to those found just south in the Sunridge development area.

DIRECT EFFECT AREA

The direct effect area is those areas where proposed facilities recommended in the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would be constructed. These facilities include a surface water diversion structure, surface water treatment plant, groundwater wells, groundwater treatment, and conveyance pipelines. The 2002 Zone 40 WSMP discusses three options for the provision of facilities to treat and deliver surface water and groundwater for use in the 2030 Study Area. Locations for these facilities have been conceptually described in the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP and are identified in Exhibit 3-4; this section discusses existing land uses in these areas. As more project-specific information becomes available regarding the precise location and size of proposed facilities, additional environmental review would be conducted to determine project-specific environmental impacts.

In general, the 2030 Study Area consists of existing and proposed residential, commercial, and industrial development concentrated in and near the cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova and in the Mather-Sunrise area. These areas are surrounded by rural residential development (i.e., development on 1 acre or more), agricultural operations, and undeveloped land.

Under all land use proposals, groundwater extraction wells, treatment facilities, and pump stations would be constructed throughout the 2030 Study Area. These facilities would be 1 to 10 acres in size and would likely be sited near proposed developments projects served by these facilities.

Freeport Regional Water Project

Under this option, FRWA, consisting of SCWA and the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), would jointly construct a surface water diversion structure near the Pocket community on the Sacramento River and a raw water conveyance pipeline to Bradshaw Road. SCWA would independently construct a surface water treatment facility in the vicinity of Bradshaw Road and Florin Road in the central portion of Zone 40. A SCWA Zone 40 raw water pipeline would connect the diversion structure to the treatment facility. EBMUD would continue the raw water pipeline to the Folsom South Canal, where its surface water would be conveyed to the Mokelumne River Aqueduct.

The surface water diversion structure would be constructed near the Pocket community in south Sacramento, on the Sacramento River (Exhibit 3-7). The Pocket area is an urban community that lies adjacent to open lands and Interstate 5 on the eastern levee of the Sacramento River. The project area consists of residential and agricultural uses, the City of Sacramento's Bartley-Cavenaugh Golf Course, and commercial businesses. Interstate 5 is located between the Pocket community and the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWWTP).

The SCWA surface water treatment plant would be constructed in the central area of Zone 40 near the intersection of Bradshaw Road and Florin Road. In general, this area consists of undeveloped, grazing, and agricultural land, rural residences, small farming operations, and limited commercial development.

This water supply option was evaluated in the EIR/EIS for the Freeport Regional Water Project (FRWA and USBR 2003), and land use impacts are summarized as appropriate, below.

Sacramento County Water Agency Freeport Water Treatment Plant Project

Under this option, SCWA would construct a surface water diversion structure in the same general location as the Freeport Regional Water Project (discussed above) and a water treatment facility on or near the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's (SRCSD) Bufferlands (Exhibit 3-8). Raw water pipelines would connect the diversion structure to the treatment plant.

The Bufferlands surround the SRWWTP and are intended to maintain a buffer zone between SRWWTP operations and surrounding residential and industrial development. The Bufferlands consist of a 1,000- to 3,000-foot-wide strip of undeveloped grasslands and agricultural land around the south, east, and extreme north SRWWTP boundaries; and natural preserve land around the Laguna and Morrison Creek drainages. A Land Use Management Plan was adopted in 1983 by SRCSD to manage the undeveloped lands surrounding the treatment plant facilities and the privately held land bordering the SRWWTP property. The plan establishes policies to permanently restrict development around the treatment plant by encouraging County land use designations and zoning that are not affected by noise, odor, chemical use, light and glare, dust, traffic, and aesthetic impacts associated with

the treatment plant facilities. Uses that can coexist with these factors without creating conflicts or adverse impacts may be considered by the County and SRCSD.

SRCSD is developing a Bufferlands Master Plan to establish a long-term management direction for the Bufferlands that would maintain the existing buffer zone, provide for future plant expansion and changes in operation, and protect and enhance the area's environmental resources. The Bufferlands Master Plan would provide guidelines and policies for alternative land uses, visitor use and access, and vegetation and wildlife management. The Bufferlands Master Plan is currently undergoing environmental review as part of the SRWWTP 2020 Master Plan process.

Sacramento County Water Agency/City of Sacramento Joint Project

Under this option, SCWA would purchase 80 mgd of dedicated capacity at the SRWWTP and would construct a conveyance pipeline that connects the treatment plant to distribution pipelines in Zone 40 (Exhibit 3-9). The City is currently expanding its diversion and treatment facilities, which are just downstream from the confluence with the American River. The environmental effects associated with expansion of these facilities were evaluated in a Final EIR that was certified by the City in November 2000. However, the environmental effects of construction of the water conveyance pipelines to Zone 40 were not evaluated in that EIR. As a result, this Draft EIR evaluates these facilities at a program level.

The treatment plant is a public facility located in a Special Planning District. The existing treatment plant is located at 101 Bercut Drive near the southeast corner of Interstate 5/Richards Boulevard interchange. Motels, fast-food restaurants, and a shipping yard are located to the north, the Union Pacific Railroad rail yards are located to the south, Interstate 5 is located to the west, and commercial and residential development is located east of the facility.

INDIRECT (GROWTH) EFFECT AREA

Indirect effect areas are those areas that are not physically changed by the construction of facilities, but that could experience secondary environmental effects as a result of the project. In the case of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP, the project would provide water to serve existing and planned growth in the 2030 Study Area. Provision of this water would remove one obstacle to growth that could result in adverse environmental impacts (e.g., air quality, traffic, biological resources) as a result of increased development. The 2002 Zone 40 WSMP indirect effect area encompasses those areas in the 2030 Study Area that would not support proposed infrastructure recommended in the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP (direct effect area), but could be developed as growth occurs in the region. In general, the indirect effect area includes all undeveloped land in the 2030 Study Area, with the exception of any designated preserve land. Other areas outside of the 2030 Study Area that could be indirectly affected by the project include the Cosumnes River and its tributaries between Sloughouse and State Route 99 as a result of increased groundwater pumping, and the Sacramento River between its confluence with the American River to the Delta as a result of increased surface water diversions at the

SRWWTP intake or proposed Freeport diversion. (Potential indirect impacts to the Consumnes River and Sacramento River are discussed in Section 4.1, Water Quality and Section 4.6, Biological Resources.)

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN LAND USE AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS IN THE 2030 STUDY AREA

The 1993 Sacramento County General Plan identifies goals, policies, and programs for land in its planning area. The General Plan established land use designations, within which development must be consistent. All projects proposed in the unincorporated County must conform to the land use designations specified on the General Plan Map.

The 2030 Study Area includes unincorporated areas in the County of Sacramento and portions of the cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova. The City of Elk Grove was incorporated in July 2000 and has prepared a Draft General Plan for which a draft EIR has been prepared and released for public review. The City of Rancho Cordova, incorporated in July 2003, has initiated its General Plan process. During the interim period prior to the adoption of a City General Plan, both of these cities have adopted and are using the Sacramento County General Plan as their guiding land use document.

Through the planning process, the cities will develop a vision of how development and land use patterns in the city should change over time. This vision could result in more or less intense development in certain areas of each city. To the degree that proposed land use assumptions differ from those described in the 1993 Sacramento County General Plan for the 2030 Study Area, the EIRs for the general plans will address impacts associated with the proposed changed land uses and corresponding changes in water demand assumptions. The following is a general discussion of the existing land uses, agricultural lands, and applicable County of Sacramento General Plan policies and zoning code provision for the 2030 Study Area.

Land Uses

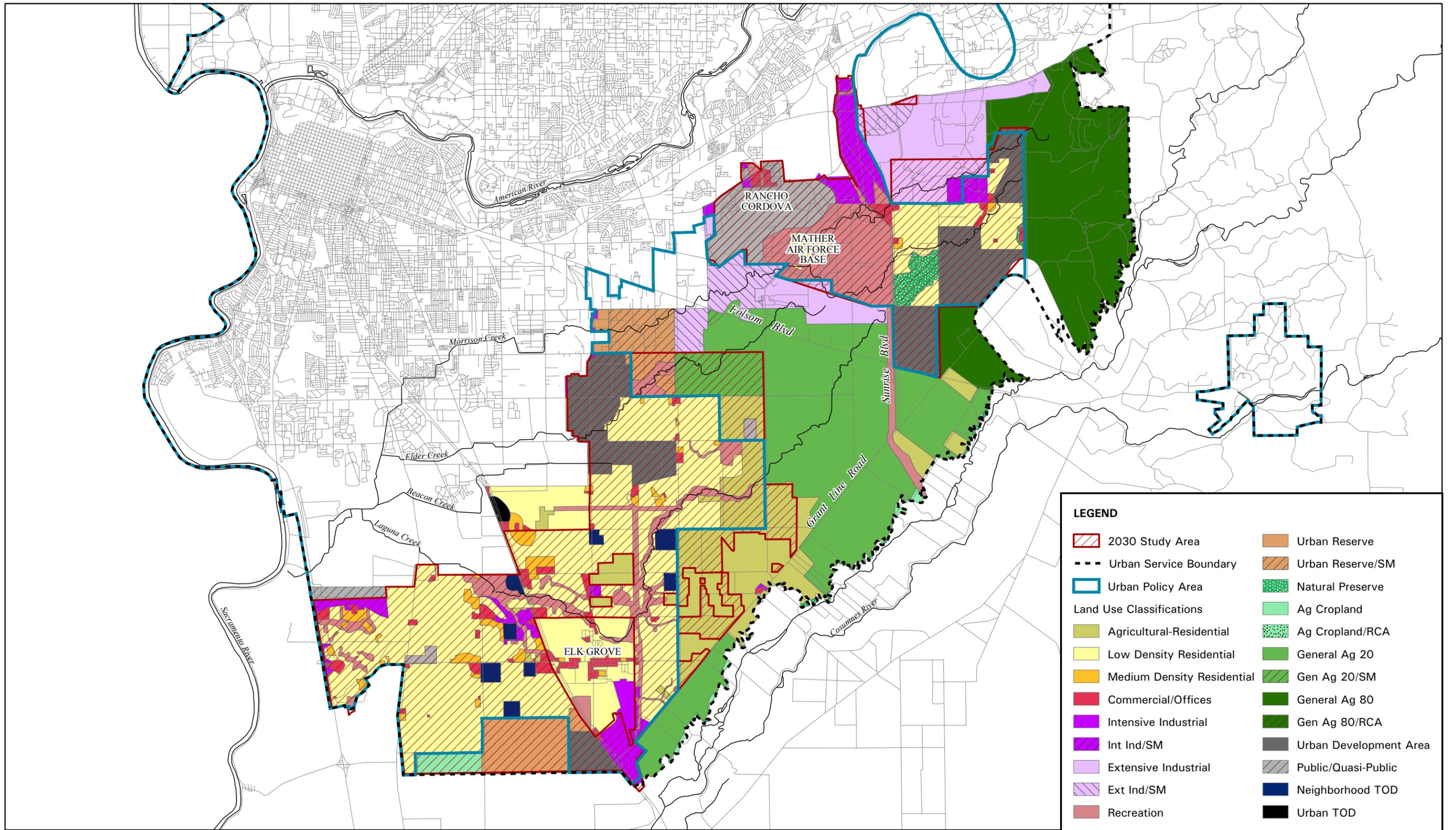
The 2030 Study Area includes a mix of land use designations as depicted in Exhibit 4.1-2. The approximate number of acres of each land use designation in the 2030 Study Area is listed in Table 4.1-1. Descriptions of each land use designation can be found in the County of Sacramento General Plan (1993), which is hereby incorporated by reference.

The Bufferlands, a proposed location for the water treatment plant, are designated by the Sacramento County General Plan (1993) as Natural Preserve and Commercial and Industrial Core Area. The land uses in the vicinity of the proposed Bradshaw Road and Florin Road water treatment plant site include low-density residential, urban development area, commercial and office, agricultural-residential, recreation, general agriculture, and aggregate resource. Water pipelines proposed under all 2002 Zone 40 WSMP options would be located primarily in existing roadways. These roadways pass through a mix of land uses, including

low-density residential, agricultural-residential, medium-density residential, transit oriented development, commercial and office, recreation, natural preserve, and general agriculture.

| Table 4.1-1 County Land Use Designations in the 2030 Study Area | |
|--|---------------|
| Land Use Designation | Acreage |
| Agricultural-Residential | 3,880 |
| Low-Density Residential | 17,330 |
| Medium-Density Residential | 940 |
| Neighborhood Transit-Oriented District | 720 |
| Commercial/Offices | 1,110 |
| Intensive Industrial | 2,700 |
| Intensive Industrial/Surface Mining | 40 |
| Extensive Industrial | 1,240 |
| Extensive Industrial/Surface Mining | 60 |
| Recreation | 5,520 |
| Urban Reserve | 1,680 |
| Urban Reserve/Surface Mining | 390 |
| Natural Preserve | 560 |
| Agricultural Cropland | 450 |
| Agricultural Cropland/Resource Conservation Area | 3 |
| General Agriculture 20 | 1,260 |
| General Agriculture/Surface Mining | 60 |
| General Agriculture 80 | 3 |
| Urban Development Area | 6,040 |
| Public/Quasi-Public | 2,570 |
| Total acreage | 46,556 |
| Note: Numbers above 10 have been rounded. | |
| Sources: Sacramento County 2003, MWH 2003 | |

The proposed diversion structure near Freeport and the City of Sacramento Water Treatment Plant is not located in the 2030 Study Area or the unincorporated County (Exhibit 4.1-2). These proposed facilities would be located in the City of Sacramento, where land use is guided by the City of Sacramento General Plan (1988) and other specific and community plans. The City's General Plan designates the area near the proposed Freeport diversion facility as public/quasi-public, community/neighborhood commercial and offices, and low-density residential, and the City of Sacramento Water Treatment Plant as transportation/utilities.



Sources: Sacramento County 2003, EDAW 2003

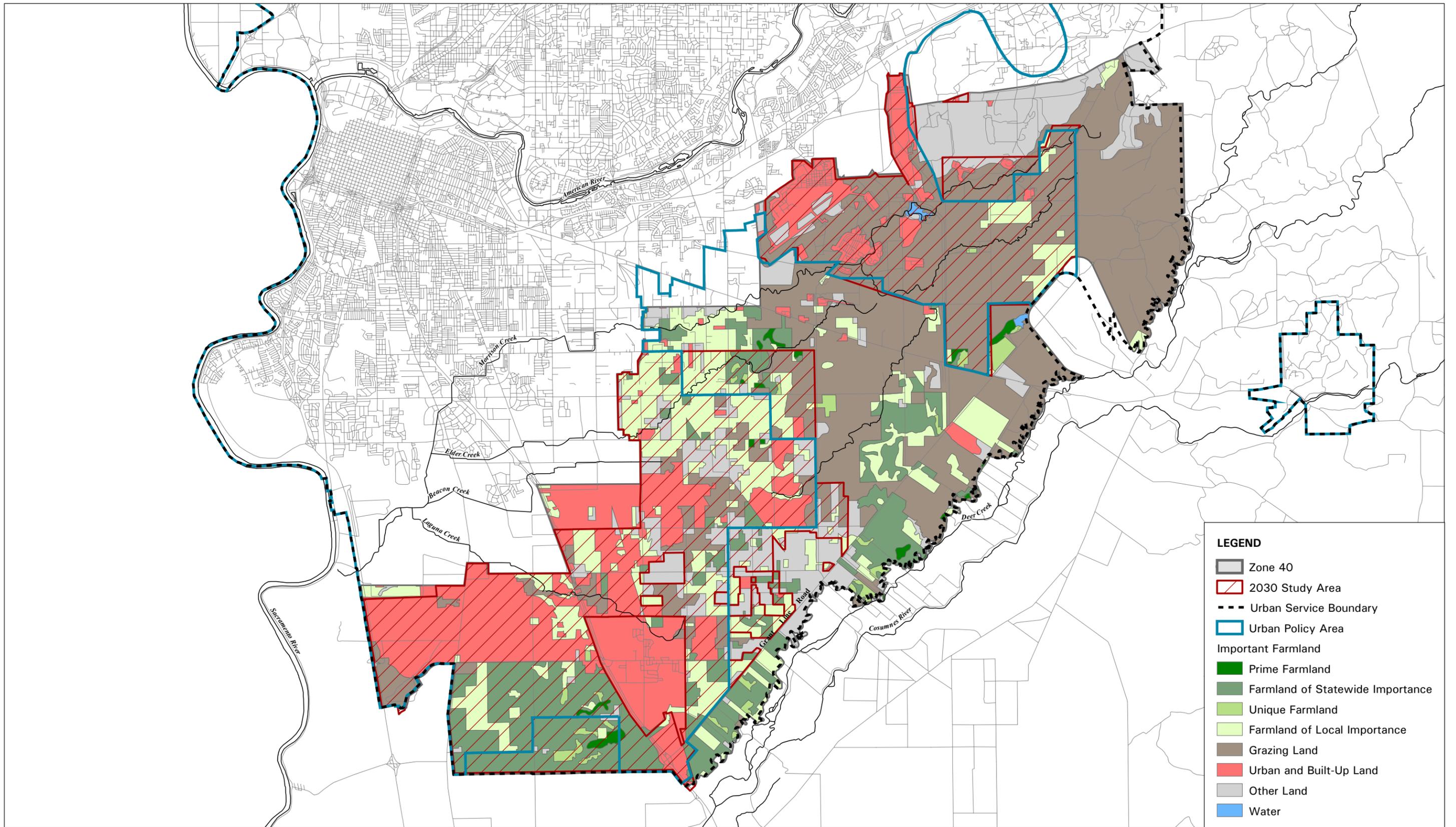
Land Use Classifications in the Study Area

2002 Zone 40 Water Supply Master Plan EIR

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EXHIBIT 4.1-2





Sources: FMMP 2000, EDAW 2003

Important Farmland

Sacramento County Zoning Code

The Sacramento County Zoning Code, amended in 1997, regulates land uses within the unincorporated territory of Sacramento County. The Zoning Code identifies regulations for design and siting of buildings (i.e., building setbacks), parking requirements, size and use of lots and yards, and mix of land uses within an area. Section 301-13, Utilities and Public Services Uses, provides that the Planning Commission, after a public hearing has been conducted, may issue a conditional use permit for a public utility or public service if the Commission determined that the use is necessary for the public health, convenience, safety, or public welfare. For those public services or utilities where County Board of Supervisors is responsible for administration of the budget (i.e., Sacramento County Water Agency), a conditional use permit is not required.

Prime Farmlands

Farmland in the 2030 Study Area was identified with assistance from the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). The FMMP was developed in 1982 by the California Department of Conservation to meet a critical need for data regarding the location of farmland, grazing land and urban development in the state. Prime Farmland is defined as those lands with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain the long-term production of agricultural crops. The land must be cropped and supported by a developed irrigation water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality during the growing season. Land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the two update cycles prior to mapping date.

Prime Farmland is primarily found in the central and southwestern portion of the 2030 Study Area. These small areas of Prime Farmland are surrounded by larger areas of Farmland of Local Importance and Farmland of Statewide Importance (Exhibit 4.1-3). Both of these farmland designations identify lands that are similar to Prime Farmland but have minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or soils with less ability to hold and store moisture. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and local advisory committees have found that Farmlands of Local Importance are important to the local agricultural economy. The Sacramento County General Plan has adopted policies for the avoidance and protection of important farmlands. Specifically, Conservation Element Policy 55 (CO-55) states that projects that develop more than 50 acres of prime or statewide important farmlands would have a significant effect.

Table 4.1-2 presents the approximate acreage of lands within the 2030 Study Area designated by the FMMP as important farmlands. The Bufferlands are designated by FMMP as Grazing Land, Other Land, and Urban Built-Up Land. There are small areas of Farmland of Statewide Importance and Farmland of Local Importance in the Bufferlands. The City of Sacramento Water Treatment Plant site and the Freeport Water site are designated as Urban/Built-up land. Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance are located in

the general vicinity of Bradshaw and Florin Roads near the proposed water treatment facility identified in the Freeport Regional Water Project option.

| Table 4.1-2 FMMP Designations in the 2030 Study Area | |
|---|---------|
| FMMP Designation | Acreage |
| Prime Farmland | 270 |
| Farmland of Statewide Importance | 6,900 |
| Farmland of Local Importance | 8,700 |
| Unique Farmland | 400 |
| Urban/Built-Up Land | 12,500 |
| Open Water | 70 |
| Grazing Land | 13,900 |
| Other | 4,000 |
| <p>Note: Approximately 34,900 acres of land within the 2030 Study Area are designated by the Sacramento County General Plan for urban, industrial, public, or transit-oriented land uses. Approximately 2,400 acres are designated for agricultural or natural preserve purposes.</p> <p>Source: CDC 2000</p> | |

COUNTY GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

Relevant Sacramento County General Plan land use policies applicable to the 2030 Study Area are identified in Table 4.1-3 (Sacramento County 1993).

| Table 4.1-3 Sacramento County General Plan Land Use Policies | |
|---|---|
| Element | Policy |
| Land Use Element | |
| LU-19 | Incompatible land uses should be buffered from one another by methods that retain community character and do not consume large land areas or create pedestrian barriers. |
| LU-57 | The County shall not provide urban services beyond the Urban Policy Area, except when the County determines the need for health and safety purposes. |
| LU-58 | The County shall maintain an Urban Service Boundary that defines the long-range plans (beyond twenty years) for urbanization and extension of public infrastructure and services, and defines important areas for protecting as open space and agriculture. |
| LU-60 | Sewer and water treatment and delivery systems shall not provide for greater capacity than that authorized by the General Plan. |
| LU-76 | The urban policy area is intended to provide a 20-year supply of developable land sufficient to accommodate projected growth. The UPA shall also include additional lands to ensure an appropriate supply. It is the policy and intent of the County to expand the UPA at a |

**Table 4.1-3
Sacramento County General Plan Land Use Policies**

| Element | Policy |
|----------------------------------|---|
| | <p>minimum of five year intervals to maintain a constant adequate supply of land.</p> <p>Guidelines to be considered by the Board in determining the expansion of the UPA include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Buildout rates by type of use, unity, and density for the previous 5-year period. ▶ Infill trends and opportunities. ▶ Population and job growth projections as reflected by a minimum of three independent sources. ▶ Evidence that the infrastructure capacity and service availability exist or can be extended to the property. |
| Public Facilities Element | |
| PF-1 | New water facilities shall be planned to minimize impacts to in-stream water flow in the Sacramento and American Rivers. |
| Conservation Element | |
| CO-1 | Long range plans for accommodating population and economic growth shall not be based on the assumption of additional supplies from future storage facilities on the Sacramento, American, or Cosumnes River unless the projects are approved and funding secured. |
| CO-3 | SCWA shall continue to work with area water purveyors to develop a conjunctive use program and assist other purveyors in obtaining surface water necessary to implement conjunctive use. |
| CO-4 | SCWA, working in conjunction with the CCOMP and the area water purveyors, shall every five years reevaluate water needs based on long-term growth consistent with the General Plan. |
| CO-18 | Work with area purveyors to investigate and implement a conjunctive use program between groundwater and surface water supplies, consistent with meeting the in-stream flow requirements of the American River. |
| CO-20 | In new development areas, as identified in Figure III-1 of the Land Use Element, entitlements for urban development shall not be granted until a Master Plan for water supply has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors and all agreements and financing for supplemental water supplies are in place. The land use planning process may proceed, and specific plans and rezoning may be approved. |
| CO-21 | The Master Water Plan shall include three planning objectives which direct the Plan to consider alternate conservation measures, achieve safe yield of groundwater supply in conjunction with development in new urban growth areas, and formulate a five year monitoring program to review water plan progress. |
| CO-22 | Development entitlements shall not be granted in areas where no groundwater exists and water purveyors have reached their capacity to deliver treated water unless all necessary agreements and financing to obtain additional water supply are secured. |
| CO-25 | Should the Board of Supervisors determine that there is a significant adverse effect on groundwater, including effects on quality, no building permits for urban commercial and residential uses shall be issued. |
| CO-26 | Modify the yield estimates of ground water supply as supported by available data and, working in conjunction with area water purveyors, revise conjunctive use and other water supply policies as necessary during five year General Plan Updates. |

| Table 4.1-3 Sacramento County General Plan Land Use Policies | |
|---|---|
| Element | Policy |
| CO-29 | Discourage any nonagricultural land use in unincorporated areas with moderate to very high groundwater capability, which could allow the percolation of pollutants into the groundwater table. |
| CO-54 | Direct development away from prime or statewide important soils or otherwise provide for mitigation that slows the loss of additional farmland conversion to other uses. |
| CO-55 | Projects resulting in the conversion of more than fifty (50) acres of prime or statewide in importance farmland shall be deemed to have a significant environmental effect, as defined by CEQA. |
| CO-62 | Ensure no net loss of marsh and riparian woodland acreage, values, and functions. |
| CO-65 | In cases where complete or selective removal of riparian woodland or scrub habitat is necessary for channel maintenance, public safety, or installation of infrastructure, it will be planned and carried out, or mitigated, so as to minimize unavoidable impacts upon biological resources. |
| Source: Sacramento County 1993 | |

Intent of Sacramento County General Plan Conservation Element Policies

The Sacramento County General Plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 15, 2003, is a comprehensive statement of the goals and objectives of Sacramento County with regard to growth and development. The Conservation Element of the General Plan addresses environmental issues associated with water resources, mineral resources, material reuse, soil resources, vegetation and wildlife, and cultural resources. The Major Goal of the Conservation Element is “Natural resources managed and protected for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations while maintaining the long term ecological health and balance of the environment.” The Conservation Element includes specific goals to manage and protect the County’s natural resources. Objectives, policies, and implementation measures are identified for each resource area consistent with resource-specific goals and the Conservation Element Major Goal.

The Water Resources section of the Conservation Element “addresses the County’s objectives with respect to the use of ground and surface water for residential, commercial, and agricultural purposes. The section assesses how and from where the County intends to secure its future water supply and provides guidelines for the County’s policies on water quality, ground and surface water use, and water conservation.”

Major goals are defined in each of four areas:

- ▶ surface water supplies,
- ▶ surface water quality,
- ▶ groundwater resources, and
- ▶ water conservation.

The Groundwater Resources section describes the nature of the groundwater basin underlying Sacramento County, the history of groundwater use, and groundwater issues of concern. The goal of the Groundwater Resources section is “Adequate long-term quantity and high quality of ground water resources for both human and natural systems.” Two of the objectives defined in the General Plan to achieve this goal are:

1. Groundwater overdraft eliminated by the year 2000 and a balanced groundwater table thereafter.
2. Growth managed to protect groundwater quality and supply.

These sections of the General Plan include discussions that provide context and support for recommended water policies. These discussions include the statement that “[t]he best available estimate of safe yield, the amount of groundwater which can be withdrawn without depleting present groundwater levels, is 357,00 AF/yr.,” and reference the County Water Plan [sic] adopted in 1978 and the Water Policy Statement adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 10, 1993.

The Sacramento County Water Plan Policy Report adopted by the Board in February 1978 is based on the 1976 Sacramento County-Wide Water Plan (“1976 WP”) prepared by CH2M Hill Engineers. Much of the 1976 WP is based on the California Department of Water Resources Bulletin No. 118-3 (1974) and Bulletin No. 104-11 (1975).

- ▶ Bulletin 118-3 defined a “safe-yield” of the Sacramento County groundwater basin at 355,000 AFA (the approximate average annual groundwater production from 1960 through 1969), where safe yield is defined as “the average annual amount of ground water that could be pumped without causing either a decrease or increase in water table levels on an average annual basis.”
- ▶ The 1976 WP recommended that average groundwater production in Sacramento County not exceed 355,000 AFA, predicting that at this level the groundwater table would continue to fall until 1995, when it would flatten out/stabilize. The 1976 WP recommended that base demands, including new water demands through the year 2020, be met with surface water and that groundwater be used to meet peak summer demands (May through October). The 1976 WP recommended new surface water supplies that included 260,000 AFA diverted from the Folsom South Canal (described as “part of the Bureau’s Auburn-Folsom South Unit which includes Auburn Dam”), 93,000 AFA for Carmichael and Rancho Cordova from a new treatment plant on the American River upstream of Fairbairn, water supply provided by the City of Folsom west to the Folsom South Canal, perfection of the City of Sacramento’s water rights, and surface supply to the foothills area from the proposed Cosumnes River Project and County Line Reservoir.

General Plan Policy CO-20 has been a particularly important factor in the determination of available water supply for new development in Zone 40. CO-20 states:

In new development areas, as identified in Figure III-1 of the Land Use Element, entitlements for urban development shall not be granted until a Master Plan for water supply has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors and all agreements and financing for supplemental water supplies are in place. The land use planning process may proceed, and specific plans and rezoning may be approved.

Nearly all the “new development areas” are in Zone 40, including East Franklin, East Elk Grove, Mather, and Sunrise-Douglas.

In the context of the discussion cited above, CO-20 was intended to ensure that new water for specific new development areas would be provided from supplemental water supplies (i.e., not groundwater). This would result in no net increase in long-term groundwater production in order to meet the objective of eliminating groundwater overdraft because this was defined in the several policy adoptions and studies noted above: holding groundwater production at the level defined in the 1976 WP and meeting all new demands from surface water. The Board has applied this policy in the following manner:

1. The 1987 Zone 40 Master Water Supply Plan has been supplemented by various approved Water Supply Master Plans for each of the adopted specific plans in the subject area.
2. The allowable entitlements in the subject area have been defined by determining the level of development that can be supported by ensured supplemental water supplies (i.e., the number of equivalent dwelling units [EDUs] that can be approved is calculated by dividing the volume of water available from specific sources of supplemental supply by the 1987 WMP unit water demand factor). The supplemental supplies defined to date include:
 - ▶ 1,000 AFA of recycled water purchased from the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District and
 - ▶ 7,200 AFA currently available from SCWA’s CVP contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (PL 101-514) and subject to the terms of a wheeling agreement with the City of Sacramento.
3. Because the unit water demand of irrigated agriculture is approximately equal to the urban unit water demand, agricultural land irrigated with groundwater can be granted development entitlements without a supplemental source of water supply because the net amount of groundwater production remains unchanged.

The Water Policy Statement adopted by the Board of Supervisors and SCWA Board of Directors in August 1993 also frames the General Plan water policies that followed it. Although the Water Forum process was just being established and its first official meeting had yet to take place, the Board acknowledged the value of the collaborative process and said it would reconsider policy in the future based on the outcome of the Water Forum. The policy statement includes the following key points:

- ▶ Protect instream and public trust values of the American River.
- ▶ American River water will be diverted downstream of its confluence with the Sacramento River.
- ▶ Acceptance of Hodge flows.
- ▶ Sacramento County does not believe that water or this policy should be utilized as a means of controlling growth or development.

All these points were addressed in the 2000 WFA EIR. The WFA also defined “sustainable yields” for each of the three groundwater subbasins in Sacramento County based on extensive hydrological analysis. The total Water Forum sustainable yield significantly exceeds the “best available estimate of safe yield” defined in the 1993 General Plan; however, General Plan Policy CO-26 (Modify the yield estimates of ground water supply as supported by available data...) acknowledges that new data could be used to support a redefinition of safe yield volume.

SPECIFIC, COMMUNITY, AND HABITAT PLANS IN THE 2030 STUDY AREA

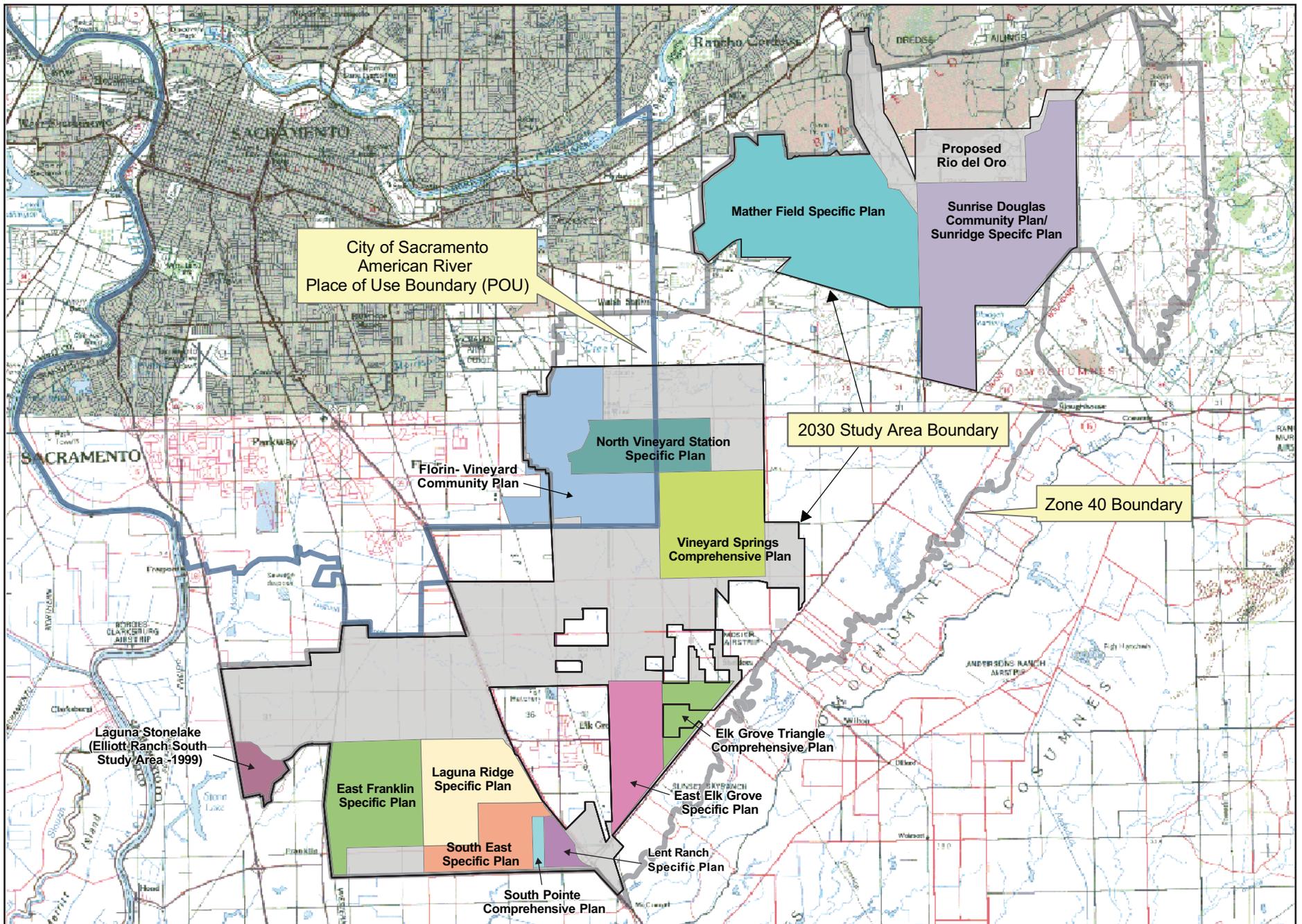
The 2030 Study Area encompasses several approved Sacramento County specific, community, and comprehensive plans. These plans serve to implement the County’s General Plan for a focused area and address development needs, location of new public facilities and infrastructure financing in more detail than the adopted General Plan. These plans are described below.

Adopted Plans

Eight approved plans are located in the 2030 Study Area. The geographical boundaries of these planning areas are depicted on Exhibit 4.1-4. Brief descriptions of the land uses proposed in these planning areas are provided below.

Mather Field Specific Plan – The Mather Field Specific Plan (approved in 1997) is located south of U.S. Highway 50, west of Sunrise Boulevard, north of Kiefer Boulevard and east of Bradshaw Road. This planning area encompasses 5,716 acres in the northern portion of the 2030 Study Area. The specific plan provides guidance for the conversion of Mather Field from military to civilian uses. The plan proposes 375 acres of residential land uses, 212 acres of commercial and office development, 2,789 acres of industrial development, and 675 acres of open space and recreational uses (Sacramento County 1997)

East Franklin Specific Plan – The East Franklin Specific Plan (approved in 2000) is located in the City of Elk Grove and is generally bounded by Elk Grove Boulevard on the north, Franklin Boulevard and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks on the west, Bruceville Road on the east, and Bilby Road on the south. A small (75 acre) portion of the specific plan area extends south of Bilby Road in the southwest corner of the plan area. The specific plan proposes 1,891 acres of



Source: Sacramento County Water Agency and MWH 2003

Specific and Community Plans in the 2030 Study Area

EXHIBIT 4.1-4

residential development, and 583 acres of commercial and recreational development (City of Elk Grove 2000).

East Elk Grove Specific Plan – The East Elk Grove Specific Plan (approved in 1996) is located in the City of Elk Grove and is bounded by Bond Road to the north, Bradshaw Road to the east, Grantline Road to the south, and Waterman Road to the west. The specific plan consists of 980 acres of residential land uses and 458 acres of commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses (Sacramento County 1996).

Lent Ranch Marketplace Special Planning Area – The Lent Ranch Marketplace Special Planning Area (approved in June 2001) is located in the City of Elk Grove. This special planning area consists of 280 acres of residential land uses and 15 acres of commercial land uses (City of Elk Grove 2001).

Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/Sun Ridge Specific Plan – The Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/Sun Ridge Specific Plan is located in the City of Rancho Cordova. The Sunridge Specific Plan was approved concurrently with the Sunrise Douglas Community Plan in 2002. The 6,042-acre Sunrise Douglas Community Plan area is located in the City of Rancho Cordova in the northern portion of the 2030 Study Area. The Sun Ridge Specific Plan encompasses 2,632 acres, approximately 42.6% of the community plan area, located east of Sunrise Boulevard, north of Kiefer Boulevard, west of Grant Line Road and south of Douglas Boulevard. The specific plan proposes to develop approximately 1,951 acres with residential and school land uses and 680 acres with commercial, parks, open space and drainage land uses. The community plan proposes to develop a maximum of 22,686 dwelling units and 18.8 million square feet of commercial and office space (Sacramento County 2001).

Elliott Ranch South (Laguna Stonelake) Specific Plan – The Elliott Ranch South Specific Plan (approved in 1996) is located in the unincorporated portion of Sacramento County in the southern portion of the 2030 Study Area. The specific plan consists of 349 acres of residential land uses and 120 acres of commercial, parks, open space and drainage detention land uses (Sacramento County 1996).

Vineyard Springs Comprehensive Plan – The Vineyard Springs Comprehensive Plan (approved in 2001) is located in the unincorporated portion of Sacramento County in the central portion of the 2030 Study Area. The comprehensive plan consists of 2,129 acres of residential land uses and 431 acres of commercial, recreation, and drainage land uses (Sacramento County 2001).

North Vineyard Station Specific Plan – The North Vineyard Specific Plan (approved 1998) is located in unincorporated Sacramento County in the central portion of the 2030 Study Area. The specific plan area is 1,594 acres bounded by Florin Road on the north, Gerber Road on the south, Elder Creek on the west and the extension of Vineyard Road on the east. The specific plan consists of 1,488 acres of residential land uses and 67 acres of commercial and recreation land uses (Sacramento County 1998).

Proposed Plans

The cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova are reviewing proposed specific plans for Laguna Ridge, Southpointe, Rio Del Oro, Sunrise Douglass II, and the Elk Grove Triangle. Both the cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova have adopted the Sacramento County General Plan as their guiding land use document until a separate General Plan is prepared and approved by each city. No specific plans are proposed in the unincorporated areas of Sacramento County. The proposed Florin-Vineyard Community Plan would address an area in the communities of Vineyard and South Sacramento referred to as the “Gap” area.

4.1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Land use impacts would be significant if implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would:

- ▶ be incompatible with existing onsite and adjacent land uses;
- ▶ induce substantial growth that results in significant environmental consequences;
- ▶ conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project, adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect;
- ▶ convert more than fifty (50) acres of prime or statewide important farmland to nonagricultural use or involve other changes that could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Impact 4.1-1: Consistency with General Plan Goals and Policies. The 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would be consistent with the goals and policies of the Sacramento County General Plan. This impact would be less than significant.

General Plan policies that pertain to the project are identified in Table 4.1-3 (above). The 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would finance and construct the necessary facilities to serve planned growth in the 2030 Study Area as identified in the General Plan. The WSMP would be consistent with the provisions of land use policy LU-60 because implementing the WSMP would provide water to already approved or planned growth in the 2030 Study Area as identified in the County’s General Plan.

Although the 2030 Study Area includes land areas that lie outside the UPA, these areas would be provided water only if the County modified the boundaries of the UPA to include them. The project would be consistent with the provisions of land use policies LU-57 and LU-76.

Public facilities policy PF-1 requires that new water facilities be planned to minimize impacts on instream water flow in the Sacramento and American rivers. The 2002 Zone 40 WSMP proposes the conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater supplies consistent with the Water Forum's negotiated solution. The purpose of the WFA is to provide a reliable and safe water supply to the region while minimizing impacts on the Lower American River. Because the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would implement one portion of SCWA's purveyor-specific agreement, the project would be consistent with PF-1.

The Conservation Element of the General Plan has adopted several policies for the preservation of local resources (e.g., rivers, habitat, groundwater and surface water supplies). Several of these policies (CO-1, CO-3, CO-4, CO-18, CO-26) require that the County investigate and implement a conjunctive use water supply system that maximizes existing water supply entitlements. Because the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP proposes conjunctive use of local surface water and groundwater supplies, the project would be consistent with these policies.

Conservation Element policies CO-29, CO-62, and CO-65 require that the County when planning new infrastructure minimize its effects on groundwater and sensitive habitats, including riparian woodland, marsh, and scrub habitat. As described in the discussion of Impact 4.1-3, implementing the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would remove an obstacle to growth, which could result in increased urbanization and conversion of sensitive habitats. Development proposed in groundwater-capable or sensitive habitat areas would be required to consider and avoid or minimize adverse effects on these resources during their project review. The County could approve only that development that is consistent with these resource protection policies. Therefore, the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP does not cause inconsistencies with these policies.

Conservation Element policy CO-20 requires that new development areas in the county develop and adopt a water supply master plan and secure the necessary agreements and financing for water supply infrastructure before entitlements are issued for new development. Consistency of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP with this policy is not an issue because this policy is applicable to new development proposals in identified growth areas. The WSMP is a water supply plan for a specified area of Sacramento County, including County-identified growth areas, and not a development project. This impact would be less than significant.

Impact 4.1-2: Consistency of Facility Site Use with Relevant Plans and Policies. Most of the project facilities proposed for the 2030 Study Area would be consistent with urban land uses because they are necessary to provide water for urban development or they would be located below ground. However, the proposed water treatment plant could be inconsistent with existing or proposed land uses depending on its specific location near Bradshaw and Florin Roads. This would be a potentially significant impact.

The 2030 Study Area supports a mix of land uses, including residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, open space, and public and quasi-public land uses. Development of groundwater extraction and treatment facilities (i.e., 1-10 acres in size) generally is consistent

with urban land uses because these facilities are necessary to provide water to urban development. Further, underground water conveyance facilities would be consistent with surrounding land use designations because they are located beneath the ground surface and would not conflict with aboveground uses. Development of a diversion structure near the town of Freeport generally would be consistent with land uses in the area (i.e., industrial, commercial, office). No potential land use conflicts would occur with this facility. Expansion of the City of Sacramento's water treatment plant would be consistent with existing land use designations (transportation/utility). No potential land use conflicts would occur with this facility. Development of a water treatment plant (approximately 80-100 acres) near Bradshaw Road and Florin Road in central Zone 40 or on the Bufferlands could be inconsistent with existing land use designations (residential, prime farmland, natural preserve, agricultural) and planned land uses in those areas because this land use could create conflicts with adjacent land uses (i.e., air noise). This would be a potentially significant impact.

Impact 4.1-3: Growth-Inducing Impacts. Implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would result in the removal of one obstacle to growth (water supply) in the 2030 Study Area. Growth would result in the conversion of undeveloped areas in the 2030 Study Area to urban land uses resulting in impacts on biological resources, scenic resources, air quality, noise, traffic, and other effects of increased urbanization. Land use decisions would continue to be made by city and county government decision-makers with guidance provided by adopted General Plans. However, because the project would remove one obstacle to growth and accommodate substantial development in the 2030 Study Area, the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would be growth-inducing, and the resulting growth-inducing impacts would lead to significant environmental effects.

Implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would result in the provision of water to meet projected future urban demand in the 2030 Study Area. Water demand projections for the 2030 Study Area are estimates, based on a variety of factors, many of which cannot be determined with certainty. In all long-term water demand and population predictions some degree of uncertainty is involved.

Similar to water and population projections, long-range projections as to the growth impacts of future water supply are inherently imprecise. Growth in the 2030 Study Area over the next 30 years will be guided by the Sacramento County General Plan, Elk Grove General Plan (currently in Draft form), the future Rancho Cordova General Plan, and governed by county and city decision-makers. Depending on the land use decisions of the cities and County between now and 2030, more or less development could be planned and approved, or a different mix of industrial, commercial, agricultural, and residential uses could occur than has been projected. Constraints other than water supply could also limit the amount and rate of growth and influence its location (e.g. transportation constraints; wastewater conveyance and treatment facility constraints; and regulatory, political, and economic factors).

Implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would not support or stimulate growth that is inconsistent with applicable County land use and growth management plans, but would

support planned growth as approved by Sacramento County, and the cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova. It is anticipated that with implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP, future growth would first occur in the UPA followed by areas outside the UPA but within the 2030 Study Area. Implementation of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would not alter the results at which growth is projected to occur in the County General Plan. The location of future growth within the 2030 Study Area would continue to be controlled by city and county land use planning agencies as guided by the local land use plans. Further, discretionary actions by the cities and County would be required to approve developments in the 2030 Study Area. Such actions would involve additional CEQA review for specific development projects.

It can be anticipated that the general impacts of the projected long-term levels of growth in the 2030 Study Area would include: increased burdens on infrastructure including roadways, transit, schools, and other public services; increased air pollution and noise from increased traffic; overall land use changes including a reduction in land cultivated in agricultures; loss of habitat as land is developed; and loss of open space opportunities.

The following community and specific plans have undergone environmental analysis, and the impacts of land use changes proposed and approved within the 2030 study area have been evaluated and mitigated where feasible:

- ▶ Mather Field Specific Plan
- ▶ Lent Ranch Marketplace Special Planning Area
- ▶ Sunrise Douglas Community Plan/Sunridge Specific Plan
- ▶ East Franklin Specific Plan
- ▶ Elliot Ranch South (Laguna Stonelake) Specific Plan
- ▶ Vineyard Springs Comprehensive Plan
- ▶ North Vineyard Station Specific Plan
- ▶ East Elk Grove Specific Plan

For future development projects not contemplated in the above community and specific plans, project-specific environmental review and analysis of impacts and mitigation will be required before they are approved. Further, any new projects in the 2030 Study Area would be considered in light of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP to determine whether the development proposals are consistent with available water supplies identified in the WSMP. Because approval of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP would remove one obstacle to growth in the 2030 Study Area, it would be growth-inducing, and the resulting land use and growth-related environmental impacts would be significant.

Impact 4.1-4: Conversion of Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The 2030 Study Area includes Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. Although specific locations of conveyance pipelines and groundwater facilities are not known at this time, construction of these facilities on designated farmland could result in an incremental loss of this resource. Also, as an indirect impact, farmland conversion could occur as a result of unknown development supported by the water supply plan.

Although the precise amount or location cannot be known, it is reasonable to expect that some farmland conversion would occur from facility construction and/or future urban development. Therefore, this is a potentially significant impact.

The 2030 Study Area includes small areas of Prime Farmland and larger areas of Farmland of Statewide Importance and Farmland of Local Importance. Implementation of one of the water supply options described in the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP could directly or indirectly affect prime farmlands in the 2030 study area. Sacramento County General Plan Policy CO-55 considers the development of more than 50 acres of prime or statewide important farmlands to be a significant impact under CEQA. Specific information on the location of groundwater facilities and exact placement of pipelines is not known at this time. Siting and development of facilities recommended in the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP could result in the development of prime or statewide important farmlands. The intent of the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP is to supply water for urban growth in the study area. Urban development supported by this water supply could require conversion of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. Although it cannot be known at this time whether the project would develop more than 50 acres of prime or statewide important farmland, it is a reasonable possibility given the extent of facility construction and future urban development in the 2030 Study Area. Therefore, this is a potentially significant impact.

4.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION GUIDELINES

No mitigation is necessary for the following less-than-significant impact.

4.1-1: Consistency with General Plan Goals and Policies

Environmental mitigation guidelines are recommended for the following significant impacts:

4.1-2: Consistency of Facility Use with Relevant Plans and Policies. SCWA shall implement facility siting criteria that avoids land use compatibility impacts to the degree feasible. Sites shall be selected to achieve compatibility with adjacent land uses. If a site is selected that could result in land use compatibility conflicts, project facilities shall be designed and situated on the project site to reduce land use conflicts. Measures implemented could include provision of buffer areas between facilities and surrounding land use, visual screening, and reduced size of project facilities.

4.1-3: Growth-Inducing Impacts. The water supply provided by the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP was determined considering planned growth for the 2030 Study Area consistent with growth projections provided in County General Plan and during the Water Forum process. The General Plan includes policies and programs for the protection of the environment and, to the extent feasible, the avoidance or mitigation of significant effects on the environment from planned growth and development. During the normal course of the County's implementation of its General Plan policies, feasible mitigation of significant impacts from planned growth and development including compliance with a future South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan could occur. Mitigation of growth-related environmental impacts is in the

purview of the County and the cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova, through their existing land use authority. SCWA itself has no such land use authority.

4.1-4: Conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. SCWA shall design and site proposed facilities to avoid the development of prime or statewide important farmlands to the degree feasible. Because it cannot be assured that less than 50 acres of prime or statewide important farmlands would be developed, this would be a significant and unavoidable impact.

4.1.4 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Adherence to the above mitigation would reduce the project's consistency issues to a less-than-significant level. However, because land use decisions and associated development-related mitigation is the responsibility of the cities and County, the 2002 Zone 40 WSMP cannot ensure that growth-inducing environmental impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels. Further, no feasible mitigation is available that would replace lost farmland. Consequently, to fulfill the disclosure requirements of CEQA, this EIR must indicate that indirect growth and land use impacts and prime farmland impacts are significant and unavoidable.