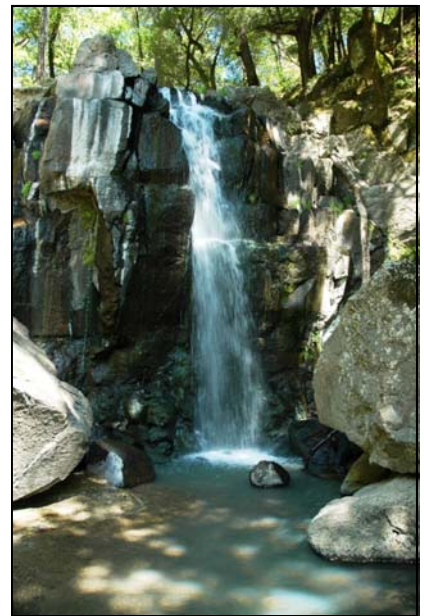


Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District

# Master Plan

2008 — 2013



January 2009



Napa County Regional Park  
and Open Space District

# About the District

The Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District is governed by a five member Board of Directors elected by the voters of Napa County. Staff support is provided primarily by Napa County under contract to the District.

## **Board of Directors**

Harold Kelly  
(Ward One)  
*hkelly@ncrposd.org*

Tony Norris  
(Ward Two)  
*tnorris@ncrposd.org*

Guy Kay  
(Ward Three)  
*gkay@ncrposd.org*

Dave Finigan  
(Ward Four)  
*dfinigan@ncrposd.org*

Myrna Abramowicz  
(Ward Five)  
*mabramowicz@ncrposd.org*

## **Staff**

John Woodbury  
(General Manager)  
*jwoodbury@ncrposd.org*

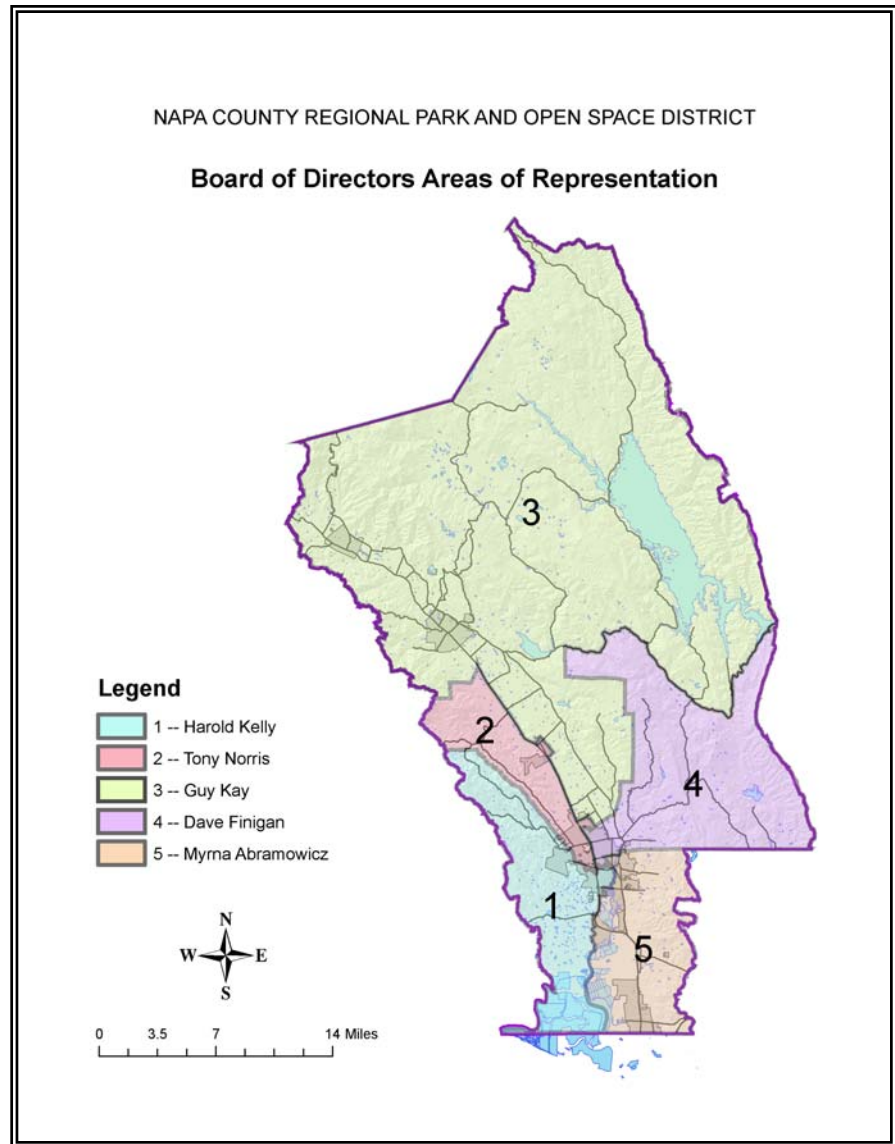
Melissa Gray  
(District Secretary)  
*mgray@ncrposd.org*

Chris Apallas  
(District Counsel)  
*capallas@ncrposd.org*

Tracy Schulze  
(District Auditor)  
*tschulze@ncrposd.org*

Tamie Frasier  
(District Treasurer)  
*tfrasier@ncrposd.org*

Chino Yip  
(Outreach Coordinator)  
*cyip@ncrposd.org*



NAPA COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT  
1195 Third Street, Room 210  
Napa, California 94559  
Telephone: 707-259-5933 Fax: 707-299-4471

[www.NapaOutdoors.org](http://www.NapaOutdoors.org)

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Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District

**Master Plan  
2008-2013**

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## Section I

# Executive Summary

On the first Tuesday of November 2006 the voters of Napa County approved Measure I. Sponsored by the County of Napa. Measure I established the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, an independent special district dedicated to protecting and stewarding important open space resources countywide and facilitating their enjoyment by the general public. The voters at the same time elected the first five members of the District's Board of Directors.

The District immediately started working on a variety of projects previously recommended by the Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, a sixteen member citizens committee appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Over a three year period prior to the formation of the District, the Committee had researched park and open space needs and opportunities in the County and prepared the proposal which became Measure I.

In its first year, the District initiated 16 park, trail and open space projects, as well as 10 organizational and financial capacity building activities. It obtained, sought or was involved with partners on capital grants totaling just over \$5 million.

At the same time that it began working on projects, the District also initiated the development of a plan to provide a comprehensive framework for guiding the future work of the District. The present Master Plan is the result of that effort. The Master Plan identifies long-term goals and guiding principles for the District, as well as identifies a work program for the period from 2008 through 2013.

The draft of this Master Plan was released for public review and comment on October 22, 2008. Public comments were taken at a special meeting of Board on the evening of November 10, 2008 at 6:30 pm in the Yountville Community Hall, at the regular Board meeting of December 8, 2008 in the Napa County Board of Supervisors hearing room, 2:00 pm, and again at the regular Board meeting of January 12, 2009, also at 2:00 pm in the Napa County Board of Supervisors hearing room. Directors also made special presentations to the City of American Canyon Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, to the Lake Berryessa Chamber of Commerce and to the Friends of the Napa River. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration was sent to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to various State agencies, and published in the Napa Valley Register on November 20, 2008, with a public comment period specified for November 21, 2008 through December 22, 2008. No comments were received on the Proposed Negative Declaration.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

The Master Plan builds on the policy foundation laid by the County of Napa General Plan, as updated and adopted in 2008. The two elements of the General Plan most relevant to this Master Plan are the Conservation Element, which sets policies for the conservation, development and utilization of the County's natural resources, and the Recreation and Open Space Element, which encourages and adopts policies and priorities for expanding the ability of Napa County residents and visitors to directly experience the beauty of the County's natural environment and to participate in nature-based recreation.

The General Plan recognizes the critical importance of the County's open spaces, and calls for the protection of an extensive landscape of open spaces in which recreation, the preservation of natural, cultural and archaeological resources, agricultural production, and the activities of private property owners are mutually supportive and complementary. Noting that 80 percent of Napa County's residents now live in the county's four cities and one town, the Recreation and Open Space Element identifies the need to create and maintain a high-quality system of parks, trails and recreational, interpretive and environmental programs, so that Napa residents can continue to have a direct relationship with and appreciation of the County's remarkable open spaces. The Element also adopts the social equity goal of making recreational, interpretive and environmental education opportunities available to all County residents.

To implement these goals, the Recreation and Open Space Element includes 46 policies and action items. Among these is the policy of coordinating with and supporting the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, and an action item of working with the District in developing a new park and recreation master plan.

In addition to building on the County of Napa General Plan, this Master Plan also draws on the policies of other agencies and partner organizations. These include the policies and procedures prescribed by federal, state and local laws and regulations, and the agencies responsible for their implementation. These policies and procedures relate to the protection of air and water quality, conservation of land and the preservation of biological, cultural and archaeological resources.

Finally, since so many of the District's projects involve partnerships with other agencies and organizations, the Master Plan recognizes the importance of understanding and respecting the responsibilities, policies and practices of its partners.

## **GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE DISTRICT**

From this policy foundation the Master Plan develops four goals and twenty-four guiding principles for the District. Three of the four goals mirror the major goals of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the County General Plan, while the fourth addresses the organizational and management needs of the District:

- Goal A: Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resource activities, open space and related facilities.
- Goal B: Preserve, restore and protect open space lands, natural resources and special habitat areas.
- Goal C: Provide historical, cultural and environmental educational programming opportunities.
- Goal D: Provide for District management and interagency partnerships.

The manner in which the District will implement these goals is shaped by the following twenty-five guiding principles:

1. Improve and expand public access to park and open space lands where appropriate and consistent with the preservation of natural, historical and cultural resources and the protection of agriculture.
2. Give priority to the development of recreation facilities and programs on lands that are already owned by another governmental agency or non-profit land conservation organizations, and to the acquisition and improvement of lands adjacent to such existing public lands.
3. Pursue acquisitions from willing sellers that will help round out the boundaries of or connect together currently isolated tracts of public lands, in order to improve resource stewardship, protect core habitats as well as habitat corridors and to allow trail connections.
4. Within the context of the long-term goals and objectives contained in this Master Plan, take advantage of unique time-sensitive opportunities to acquire or protect significant open spaces and habitat
5. Pursue a balanced program of providing a range of recreation venues including parks, picnic areas and campgrounds, open space lands, trails, and water resources that serve a diversity of recreation interests.
6. Provide recreation opportunities in all areas of Napa County.
7. Provide recreational opportunities to serve Napa's diversity of cultures and wide range of ages and physical abilities, that are focused on nature-based recreation.
8. Promote the establishment of educational programs and interpretive facilities on properties managed by the District that provide information on the environment, history and culture.
9. Pursue projects and programs that are as affordable and accessible to all income and age groups as possible, utilizing donations and partnerships where feasible, and with user fees evaluated on a case-by-case basis and only imposed as necessary to ensure projects and programs are financially self-supporting and sustainable.
10. Seek to partner with other agencies, non-profit land conservation organizations, and other community and business groups, in pursuing the acquisition, development and/or operation of recreation facilities and programs.
11. Promote projects that improve the management of public lands.

12. Assume responsibility for lands and facilities that the District can manage in an operationally and financially responsible manner.
13. Operate District facilities and programs in an energy efficient and environmental sensitive manner.
14. Promote projects that support the economic viability of the County by preserving what is most special and providing opportunities for the public to experience what has been preserved.
15. Focus on projects that are regional in nature.
16. Focus on projects and that complement rather than interfere with or duplicate city and other agency facilities or programs, and where District involvement will facilitate worthy projects that otherwise may not occur.
17. Seek to develop recreation facilities and programs at locations in close proximity to the County's population centers.
18. Aggressively seek grants and donations to acquire and develop park and open space facilities.
19. Plan and implement projects following the principal that good stewardship of the park and open space lands and resources owned or operated by the District is the first priority of the District
20. Promote the use of volunteers and community based organizations for improving and managing District programs and facilities.
21. Promote non-motorized recreation facilities such as hiking trails, bicycle routes and other facilities that link the County's cities, town and communities to each other and to regional parks and other important destinations.
22. Utilize the criteria in Policy ROS-10 of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Napa County General Plan when designing and locating trails.
23. Increase the amount of dedicated open space in Napa County by at least 50,000 acres, working in partnership with other governmental and local nonprofit land conservation organizations.
24. Increase recreational trails open to the public by at least 100 miles, working in partnership with other governmental agencies and non-profit land conservation organizations.
25. Protect the natural resources of District properties and facilities by adopting user policies, regulations and educational materials which promote a "leave no trace" philosophy.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES AND HABITATS OF NAPA COUNTY**

Napa County is fortunate to have an extensive database of information about its natural resources. Thanks to the work of many experts, and especially those at the University of California at Davis and the non-profit research organization NatureServe, working in partnership with the Land Trust of Napa County, the County has exceptionally detailed mapping of its biological resources.



The County of Napa's Baseline Data Report combines this biodiversity mapping with numerous other geographic information system data sets related to water quality and supply, soils and minerals, agricultural and timber resources, natural hazards and land use, as well as demographic, economic and infrastructure information.

The scientific data presented by these maps and reports confirms that the County has among the highest levels of biodiversity found anywhere in North America. This rich natural resource heritage brings with it a responsibility for us to protect and steward these resources for future generations.

This responsibility includes protecting unique habitats supporting special-status species, as well as large assemblages of more typical but nonetheless essential habitats for plant and wildlife species health. A related challenge is to protect corridors of open space linking core habitats to avoid fragmentation of habitats into units too small to function effectively.

## **SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR REGIONAL PARKS, OUTDOOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

Napa County has a handful of developed parks and recreation facilities, including Bothe-Napa State Park, Robert Louis Stevenson State Park, Skyline Wilderness Park, Lake Berryessa, the small Napa River Ecological Reserve, the Connolly Ranch Environmental Education Center, the Oat Hill Mine Trail, and short segments of the Napa River Trail, the San Francisco Bay Trail and the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

The County also has extensive public lands with limited or no improvements, and often with no public access. These include the Knoxville Recreation Area and other federal Bureau of Land Management properties, the Napa-Sonoma Marshes owned by the State Department of Fish and Game, various Land Trust of Napa County preserves such as those at Wild Lake Ranch, Mt. George, and Archer Taylor, and watershed lands owned by various municipal water districts.

Overall, despite the fact that one-fourth of the land in the County is protected open space, the ability of the general public to directly experience these open spaces is quite limited. Drawing on the past work of the Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, as well as the information and policies contained in the County General Plan, this Master Plan identifies a variety of needs for open space parks and recreational facilities and programs. Among these are needs for the following:

- Trails serving hikers, equestrians, mountain bicyclists, and dog walkers, both close to home as well as longer trails for more ambitious excursions.
- Camping facilities, including automobile-accessible “family” campgrounds and back country primitive camping sites.
- Picnicking facilities in natural settings.
- Outdoor educational programs and interpretive facilities.
- Water-based activities, with a special focus on the Napa River because of its ecological importance and close proximity to where most Napa residents live and work.

## WORK PROGRAM

The Master Plan includes a work program of 61 projects for the District to consider. Project proposals were developed to respond to the wide range of open space protection and outdoor recreational needs identified in the Plan.

Presented in Section VII (and summarized in Table VIII-1), this work program is intended to demonstrate the range of projects which the District is evaluating, to challenge the District to do its utmost, and to give the District flexibility, recognizing that multiple factors can delay or eliminate any particular project. Identifying a broad range of desirable projects also improves the ability of the District to take advantage of grant programs, which typically have narrowly defined purposes; to successfully compete for many grant programs, it is necessary to have eligible projects planned and ready to go on short notice.

Projects are categorized by the District's four main goals mentioned earlier. Each project write-up includes a project description, a discussion of benefits, issues and partners, estimated timelines and costs, and specific action objectives. It must be noted that the timelines generally reflect the most optimistic times within which projects can be implemented, assuming agreements with other partners are reached expeditiously, permits are obtained without significant delay, adequate grant funding is secured, and sufficient District staff and operational funding is available.

## PRIORITIES

It is not expected nor realistically possible for the District to complete all of the projects identified in the work program, and certainly not during the five year time frame of the Master Plan. Some projects will turn out to be infeasible and never implemented. Some will only be started by 2013. Others will not have been commenced because they are dependent on opportunities which have not yet materialized. Finally, the District clearly does not have the financial capacity to undertake all of these projects.

Because more projects have been identified than will be implemented during the time frame of this Plan, the District Board of Directors must continually weigh project priorities, particularly during its annual budget process. In addition, the full listing of projects will be reevaluated and updated in 2011 and every three years thereafter. This will enable the District to have current project targets that provide a useful road map for day-to-day decision-making, while maintaining a long term policy framework.

To assist with prioritization, the projects proposed in the Master Plan are categorized into two tiers. Tier One includes those projects which will have higher priority for District resources. These are the projects on which staff will devote the most time, and toward which discretionary funding will first be directed. Nonetheless, the Master Plan acknowledges that only some Tier One projects will be completed within the first five years period, due to challenges in obtaining the approval of partners, permits from regulatory agencies, staffing limitations, and insufficient funding. Nonetheless, it is the District's intent to have made significant progress

within this time frame where possible, particularly in terms of defining projects and having plans that are ready to go. Generally speaking, Tier Two projects are less time-sensitive or dependent on circumstances which are not yet favorable and beyond the ability of the District to control. These projects will be pursued during the coming five years to the extent that District staff and discretionary funding is not needed for Tier One projects, or when unique one-time opportunities present themselves. For this reason, Tier Two projects typically do not have specific dates associated with specific objectives.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The District since its formation has contracted with Napa County for basic professional and administrative services, and proposes to retain this institutional structure through the life of this first Master Plan. There are several advantages to this approach. First, at present levels of operation, it is more cost effective for the District to contract for basic professional services than to set up its own personnel and financial systems. Second, given the District's present lack of guaranteed long-term operational funding, it is more prudent to contract for staff services than to take on the relatively fixed, long-term obligations that come with hiring its own employees and maintaining its own offices and equipment. Third, given the District's current reliance on the County for basic operational funding, it is important for the District and the County to maintain a close working relationship, and contracting with the County for professional services is an effective way to ensure this.

This approach is also advantageous for the County, by enabling the County to meet its General Plan open space and recreation goals in a focused, efficient and accountable manner.

Nearly all of the projects presented in the Plan are built around partnerships with other public agencies and organizations. This reliance on partnerships is fundamental to the District's implementation strategy. It reflects a commitment by the District to work cooperatively with other governmental agencies to improve the stewardship of and the public's ability to enjoy existing public lands and natural resources. In some cases the District's role is to assist its partners accomplish common goals by bringing additional financial, professional or institutional resources to bear on their work. In other cases the District's role is to utilize lands owned by its partners to provide public benefits that are compatible with but go beyond the missions of its partners.

A focus on empowering and supporting volunteers is another fundamental aspect of the District's implementation strategy. Utilizing volunteers has the obvious advantage of enabling the District to provide more services than would otherwise be possible. Working with volunteers has the added long-term benefit of building community involvement and support, and the sense of public ownership that is critical to the sustainability of the District's projects.

This reliance on partnerships and volunteers has significant ramifications for how the District operates. The District must respect and support a wide range of interests and opinions. Projects must be based on consensus. The District must be flexible and willing to compromise. Decision-making must be participatory, not top-down.

## FUNDING OPTIONS

The District's first-year operating budget of just under \$300,000 was funded primarily through a grant from Napa County, using a portion of the County's Special Projects Fund set-aside for parks and open space. Its second year operating budget, excluding election costs, increased approximately five percent, largely as a result of inflation.

The District needs to obtain additional capacity to develop project plans and secure and manage grant funding, if it is to make substantial progress on the Tier One projects identified by the Master Plan. Without added capacity, as the District's first projects are completed, resources currently devoted to project development will need to shift to operations. If the District is to continue to develop and open new facilities during this five year time frame, and have the capacity to continue to develop and open new facilities beyond this time frame, by the end of this first five year planning horizon the District will need to have increased its current level of staffing. To maintain the pace of project implementation proposed in the Master Plan, the Plan projects the District will need to increase staff support from the current full-time equivalent of 2.0 people up to the full-time equivalent of 4.5 people by the end of the fifth year.

The County's operational support of the District has come from a portion of the County's Special Projects Fund, which is funded by the increase in the County Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) approved by the voters in 2004. Because of the Special Projects Fund, the District could have sufficient funding to cover the staffing needs noted above, subject to three conditions: (1) the TOT continues to increase as it has over the past decade, (2) the Board of Supervisors continues its adopted policy of distributing 60% of the Special Projects Fund for parks and open space, and (3) the Board of Supervisors agrees to allow the proportion of the funds granted to parks and open space being used for operations to gradually increase.

The Master Plan does not propose any immediate plans for the District to seek additional dedicated tax revenues. There are several reasons for this. First, the District believes it is essential to demonstrate what it can do with existing public funding before considering whether it should ask the voters for additional funds. Second, any proposal for new funding should not be made in isolation, but must be closely coordinated and balanced with other significant funding needs, such as for improved road maintenance. Third, given the present state of the economy, now is not a good time to be asking voters for more taxes. Finally, the increase in annual operational funding needed by the end of the first five year period is only about \$250,000, which by itself is insufficient to justify going to the ballot.

However, the District recognizes that a variety of factors—such as changes in County priorities, economic recession or changes in State law related to the County's share of tax revenues—could result in flat or decreased funding from the County to the District. This would necessitate a reevaluation of the District's funding strategy.

The Master Plan also notes that the District's present ability to protect the County's significant open space land and natural resources is very limited. To make more than marginal progress in acquiring and preserving the County's most important natural resources, new local



sources of revenue will be needed as a match for other grants which the District will seek to obtain. One small potential source of revenue, as called for in the County of Napa General Plan, is for the County to require new development to mitigate for their impacts on the environment and for the increased demand they generate for outdoor recreational facilities. Such mitigation could include the payment of in-lieu fees in those cases where impacts and needs cannot be addressed on-site. The fact that most development in Napa County occurs in the cities, rather than the unincorporated areas, means that the amount of revenue that could be generated from impact fees would be fairly limited. The only significant source of new funding would be through a voter-approved tax, either to fund District operational needs and thereby free up the County Special Projects Fund for capital projects, or to directly provide capital funds for acquisition and preservation projects. The Master Plan calls on the District to further explore these and other funding options over the next two years in consultation with the County and other potentially affected public agencies.

The District is fortunate to be receiving financial and policy support from Napa County. Therefore, the immediate challenge for the District, and the primary focus of the Master Plan, is to demonstrate that the District can use this funding efficiently and effectively. By the end of the first five year time frame of the Master Plan, the District intends to have established a clear track record of accomplishment. This track record will form the basis for continued public discussion regarding the future level of service and open space protection which the community desires from the District.



## Section II

# INTRODUCTION

This is the first Master Plan of the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District. It is intended to cover the period from 2008-2013, which includes the past year of District operations, plus the next five years. A review and update of the plan's projects and implementation strategy is planned for 2011.

The purpose of this Master Plan is to identify, prioritize and present an implementation plan for the acquisition, restoration, development, programming and operation of a countywide system of regional parks, trails water resources, natural habitats and other open spaces of Napa County. It is not a general plan, plan element, strategic plan, park standards plan or specific park development plan. Rather, it combines a description of the District's planning and policy context with a work program for the District to follow during this planning period.

This Master Plan is divided into eight sections. Section III provides the policy foundation upon which the plan was developed. The section reviews the County's new General Plan focusing on the Recreation and Open Space and Conservation Elements, other relevant agency policies and the formation and first year of operation of the District. Section IV establishes the goals and guiding principles for the Master Plan based upon this policy foundation. The Master Plan is organized around four broad goals dealing with facilities development, open space preservation and restoration, education and District operations.

Sections V and VI review the existing natural resources and park and recreation facilities in Napa County to provide a basis for identifying needs for facilities, open space protection, programs and District operations. The 2003-5 study and development of land conservation priorities by the Land Trust of Napa County and the County of Napa's 2005 Baseline Data Report are summarized in Section V. Existing County parks, recreation and open space facilities are reviewed in Section VI. Most importantly, the open space, park and recreation, habitat protection and Napa River needs assessments that were completed by the Land Trust of Napa Valley, various Napa Living River groups, the Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, and the 2007-8 County General Plan process are reviewed and summarized at the end of Section VI. These form the basis for the identification and development of the work program set forth in Section VII.

The heart of this Master Plan are the 56 project descriptions presented in Section VII that reflect and respond to the policy foundation, goals and guiding principles, and park, recreation, habitat conservation and open space needs reviewed in previous chapters. These projects represent the

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*The heart of  
this Master Plan  
are the fifty-six  
project descriptions  
presented in Section VII*

\_\_\_\_\_

work program for the District for the period 2008-13.

Section VII divides projects into the four broad goal areas of facility development, preservation and restoration, education and District operations. Each project is presented with a description, background, identification of benefits and issues, project partners and a time frame and estimated cost. Most importantly, each project description includes action objectives providing timelines and milestones for implementation.

Section VIII identifies project priorities and implementation and funding strategies. It also presents a basic operations, staffing and funding.

Finally, the Master Plan includes a Section IX, whose purpose is to document concepts and projects suggested for consideration when the Master Plan is updated. This section is intended for reporting on concepts and projects raised during the public comment and Board review process, which are not yet ready for inclusion in the Master Plan.

### **Time Frame and Use of Plan**

This Master Plan is intended to be a living policy and planning document and not another plan that fills shelf space. Section VII, which provides the Master Plan's work program, is intended to be updated periodically to reflect changing funding and project opportunities. After this review, the updated projects will replace the existing project descriptions in this chapter. Section VIII on project priorities and funding strategies will also be updated as necessary.

To facilitate scheduled updates, Section IX is reserved as a place to record suggestions provided through the public review of the draft version of this Master Plan, for additional projects and strategies which are beyond the scope of this Plan but sufficiently important to capture so they help guide future updates. In this manner, this Master Plan will always be an up-to-date plan reflecting current District goals and objectives.

It has been written in readable narrative form with a minimum of technical terms to facilitate its use by the general public. This Master Plan also includes a brief historical background of recent park, recreation, open space and land conservation policy development and need assessments in Napa County to provide the reader a better perspective and understanding of the plan's recommended projects.

This Master Plan is all about informing and explaining to Napa County residents what the District is planning to work on during the designated time frame. It is not intended to be a dream but an action plan that will be implemented on an incremental basis as resources become available. It is a plan for **NOW**.

### Section III

## POLICY FOUNDATION

### A. 2008 NAPA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

#### 1. Geographical Setting, General Policies and Vision of Napa County

The Napa County General Plan is a framework for planning the future of the County and serves as the official policy statement of the County Board of Supervisors to guide the private and public development of the County. The first County General Plan was adopted in 1969 and has since been updated to reflect changing conditions in Napa County. The County instituted a comprehensive process in 2005 to again update the General Plan and adopted the new update in 2008. The General Plan in accordance with State law includes a number of Elements or special sections that address important topics such as land use, circulation, economic development and housing.

The updated General Plan starts with the following vision statement:

“Today and in the future, unincorporated Napa County will be home to world-famous wines and a residential population smaller than most Bay Area cities and towns. The county’s scenic beauty, valuable agricultural resources, and quality of life are reinforced by longstanding commitments to agricultural preservation, resource conservation, and urban-centered growth. While other Bay Area counties have experienced unprecedented development and urban infrastructure expansion over the last four decades, Napa County’s citizens have conscientiously preserved the agricultural lands and rural character that we treasure.”

\_\_\_\_\_ *This Master Plan*  
*builds on the*  
*policy framework*

“The County has led the nation in innovative agricultural preservation strategies, and it intends to remain a leader in moderating and directing growth in ways that minimize resource consumption and make unincorporated Napa County a sustainable rural community. Napa will continue to be a place with abundant natural resources, a vibrant agricultural-centric economy, an enviable quality of life, and a responsible and inclusive government. The goals, policies, and implementation actions of this General Plan are collectively intended to achieve this community vision and guide future decisions related to land use development.”.....

*established by*  
*Napa County’s*  
*2008 General Plan.*

The General Plan update includes two Elements that are directly relevant to the development of the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District’s Master Plan. The Con-



servation Element provides planning policies for the conservation, development and utilization of water, soil, plant, animal and other natural resources. The Recreation and Open Space Element sets forth the goals and policies of the County regarding recreation and public open space lands. These two General Plan Elements provide the policy framework upon which the District's 2008-13 Master Plan is based.

The following sections summarize the updated General Plan Conservation and Recreation and Open Space Elements.

## 2. Recreation and Open Space Element

### a. Overview

The following is a brief review of the Recreational and Open Space Element. This Element begins by reviewing 1) County recreation needs and current conditions, 2) recreation supply and demand, 3) open space ownership characteristics, and 4) the location and accessibility of recreational open space. It then presents three major goals, 30 policies and another 30 implementing actions which are included at the end of this summary.

The Element defines what is meant by "open space" and focuses primarily on the recreational use of open space. Open space is defined as lands supporting an array of activities and amenities which derive from and directly depend on the land's sustainable natural resources. Recreation is defined as one of the appropriate and desirable uses of open space.

The Element reviews the changing needs of the County resulting from population changes, noting that in 1970 half of the County's population lived within the unincorporated or rural areas whereas by 2005 nearly 80 percent lived in incorporated cities. This trend, which is expected to continue, increases demand for recreation opportunities and publicly accessible open space in areas surrounding urbanized areas. Even as demand has been increasing, the Element notes that in many instances the availability of nature-based recreational opportunities has unfortunately declined. The decline has been due to local government funding reductions and reduced public access to private lands as development has occurred.

The Element briefly reviews two State Department of Park and Recreation opinion surveys identifying the most popular recreational activities and unmet recreation activity needs. It also includes the results of a survey on average travel time to recreation areas.

The Element notes that non-urban recreational opportunities in Napa County are provided by both public and private sectors but overall are limited in supply. On the public side most open space land is owned by the Federal and State governments which own over 105,000 acres of land in Napa County. However, other than at Lake Berryessa, the recreational use of these open spaces has been limited, primarily because the various public agencies that own property have inadequate funding or lack the mission to encourage and manage public access. The Element briefly summarizes the existing County park and recreation facilities.

These facilities are reviewed in greater detail in section VI A of the master plan entitled “Existing Recreation and Open Space Facilities and Programs”.

The Recreation and Open Space Element notes that nearly 90 percent or about 450,000 of the total 507,000 acres in Napa County is “open space” as defined by the Element. About three-fourths or 75 percent of these open space lands are privately owned and are used for farming, grazing and a variety of low intensity uses. Approximately 14,400 acres of these private lands have their open space values permanently protected through conservation easements primarily managed by the Land Trust of Napa County.

Almost 25 percent or 123,619 acres of the land in Napa County is dedicated open space owned in fee title by public agencies or land conservation organizations such as the Land Trust of Napa County. The Federal Government is the largest public property owner with nearly 63,000 acres of land and water. The Federal Bureau of Land Management manages most of this land in the northeastern part of Napa County with the Federal Bureau of Reclamation managing the remainder around Lake Berryessa.

The State of California is the second largest owner of public open space lands with 42,393 acres. Most of this land is managed by the State Department of Fish and Game with the Napa-Sonoma Marshes near the mouth of the Napa River, and property north of Lake Berryessa including the Knoxville Wildlife Area. The State Department of Parks and Recreation owns and operates the Robert Louis Stevenson, and Bothe-Napa State Parks. Other State agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs own smaller parcels of land. Local governmental agencies such as the cities of Napa and Vallejo which operate domestic water systems own important properties associated with their water supply reservoirs and American Canyon owns the Newell Open Space Preserve. Napa County holds a lease from the state for Skyline Park until the year 2030, and operates the park through a concessionaire agreement with a local non-profit association. Figure 3.1 illustrates the location and amount of public open space lands in Napa County.

The Element emphasizes that open space owned by public agencies or land conservation organizations offers great potential for public recreation. Napa County is characterized having over 25 percent of its land being dedicated open space owned by these agencies. Opening and improving access to existing public properties is a way to increase public access at reduced cost.

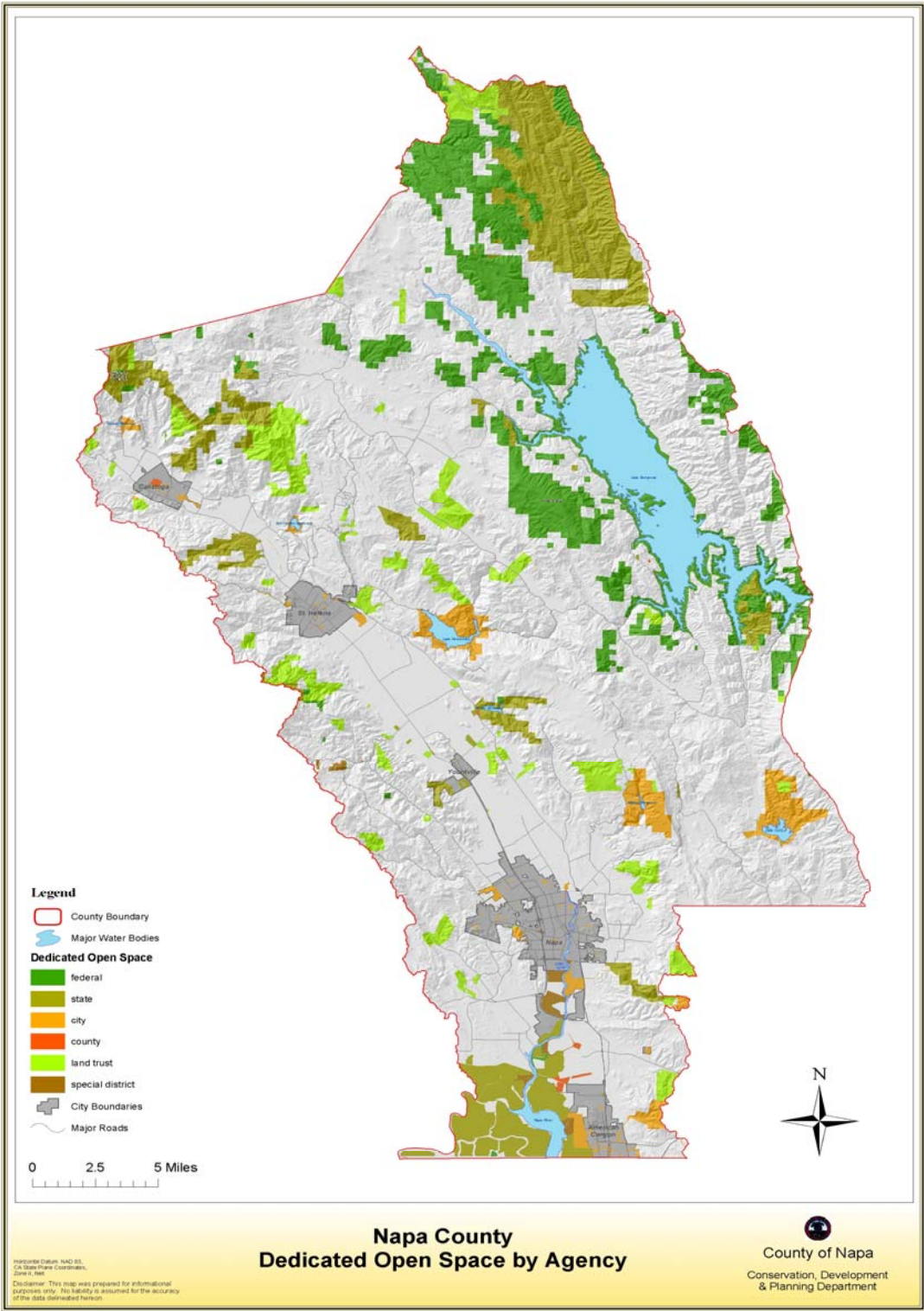
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*Open space lands owned  
by public agencies  
and land conservation  
organizations offer the  
greatest potential for  
expanding public recreation*

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Figure 3.1 Dedicated Open Space by Type of Owner







Open space lands that are already accessible and actively used by Napa residents are the Bothe-Napa State Park and associated historic grist mill, Robert Louis Stevenson State Park, Skyline Park, Lake Hennessey, Lake Berryessa, and the Oat Hill Mine Trail.

Most of the rest of the public open space in Napa County is either inaccessible or undeveloped and little used. These include the Knoxville area north of Lake Berryessa,

the Blue Ridge area east of Lake Berryessa, and the Cedar Roughts area west of Lake Berryessa.

Another large area of public open space is along the lower Napa River and spreading through the Napa-Sonoma Marshes. Lack of funding has generally limited the ability of the various public agency owners to implement their recreation goals for these land, so they remain largely unmanaged and unimproved.

The Element summarizes a State recreation survey that found that two thirds of the trips by Californians to recreation areas require 10 minutes or less travel time. Only 16% of these trips were over 20 minutes in length. This underscores the importance of having recreation facilities within 10 to 15 minutes of where most people live unless it is a large regional recreational area that will have a statewide attraction.

As noted previously, there is a disparity between where most Napa county residents live and the location of a large portion of accessible public open space in Napa County. Unfortunately, of the 123,619 acres of dedicated public open space in Napa County, less than 6 percent is located within a ten minute drive of the county's cities and less than 14 percent is within a 15 minute drive. In addition, less than 2 percent are within a 10 minute driving distance and less that 5 percent with a 15 minute driving distance for dedicated open space areas which are open to the public.

In summary, however, this General Plan Element concludes that there are significant opportunities to increase the amount of accessible open space within close proximity for the 80 percent of the population that lives within the more urbanized areas of the County. There are nearly 11,000 acres of open space owned by public agencies or land conservation organizations with a 15 minute drive of the county's cities. While some of these lands are not appropriate for public access, many are. This Element proposes a goal of at least doubling the acreage of open space with a 15 minute drive of the incorporated urban areas that is accessible to the public.

The following are the three goals that are presented in the Recreation and Open Space



Element, along with a brief summary of the associated policy and action items associated with each goal. Due to the importance of this Element in establishing a policy framework for this master plan, following this summary is a detailed review of each goal, policy and action item, accompanied by a reference to the part of the plan that responds to them.

**Goal ROS-1: To insure an extensive landscape of open space in which recreation, the protection of natural, cultural, and archaeological resources, agricultural production, and private property are mutually supportive and complementary.**

This goal has nine policies and two action items addressing recreation open space acquisition, location, use, size, relationship to agriculture and surrounding areas, public access, financial incentives for dedications, grant funding and Zoning Ordinance conformance.

**Goal ROS-2: To create and maintain a high-quality system of parks, trails, and recreational, interpretive and environmental programs.**

This goal has 21 policies and 4 action items that include (1) establishing broad objectives on increasing the number of off-street trails and dedicated open space, (2) establishing a close working relationship and funding support for the District, (3) identifying 18 specific recreation, park, Napa River and trail improvements to coordinate and/or complete, (4) transfer of existing county park facilities to the District, and other related polices on the use and funding of recreation facilities.

**Goal ROS-3: To make recreational, cultural, interpretive and environmental education opportunities available to all County residents.**

This goal has 11 policies that include (1) promoting nature-based recreation in close proximity to population centers, (2) connecting population centers through a system of biking and hiking facilities, (3) providing recreation facilities and programs serving the diverse needs of all population groups, and (4) promoting diverse educational programs and related policies .

## **b. Recreation and Open Space Element Policies and their Relationship to this Master Plan**

Provided below are the Goals, Policies and Actions included with the Recreation and Open Space Element of the General Plan. Where appropriate, notations in italics have been added to indicate how the policies relate to specific projects identified by this Master Plan.

**GOAL ROS-1: TO ENSURE AN EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPE OF OPEN SPACE IN WHICH RECREATION, THE PROTECTION OF NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND PRIVATE PROPERTY ARE MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE AND COMPLEMENTARY.**

**Policy ROS-1:** The County encourages the acquisition, location, design, and operation of recreation open space, in ways that protect natural resources, enhance natural habitats, conserve agricultural lands, maintain agricultural productivity, and respect private property. The County shall coordinate with the support of the District in implementing this policy.

**Policy ROS-2:** The regulatory review and criteria for recreational facilities and activities should be tailored to reflect the intensity, location, and potential impact of the type of recreation proposed.

**Policy ROS-3:** Recreational facilities and improvements on open space lands should be the minimum necessary to achieve recreation objectives and be limited in density, intensity, need for public services, impacts on the natural environment, growth inducement, and impacts on neighboring properties. Uses on open space lands shall respect the character of the surrounding area, require a minimum of public support services ( such as paved roads, emergency services, or law enforcement); contain a minimum of paved services, structures, natural landform alteration or other introduced or constructed features inconsistent with the environment; require minimal water usage, wildlife habitat removal and usage of herbicides and pesticides; be coordinated with neighbors in terms of integrated pest management procedures; and shall not contribute to the likelihood that additional non agricultural uses of agricultural land will be proposed to support or be necessary to the continued existence of the recreational use.

**Policy ROS-4:** The public's right to access and enjoy publicly owned open space lands in a responsible manner should be supported where appropriate and consistent with other Recreation and Open Space Element policies and adopted resource management plans.

**Policy ROS-8:** Minimize potential negative impacts of proposed open space improvements and uses through appropriate design and by requiring mitigation for any remaining significant impacts.

*District Master Plan: These general policy statements have been borne in mind during the development of the Master Plan's projects.*

**Policy ROS-5:** Financial and other incentives should be used to encourage dedication in easement or fee title of significant fish and wildlife habitats and other open space resources to public agencies and non-profit land conservation organizations.

**Policy ROS-6:** The acceptance of mitigation funds and dedications of easements or property for the purpose of resource protection should be linked to and consistent with clearly articulated programmatic goals.

*District Master Plan: Many of the projects identified in the Plan have the potential to serve as mitigation for development impacts elsewhere, and be eligible for mitigation funds.*



Policy ROS-7: Federal, state, and regional funding for providing sustainable, long-term stewardship of open space resources and habitats should be utilized where possible to supplement local funding.

Policy ROS-9: The County will not use the power of eminent domain to acquire or easements for parks, trails, and other recreational open space facilities or activities.

*District Master Plan: The District does not have the power of eminent domain..*

Action Item ROS-9.1: In cooperation with other public agencies, and in particular the District, maintain a comprehensive inventory of public lands, including their existing and potential resource and recreational values.

*District Master Plan: Project D-13.*

Action Item ROS-9.2: Modify the Zoning Ordinance as necessary to reflect the policies included in this Element, and provide the appropriate level of review of proposed improvements and activities.

*District Master Plan: Project B-8.*

#### GOAL ROS-2 TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A HIGH-QUALITY SYSTEM OF PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATIONAL, INTERPRETIVE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FACILITIES.

Policy ROS-11: Increase by 2030 the amount of dedicated open space available, improved and managed for nature-based recreation by the general public by improving access to existing public lands and by selective public acquisition from willing landowner of fee title ownerships, easements, and/or license agreements over high priority lands.

*District Master Plan: Projects B-1-8, and A-1-22*

Policy ROS-12: By 2030 increase the number and length of non-motorized, off-street trails available for walkers, joggers, bicycles, and equestrians.

*District Master Plan: Projects A-1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22.*

Action Item:ROS-12-1: In partnership with the District establish numeric objectives for increased off-street trails and acreage of dedicated open space accessible to the public.

*District Master Plan: Guiding Principles 24 and 25 and most projects under the Goals A and B.*

Policy ROS-13: The County should work in close partnership with the District and support sufficient long-term funding for the District to address mutual goals and policies.

*District Master Plan: The master plan identifies long term funding needs in Section VIII which will be addressed outside of the master plan process. Napa County has been supportive in providing short term funding for operations and recreation projects.*

Policy ROS-14: The priority of the County, working in cooperation with the District, shall generally be to provide parks outside of the cities that are focused on nature-based recreation, recognizing that the County's cities and town generally provide neighborhood and community parks and urban recreation.

*District Master Plan: Guiding Principle 13*

Policy ROS-15: The County in coordination with and generally by working through the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District shall plan for and reserve land for recreational facilities and encourage non-commercial recreational development, including both parks and a comprehensive system of trails, in a manner and to the extent consistent with agricultural, water quality and natural resource protection goals and the Trails Policy contained in this Element (Policy ROS-10). The following recreational opportunities are the County of Napa's priorities (not necessarily in the order

shown) which shall be addressed in greater detail in a park and recreation master plan to be prepared by the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District.

- Complete the San Francisco Bay Trail through Napa County including both bicycle lanes and paths and where possible, recreational alignment in close proximity to the Bay, the Napa River, and associated wetlands, including a recreational alignment between the cities of American Canyon and Napa adjacent to existing and planned tidal wetlands west of the Napa Airport.  
*District Master Plan: Guiding principle 20 and projects A-5, 6, 18 and 23*
- Provide for direct and convenient recreational access to and along the Napa river in the vicinity of the City of American Canyon  
*District Master Plan: Project A-5*
- Support the provision of boating access to the Napa River, along with related facilities, including docks, ramps, restrooms, and picnic and overnight stay areas, as part of a regional Bay Area Water Trail.  
*District Master Plan: Project A.17 and A.23*
- Support investigation of the feasibility of establishing a regional park at the site of the former American Canyon Landfill in cooperation with the Napa-Vallejo Waste Management Authority.  
*District Master Plan: Project A.5 is the first step in implementing this policy.*
- Support efforts by the City of American Canyon and the District to provide public access to the Newell Preserve and an off-street trail system linking the Newell Preserve and the Napa River.  
*District Master Plan: Project A-9*
- Provide increased points of public access to the Napa River for nature-based recreation.  
*District Master Plan: Projects A-5, 6, 8, 17, 18, and B-1, 5.*
- Implement sections of the proposed Bay Area Ridge Trail, with the ultimate objective of a continuous regional trail.  
*District Master Plan: Project A-19*
- Implement sections of a Napa Valley Crest Trail that provides scenic overlooks and recreational opportunities among the ridge lands surrounding the Napa Valley, with the ultimate objective of a continuous trail that serves as one spine of an integrated trail network.  
*District Master Plan: Project A-16*
- Complete the Lake Berryessa Trail.  
*District Master Plan: Project A-10*
- Assure the permanent protection of Skyline Park as a public park and nature-based recreation area through all appropriate means including but not limited to acquisition, state legislation and local zoning requirements.  
*District Master Plan: Project B-8*
- Provide more opportunities for walking, riding, bird watching, and environmental education in the publicly owned marshes in the southern area of the county.  
*District Master Plan: Project C-7*
- Investigate the feasibility of a non-motorized trail, and implement sections as opportunities arise, connecting the communities of the Napa Valley.  
*District Master Plan: Project A-6*
- Repair, restore, and operate the Oat Hill Mine Road as a non-motorized recreational trail.  
*District Master Plan: Project A-1*
- Focus on improving public access to and from recreational facilities on existing public lands, such as watershed lands owned by water districts, and state and federal lands located primarily in the eastern parts of the county.  
*District Master Plan: Projects A-1-11, 13-22*
- Connect scattered, landlocked, and discontinuous public lands through selective acquisition from and/or land exchanges with willing landowners to provide habitat corridors,

facilitate a connected system of trails, and improve the effective use and stewardship of existing public lands.

*District Master Plan: Projects A-15, 16, 19, 20 and B.9*

- Support the improvement and operation of Lake Berryessa as a year-round recreation area providing a balanced and hospitable environment for nature-based recreation.

*District Master Plan: Projects A-3, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15*

- Coordinate with the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area (BRBNA) Partnership in identifying and implementing a system of recreational trails within Napa County and connecting to adjacent properties.

*District Master Plan: Projects A-10, 11, 12, 13 and 15*

- Identify additional priorities through an update to the County's Park and Recreation Plan, as called for in Action Item ROS-4 and pursue these priorities as opportunities arise.

*District Master Plan: This master plan is intended to implement this action item.*

Policy ROS-16: Recreational uses on lands designated for agriculture should be encouraged only where those uses will not deplete or degrade natural resources on which nearby or on-site agricultural depends, and will not adversely affect the commencement, intensification, or continuation of local agricultural activity.

*District Master Plan: The master plan conforms to this policy.*

Policy ROS-17: A consistently high level of cleanliness, usefulness and safety at public parks and trails within County jurisdiction should be maintained.

*District Master Plan: Projects D-2, 9 and 12*

Policy ROS-18: Financial and other incentives that support the provision of parks and recreational trails through the voluntary donation of important open space lands and trail easements, or license agreements to appropriate public agencies and/or non-profit land conservation organizations, should be encouraged.

*District Master Plan: Projects B-2, 5, and 8.*

Policy ROS-19: Federal, state, regional and local programs that provide grants for protecting, improving, and maintaining significant open spaces should be supported and utilized where feasible.

*District Master Plan: Nearly all of the projects in this Master Plan depend on grant funding.*

Policy ROS-20: Partnerships with other public agencies, non-profit organizations, and the private sector should be used where feasible to enhance recreational opportunities and appropriate nature-based recreation, including but not limited to: the District, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Fish and Game, State Lands Commission, cities of Napa County, schools, Federal Bureau of Land Management, Napa County Transportation Planning Agency, Land Trust of Napa County and outdoor recreation and visitor serving businesses.

*District Master Plan: Guiding principle 21 and Projects A-1-20, B1-8, C 1-8 and D -2,, 4, 7, 8, and 13.*

Policy ROS-21: Support the sale of existing public open space lands and/or land exchanges with private property owners, provided the sale or exchange of such lands will result in a net improvement in public recreational opportunities, enhanced protection and stewardship of natural resources and habitats, and more efficient and effective land management.

Action Item ROS-21.1: Develop a new park and recreation master plan that identifies priorities, implementation strategies, and funding needs, and update it at appropriate intervals, working in partnership with the District.

*District Master Plan: This Master Plan is intended to respond to this action item.*

Action Item ROS- 21-2: Support sufficient and stable funding for the District.

*District Master Plan: The County has been providing both operating and special project funds to the District.*

Action Item ROS-21.3: Investigate and where feasible, transfer the ownership and/or operation of existing County park facilities to the District.

*District Master Plan: Projects 1-8 and B-1 relate to this action item, and could be the catalyst for the transfer to the District of the County's responsibilities at the Napa River Ecological Reserve.*

Action Item ROS-21.4 Support the District in obtaining state, federal, and foundation grants, using methods such as preparing and adopting local plans and policies which may be required by various grant programs, and providing required local matching funds.

*District Master Plan: The County has been supportive of the District's efforts to secure project funds and has used its Special Projects Fund to provide local matching dollars for grants from other sources.*

**GOAL ROS-3: TO MAKE RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL, INTERPRETIVE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO ALL COUNTY RESIDENTS.**

*District Master Plan: Guiding principle 3 and Projects C 1-8*

Objective ROS-1: By 2030, ensure that the majority of Napa County residents live within close proximity of parks offering a variety of nature-based recreation opportunities by at least doubling the acreage of publicly accessible open space within a 15 minute or less driving time of each of the county's four cities and town.

Policy ROS-22: Nature-based recreational opportunities should be provided near each population center and in more remote parts of the county. Urban recreation opportunities should be considered for more developed, non-agricultural areas of the unincorporated county.

*District Master Plan: Guiding principle 4*

Policy ROS-23: A system of scenic roads, bicycle routes, and hiking trails should connect existing cities and other local population centers to outdoor resources and open space resources and facilities.

*District Master Plan: Projectss A-1, 9, 10, 18, 21 and 22*

Policy ROS-24: A range of recreational opportunities should be provided to serve the diverse recreational interests of children, adults, families, people with disabilities, and individuals. Where possible, recreational opportunities and particularly those which are youth oriented, should be provided within walking or bicycling distance, or accessible by public transit, of population centers.

Policy ROS-25: There should be a mix of no-cost, low-cost, and user fee-based recreational opportunities on public lands so that people of all income levels are able to enjoy outdoor recreation.

*District Master Plan: Guiding principles 2 and 6*

Policy ROS 26: The use of volunteers and community-based organizations should be encouraged to maintain, restore, and enhance open space resources and habitats.

*District Master Plan: Projects A-1, 14, B-1, D-2*

Policy ROS-27: Linkages between city-provided recreational facilities and programs and nature-based recreational facilities and programs in unincorporated areas should be encouraged.

*District Master Plan: Projects C 1-8*

Policy ROS-28: Opportunities for the public to visit, learn about and enjoy significant and representative historical, archaeological, and cultural resources should be provided. The County shall coordi-

nate with and support the District in making recreational, cultural, interpretive and environmental education opportunities available to all County residents.

*District Master Plan: Projects C 1-8*

Policy ROS-29: Scientific and environmental educational programs at public parks and preserves should be encouraged, and the development and funding of a comprehensive program of environmental research and education for students should be coordinated with the education community.

*District Master Plan: Projects C 1-8, D-2 and 3*

Policy ROS 30: Other than at Lake Berryessa, recreational facilities should be designed and scaled to serve the needs of county residents, recognizing that facilities that serve local residents will also serve visitors, that visitors can help pay for the construction and operation of recreational facilities beneficial to residents, and that the provision of additional nature-based recreational opportunities is an important tool for achieving economic development goals while reducing potential adverse impacts of tourism. In the case of Lake Berryessa, recreational facilities are understood to serve a broad regional market, but should nonetheless be designed to also serve the desire of Napa County residents for water- and nature-based recreation.

*District Master Plan: Guiding principle 12*

Policy ROS- 31: A clear, attractive, comprehensive roadside signage system, together with other forms of public information should be designed, installed and distributed to facilitate the public's use and enjoyment of parks and historical, archaeological, and cultural resources.

*District Master Plan: Improved signing is planned in the development of new or expanded recreational facilities outlined under Goal A.*

### 3. Conservation Element

#### a. Overview

The Conservation Element establishes the County's goals, policies and action items that are intended to promote the conservation of open space and associated natural resources. The Element covers a wide range of topics including sections on natural resources; water resources; water quality; water supply, conservation, and reuse; climate protection and sustainable practices for environmental health; managed production of resources and vineyard development.

The goals, policies and action items in Conservation Element are intended to ensure that Napa County's abundant natural areas and extraordinarily high biodiversity will be preserved and enhanced. The important first policy of this Element under the Open Space Conservation section states as follows:

“The County will preserve land for greenbelts, forest recreation, flood control, adequate water supply, air quality improvement, native vegetation and natural beauty.

The county will encourage management of these areas in ways that promote wildlife habitat renewal, diversification, and protection”.

The County completed a comprehensive Baseline Data Report (BDR) in 2005 that provides detailed baseline information on existing conditions on biological resources and other resources throughout Napa County. This Element summarizes and updates this information of this Report into its narrative description and goals and policies. The following is a brief summary of the information provided in the first three sections of the Element that focuses

on open space, and natural resource and the Napa River watershed characteristics of Napa County.

The Element first indicates that Napa County has for many years been committed to the conservation of sensitive resources and has been a leader in both protecting agricultural land and providing for the conservation of natural resources including important plant species and habitats. Over 89 percent of Napa County is considered “open space” based upon the areas being reserved for non-urban uses. Minimum parcel sizes of 40 to 160 acres apply to 93 percent of the land area in the unincorporated county. In recognition of the need to protect the county’s special environment, Napa County has established and updated comprehensive land conservation procedures for development review to insure the protection of water quality and natural resources. The County has also adopted special procedures to protect the Napa River watershed.

*Napa County is known  
as a region of “world*

In describing the habitat and biological resources of the County, the Element first notes that California is considered a region of significant biodiversity with a large and diverse number of plant and animal species. Napa County has an even greater diversity of habitats and of plant and animal species compared to other parts of the State and is known as a region of “world class” biodiversity. It has been classified as one of the 25 most biologically diverse counties in the United States.

*class” biodiversity*

The Element notes that Napa County contains 32 percent of the state’s native flora. The County’s Baseline Data Report identified eight principal biotic communities in the County. Twenty-three sensitive biotic communities have also been identified because of their rarity and high biodiversity . Approximately 114 special-status plant species have been observed in Napa County.

Napa County is also home to many wildlife species, including a number of rare, threatened and endangered species. To date, 24 special-status wildlife species have been found in the County. Napa County also has important wildlife corridors or linkages that are important to assure adequate food supply, seed dispersal and other benefits. This biota or combination of “flora and fauna” provide measurable benefits to the County, including erosion control, water quality enhancement, natural beauty and ecological cohesiveness. A fuller review of the natural environment and habitat of Napa County is included in Section V of this Master Plan.

The Element also reviews the importance of the Napa River that travels 55 miles from the headwaters of Mt St. Helena to the Delta’s entry into San Pablo Bay. The Napa River Watershed covers approximately 245,724 acres, including 11,530 acres of marshland. While all the cities and most of the county’s residents are located in the Napa River Watershed, most of the watershed remains predominately rural with only 34 square miles (about 9 percent) developed for urban uses with the remainder consisting of agricultural production and undeveloped open space. The Napa River basin supports a diverse number of fish and wildlife. It is home to nearly sixteen intact communities of native fish species as well as a diverse variety of plant and wildlife. In recognition of this the Napa River Flood Reduction



Projection Project has incorporated the “Living River Principles” which among other goals protects the River’s fish and wildlife habitat. The District’s Master Plan proposes a number of projects to promote the protection and recreational use of the Napa River and associated watershed including the Napa River Marches at the southern end of the River.

The Conservation Element includes a number of goals, policies and action items related to the County’s development review process designed to protect and manage the County’s natural resources and habitats including specific protection of sensitive biotic communities, special-status plant and wildlife species, and wildlife corridors. Many of these policies respond to Biological Resources section of the BDR. For example Policy CON-17 of this Element identifies five specific actions to preserve and protect native and serpentine grasslands, serpentine chaparral, and sensitive biotic communities and habitats. There are also policies outlining mitigation measures to address impacts on the natural habitat and special-status species that are affected by development.

Although the District will not be involved in the County development review process or the enforcement of these regulations it may have a role in assisting in the implementation of some of these policies and mitigation measures. For this reason goals and policies of the open space and natural resources conservation sections of this Element that address habitat and special-status species protection and associated mitigation measures are included in the following selective listing of these goals and policies. Other goals and policy items that are pertinent to the Districts’ function and responsibility are also included. The actual reiteration of the Element’s goal or policy statement is presented in bold type with summaries presented in regular type.

## **b. Conservation Element Policies and their Relationship to this Master Plan**

### **Open Space Conservation Policies**

Policy CON-1: The County will preserve land for greenbelts, forest, recreation, flood control, adequate supply, air quality improvement, habitat for fish, wildlife and wildlife movement, native vegetation and natural beauty. The County will encourage management of these areas in ways that promote wildlife habitat renewal, diversification, and protection.

Policy CON-4: The County recognizes that preserving open space is consistent with and critical to the support of agriculture and agricultural preservation goals.

Policy CON-7: The County shall enact and enforce regulations which maintain or improve the current level of environmental quality found in Napa County. ....

Policy CON-8: The county will use financial and other incentives to encourage voluntary dedication in easement or fee title to the county of Napa or its designee ( such as a local non-profit land trust) of significant habitat areas, as appropriate to ensure long-term protection for fish and wildlife resources and protection of agricultural lands and open space.

Policy CON-9: The county shall pursue a variety of techniques and practices to achieve the county’s Open Space Conservation policies, including 1) transfer of development rights, 2) acquisition through various means, 3) Williamson Act and other incentives, and 4) mitigation requirements of development impacts.

**Natural Resources Goals and Policies**

Goal CON-3: Protect the continued presence of special-status species, including special-status plants, special-status wildlife, and their habitats, and comply with all applicable state, federal or local laws and regulations.

Goal CON 4-: Conserve, protect, and improve plant, wildlife, and fishery habitats for all native species in Napa County.

Goal CON-5: Protect connectivity and continuous habitat areas for wildlife movement.  
Natural Resources Policies

Policy CON-13: The county shall that all discretionary residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, agricultural and water development projects avoid impacts to fisheries and wildlife habitat to the maximum extent feasible. Where impacts cannot be avoided, projects shall include effective mitigation measures and management plans .....

Action items d, e, and f under this policy mention protection of special-habitat species through buffering, providing replacement habitat, and enhancement of existing habitat through restoration and replanting.

Policy CON-14: To offset possible losses of fishery and wildlife habitat due to discretionary development projects, developers shall be responsible for Mitigation when avoidance of impacts is determined to be infeasible. Such mitigate measure may include providing and permanently maintaining similar habitat within Napa County, enhancing habitat areas, or paying in-kind funds to an approved wildlife habitat improvement and habitat fund.

Policy CON-16: The County shall require a biological resources evaluation for discretionary projects in areas identified to contain or potential contain special-status species..... The county shall also encourage the development of programs to protect special-status species and disseminate updated information to state and federal agencies.

Policy CON-17: Preserve and protect native grasslands, serpentine grasslands, mixed serpentine chaparral and sensitive biotic communities and habitats of limited distribution through a variety of measures.

Policy CON-18: To reduce impacts on habitat conservation and connectivity:  
c) Preservation of habitat and connectivity of adequate size, quality, and configuration to support special-status species within the project area. ....  
d) The county shall require discretionary projects to retain movement corridors of adequate size and habitat quality to allow for continued wildlife use based on the needs of the species occupying the habitat.

Policy CON-19: The County shall encourage the preservation of critical habitat areas and habitat connectivity through the use of conservation easements and County conservation regulations.

Policy CON-20: Monitor biodiversity and habitat connectivity throughout the County and apply appropriate adaptive management practices as necessary to achieve Natural Resources Goals.

Policy CON-22: The County shall encourage the protection and enhancement of natural habitats which provide ecological and other scientific purposes.

## B. POLICIES OF OTHER AGENCIES

In addition to the County General Plan and Zoning, the District is affected by the policies of numerous other public agencies. In all circumstances, the District is subject to the same regulatory reviews as any other project proponent. In addition, in order to partner with other agencies, the District must acknowledge and resolve varied and sometimes conflicting interests.

### 1. Regulatory Policies

As a political subdivision of the state, the District is subject to the California Constitution and State Statutes, as well as numerous administrative codes, covering requirements on everything from how budgets are adopted to how contracts are awarded, property bought and sold, employees hired, and the whole gamut of other government operations..

All meetings of and communications between members of the Board are regulated by the Brown Act, to assure that public decisions are made with the proper level of public scrutiny. The Board of Directors and District officers are covered by a Conflict of Interest Code and the Fair Political Practices Act. These requirements bring in the California Fair Political Practices Commission, and all of the implementing policies and procedures they have adopted.

Its actions must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act., which brings with it consideration for everything from preservation of historic and cultural resources to traffic generation to protection of threatened and endangered species. Given the nature of the District’s proposed projects, the policies and practices of the California Department of Fish and Game are particularly relevant. Examples of other agency partners whose regulatory oversight may come into play include the Public Utilities Commission, the State Office of Historic Preservation and the California Department of Forestry.

If federal funding is involved, or if wetlands are affected, or if a federally-protected species or habitat protected by the Endangered Species Act, is potentially affected by a decision of the District, then the National Environmental Policy Act also applies, and the policies and practices of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineering come into play.

### 2. Policies of Partners

Many of the projects contained in Section VII involve partnerships with other landowning agencies within the County. The mission of these other agencies is sometimes quite broad, while in other cases it is more narrow. Forming partnerships with these other agencies

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#### **Selected Statutes Affecting the District**

- California Environmental Quality Act*
  - National Environmental Policy Act*
  - Endangered Species Act*
  - Clean Water Act*
  - Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act*
  - Open Meeting Law (“Brown Act”)*
  - Section 404 Wetlands Fill Limitations and Permits*
  - Fair Political Practices Act*
  - Conflict of Interest Code*
  - Public Resources Code for Special Districts*
  - ...and a lot more*
-

means the missions and policies of the other agencies must be respected.

At the federal level, the Bureau of Reclamation's Lake Berryessa property is governed by a plan as presented in a Record of Decision issued in 2006. Several projects in the Master Plan (Projects A.3, 10, 12, 15, and C.1) are either called for in the Record of Decision, or are consistent with its general principles.

The other major federal partner is the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The lands under its ownership in Napa County are governed by a Resource Management Plan approved in 2006. BLM's mission is very broad, encompassing resource protection, resource development, hunting, off-road vehicle use, hiking, camping, mountain bicycling and horseback riding. Several of the proposed trail projects involve BLM property, and are either called for or are consistent with the RMP (Projects A.11, 12, 13, 15 and B.2)

The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is the largest state property owner. Its properties fall into different categories depending on their habitat or other values. In general, DFG properties are open to the public for wildlife-dependent recreation. This includes hunting, fishing and nature-oriented activities like bird watching, natural resource interpretation and outdoor education. Little or no new development is permitted on most DFG properties, although restoration of degraded wetlands and habitats have become a large part of the DFG's mission. The legislatively-mandated rules for each DFG property are contained in the California Code of Regulations. Several Master Plan projects involve partnerships where DFG property is improved and managed by the District (Projects A.4, 5, 6, 8, B.1, and C.2 and C.5)

Two projects are proposed for City of Napa Water Division lands—around Milliken Reservoir (see A.2) and around Lake Hennessey (A.7). Since these lands were acquired to protect drinking water supplied to City of Napa residents, protecting water quality is the primary objective in determining what types and intensities of public use are appropriate.

## C. NAPA COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

### 1. Formation and Responsibilities of the District

In recognition of increasing public support for protecting open space and growing demand for outdoor recreation, combined with the declining opportunity of the public to experience the county's natural environment, the Napa County Board of Supervisors in 2002 appointed a 16 member advisory committee to address these concerns. The Board directed the Committee in reviewing these concerns to develop options and recommendations for enhancing County park, open space and recreational opportunities for Napa residents.

The Committee first determined after a series of public meetings that there is strong public interest by County residents in protecting the County's natural and historical resources, increasing nature based recreation opportunities and providing outdoor "classrooms" that could be used by schools and community groups. The Committee developed a comprehensive database of existing public lands which illustrated many potential opportunities for improving access and recreational use of existing publicly-owned lands. Their study also demonstrated that the environmental integrity and recreational benefits provided on existing public lands could be improved through some carefully targeted acquisitions to establish more usable boundaries for these areas.

In June, 2005 the Committee made a special report to the Board of Supervisors highlighting the results of their work reviewing park and open space goals, opportunities and needs of Napa County. This report noted that the County's policy of protecting open space lands and directing population growth to its cities has increased the demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. It recognized that more than three-fourths of the Napa County population is now living within the incorporated areas of the County. Finally, the Committee recommended that options for a new special organizational entity such as a special district that could assist the County focus on addressing these needs be considered at this time. At this meeting the Board expressed general interest in this approach and asked the Committee to develop more information on district organization and funding options.

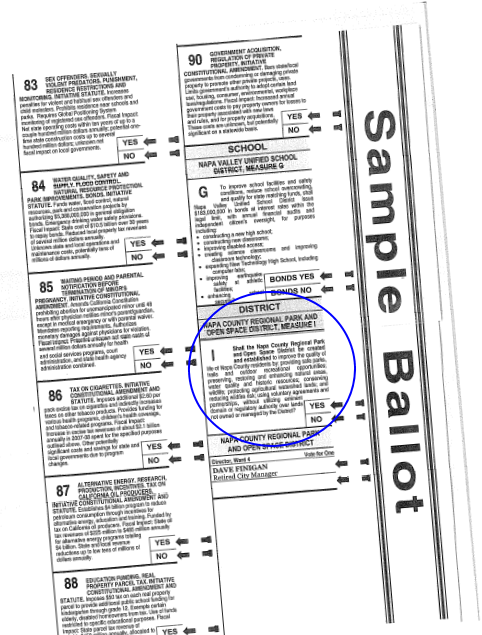
The Committee then developed five organizational and funding options for consideration by

#### Members of the Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee

David Briggs	Carol Kunze
Chip Bouril	Linda Marie-Loeb
Karen Bower-Turjanis	Mike McCarty
Kathleen Carrick	Tony Norris
Greg Coleman	Gene Piscia
Laurie Davis	Mathew Plate
Stuart Dole	Manuel Rios
Kerry Eddy	John Salmon
Matt Eisenberg	Mark Van Gorder
Mark Grassi	Brad Wagenknecht
Cheryl Harris	Susan Warner
John Hoffnagle	

the Board. These options varied from continuing the status quo to formation of a special district with a directly elected board with various levels of funding. At the October 18, 2005 meeting of the Board the Committee reviewed the five options and recommended the creation of an independent park and open space special district under Section 5500 *et seq* of the State Public Resources Code. It was the Committee's determination that a directly elected special district would provide the most effective organizational structure for responding to the public need for park, open space and recreation opportunities, provide the greatest potential for building close partnerships with county and cities and provide the greatest flexibility for new dedicated funding for these programs.

The Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District was proposed to have the following five key provisions; 1) majority approval by the voters, 2) five directly elected directors for its governing board, 3) jurisdiction over all Napa County, 4) no power of eminent domain, and 5) the ability to contract with the County for staffing and support services. The Board endorsed the recommendations of the Committee at this meeting and authorized proceeding with development of a district formation ballot measure and district board of director election for the next General Election.



At its June 13, 2006 meeting the Board, after holding a public hearing on the formation of the proposed Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, approved initiating legal proceedings for its formation, and adopted a resolution calling for an election on the new District and election of its governing board for the November 2006 General Election. The staff report for this Board meeting noted that it was important for the County to take a lead role in building countywide capacity for providing regional parks and outdoor recreation through formation of this District and assisting the District develop a diversified base of long term revenues.

This report also noted that Napa County was the only county in the nine-county Bay Area and one of only a handful of counties statewide, which had neither a county parks department nor a countywide special district dedicated to parks and open space. This institutional gap has resulted in Napa residents having very limited opportunities for outdoor recreation even though 120,000 acres of open space in Napa County is in public ownership and approximately 25% of the County is permanently protected as open space. In addition, the report noted that Napa County had missed numerous grant funding opportunities because of not having an agency to focus on securing funds for open space and parks. The lack of any dedicated County governmental organization devoted to this area had also inhibited its ability to foster partnership with other Federal, State and local organizations that would have facilitated the development of new park, open space and recreational facilities.



At the Napa County 2006 General Election voters approved the formation of the proposed new Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District and elected the District's first governing board of directors. The vote on the formation of the new District was approved within all of the five Supervisors' districts, and within every city.

## 2. The District's first year of operation

Three basic concepts guided the District's first year of work:

- ⇒ Existing public open space lands deserve better management;
- ⇒ Partnerships with other agencies and organizations are the key to efficient and effective action, and
- ⇒ Big visions require a solid foundation and methodical nuts-and-bolts planning.

Over the first twelve months the District advanced plans for 16 parks, trails and restoration projects. Each of these plans involved open space lands owned by public agencies or non-profit land conservation organizations whose public values have not been fully realized. Progress on each of these plans came about through District efforts to strengthen partnerships with others. The District's primary job the first year was to listen to the ideas and hopes of people throughout the county, and to turn those ideas into practical projects that can be approved, funded and implemented.

These 16 projects represented an interim plan for the District. They reflected high priority needs that required immediate action so that favorable circumstances and opportunities would not be lost. The District concurrently initiated the development of this Master Plan, intended to expand and enhance the interim plan and establish a comprehensive and systematic approach to meeting park and open space needs during the next five years.

### a. Projects

The first year work program and accomplishments included the following projects:

Napa River/Bay Trail. Completed the feasibility study for a nearly nine mile walking and bicycling trail connecting the cities of American Canyon and Napa, utilizing lands owned by seven different public agencies along the eastern side of the Napa River; established a partnership with the City of American Canyon to implement the first phase between American Canyon and Green Island Road; prepared a River Parkway Grant Program application in partnership with the City of American Canyon; and initiated the process of securing other agency approvals.

Camp Berryessa. Prepared and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bureau of Reclamation to develop a facility design and operational plan for the reopening and development of the former Boy Scout Camp on Lake Berryessa as a community-based group and environmental education camp.

Oat Hill Mine Trail. Researched and obtained County Board of Supervisors' authorization to reopen the abandoned Oat Hill Mine Road easement for public use as a non-motorized

recreational trail between Calistoga and Aetna Springs Road; initiated planning for a major volunteer effort to repair erosion problems and improve the trail.

Milliken Ridge Trail. In consultation with the City of Napa, completed a feasibility study including a draft management and operations plan for the development of approximately 3 miles of Bay Ridge Trail, and 7 miles of other connector and loop trails including a staging and picnic area on 2,198 acres of land around Milliken Reservoir owned by the City of Napa but closed to the public for the past 29 years.

Napa River Ecological Reserve. Oversaw the completion of initial improvements to the Napa River Ecological Reserve on the Yountville Crossroad, working in partnership with Napa County, including installing parking area improvements and implementing a more effective cleaning and maintenance program; facilitated an Eagle Scout candidate volunteer in constructing an attractive trash enclosure and restoring the main entry sign; applied for and obtained a grant to restore native habitat and improve interpretive signage, working in partnership with the Napa County Resource Conservation District, Acorn Soupe and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Berryessa Estates. Drafted a trail plan and initiated community review for a no-cost transfer to the District, and opening to the public, of 360 acres of Bureau of Land Management open space next to Berryessa Estates.

Lake Hennessey. In consultation with the City of Napa, began development of a plan for opening for public enjoyment several miles of existing dirt roads and trails in the Oak woodlands on the north side of Lake Hennessey.

Napa River Flood Control Easement. Agreed to hold a conservation easement over Napa County Flood Control District lands on the east shore of the Napa River and north of the Imola Bridge, to facilitate a Flood District project and their ability to secure grant funding.

Newell Preserve. Arranged for funding for a solar water pump and distribution system at the Newell Preserve in American Canyon, to promote public use and protect riparian habitat, once the City is successful in drilling a productive well; facilitated City/County discussions to resolve impediments to public access.

River to Ridge Trail. Worked with Napa County to prepare lot line adjustment documents to resolve encroachment problems with the River to Ridge Trail connecting Kennedy Park to Skyline Park; facilitated an Eagle Scout candidate volunteer project in install a wildlife interpretive display.

Skyline Park. Worked with Napa County to protect Skyline Park from development by seeking authorization to purchase the park from the State; with the veto by the Governor of that approach, proposed General Plan and Zoning Ordinance changes to protect the park; oversaw Proposition 12-funded erosion control work on Lake Marie Road and the paving of the campground loop road to eliminate dust emissions.

Wild Lake Ranch/Duff/Robert Louis Stevenson State Park. Worked in cooperation with the Land Trust of Napa County and California State Parks on developing a strategic plan for protecting and providing public access to protected open space extending from Angwin to Mt. St. Helena.

Rector/Stags Leap Ridge Trail. Initiated discussions with the Veterans Home and started the process of securing the appropriate permits and grant funding to development approximately 6 miles of Bay Area Ridge Trail from Silverado Trail to east of Stags' Leap.

Vallejo Lakes. Worked with the Solano Land Trust, Solano County, the Coastal Conservancy and the Vallejo Water District, began planning for the purchase of 1,100 acres of surplus watershed lands to protect habitat and more than double the size of Skyline Park.

Berryessa Vista. Initiated the below-market purchase of 224 acres of land from the Land Trust of Napa County to create the Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park on the southern shore of Cappell Cove at Lake Berryessa.

South Wetlands Opportunity Area. Initiated discussions with the Napa County Flood Control District for the no-cost transfer of 774 acres of wetlands owned by the Flood Control District, located between the Napa River, Highway 29 and Newport Drive, for use as habitat and nature-based recreation.

## **b. Organizational Capacity Building**

In addition to work on the above 16 park, trail and resource interpretation and protection projects, the District also completed a number of actions associated with the initial startup of the District and the laying of the foundations necessary for effective, sustainable and accountable long-term operations. These are summarized as follows:

1. Governing Board. Seated first governing board, selected Board and staff officers, and determined individual board member terms of office.
2. County-District Partnership. Approved work program and agreements formalizing the partnership between the District and the County, setting expectations for District performance and providing for the use of selected County staff and elected officials to provide services to the District.
3. District Procedural Guidelines. Approved a Conflict of Interest Code, California Environmental Quality Act Local Guidelines, and District By-laws to assure effective and accountable decision making.
4. Outreach Strategy. Developed initial District strategy for outreach to community organizations.
5. Master Plan. A Board-appointed ad hoc committee initiated working with staff in developing a draft District Master Plan.
6. Non-Profit Foundation. A Board-appointed ad hoc committee initiated working with staff to research options for establishing a non-profit foundation to assist the District with fundraising.

7. District Logo. A Board-appointed ad hoc committee developed, and the District Board approved, a District Logo.
8. Internet Communications. Established a rudimentary web page for the District using the County web site, and initiated planning for a dedicated District web page.
9. Volunteer Involvement and Stewardship. Developed and filled a contract position to manage District parks and trails with an emphasis on community involvement and volunteerism.
10. Work Plan and Budget. Developed an annual work plan and budget, and instituted a monthly public Board review process.
11. Performance Review. Approved and implemented District performance review procedures for County staff working for the District.
12. Priority Conservation Areas. Developed and approved Napa County area nominations for the ABAG Priority Conservation Area (PCA) planning process.
13. General Plan. Reviewed and made recommendations on the Recreation and Open Space and Conservation Elements for the update of the County's General Plan.

### c. **Financial Capacity Building**

In supporting the formation of the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, the Board of Supervisors relied on budget estimates indicating that County-funded District operations in the first years would cost between \$300,000 and \$350,000 per year. The District was careful to pace the development of projects to stay within this estimate. The first year operating budget was \$287,982.

The District started with a commitment to efficiency in its operations. To meet this commitment, the District adopted the strategy of partnering with other agencies and organizations, contracting for services, and developing volunteer support as much as possible, rather than setting up an elaborate independent bureaucracy. In addition to contracting with Napa County for basic staffing services, the District in October of 2007 retained contract staff to help develop and manage a volunteer trail and camp host program, a volunteer trail patrol program, and other volunteer-based events and activities.

In terms of capital needs, the District adopted a three-part strategy. First, it focused on projects where the land could be acquired at either no cost or at below-market rates. For example, the District acquired the Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park property from the Land Trust of Napa County at one-third of its fair market value, and its proposed acquisitions of the 774 acres of wetlands south of the City of Napa from the Napa County Flood Control District, and the 360 acres of open space adjacent to Berryessa Estates from the Bureau of Land Management, would involve no-cost interagency transfers. Other projects, including the Napa River/Bay Trail, the Milliken Ridge Trail, the Rector/Stag's Leap Ridge Trail and Camp Berryessa are proposed to utilize no-cost agreements with the affected agency partners.

Second, the District researched donation and sponsorship programs to provide capital improvements including kiosks, benches and interpretive materials. The first implementation of this initiative was for improvements to and the formal re-opening of the Oat Hill Mine Trail, which took place in May 2008.

The District devoted considerable time to obtaining and using outside grant funds. In its first year, the District actively assisted the County complete \$255,000 in Proposition 12 grant-funded projects, including the Connolly Ranch outdoor dining area, improvements to the Napa River Ecological Reserve, improvements to Skyline Park, and the purchase of Berryessa Vista.

The District also made a strong drive to bring other projects to a level of readiness that would enable the District to aggressively seek new grant funding. This resulted in the award of a \$100,000 grant for restoration of native vegetation at the Napa River Ecological Reserve, and the submittal of a \$1,223,300 application. the River Parkway Grant Program for the Napa River/Bay Trail project, which matched an additional \$932,900 in funding provided by the City of American Canyon utilizing both a federal transportation grant plus City general fund revenues (in June of 2008 the District received a grant award of \$1,032,300 from the River Parkway Grant Program).

Additional projects which were brought nearer to the point where the District could seek outside grant funds included Camp Berryessa, the Milliken Ridge Trail and Rector/Stag's Leap Ridge Trail segments, and the expansion of Skyline Park through the purchase of surplus Vallejo Water District property near the Vallejo Lakes. To help advance more projects to the point where they are eligible for outside grant programs, the District in December successfully competed for \$344,700 in County Special Project Fund grants, which over a three year period will assist with Oat Hill Mine Trail improvements, phase two of the Napa River/Bay Trail, and Camp Berryessa.

Another District approach to bringing more outside grant funding to Napa County was to support grant funding for District partners. The District worked with and supported the Land Trust of Napa County obtain a \$1,000,000 grant to complete the Duff Acquisition next to the Oat Hill Mine Trail, and a \$290,000 grant to complete an integrated management plan for more than 12,000 acres of open space north and east of Calistoga owned variously by California State Parks, California State Lands Commission, the Bureau of Land Management, Napa County and the Land Trust of Napa County.

In total, in its first year of operation the District obtained, sought or was involved with partners on capital grants totaling \$5,035,900.

## SECTION IV

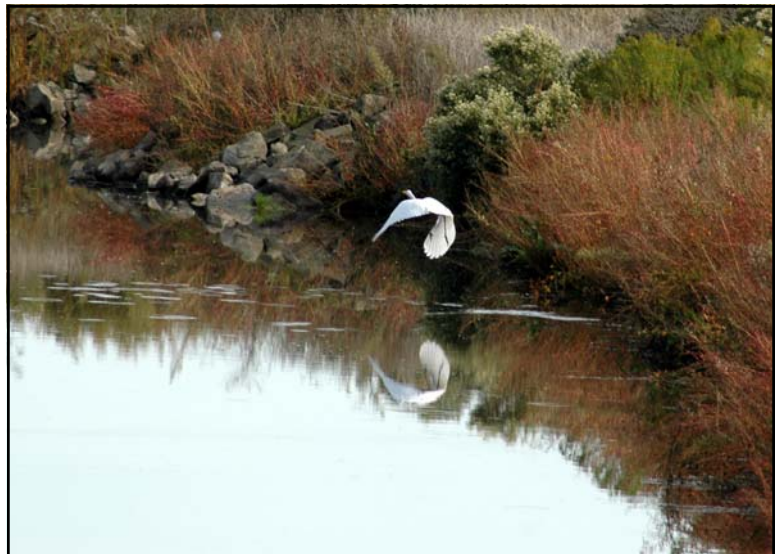
# GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPALS OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan is organized around four broad goals of facility development, open space preservation, educational programs and District operations and partnerships. The first three goals are derived from the County General Plan and the resolutions establishing the function and responsibility of the District, as discussed in Section III. The fourth goal addresses District operations and management. These goals are as follows:

- A. Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resource activities, open space and related facilities.
- B. Preserve, restore and protect open space lands, natural resources and special habitat areas.
- C. Provide historical, cultural and environmental education programming opportunities.
- D. Provide for District management and interagency partnerships.

These four broad goals include a range of specific activities. Except for the fourth goal related to District management, the specific activities covered by these broad goals are outlined below.

- A. Recreation Facility Development
  - 1. Trail Based recreation
    - a. Hiking
    - b. Mountain Biking
    - c. Horseback Riding
    - d. Dog Walking
  - 2. Camping
    - a. Primitive or Back-country Camping
    - b. Drive-in Tent Camping
    - c. RV Camping
    - d. Semi-rustic Overnight Accommodations (Tent Cabins and Yurts)
  - 3. Picnicking
  - 4. Nature Observation
    - a. Overlooks and Waysides
    - b. Bird Watching
    - c. Photography
    - d. Star gazing





5. Water Recreation
  - a. Swimming
  - b. Canoeing and Kayaking
  - c. Napa River Water Trail
6. Outdoor Sports
  - a. Fishing
  - b. Hunting
  - c. Archery
  - d. Disc Golf
  - e. Equestrian Skills (arena based and open field courses)
- B. Resource Preservation and Restoration
  1. Natural habitats and wildlife
    - a. Representative examples of each of the major plant communities to assure sufficient habitat for the full diversity of native plants and animals.
    - b. Unique and/or rare habitats.
    - c. Threatened and endangered species.
    - d. Habitat connectivity
  2. Watershed Protection
    - a. Groundwater
    - b. Creeks, lakes and ponds
    - c. Vernal pools
    - d. Drinking water
  3. Archaeological, cultural, historic sites
- C. Educational Programs
  1. Community-based habitat restoration projects
  2. Interpretive materials, facilities and programs

In addition to the four goals, the Master Plan identifies and incorporates a number of guiding principals that are intended to define general policies the District should follow during this five year period. Some of these guiding principals are taken from the existing and/or proposed County General Plan while others were identified in the development of this Master Plan.

These guiding principals provide general criteria for the selection and development of the projects presented in this Master Plan. They are also intended to provide a policy foundation for project implementation as well as the ongoing operation of the District.

The guiding principals are as follows:

1. Improve and expand public access to park and open space lands where appropriate and consistent with the preservation of natural, historical and cultural resources and the protection of agriculture.





2. Give priority to the development of recreation facilities and programs on lands that are already owned by another governmental agency or non-profit land conservation organizations, and to the acquisition and improvement of lands adjacent to such existing public lands.
3. Pursue acquisitions from willing sellers that will help round out the boundaries of or connect together currently

isolated tracts of public lands, in order to improve resource stewardship, protect core habitats as well as habitat corridors and to allow trail connections.

4. Within the context of the long-term goals and objectives contained in this Master Plan, take advantage of unique time-sensitive opportunities to acquire or protect significant open spaces and habitat
5. Pursue a balanced program of providing a range of recreation venues including parks, picnic areas and campgrounds, open space lands, trails, and water resources that serve a diversity of recreation interests.
6. Provide recreation opportunities in all areas of Napa County.
7. Provide recreational opportunities to serve Napa's diversity of cultures and wide range of ages and physical abilities, that are focused on nature-based recreation.
8. Promote the establishment of educational programs and interpretive facilities on properties managed by the District that provide information on the environment, history and culture.
9. Pursue projects and programs that are as affordable and accessible to all income and age groups as possible, utilizing donations and partnerships where feasible, and with user fees evaluated on a case-by-case basis and only imposed as necessary to ensure projects and programs are financially self-supporting and sustainable.
10. Seek to partner with other agencies, non-profit land conservation organizations, and other community and business groups, in pursuing the acquisition, development and/or operation of recreation facilities and programs.
11. Promote projects that improve the management of public lands.
12. Assume responsibility for lands and facilities that the District can manage in an operationally and financially responsible manner.
13. Operate District facilities and programs in an energy efficient and environmental sensitive manner.
14. Promote projects that support the economic viability of the County by preserving

what is most special and providing opportunities for the public to experience what has been preserved.

15. Focus on projects that are regional in nature.
16. Focus on projects and that complement rather than interfere with or duplicate city and other agency facilities or programs, and where District involvement will facilitate worthy projects that otherwise may not occur.
17. Seek to develop recreation facilities and programs at locations in close proximity to the County's population centers.
18. Aggressively seek grants and donations to acquire and develop park and open space facilities.
19. Plan and implement projects following the principal that good stewardship of the park and open space lands and resources owned or operated by the District is the first priority of the District
20. Promote the use of volunteers and community based organizations for improving and managing District programs and facilities.
21. Promote non-motorized recreation facilities such as hiking trails, bicycle routes and other facilities that link the County's cities, town and communities to each other and to regional parks and other important destinations.
22. Utilize the criteria in Policy ROS-10 of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Napa County General Plan when designing and locating trails.
23. Increase the amount of dedicated open space in Napa County by at least 50,000 acres, working in partnership with other governmental and local nonprofit land conservation organizations.
24. Increase recreational trails open to the public by at least 100 miles, working in partnership with other governmental agencies and non-profit land conservation organizations.
25. Protect the natural resources of District properties and facilities by adopting user policies, regulations and educational materials which promote a "leave no trace" philosophy.

## SECTION V

# SUMMARY OF NAPA COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND HABITATS

The policy foundation for this Master Plan is set by the County General Plan and the District's formation resolution, as discussed in Section III and further refined by the guiding principles presented in Section IV. It is now important to review the natural resources and conservation values of existing open space lands. This will be followed in Section VI with a review of existing park and recreation facilities and existing and projected outdoor recreation demand. .

Two major studies of Napa County's habitat and associated biological environment were completed during 2003-5. The first involved a strategic planning process completed by the Land Trust of Napa County (referred to below as the Land Trust) in 2004 that assessed and established land conservation priorities in Napa County., with assistance from the non-profit organizations NatureServe and The Nature Conservancy, and the UC Davis Information Center for the Environment (ICE) This led to the development of their Conservation Vision 2010 Plan. That Plan examines and makes recommendations on the biodiversity/habitat, agriculture and recreation and scenic open space conservations needs of Napa County. It includes a comprehensive biological resources database of the County.

The third study was the Napa County Baseline Data Report (BDR) completed in 2005 which provides baseline information on a wide range of topics including biological resources. This study incorporates the biodiversity database information developed by the Land Trust study along with a wide variety of other geographic information.

### A. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF NAPA COUNTY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The General Plan Conservation Element, Biological Resources Section of the Napa County Baseline Data Report and The Nature Conservancy, NatureServe and ICE studies prepared for the Land Trust provide valuable information of the natural resources in Napa County. The following is intended to be a general summary of the information in these studies. This is followed by a more detailed review of each.

California is known globally as a region having significant biodiversity. Napa County has a high level of biodiversity compared to California. Napa County has been described, along with the San Francisco Bay area, as a region containing "world class" biodiversity. This is attributable to Napa's varied topography, landscape of peaks and valleys, rolling hills, numerous microclimates, and many creeks, streams, and rivers that combine to create one of the 25 most biological diverse counties in the United States. Napa County is also home to a number of special-status plant and wildlife species that are legally pro-





ected under federal and state regulations and are designated endangered, rare or threatened.

The County straddles the North Coast Ranges. The western half of the County is within the Outer Coast Ranges. This portion of the County is characterized by high rainfall, allowing the growth of the redwood, mixed-evergreen and mixed-hardwood forests that are its dominant vegetation types. The eastern half of the County, located within the Inner North Coast Ranges, is characterized by low rainfall and hot, dry summers, resulting in domi-

nance by chaparral and pine/oak woodland. In between these two areas is the Napa River watershed. Covering an area north of Calistoga to the rivers' entry into San Pablo Bay, the Napa River Watershed encompasses most of the County's agricultural and urban development.

The General Plan Conservation Element briefly summarizes the County's plant, wildlife, and beneficial impact of these biological resources as follows: "Napa County has particularly diverse plant life, including oak woodlands, grasslands, mixed serpentine chaparral, mixed willow riparian forests, redwood forests, and vernal pools. Although Napa County occupies less than ½ percent of California's land, it contains 1,102 native plants, representing 32 percent of the states native flora. Approximately 114 special-status plant species have been observed in the County. Two plant species, found in the Valley— Napa bluegrass and Calistoga popcorn flower—are found nowhere else in the world. Napa County with approximately 167,450 acres of oak woodlands, comprising 33 percent of the County, has the highest density of oak woodlands in the state.

Napa County is also home to numerous wildlife species, including many rare, threatened, and endangered species. Twenty-four special-status wildlife species have been found in the County. The coniferous forest of the northwest county provide homes for the threatened northern spotted owl. The County's baylands in the southern portion of the County at the mouth of the Napa River are a component of the largest estuarine system on the west coast of North and South America—the San Francisco Bay Delta. This area supports over 130 species of birds, including the endangered California clapper rail. The rivers, creeks, streams of Napa's watersheds provide habitat for many species of plans fish, invertebrates, and amphibians, including the threatened California red-legged frog.

The biota or combination of the flora and fauna of the biological resources of Napa county provide real and measurable values to the County, including water supply and quality enhancement, erosion control, natural beauty, and ecological health. The piecemeal destruction of this environment represents a threat to the high level of biodiversity and special status species in the county. Specific threats include continued suburban and rural development, unnatural wildfire, non-native invasive species, overgrazing, hydrologic modifica-



tions, wildlife exclusion fencing, conversion of natural habitats, disease and certain non-native pests.” The Conservation Element of the updated 2008 General Plan includes a series of goals, policies and actions to address and mitigate these threats to the natural environment of Napa County.

## B. THE LAND TRUST OF NAPA COUNTY BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT

The Land Trust assessment of conservation values for Napa County involved the creation of a task force, key informant interviews, existing plan review and the development of a comprehensive GIS map that identifies priority areas suitable for recreation, open space conservation and habitat protection. The Land Trust’s biodiversity assessment included studies by the Nature Conservancy called Conserving the Landscapes of Napa County and the NatureServe’s project ALDO which resulted in a computer-based model that measures and prioritizes land conservation work.

The purpose of the study by the Nature Conservancy was to develop a strategic vision for conserving functional landscapes that would maintain the viability of important ecological systems in Napa County. It was intended to be a conceptual blueprint for land conservation programs and activities in the County.

The study identified nine conservation areas that support the most important ecological systems, including valley and blue oak woodlands, native perennial grasslands, serpentine chaparral, cypress forests, riparian forests, and aquatic systems for native fish. The nine conservation areas identified were American Canyon, Atlas Peak-Mount George, Blue Ridge-Vaca Mountains, Knoxville-Cedar Roughs, Mount Hood Range, Mount St. Helena, Napa River and Tributaries, Napa River Wetlands, and Pope Valley.

The Nature Conservancy study evaluated the existing state of the habitat in each of these areas and identified conservation targets for ecological systems, mammals, birds, fish, invertebrates, and plants. It also identified threats to the habitat and then developed conservation goals and strategies that became a conservation plan for each area. Each conservation area plan included core areas with the highest priority for protection including buffer zones and wildlife linkages. The conservation areas were ranked according to measures of conservation value and vulnerability. Finally, conservation areas were divided into three tiers based upon the conservation value and vulnerability.





NatureServe and selected partner organizations developed an assessment of Napa County's biodiversity for the Land Trust during 2002-3. The goal of this project was to measure the relative conservation value of properties across the County and develop a conservation strategy to protect the most important biodiversity areas. Their study resulted in the identification of the 300 most important biodiversity

parcels to protect in the County. The biodiversity elements used to establish these priorities were ecological systems, plant communities considered rare and vulnerable, and plants and animals considered rare and vulnerable. Most of these 300 parcels were located along the northern and eastern boundaries of the County. The largest cluster of parcels was located north of Lake Berryessa and is contiguous with the Knoxville Wildlife Area and the McLaughlin Reserve. Two additional large clusters are located directly east of Lake Berryessa and around Lake Curry owned by the City of Vallejo.

The Land Trust then combined the results of these two studies to develop a map identifying the high priority conservation areas. Properties with the highest priority are located in areas where the two study analyses intersected. In addition numeric values are assigned to all properties in the County that each study identified as having high biodiversity value. These maps are now used by the Land Trust to plan their land acquisition, protection and conservation easement programs. They were also provided to the County for incorporation into their Baseline Data Report section on Biological Resources.

## C. NAPA COUNTY BASELINE DATA REPORT ON BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Napa County Baseline Data Report (BDR) provides existing condition information for a wide variety of environmental and resource topics in Napa County. The BDR contains sections on various county resource topics, geographic information system (GIS) maps and databases, sophisticated hydrologic models and other information.

The development of the BDR grew out of early County efforts to develop a program-level environmental impact report (PEIR) that could provide a basis for the County to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and improve its ability to evaluate environmental impacts from development, infrastructure, and other projects. The BDR was intended to be the first component of a PEIR and serve as a background document for major County projects. The study was initiated in 2003 and completed at the end of 2005 with subsequent approval by the County Board of Supervisors.

The BDR is envisioned as a living document providing comprehensive environmental and

## Summary of Conclusions from the Baseline Data Report

- ◆ Due to its biodiversity, Napa County's diverse and unique assemblage of flora and fauna is a biological resource of statewide and national importance.
- ◆ This biodiversity provides valuable goods, ecosystem services, recreational opportunities, and potential scientific information that are highly useful to society.
- ◆ Twenty-five sensitive biotic communities (out of 52 natural land cover types) are found in Napa County.
- ◆ Critical biological areas in the county include the following:
  - 1) The Napa River Marches, a critical and important habitat for many special-status wildlife species and some special-status plants.
  - 2) The Napa River and its tributaries, which support a regionally-significant anadromous fish run.
  - 3) Knoxville Area, which supports a high concentration of serpentine-dependent plant species.
  - 4) The vernal pool complexes in Pope Valley and the Eastern Mountain area.
  - 5) Old-growth Douglas-fir in the Western Mountains Evaluation Area, the Livermore Ranch Evaluation Area and other scattered inparts of the County, which provide habitat for old-growth-dependent species such as northern spotted owl and other species.
- ◆ Eighty-one special -status plant species and 68 special –status wildlife species man be found in Napa County. Two plant species found in the County are found nowhere else in the world (Napa bluegrass and Calistoga popcornflower).
- ◆ Several biotic communities and habitat features are particularly important to protect due to their relatively limited extent in the County and their importance to a large number of special-status plant and/or wildlife species. These communities are the following:
  - 1) Riparian woodland, freshwater wetlands (including vernal pools), and streams, which support a disproportionately high number of the County's special-status plant and wildlife species.
  - 2) Rock outcrops, which provide habitat for many special special-status plant species and are used by special-status raptors and bats.
  - 3) Salt marsh, which is an important biotic community for the County's special-status wildlife species, many which are only found in this community.
  - 4) Serpentine grassland, which occupies 0.4% of the County and provides potential habitat for 38% of the County's special-status plant species, some of which are only found in this community.
- ◆ Maintenance of wildlife movement corridors is important to conserve the diversity of wildlife and plants fund within Napa County. Riparian corridors are particularly valuable for movement by many species, and are especially critical in the Napa Valley because of the limited extent and fragmented distribution of other natural land cover in this area.
- ◆ Management of biological resources in each Evaluation Area should be tailored to the biological resources in that area and the threats to those resources...
- ◆ Non-native invasive species are a threat to nearly all the biotic communities in the County. A comprehensive approach to controlling the spread of these species and reducing their extent is critically needed to conserving the County's biological resources.
- ◆ Habitat loss due to agricultural and residential development threatens the County's biological resources. In addition to direct habitat loss as a result of development, alterations of natural hydrology and water quality due to urban and agricultural development can have detrimental effects on degraded downstream biotic communities particularly on wetlands and streams.





resource management information for use by the County in its general planning and development review programs. The County plans to update the BDR on an ongoing basis to insure that the information is current and reliable. The BDR was used to update the County General Plan, and continues to be used to improve the county's environmental resource mapping system, and provide baseline conditions for permitting and planning projects including CEQA reviews.

The BDR is divided into 18 sections addressing a variety of topics on Napa County resources such as geologic resources, climate and air quality, population and housing, transportation and circulation, surface and groundwater hydrology agricultural resources and other general topics of importance to the County. The Biological Resources section of the BDR is of particular interest to the District and this Master Plan. As mentioned previously, the data prepared by the Land Trust on County biological resources was incorporated into the BDR. However, the BDR does not prioritize biological resource needs on a County-wide basis as did the Land Trust studies.

The Biological Resources section is divided into chapters and provides information on the nature and distribution of biological resources throughout the County. Reviewed below are the four chapters most relevant to this Master Plan: Evaluation Areas, Biotic Communities, Special-Status Plants and Wildlife Species, and Wildlife Movement Areas.

## 1. Evaluation Areas

The report divides the County into thirteen "Evaluation Areas" based on physical and geographic characteristics: Napa River Marshes, Jamieson/American Canyon, Carneros, Napa Valley Floor, Western Mountains, Eastern Mountains, Angwin, Livermore Ranch, Southern Interior Valleys, Central Interior Valleys, Pope Valley, Berryessa, and Knoxville. These areas are similar to the nine conservation areas identified by the Nature conservancy study. For each of these areas the report provides information on the eight identified biotic communities, special-status plants and wildlife, wildlife movement areas and other related habitat information. Each Evaluation Area also includes information on land cover, habitat, sensitive biotic communities, habitat protection, and management considerations. These suggest conservation priorities and issues for each area.

## 2. Biotic Communities

The chapter on biotic communities defines characteristic assemblages of plants and animals that are found in a given range of soil, climate, and topographic conditions across a region. The BDR takes 59 identified land cover types and categorizes them into eight

principal biotic communities; grassland, chaparral/scrub, oak woodland, riparian woodlands, coniferous forest, wetlands, open water, and agricultural cropland. The chapter then describes each biotic community in terms of both typical plants and wildlife and as well as unique and special-status species. Tables are provided indicating the location, size and plant characteristics of these biotic communities in each of the 13 Evaluation Areas.

Of the 59 identified land cover types, 23 are classified as sensitive biotic communities because of their rarity, high biological diversity, and/or susceptibility to disturbance or destruction. Examples of sensitive biotic communities include (a) grasslands with serpentine bunchgrass, wildflower field (located in native grassland), creeping ryegrass, purple needlegrass, and one-sided bluegrass grasslands; (b) mixed serpentine chaparral; (c) McNab cypress and Oregon white oak woodlands; (d) California bay forests and woodlands; (e) Fremont cottonwood, Arroyo willow, black willow, pacific willow, red willow, narrowleaf willow and mixed willow riparian forests; (f) sergeant cypress woodland; (g) Douglas-fir-ponderosa pine forest; (h) redwood forest; (i) coastal and valley freshwater and northern coastal salt marshes and northern vernal pools. The BDR the presence of these sensitive biotic communities in each of the eight biotic communities and the 13 Evaluation Areas.

### 3. Special-Status Species

The chapter on special-status plant species provides a list of these species found in Napa County as well as information on the biotic communities, habitat, and distribution of these species in the County. The chapter notes that although 78 special-status plant species been documented as observed in the County recent studies have increased this number to 114. It notes that special-status plants are found in all of the principal biotic communities in the County. The County is considered a “hotspot” for rare plants which are particularly concentrated in the central and northwest portions of the County. The County has documented information of the occurrence of 55 of the 2089 rare plant species extant in California. Seven of the County’s special-status species are also listed as federally endangered. Some biotic communities support a large number of special-status plants; an example is the County’s serpentine grasslands. Vernal pools are associated with five special-status plant species.

The chapter on special-status wildlife lists 68 species that are likely to be found in the County. This includes 39 birds, 11 mammals, 8 fish, 5 invertebrates, 3 amphibians, and 2 reptiles. Only 24 of these 68 species have documented occurrences in the County. Twenty-four of the 796 rare animal species extant in California have been documented in the County. Six special-status wildlife species found in the County are federally endangered and eight are federally threatened. The federally endangered wildlife species are the California freshwater shrimp, callippe silverspot, winter-run chinook salmon, tidewater goby, california clapper rail, and the salt marsh harvest mouse. Wildlife species commonly use several different biotic communities for different purposes although some have a strong association with a particular community such as the salt marsh or coniferous forest. Special-status wildlife species utilize every biotic community in the County. The chapter also includes a table identifying the habitat, distribution and known County locations for special-status wildlife.



## 4. Wildlife Movement

The chapter on Wildlife Movement Areas or habitat linkages describes the importance of habitat connectivity to species success, species requirements for movement areas, areas that have potential for wildlife movement and projected movement corridors. Movement corridors that provide habitat connections between two distant points are important to enable periodic migrations, assure access to food supply and water and breeding areas, promotion of genetic diversity, and providing for the dispersal of seeds and other related benefits. Wildlife habitat is being fragmented throughout California as development occurs. This chapter reviews the reasons for wildlife movement and movement requirements for terrestrial animals, birds and bats and aquatic wildlife. It also reviews existing movement corridors and identifies the three following distinct habitat groupings important to wildlife movement in Napa County: grassland-riparian, oak woodland riparian and coniferous forest-riparian. Finally, this chapter ppresents existing movement corridors and projects the impact on these corridors with theoretical buildout of the County.

Overall, the Biological Resources section of the BDR identifies a number of conclusions intended to highlight important areas of concern for future protection of Napa’s County’s diverse and sensitive habitats. Since these recommendations are directly related to the mission of the District, they are presented below in substantially the same form as they appear in the Baseline Data Report:

### D. DISTRICT USE OF COUNTY STUDIES ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND HABITATS

The material presented in the County’s Baseline Data Report and developed by the Land Trust of Napa County and other land conservation organizations provides invaluable information on the natural resources and habitats of the County. This information has informed the development of the guiding principles and the project objectives contained in this Master Plan in three ways:

1. By helping to pinpoint key areas for open space acquisition to protect and conserve important natural resources and habitats.
2. By providing guidance in identifying open space areas that may or may not be appropriate to open up for public recreational use, balancing the goals of public access with habitat protection.
3. By identifying resources worthy of environmental information and interpretation programs.

An example of how this information has been used is provided by Project Objective B.10—the proposed acquisition of property in the Moore Creek watershed. Moore Creek is identified in

the NatureServe study as an area of high priority in terms of biodiversity. The proposed property acquisition would protect 3 miles of perennial creek with a highly valuable riparian biotic community. It connects to other high priority habitat lands that are protected by conservation easements or public ownership. These habitat values, combined with potential recreation values, make this an ideal property to consider for acquisition.

The District may in the future also use the County BDR and related studies to help implement mitigation measures associated with new development. Although the District itself does not have responsibility for the enforcement of environmental regulations for new property development projects, it may be involved with implementing projects designed to mitigate the adverse impacts associated with such projects. The BDR provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating the rarity of impacted resources and the availability of other sites containing similar resources.



## Section VI

# Supply and Demand for Regional Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space in Napa County

### A. EXISTING FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

To develop a master plan and associated work program for the District it is first necessary to identify existing park, recreation and open space facilities and programs in the County. This provides the basis for determining the need for expanded or additional facilities and programs through the identification of existing gaps or limitations in these facilities. This section of the Master Plan first reviews existing County regional park, recreation and open space facilities and then determines future facility and program needs. Section VII of the Master Plan identifies specific project objectives that respond to and address these park, recreation and open space needs.

#### 1. Summary of Existing Regional Park and Recreation Facilities and Protected Open Space

According to an analysis of land use prepared as part of the update to the Napa County General Plan, the County in January 2006 had a total of 38,017 acres of dedicated open space. “Dedicated open space” includes lands who open space values (habitat, recreation and agriculture) are permanently protected either by fee title ownership or easement held by a public agency or land trust. The chart below indicates the protected acreage by agency and/or land trust:

<b>Dedicated Open Space in Napa County</b>			
<u>Agency/Organization</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Agency/Organization</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
USA	62,781	Napa Flood Control District	624
State of California	42,393	Napa Community College District	185
County of Napa	356	Napa Sanitation District	116
City of Napa	5,778	Spanish Flat Water District	7
City of American Canyon	1,358	Land Trust of Napa County	
City of St. Helena	435	Preserves	5,885
City of Calistoga	400	Conservation Easements	14,398
Town of Yountville	9	Quail Ridge Wilderness Conservancy	37
City of Vallejo	3,256		
		Total	138,017

*Source: Napa County General Plan, June 2008, Recreation and Open Space Element, page ROS-14*

The primary existing public regional park and recreation, facilities and open space areas in Napa County are discussed below. This discussion draws extensively from author Ken Stanton, whose book Great Day Hikes in and around Napa Valley, is the best available compilation of such information.

**Bay Area Ridge Trail System—Napa County:** The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (BARTC) founded in 1987 is a non-profit volunteer organization working to create a 550+ plus mile ridgeline trail system connecting the Bay Area's greenbelt of parks and open spaces with its communities. When completed the Ridge Trail will connect 9 counties and serve 100 communities. To date the BARTC has facilitated the dedication of over 315 miles of Ridge Trail, with 14 miles completed to date in Napa County, including 12 miles of the primary Ridge Trail route and 2.75 miles of connector trails. The dedicated sections of the Ridge Trail in Napa County include the Napa-Solano Ridge Trail in Skyline Park, and the bicycle lane utilizing the Yountville Crossroad and Solano Avenue heading south from Yountville. The Ridge Trail alignment in Napa County in part follows the same alignment as the proposed Napa Crest Trail (see Project A.16 in Section VII).



**Bothe-Napa Valley State Park:**

This Park is owned and operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. It is located halfway between Calistoga and St Helena just west of Highway 29. It offers hiking trails, horseback riding, 50 family campsites including 19 walk-ins and one group campsite and historic facilities including the operating Bale Grist Mill. The primary trail is the Ritchey Canyon trail which is just over 4 miles long and moderate in grade. Bicyclists may use the lower portion of the trail. There are seven miles of other trails such as the Redwood and Coyote Peak trails that connect to the Ritchey Trail.



**Connolly Ranch Environmental Education Center:** This 12 acre urban farm adjoins the Westwood Hills Park in Napa. The center contains environmental and agricultural educational facilities operated by the Land Trust of Napa County since 1991. Working with

other local organizations and volunteers, Connolly Ranch provides environmental education programs for over 3,500 Napa students a year.

**Enchanted Hills Camp.** Enchanted Hills Camp is owned by The Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and is one of several camps and conference centers operated by the cooperative efforts of United Camps, Conferences and Retreats, serving over 800 nonprofit groups each year. Enchanted Hills Camp is located amid 311 acres on Mount Veeder just 10 miles west of Napa, in Napa County California. Nestled amid majestic coastal redwood, douglas fir, madrone and tan oak trees, its tranquil setting has enhanced the programs for the blind and visually impaired for over five decades. Enchanted Hills Camp has two separate lodging areas. The upper camp serves adults in a retreat setting situated around a small scenic lake, while the rustic lower camp serves campers during non-winter months. The site can also accommodate daytime conferences and special events. The lower camp is designed for rustic camping with screened unheated cabins, central bathrooms, fire circles and a beautiful outdoor amphitheater.

**Lake Berryessa Recreational Area:** Lake Berryessa located in the western part of Napa County is the largest provider of recreation activities. This recreational area owned and managed by the Federal Bureau of Reclamation attracts over a million people a year to seven privately operated lake resorts for RV camping, boating, fishing and other related activities. There are two large public day use areas for picnicking, fishing and hiking. One is just north of the Spanish Flat area; the other at Oak Shores is one mile south of Middle Creek. There is also a public boat launch located at the southwestern end of the Lake on Highway 128 and a visitor's center in the Spanish Flat area. At the present time there are limited public trails along the lake shoreline. Plans are currently being developed by local residents and the Bureau of Reclamation for a public trail around the entire lake.

**Lake Hennessey:** This lake and its associated dam facility and watershed area are part of the water supply system for the City of Napa. Altogether the City owns 2600 acres in the area. The lake provides fishing, boating, some hiking and spectacular bird watching. The Lake's main access is east of the Silverado Trail on Highway 128. There is a picnic area at the boat launch area on the south side of the lake with limited trails. On the north side of the Lake which is reached by Conn Valley Road there is a two mile trail following the shoreline. The best waterfowl viewing is at the eastern end of the Lake on Highway 128 or along the north shoreline trail.

**Las Posadas Demonstration Forest:** This is a 796 acre area managed by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as a demonstration forest. Demonstration forests are designed to host research projects and demonstrate improved forest management practices, from timber production and environmental stewardship, to public recreation uses. Unlike some of the other demonstration forests managed by CDF, the Las Posadas Demonstration Forest is not formally open to the public. There is however a 4-H camp on the property.

**Cedar Roughs:** In 2006 Congress established the 6,350 acre Cedar Roughs Wilderness Area. Managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Cedar Roughs is a rugged area of dense chaparral and cypress, with high habitat values. It includes the world's largest stand





of genetically pure Sargent cypress, and is home to a stable population of black bear. While legally open to the public, access is limited and difficult. One trail leads a short distance into Cedar Roughs from the Pope Canyon Road.

**Napa River Ecological Reserve:**

This 73 acre special environmental reserve area is owned and operated by State Fish and Game. It has the

last significant stand of valley oak riparian woodland left in Napa Valley. The Reserve is home to over 230 plant species, and 200 species of animals have been observed there. The Reserve is located about a mile west of the Silverado Trail on Yountville Cross Road. It includes a short loop trail along the Napa River that provides an opportunity to view the diverse plant and animal life in this area.

**Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area:** This large marsh and wetland area at the southern end of Napa County is owned by the California Department of Fish and Game and is managed primarily for habitat protection. It covers an area of almost 9,000 acres. The primary users of this area are boaters, hunters and fishermen. Public access by land is primarily confined to the Huichica Creek Unit located in the northern portion of this wildlife area. This unit is accessed from the end of Buchli Station Road in the south Carneros area of Napa County. There is a parking lot just after the railroad tracks that provide the access point to this wildlife area. The remaining parts of the Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area can only be accessed by water—principally by canoe, kayak or other small boats.

**Newell Open Space Preserve:** This 640 acre open space preserve was dedicated by the Newell family to the City of American Canyon in 1999. Unrestricted public access to this preserve is currently only provided from I-80 in Solano County utilizing the adjoining 1039 acre Lynch Canyon preserve. Public access from American Canyon is currently restricted to docent-led groups. The City is currently planning the development of a picnic and camp area and a trail system for this open space preserve, including a connection to the Bay Area Ridge Trail, which is located at the eastern edge of the Preserve. When complete, the location of this open space preserve adjacent to the Lynch Canyon Preserve with its 8 miles of trails will result in a major and convenient open space facility for the southern part of Napa County for hiking, camping, mountain biking, nature observation and other related recreation activities.

**Palisades and Oat Hill Mine Trails:** The Palisades together with the historic Oat Hill Mine Trail provide the most dramatic and popular hiking and mountain bicycling area in Napa County. These trails provide over 16 miles of quality trail experience and are used by over 5000 visitors annually of which about 50% are from outside Napa County. The Palisades Trail is accessed from the Table Rock trailhead on Highway 29. The Table Rock Trail joins the Palisades Trail and continues in a southeast direction to connect with the Oat

Hill Mine Trail. This is a strenuous hike with magnificent views and interesting rock formations. The westerly, lower section of the Oat Hill Mine Trail is just under 5 miles and starts at the intersection of Highway 29 and Silverado Trail. The easterly section of this trail is a little over 3 miles in length, and starts at the western end of Aetna Springs Road about 4 miles west of the Aetna Springs Resort.

**Robert Louis Stevenson Park:** This park is owned and operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks). It consists of 5,273 acres in and around Mount St. Helena located in the north of the County adjacent to Lake County. The park is largely undeveloped, consisting of a few picnic tables at the trail entrance off the west side of Highway 29. This park is primarily used for hiking to the top of Mount St. Helena which is a strenuous 5 mile hike up to the top. The other important feature of this park is the Palisades area which was added to the Park in 1997 and provides a beautiful hiking trail traversing the base of the volcanic cliffs of the Palisades and connecting to the Oat Hill Mine Trail.

**San Francisco Bay Trail System—Napa County :** The Bay Trail is a 400-mile multiuse path that will circle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays at or near the edges of the bay. It will connect nine Bay Area counties and 42 shoreline communities. Its development is coordinated by the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, a non-profit organization supported by the Association of Bay Area Governments. Currently 60 percent of the Bay trail is finished with 240 miles of trail. Completed sections of the Bay Trail include Wetlands Edge Drive in American Canyon, the Napa River Trail through Kennedy park to the Imola Bridge, a Class I bicycle path crossing the Napa River on the Imola Bridge, and sections of Class I and Class II bicycle paths on or paralleling several rural roads in the Carneros region.

**Skyline Wilderness Park:** This 850 acre park is located on State owned property in south Napa adjacent to Napa State Hospital. The State leases this property to Napa County which in turn has a concession agreement with the Skyline Park Citizens Association to operate the property as a public park. Skyline Park provides 17 miles of hiking, horseback riding and mountain bicycling on 12 trails, about 15 tent camping sites, 38 RV camping sites and archery and disc golf ranges. It also provides equestrian facilities including an arena and round pen for exercising horses. There are no horse rental facilities at this park. It also includes the Martha Walker Native Plant Garden, and a native plant propagation area. Its principal trails include the Lake Marie, Thatcher's Rim Rock, Skyline and Napa Solano-Ridge Trail. The River to Ridge Trail connects Skyline Park with the City of Napa's Kennedy Park on the Napa River.

**Other Popular Trails in Napa County:** Other popular trails are located in Alston Park, Westwood Hills Regional Park and the Napa River Trail, all managed by the City of Napa. Alston Park in western Napa on Dry Creek Road has over two miles of trail that are suitable for hikers, dogs, mountain bikers and horses. Westwood Hills Regional Park on the south side of Browns Valley Road in Napa provides a two mile loop trail with picnic tables at the base of the trail. It also includes the Carolyn Parr Nature Museum. The Napa River Trail has three links completed—between Trancas and Lincoln Avenue, adjacent to downtown Napa, and from Kennedy Park to just north of the Imola Bridge.

In addition, there is an informal hunter's trail heading up Rector Ridge from the Silverado Trail just north of Yountville. This trail, which crosses State Department of Veterans Affairs property utilizing a public access easement held by the California Department of Fish and Game, offers spectacular views of the central stretch of the Napa Valley.

**Open Space Areas and the Land Trust of Napa County:** The Land Trust is one of the oldest and most successful land trusts in the United States. Since its inception in 1976 it has brought about the protection of over 50,000 acres of Napa's most significant landscapes through conservations easements, property acquisition and property transfers to other land conservation entities. Its open space acquisitions include agricultural lands, natural lands and accessible open space.

The Land Trust manages over 115 conservation easements protecting private property. It also has 1860 acres of permanent open space in four special preserves that owned by the Land Trust. The Land Trust also provides a comprehensive environmental education program through its operation of the Connolly Ranch educational center. It also utilizes numerous volunteers to offer a program of field trips that allows Land Trust members and the public to visit selected private and public open space properties.

The Land Trust recently acquired the 3,045 acre Wild Lake Ranch in the northeast part of Napa County north of Angwin. It is currently in negotiations to acquire the adjacent Duff property that will connect Wild Lake Ranch to Robert Louis Stevenson Park and the Oat Hill Mine Trail and the Palisades Trail. This will create a 12,000+ acre open space area in northeast Napa County protecting a major landscape and providing recreation opportunities that are unprecedented in Napa County.

**Other Special Wilderness and Wildlife Areas in Napa County:** There are a number of other less developed wilderness areas in Napa County that offer some special hiking and outdoor experiences in more remote areas. These areas currently have very limited facilities with underdeveloped hiking trails and minimal public usage. The Knoxville Wildlife Area at the northeast corner of Napa County north of Lake Berryessa owned by the California Department of Fish and Game includes over 20,000 acres in the Putah Creek. This wildlife area is managed for habitat protection and wildlife-dependent recreation. It provides some great hiking opportunities including Long Canyon Trail and the trail to Zim Zim falls. The Bureau of Land Management also owns over 15,000 acres to the north and west of this area in their Knoxville Unit that is used for off-road vehicle recreation and



hunting. The BLM land surrounds the McLaughlin Reserve, owned by U.C. Davis. Established at the site of the now-closed Homestake Mine, the reserve is used as a research station by numerous students and groups. The Reserve also regularly offers interpretive programs open to the public regarding the ecology, geology and history of the area.

The Cedar Roughts Wilderness Area includes 6,350 acres of land owned by the Federal Bureau of Land Management west of Lake Berryessa and south of Pope Canyon Road. Two short, unmarked trails lead less than 1 mile into this wilderness area. Finally the Sugarloaf Ridge and Hood Mountain Parks in Sonoma County off Highway 12 on Adobe Canyon Road located at the border of Napa and Sonoma counties offer special hiking and camping opportunities. Sugarloaf Ridge Park covers 2,700 acres and has 25 miles of hiking trails, 50 primitive camping sites, a large group camp and the Robert Ferguson Observatory.

## 2. Conclusions Regarding Existing Recreation Facilities and Programs

The previous summary of existing recreation facilities and programs illustrates various gaps and limitations. For example, local and regional trails are limited and not well distributed throughout the County. In spite of nearly one-fourth of the County being dedicated open space, most of that land does not have marked trails. The Napa River is a dominant natural feature in the County yet has only limited public recreational access. There are almost no open space-based environmental, historical, or cultural educational programs. Nature-based recreation opportunities within a 15-minute drive of where most people in Napa live and work are very limited.

## B. NAPA COUNTY RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITY AND PROGRAM NEEDS

An evaluation of the open space, recreation facility and program needs of Napa County has been done in various manners by three different organizations or groups in the past five years. Open Space and associated recreation facility needs were reviewed and identified by the Land Trust in 2003 during their strategic planning process. The Napa County Park and Open Space Advisory Committee received comments on and reviewed park and recreation facility and program needs during its deliberations in 2005-06. Finally, the County also evaluated and identified recreation facility and program needs during the development of the Recreation and Open Space Element of the 2008 General Plan. A summary of the results of each of these studies is as follows:

### 1. Assessment of Regional Recreational and Open Space Needs in Napa County by the Land Trust of Napa County

In 2003 the Land Trust completed a comprehensive strategic planning process that included the assessment of land conservation priorities in Napa County and addressed the areas of biodiversity/habitat, agriculture and recreational and scenic open space resources. Each of these areas was examined with priorities identified in a separate report. The Land Trust cre-



ated a 14 member Task Force on Recreation and Open Space composed of local officials knowledgeable about recreation and open space needs in the county. This task force reviewed existing plans and conducted interviews with key informants to develop a report identifying high priority needs and projects. This report included the following statement identifying the highest overall recreation need: “There is a great need to provide more regional recreational opportunities with Napa County. These opportunities would be primarily “passive” in nature, such as hiking and camping, as opposed to “active types” such as ball fields and swimming pools which would be provided by the cities.”

The Task force identified twelve high priority project needs to provide additional recreation and scenic open space resources in Napa County from its interviews and deliberations. These twelve projects are summarized as follows:

1. Development of park and trail improvements at Robert Louis Stevenson State Park.
2. Expansion of access to the Napa River
3. Expansion of recreational facilities at Lake Hennessy
4. Development of Rector Ridge Trail
5. Redevelopment of recreation facilities at Milliken Reservoir
6. Improvement of recreation trails at Lake Berryessa
7. Acquisition and improvement of Skyline Park
8. Provide improved public access and environmental education at the Napa Marshes
9. Creation of a Napa greenbelt on the western edge of the city
10. Provision of downtown Napa River access for boating activities
11. Completion of Bay Area Ridge and Bay trail systems in Napa County
12. Development of recreational facilities at Newell Preserve

## 2. Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee Review of Facility and Program Needs.

In 2002 the Napa County Board of Supervisors appointed a 16 member advisory committee to address the demand for protecting open space and growing demand for outdoor recreation in Napa County. The committee determined after a series of public meetings that there is a strong interest by county residents in protecting the county’s natural resources and increasing local nature based recreation opportunities. The committee developed a database of existing public lands which denoted potential opportunities for improving access and recreational use of existing publicly-owned lands.

The Committee received input and discussed the need for many different types of new or expanded recreation facilities and programs in Napa County. The following is a summary of some of the more commonly expressed needs that emerged during this process:

1. Additional environmental, historical, cultural and agricultural education opportunities for all age and cultural groups close to the main population centers of Napa County, based on field trips and interpretive displays.
2. Short educational walking and hiking facilities at rest stops and other areas close to the main population centers of Napa County.
3. Longer distance hiking, biking and equestrian trails.



4. Increased protection and stewardship of Napa County natural resources.
5. Additional water recreation facilities and activities on the Napa River
6. Additional group picnic areas.
7. Promotion of art exhibits and programs in recreation areas.
8. Public recreation facilities (especially campgrounds) and programs at Lake Berryessa.
9. Completion of bicycle and hiking trail system and linkages to Napa county communities.
10. Increased public access for fishing.
11. Increased public equestrian facilities and trails.

### 3. County General Plan Recreation and Open Space Element

The Recreation and Open Space Element (Element) of the 2008 update of the Napa County General Plan reviews the changing needs of the County resulting from population changes and growth since the 1970's. It notes that in 1970 half of the county's population lived in the unincorporated or rural areas whereas by 2005 nearly 80% lived in incorporated cities. It anticipates this trend will continue. These changes are resulting in increased demand for opportunities to recreate in and enjoy natural open spaces that surround the county's cities. The Element also notes that unfortunately, rather than increase, in many areas recreational opportunities have declined due to local government funding reductions and reduced public access to private lands as development has occurred.

The Element reviews a 2002 California Department of Parks and Recreation opinion survey that indicated the most popular recreational activities are 1) walking for fitness and fun, 2) walking dogs and 3) sightseeing and wildlife viewing. The survey also found that two-thirds of the trips by Californians to recreation areas require 10 minutes or less travel time while only 16% were over 20 minutes in length. The Element notes that this underscores the importance of providing significant regional park and recreation opportunities within a 10 to 15 minute drive of where people live. Finally, the Element refers to another State Park and Recreation Department study that measured recreation needs that are not being met by existing recreational facilities with the greatest unmet needs being 1) camping in developed campgrounds, 2) trail biking, 3) walking for fitness and fun and 4) wildlife viewing.

In summary the Element concludes there is strong demand but limited supply for overnight and day use activities including camping, picnicking, hiking and mountain biking and a shortage of equestrian opportunities. It also concludes that while there is a strong demand for outdoor recreational opportunities, due to limited funding a blend of techniques will be required to meet this demand, including 1) public-private partnerships, 2) multi-use facilities that spread the cost among a diverse mix of activities, and 3) new public financing.

### 4. Napa County Flood Control District and Living River Studies

The Napa River travels 55 miles from the headwaters around Mt. St. Helena to the Delta's entry into San Pablo Bay. Three ecosystems converge in its watershed to make it one of the richest biological ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest. Its 53 tributaries provide the second largest supply of fresh water in the San Francisco Bay- Delta Estuary. It supports nearly sixteen intact communities of native fish species as well as a diverse number of wildlife. Unfortunately,

since 1997 it has been listed as an “impaired” water supply with several fish species threatened or endangered. The River also has limited public access and recreational facilities for the public to enjoy.

In the early 1990’s numerous Napa residents and businesses became concerned about the preservation and protection of the Napa River. This concern culminated in the formation in 1993 of the non-profit organization Friends of the Napa River. This organization has provided leadership in promoting policies, programs, special studies and events such as the annual river festival dedicated to the restoration, protection and celebration of the Napa River and its watershed.

In 1995 a proposed Napa River Flood Protection Plan developed by the Army Corps of Engineers was rejected by the community. Recognizing the critical need for flood protection for the Napa River, the Citizens for Napa River Flood Management was formed to develop a plan acceptable to the community that would balance the needs of flood protection with protection of the Napa River ecosystem. This group for the first time brought together environmental, agricultural and other economic interests. After 18 months of analysis and study this coalition developed the Napa River/Napa Creek Flood Management and Protection Plan. This plan and associated local project funding was approved by the voters in 1998.

This plan introduced the important new concept of maintaining the Napa River as a “living river”. The concept is for the Napa River to function as a natural river in as original a physical state or geomorphic form as possible as it conveys variable water flows and stores water in its floodplain. It provides for the balancing of sediment input into the river with sediment movement out, provides good quality fish and wildlife habitat, maintains good water quantity and quality, and provides recreation and aesthetic values. The overall objective is to maintain a long –term, sustaining river ecosystem that is a “living” river system.

This concept combines ecological and engineering principles to create a plan for guiding the River’s energy rather than confining or channeling it. It minimizes the need for new levees, dikes and floodwalls. Its application to the Napa River flood control project calls for the removal of old flood levies, acquisition of old wetlands, relocation of buildings and the creation of tidal marches to control the floodwaters in an effort to “return” the river to its original floodplain and water flow capacity. This was the first application of the “living river” concept to a major flood control project and is now being applied in many communities around the world. The Napa River/Napa Creek Flood Protection Project is now being implemented using this “living river” concept plan.

Included in the flood protection project are plans for trails that can provide the public with the ability to enjoy the Napa River. These plans have been further developed by the City of Napa as the Napa River Parkway Plan. When complete, the Napa River Parkway will extend the length of the flood project within the City of Napa, from Trancas Street at the northern boundary of the City of Napa, to Kennedy Park near the southern boundary of the City.

In 2003 the Friends of the Napa River initiated the formation of a group of interested parties and organizations to promote the development of a plan for increasing public access and boat-

ing facilities along the Napa River. This resulted in the formation of a Dock Coalition whose purpose was to study and develop a comprehensive plan for docks, their types, locations, numbers, purposes and accessibility along the Napa River. The Dock Coalition started their work in mid 2004, meeting with various State and Federal agencies and local governmental officials to review opportunities and constraints. This group reviewed ways in which docks might enhance the responsible use of the river in relation to its shoreline properties and most importantly developed the concept and plan for a Napa River Water Trail.

The Napa River Water Trail developed by the Dock Coalition is a loosely linked series of docks and/or launch sites, extending along a designated but limited length of the river. Water Trail activities include boating, bird watching, fishing and competitive sports such as sculling. The Coalition identified 27 potential boat docks and launching sites along the Napa River from Trancas Park in Napa to American Canyon.

More detailed plans for the water trail are expected to be developed by the City of Napa as part of its preparation of a new park and recreation master plan.

## 5. Berryessa Trails and Conservation Lake Berryessa Survey

In 2001 a survey of primarily Napa County residents was conducted by a group of volunteers and published in a report titled “A Vision for Lake Berryessa”. Surveys were distributed and collected at the Chefs’ Market and the Farmers Market in Napa and the St. Helena Harvest Festival. In addition, five percent of the surveys were collected from an insert in the bi-monthly newsletter of the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club. Other surveys came from the Napa and St. Helena libraries, local residents at Lake Berryessa, customers of Marin Outdoors in Napa, and downloaded from the internet in response to letters to the editor published in the Napa Register and the Yountville Sun. In all, 389 surveys were completed.

The survey explored the question of what types of recreational activities the public wished to have at Lake Berryessa. The survey indicated that the greatest desire was for the Lake to support non-motorized, nature-based recreation. Hiking was desired by 90% of respondents, followed by swimming at 79%, kayaking at 68% and bicycling at 65%. The recreational activities for which the Lake is primarily known showed considerably less broad appeal: Water-skiing was desired by 31% of respondents, motor boating by 21% and jet skiing by 13%.

## C. SUMMARY OF RECREATION FACILITY, OPEN SPACE AND PROGRAM NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS

The above assessments of recreation facility and program needs share a common theme: there is a strong desire for more nature-based recreation opportunities both close to where Napa residents live as well as in the more remote parts of the County. Consistent with the theme of nature-based recreation, the following specific types of recreation facilities are most in need of expansion:

1. Trails. There is a strong desire for more trails for hikers, equestrians, mountain bicyclists, joggers and dog walkers, including both shorter, close-to-home trails that can be incorporated into daily routines, as well longer-distance trails for all-day and multi-day destination trips.
2. Campgrounds. More campground facilities needed, including family and group drive-in tent and RV campgrounds, primitive pack-in campgrounds, and rustic but somewhat more sheltered campgrounds with tent cabins and yurts.
3. Picnic Areas. Picnicking facilities in natural settings are in short supply yet greatly desired.
4. Outdoor Education. Additional outdoor educational and interpretive facilities related to the environment and the cultural, archeological and agricultural history of Napa County are needed.
5. Water Recreation. Access to rivers and lakes for swimming and human-powered boating should be expanded.
6. Wildlife-Dependent Recreation. Federally-owned lands within Napa County provide opportunities for fishing, hunting and bird-watching, but more locations where the public could engage in these activities would be desirable.
7. Open Space Protection. Selected open space areas in critical locations need to be acquired to protect habitat and provide future nature based recreation opportunities.
8. Restoration and Maintenance. Existing public open space lands and facilities need habitat restoration and improved maintenance.

These needs, together with the goals and guiding principles discussed in Section IV, have guided the development of the projects which make up the work program presented in Section VII.

## Section VII

# WORK PROGRAM

## A. OVERVIEW

This important section of the master plan presents the work program for the District by proposing 61 projects to promote and initiate during the five year period of 2008-13. This work program was developed in response to the County General Plan, goals and guiding principles, and supply and demand characteristics that lead to an identification of park, recreation, land preservation and educational needs in Napa County. These were presented in previous Sections III, IV, V and VI. This chapter represents the synthesis of the information and analysis presented in the previous chapters of this master plan into the form of a specific plan of projects for the District to focus its attention on during this five year period.

**It must be emphasized** that the inclusion of these 61 projects does not commit the District or any of its partners to complete these projects. This is a work program only. The projects described in this section are projects which the District intends to further research, evaluate and test for feasibility. To the extent these projects are actually undertaken they will be reviewed further pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. The timelines and action objectives included with the project objectives indicate the manner in which the projects could proceed, but are no guarantee of actual implementation. As discussed below, and in the individual project descriptions, numerous factors which are only partially within the control of the District will affect whether and how these projects will be implemented.

The projects that are presented in this section are divided into the four principal goals and respond to the guiding principals previously identified. It should be noted, however, that many projects involve a number of actions that will associate them with more than one principal objective. For example, the redevelopment of the former Boy Scout Camp at Lake Berryessa (Camp Berryessa) involves obtaining site control (through an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation), facility development, program implementation and finally District operation. Each project in addition responds to a number of guiding principals in terms of location, types of people served, habitat preservation, other agency relationships, etc. For this reason District efforts at some locations have been divided into separate projects reflecting different objectives based on their phase of development--such as land acquisition, habitat protection and restoration or facilities construction.

Each project description is presented with information describing the project with a preliminary cost estimate and time frame using the following categories:

1. Project Description
2. Background
3. Benefits and Issues
4. Other Partners
5. Time Frame and Estimated Cost
6. Actions Objectives



The benefits and issues category is intended to highlight not only the project benefits but important issues and potential challenges associated with the project. Nearly all of the projects involve working with another governmental agency to either secure approval to use their property or to obtain project funding. For this reason the category “other partners” has been included to identify these agencies or non-profit organizations that will be necessary to secure project support and approval necessary to implement the project.

The project descriptions also include projected timelines. The reader is cautioned that since nearly all of the projects rely on partners doing their part, regulatory agencies issuing discretionary permits and the District being able to obtain necessary funding, these timelines will be out of the District’s control and will constantly change. For this reason the time frame and estimated cost for many projects is intended to provide only a general frame of reference at this time reflecting the quickest pace at which the projects could proceed if sufficient district staffing and project funding were provided.

An important part of these descriptions is the “action objectives” category. This category presents information on the individual steps with estimated dates needed to complete the project. This section is intended to describe, in easily understandable form, the steps that would be needed to accomplish the project. The time frames noted in this category are typically more precise for the higher priority projects. Most projects will be dependent upon securing a grant to implement some or all phases of the project.

Although this District work plan includes 61 projects it is not expected or realistically possible for all of these projects to be completed during this five year period. Many of these projects will only be started by 2013 while others may not have commenced because of funding or other issues. There will also likely be other projects that were not identified in this first plan that will develop as “high priority opportunities” such as the recent Moore Creek Open Space Park acquisition.

This Master Plan includes more projects than can realistically be completed because it recognized the multiple factors that can delay or prevent any particular project. It is therefore important to identify a sufficient number of projects which could fill the various identified recreation and open space needs, so that when one project is delayed or determined to be infeasible, there are other identified project concepts to pursue.

Another reason for including more projects in the Plan than the District knows it will actually complete, given its limited staffing and operational funding, is that grant programs are in constant flux, with the amounts and purposes for grant programs rapidly changing. One of the reasons Napa County has historically missed out on many grant opportunities is that it has not had projects sufficiently planned to be eligible for funding opportunities when they arise. To successfully compete for many grants, it is necessary to have projects planned and ready to go on short notice. By identifying a wide range of desirable projects, this Master Plan should improve the ability of the District to compete for private foundation, state and federal grants.

As mentioned previously, it is planned to update the master plan periodically to keep it as cur-

rent as possible given anticipated changes in project approvals and funding. The principal part of the master plan that will be updated will be this chapter. The first update is planned in 2011.

The following is a list of the 61 projects divided into the four principal goals of facility development, open space preservation and habitat restoration, education, and District operations. After this listing is a summary of the relationship of the projects to the identified needs presented in Chapter VI.

## B. LIST OF PROJECTS

\* Note: Projects identified with an asterisk are Tier One priorities (see Section VIII for a discussion of the significance of this prioritization).

### **Goal A: Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resources, open space and related facilities**

- A.1 Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements \*
- A.2 Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development \*
- A.3 Camp Berryessa Redevelopment \*
- A.4 Rector Ridge/Stags Leap Ridge Trail Development \*
- A.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Phase I Development \*
- A.6 Napa River and Bay Trail Phase II Development \*
- A.7 Lake Hennessey North Shore Trail Development \*
- A.8 Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements \*
- A.9 Newell Open Space Preserve Improvements
- A.10 Lake Berryessa Trail Development Phase I\*
- A.11 Berryessa Peak and Blue Ridge Public Access Development
- A.12 Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Development \*
- A.13 Pope and Putah Creeks Trail Development
- A.14 Skyline Park Improvements Phase II \*
- A.15 Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area Trail Development
- A.16 Napa Crest Trail Development \*
- A.17 Napa River Access Development
- A.18 San Francisco Bay Trail Completion in Napa County
- A.19 Bay Area Ridge Trail Completion in Napa County
- A.20 Backcountry Camping Facilities in the Palisades Area
- A.21 River to Ridge Trail Encroachment Problem Resolution \*
- A.22 Moore Creek Trails, Picnic Area and Camping Facilities Development \*
- A.23 Napa River Water Trail Development
- A.24 Napa Valley Greenway / Vine Trail Development
- A.25 Henry Road/Milliken Peak Area Trail Development
- A.26 Countywide Trail Network Development

**Goal B: Preserve, restore and protect open space lands, natural resources and habitat areas**

- B.1 Napa River Ecological Reserve Restoration \*
- B.2 Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space Preservation
- B.3 Berryessa Vista Acquisition \*
- B.4 Vallejo Lakes Area Acquisition \*
- B.5 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Acquisition
- B.6 Linda Falls Conservation Easement \*
- B.7 Palisades Cooperative Management Plan Development
- B.8 Skyline Park Protection and Master Plan Development \*
- B.9 Moore Creek Watershed Projection \*
- B.10 Other High Priority Habitats Preservation

**Goal C: Provide for recreational, cultural, environmental and working landscapes education.**

- C.1 Camp Berryessa Outdoor Education Program Development \*
- C.2 Napa River Ecological Reserve Environmental Education Program Development \*
- C.3 Napa River to Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development
- C.4 Rector Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development
- C.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Interpretive Path Development \*
- C.6 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Interpretive Facilities and Programming Development
- C.7 Huichica Creek Wetlands Interpretive Path Development
- C.8 Oat Hill Mine Trail Interpretive Path Development
- C.9 Cedar Roughs Interpretive Materials Development

**Goal D: Provide for District management and partnerships**

- D.1 Develop District Budget Options for Alternative Levels of Service \*
- D.2 Develop Public Information Program \*
- D.3 Consider Establishing a Non-Profit Foundation
- D.4 Consider Forming District Advisory Committee
- D.5 Establish Partnerships with Public Art, Historical & Cultural Interpretation Organizations
- D.6 Develop Volunteer Participation \*
- D.7 Prepare and Adopt District Purchasing and Contracting Policies and Procedures
- D.8 Prepare and Adopt District Policies and Ordinances for Public Use of Facilities \*
- D.9 Adopt Policies and Develop Partnerships, Sponsorships and Donation Programs for Use and Promotion of District Facilities \*
- D.10 Consider Developing District Deputized Ranger Capacity
- D.11 Prepare and Adopt Green Standards for Building and Operations
- D.12 Develop and Implement Cooperative Strategies for Habitat Restoration
- D.13 Update Countywide Inventory of Protected Open Space Lands \*
- D.14 Update District Master Plan \*
- D.15 Establish Partnerships with Land Conservation and Public Recreation Organizations and Agencies
- D.16 Prepare and Adopt Habitat Stewardship Guidelines

## C. RELATIONSHIP OF PROJECTS TO IDENTIFIED NEEDS

Each project description includes a discussion of the specific recreation activities, conservation objectives and programs that will be provided. To assist the reader in understanding how specific projects contribute to meeting the broad categories of needs, provided below are major findings that emerged from the discussion in Section VI, followed by a listing of those projects which address each finding:

1. Trails. There is a strong desire for more trails for hikers, equestrians, mountain bicyclists, joggers and dog walkers, including both shorter, close-to-home trails that can be incorporated into daily routines, as well longer-distance trails for all-day and multi-day destination trips.
  - A.1 Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements
  - A.2 Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development
  - A.4 Rector Ridge/Stag's Leap Trail Development
  - A.5/A.6 Napa River and Bay Trail Development from American Canyon to Napa
  - A.7 Lake Hennessey North Shore Trail Expansion
  - A.9 Newell Preserve Access Improvement
  - A.10 Lake Berryessa Trail Development
  - A.11 Berryessa Peak and Blue Ridge Public Access Development
  - A.12. Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Development
  - A.13 Pope and Putah Creeks Trail Development
  - A.15 Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Wildlife Area Trail Development
  - A.19 Bay Area Ridge Trail Completion
  - A.22 Moore Creek Trail, Picnic Area and Cmping Facilities Development
  - A.24 Napa Valley Greenway / Vine Trail Development
  - A.25 Henry Road/Milliken Peak Area Trail Development
  - A.26 Countywide Trail Network Development
  
2. Campgrounds. More campground facilities needed, including family and group drive-in tent and RV campgrounds, primitive pack-in campgrounds, and rustic but somewhat more sheltered campgrounds with tent cabins and yurts.
  - A.3 Camp Berryessa Redevelopment
  - A.9 Newell Open Space Preserve Improvements
  - A.12 Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Development
  - A.20 Backcountry Camping Facilities in the Palisades Area
  - A.22 Moore Creek Trail, Picnic Area and Cmping Facilities Development
  - B.7 Palisades Cooperative Management Plan Development
  - B.8 Skyline Park Protection and Master Plan Development
  
3. Picnic Areas. Picnicking facilities in natural settings are is short supply yet greatly desired.
  - A.2 Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development
  - A.9 Newell Open Space Preserve Improvements
  - A.16 Napa River Access Development
  - A.22 Moore Creek Trail, Picnic Area and Camping Facilities Development

4. Outdoor Education. Additional outdoor educational and interpretive facilities related to the environment and the cultural, archeological and agricultural history of Napa County are needed.
- C.1 Camp Berryessa Environmental Educational Program Development
  - C.2 Napa River Ecological Preserve Environmental Education Program Development
  - C.3 Napa River to Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development
  - C.4 Rector Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development
  - C.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Interpretive Path Development
  - C.6 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Interpretive Facilities and Program Development
  - C.7 Huichica Creek Wetlands Interpretive Path Development
  - C.8 Oat Hill Mine Trail Interpretive Path Development
  - C.9 Cedar Roughts Interpretive Materials Development
5. Water Recreation. Access to rivers and lakes for swimming and human-powered boating should be expanded.
- A.3 Camp Berryessa Redevelopment
  - A.8 Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements
  - A.17 Napa River Access Development
  - A.23 Napa River Water Trail Development
6. Wildlife-Dependent Recreation. Federally-owned lands within Napa County provide opportunities for fishing, hunting and bird-watching, but more locations where the public could engage in these activities would be desirable.
- A.8 Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements
  - A.13 Pope and Putah Creeks Trail Development
  - A.17 Napa River Access Development
  - C.6 South Napa Wetlands Interpretive Facilities and Programming Development
  - C.7 Huichica Creek Wetlands Interpretive Path Development
7. Open Space Protection. Selected open space areas in critical locations need to be acquired to protect habitat and provide future nature based recreation opportunities.
- B.2 Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space Acquisition
  - B.3 Berryessa Vista Acquisition
  - B.4 Vallejo Lakes Area Acquisition
  - B.5 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Acquisition
  - B.6 Linda Falls Conservation Easement
  - B.8 Skyline Park Protection and Master Plan Development
  - B.9 Moore Creek Watershed Protection



8. Restoration and Maintenance. Existing public open space lands and facilities need habitat restoration and improved maintenance.
  - A.1 Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements
  - A.8 Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements
  - B.1 Napa River Ecological Reserve Restoration
  - D.16 Prepare and Adopt Habitat Stewardship Guidelines

## D. Project Descriptions

### Goal A

Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resources, open spaces and related facilities



### Project A.1

## Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements

**Description:** Reopening and improvement of the Oat Hill Mine Trail north of Calistoga through erosion control work, signage installation and pruning of vegetation overgrowing the trail.

**Background:** The Napa County Board of Supervisors in 2007 approved reopening the abandoned Oat Hill Mine Road easement between Calistoga and Aetna Springs Road for public use as a non-motorized recreational trail, and simultaneously entered into an agreement with the District to improve and operate the trail. This section of the trail was officially reopened in May, 2008. It is planned to improve this trail with signage, brush clearance and erosion control improvements in selected areas. In the future, the District will investigate the feasibility of repairing and reopening the trail continuing north to the Lake County line.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** The Oat Hill Mine Trail is the most popular trail in Napa County providing a hiking experience to over 5,000 people annually, despite its past unofficial status. It provides a critical link to public open space areas that are part of Robert Louis Stevenson State Park and State School Lands, as well as the new Wild Lake Ranch and Duff properties owned by the Land Trust of Napa County. The trail facilitates walking, hiking, camping, bird watching, nature observation, mountain biking, horseback riding and other related recreational activities. The principal issue is the settlement of pending litigation over the location of the easement near the Calistoga end of the trail.



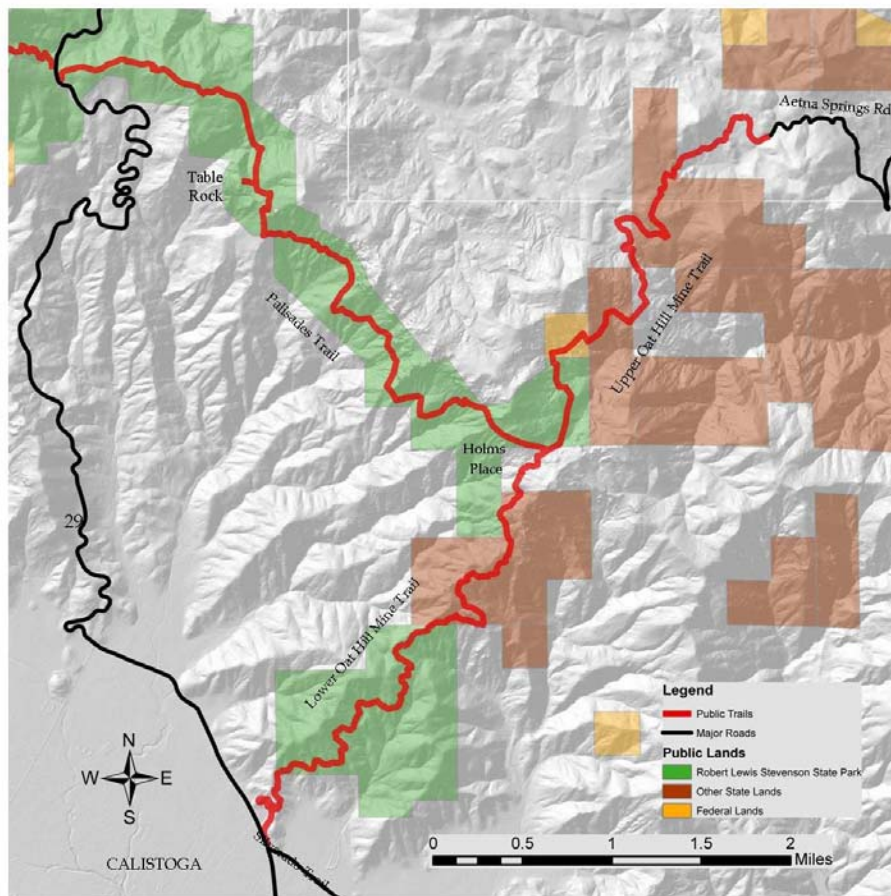
**Other Partners:** Napa County approval of reopening this trail and authorizing funds for this project was a necessary first step. In improving and operating the trail, the District also needs to coordinate with California State Parks, the State Lands Commission and the Bureau of Land Management, as well as with the Land Trust of Napa County and several private property owners.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Completion of most of the critical improvements occurred in May of 2008 with the assistance of a large weekend volunteer work party. The remaining critical erosion control work will be undertaken after the pending litigation is resolved. The estimated cost of the signage and trail improvements is \$50,000 which has been approved by the County from its special projects fund.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Napa County resolution of litigation associated with the trail by March, 2009
- B. Initiation of volunteer program to make trail improvements by May, 2008
- C. Investigate the feasibility of opening the remainder of the Oat Hill Mine Road for non-motorized recreation by December 2010.

## Map of the Oat Hill Mine Trail







Project A.2

## Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development

**Description:** Construct approximately 3 miles of Bay Area Ridge Trail and up to 7 additional miles of connector trails, along with a staging and modest picnic area on the City of Napa's lands in the vicinity of Milliken Reservoir .

**Background:** The City of Napa owns over 2,000 acres of open space around Milliken Reservoir which was used by the public until 1978 for environmental education, group camping and outdoor recreation. The City of Napa has agreed to allow the District investigate the feasibility reopening portions of the property for nature-based recreational use including a section of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, other connector trails and a small picnic and staging area.

**Benefits and Issues:** Just a 15 minute drive from downtown Napa, the City of Napa's Milliken property presents one of the best opportunities for providing outdoor recreation close to where most Napa residents live and work. The proposed project would also develop an important segment of the regional Bay Area Ridge Trail. The City of Napa must be assured that drinking water quality will be protected through appropriate location and design of trails and adequate supervision of public use.

**Other Partners:** The District needs to obtain approval from and enter into a management agreement with the City of Napa.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The District expects to complete planning and obtain permits for the project during 2008. Assuming funding is obtained, the first phase of construction

Project Location



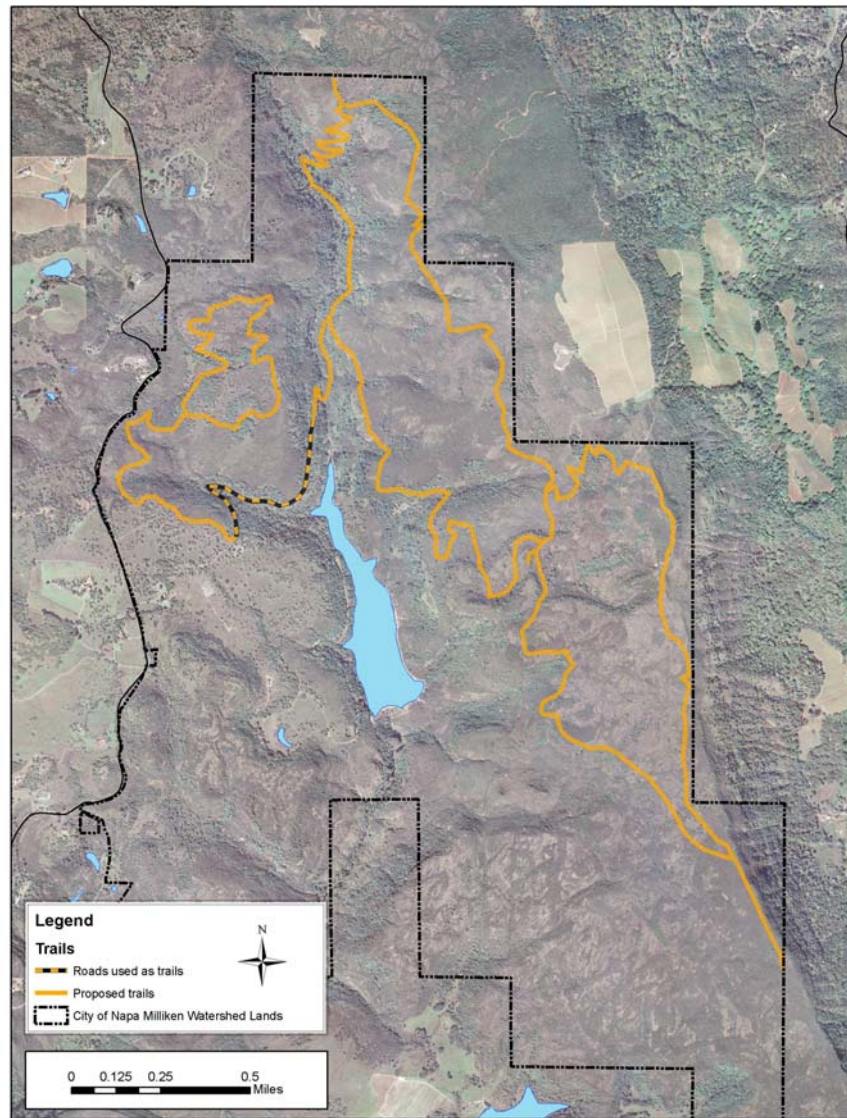


can start in 2009, with the second and third phases completed in 2009 and 2010. The estimated cost of all trail, staging area and other related improvements is \$1,600,000.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete initial project feasibility study by January, 2008.
- B. District Board review and approval of feasibility study by February, 2008
- C. Obtain conceptual approval for the project from the City of Napa by March, 2009
- D. If approved by the City, completion of the environmental review by the District and public outreach by December, 2009.
- E. Complete agreement between the City and District providing for the management and use of the project area by December, 2010.
- F. Obtain grant funding for phase one and start construction by June 2011.

**Proposed Trail Alignments**





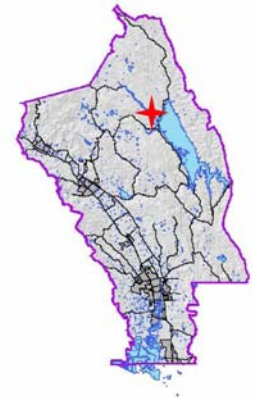
### Project A. 3

## Camp Berryessa Redevelopment

**Description:** Redevelop the former Boy Scout camp at the north-east side of Lake Berryessa on Putah Creek as a group and family camp with an environmental education focus.

**Background:** Camp Berryessa was initially developed and operated by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) under a lease with the Federal Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau). The BSA closed the camp and ended their lease several years ago because of the expense of needed infrastructure improvements. In 2006 the Bureau adopted a new management plan for Lake Berryessa which identified this site as appropriate for an environmental camp and called for the Bureau to seek a local agency or non-profit organization partner to construct and operate such a facility. The Bureau and the District have entered into an agreement giving the District the right to develop a proposal for the site.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** Camp Berryessa offers a unique opportunity for a water-oriented camp in a natural setting with good road access. Other than a water well and power line, none of the infrastructure or buildings from the former camp remain, so any new facility will need to be primarily new construction.

**Other Partners:** After preparation of a development and operations plan, the District will need to obtain a long-term lease from the Bureau before the facility can be built. The District will make the completed facility available to other community organizations and public agencies to operate outdoor education programs.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The Bureau has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the District giving the District an 18 month period of time, commencing from November, 2007, to prepare a development and operations plan. The estimated cost of the utility and other camp facility improvements will be developed in the feasibility study, but is expected to be in the range of \$1 million to construct, depending on the type of facility that is proposed. One of the objectives of the feasibility study is to develop a business model that will enable the camp to be financially self-supporting in terms of basic operations.



**Action Objectives:**

- A. Initiate feasibility study for development of the property as a group environmental educational camp by July, 2008.
- B. Complete feasibility study by June, 2009.
- C. Complete project environmental review by December, 2009.
- D. Negotiate and complete lease agreement with the Bureau by June 2010.
- E. Complete and submit grant application for final engineering and construction of project by June 2010.
- F. If grant funding is approved, start construction in the spring of 2011, and open the facility by December, 2011.

## Camp Berryessa





#### Project A. 4

## Rector Ridge/Stags Leap Ridge Trail Development

**Description:** Construct staging area and approximately 6 miles of Ridge Trail climbing Rector Ridge and past Stags Leap heading east from Silverado Trail near Rector Creek.

**Background:** The proposed staging area and trail is on watershed lands owned by the State Department of Veterans Affairs. The California Department of Fish and Game has a public access easement running generally east-west along Rector Ridge, and there is an informal and fairly steep trail that follows this easement. In 2002 the non-profit organization Bay Area Ridge Trail Council prepared a plan for constructing a staging area and improving and extending the trail, and the State Coastal Conservancy adopted a Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The plan was not implemented, however, primarily because there was no public agency partner able to take on management responsibility for the trail. The Pathway Home Project at the Veterans Home in Yountville, which is working with returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, has expressed interest in receiving proposals for outdoor recreational facilities in this area that can benefit their program, and the District Board of Directors has approved proceeding with the project. Because of the time gap since the earlier CEQA review, supplemental CEQA review will be needed.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** This project will provide an important segment of the regional Bay Area Ridge Trail that encompasses a very special area of Napa County. It will support walking, equestrian and mountain bicycling activities and provide a special recreational opportunity for Veteran's Home residents.

**Other Partners:** The project will need the support of the Veterans Home in Yountville and the ap-



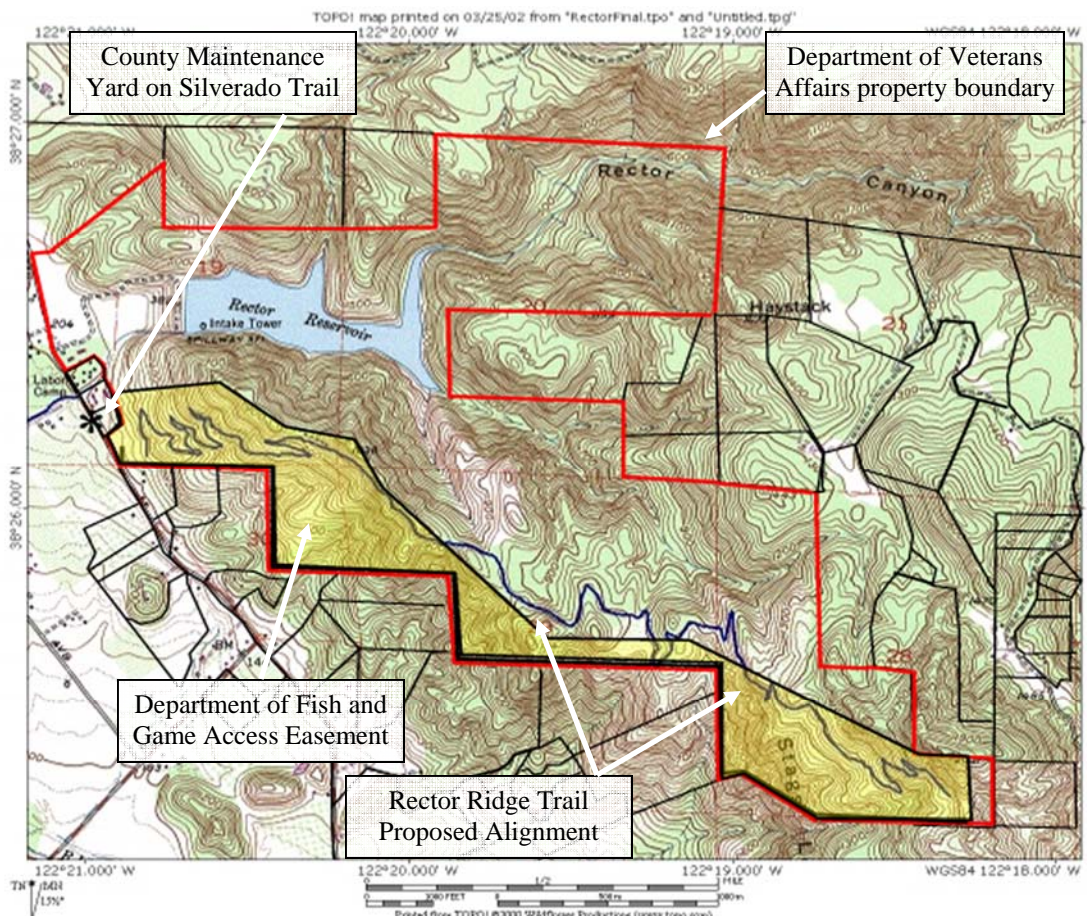


proval of the State Department of Veterans Affairs. In addition, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) will need to formalize its verbal support for having the trail located within the DFG easement. Since the staging area would be located immediately adjacent to a County of Napa corporation yard, County coordination will be important for designing and constructing the vehicular access from Silverado Trail. The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council will also be an important partner, assisting with the planning and funding of the trail.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The staging area and first segment of trail could be constructed as early as 2009 if approvals and funding can be obtained. The remainder of the trail could potentially be constructed in 2010. Preliminary cost estimates indicate the staging area will cost approximately \$100,000, while construction of the entire six miles of trail could be as much as another \$1,000,000, because of the difficulty of constructing a safe, multi-use trail through this very steep, rocky terrain. It is expected that the bulk of the cost of construction will be funded through grants.

#### Action Objectives:

- a. Obtain Veterans Home support by June 2009.
- b. Complete CEQA update by September 2009.
- c. Obtain funding for phase one by March 2010.
- d. Construct phase one by September 2010.
- e. Initiate construction by October 2010.







Project A. 5

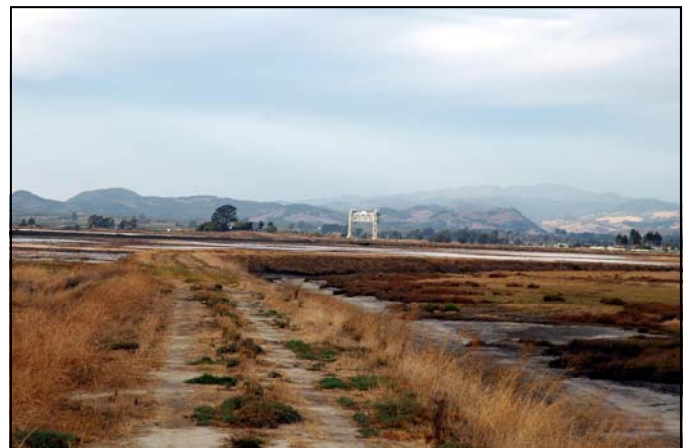
**Napa River and Bay Trail  
Phase I Development  
American Canyon to  
Green Island Road**

**Description:** Develop 5.6 miles of recreational trail between the City of American Canyon, the Napa River and Green Island Road providing direct access to the Napa River and along interior levees of former salt ponds being restored to tidal wetlands.

**Background:** The project feasibility study has been completed and approved by the District Board. The District has obtained a grant of \$1,032,000 from the California River Parkway Grant program for Phase One of the project between American Canyon and Green Island Road in partnership with the City of American Canyon. Napa County has approved a Use Permit for Phase I of the trail. The District and American Canyon have obtained conceptual approval for Phase I from the California Department of Fish and Game and the Napa-Vallejo Waste Management Authority, which own portions of the right of way.

**Benefits and Issues:** The trail will provide two routes for direct access to the Napa River from the City of American Canyon, as well as approximate one-half of what will eventually be the only walking/hiking link between the cities of American Canyon and Napa. Phase I will also be designed to serve bicyclists, and will provide river access for hand-launched kayaks and canoes. The trail will enable exceptional bird viewing, as well as interpretation/education of the area's natural and human history (see project C.3).

**Other Partners:** This project involves Napa County, the City of American Canyon, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and the Napa-Vallejo Waste Management Authority. Each of these agencies owns some portion of the right-of-way, and will require leases to construct and operate the trail.



**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The estimated cost of Phase I is a little less than \$2 million, for which the City of American Canyon is providing approximately \$800,000 for the direct river access portion of the trail, and the District has obtained a grant of \$1,032,000. Construction of Phase I by American Canyon is planned for 2008 with the District's portion planned for 2009-11 assuming completion by DFG of repair work to the levee which will utilize the trail route approved by State Fish and Game.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Approval of MOU between the City of American Canyon and the District, and between DFG and the District, by June 2009.
- B. Completion of the first route providing Napa River access by September 2009.
- C. Complete the second Napa River access route along the perimeter of the closed Napa Vallejo Waste Management Authority landfill by June 2010.
- D. If grant funding is received, and assuming DFG restoration of the salt ponds stays on schedule, construct the trail segment extending from American Canyon to Green Island Road by July, 2011.

**Napa River and Bay Trail**  
American Canyon to Green Island Road





Project A.6

**Napa River and Bay Trail  
Phase II Development  
Green Island Road to City of Napa**

**Description:** Develop approximately 5 miles of recreational trail between Green Island Road and the City of Napa generally following the interior levees of the wetlands along the eastern shore of the Napa River.

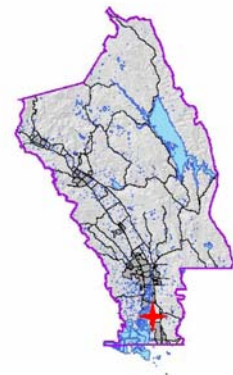
**Background:** The project feasibility study has been completed and approved by the District Board.

**Benefits and Issues:** The project will complete the only walking/hiking link between the cities of American Canyon and Napa. The trail will provide exceptional bird viewing, as well as interpretation/education of the area's natural and human history (see project C.3). A wetland fill permit will be required from the Army Corps of Engineers for a short section of boardwalk needed to cross an area that qualifies as a freshwater wetland. This, plus the fact that the proposed route is in an area designated as critical habitat for two endangered species will trigger consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Other Partners:** This project involves the City of Napa, the Napa Sanitation District, California Department of Fish and Game, the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District and Caltrans. Each of these agencies owns some portion of the right-of-way, and will require leases or easements to construct and operate the trail.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The estimated cost for all of Phase II is approximately \$8 million. CEQA review for Phase II is planned for 2008, with permits and agreements planned for 2009. Given the expense and challenges of constructing Phase II, it could be divided into two sub-phases, one

Project Location

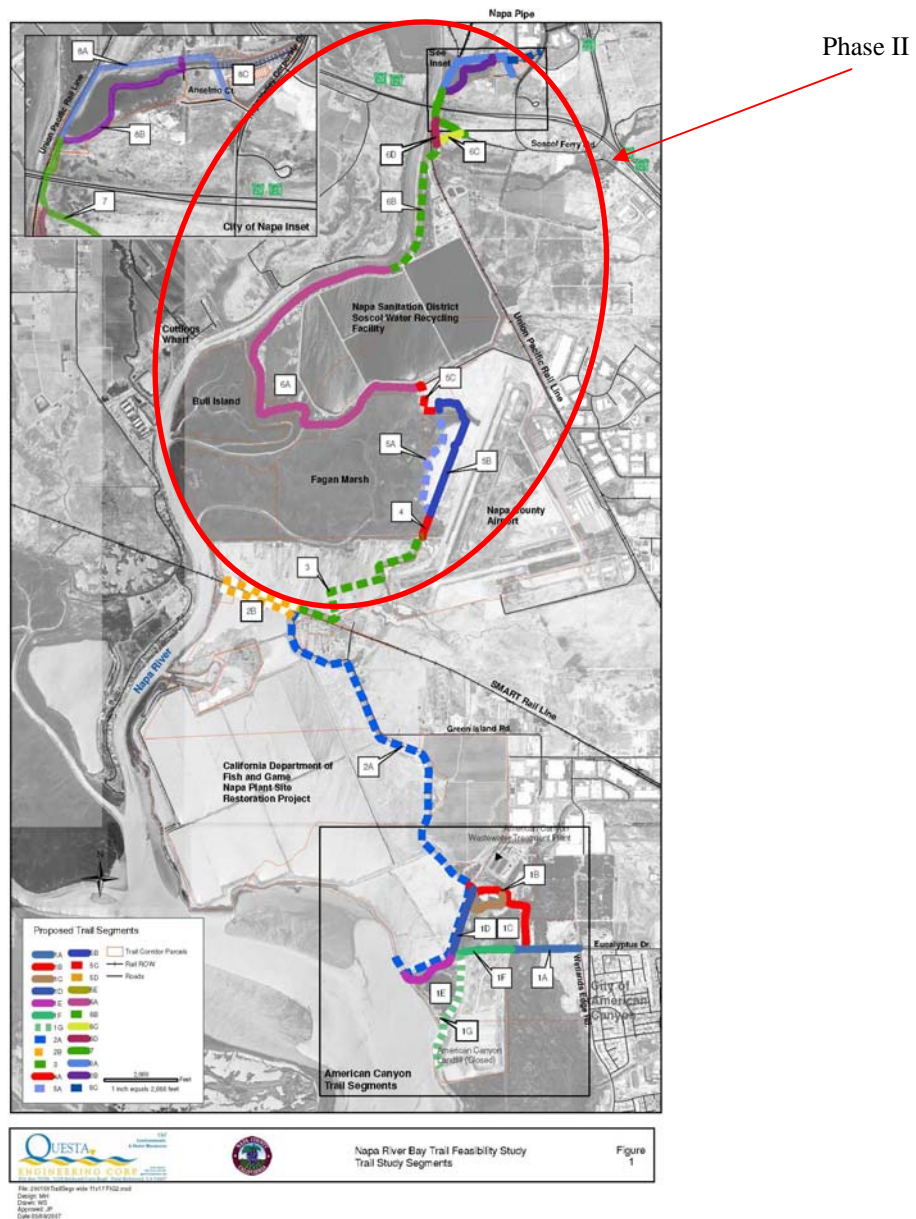




from Green Island Road to Soscol Ferry Road, and one from Soscol Ferry Road to the southern edge of the Napa Pipe Property. The southern segment is estimated to cost \$5.5 million, while the northern segment is estimated at \$2.8 million.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete CEQA review and execution of agreements with DFG, SMART, Napa Sanitation District, Caltrans and City of Napa by December 2009.
- B. Apply for grant funding by March 2010.
- C. If grant funding is obtained, complete plans by December 2010, and begin construction by April 2011.





Project A.7

## Lake Hennessey North Shore Trail Extension

**Description:** Extend an existing 2.7 mile walking trail on the north side of Lake Hennessey into a eight-mile long loop trail system.

**Background:** The City of Napa-owned Lake Hennessey watershed currently provides recreational boating and fishing and limited trail facilities on the southern, western, and northwestern part of the lake. City staff has agreed to cooperate with the District in investigating the feasibility of expanding upland trail-based recreation on the north side of the lake.

Project Location



**Benefit and Issues:** Most of the trail system would utilize an existing dirt access road; approximately one mile of new trail would be constructed to provide access to the top of an unnamed peak. The trails would pass through beautiful Oak woodland habitat, and could provide hiking, walking, bird watching, mountain biking, nature observation and other related recreational activities. The City's primary concern will be to ensure the protection of water quality in Lake Hennessey. The northeastern corner of the property is contiguous with the proposed Moore Creek acquisition (Project A.22); the two projects combined would result in over 12 miles of connected trails.

**Other Partners:** The City of Napa, as the owner of the property, will need to approve an agreement to allow the District to construct and operate the trail system.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Planning for this project will begin after the District has formalized its agreement with the City for the City's Milliken Reservoir property (project A.2). This project may be divided into phases, with the existing roads opened to public use first, and the new trail to the peak constructed



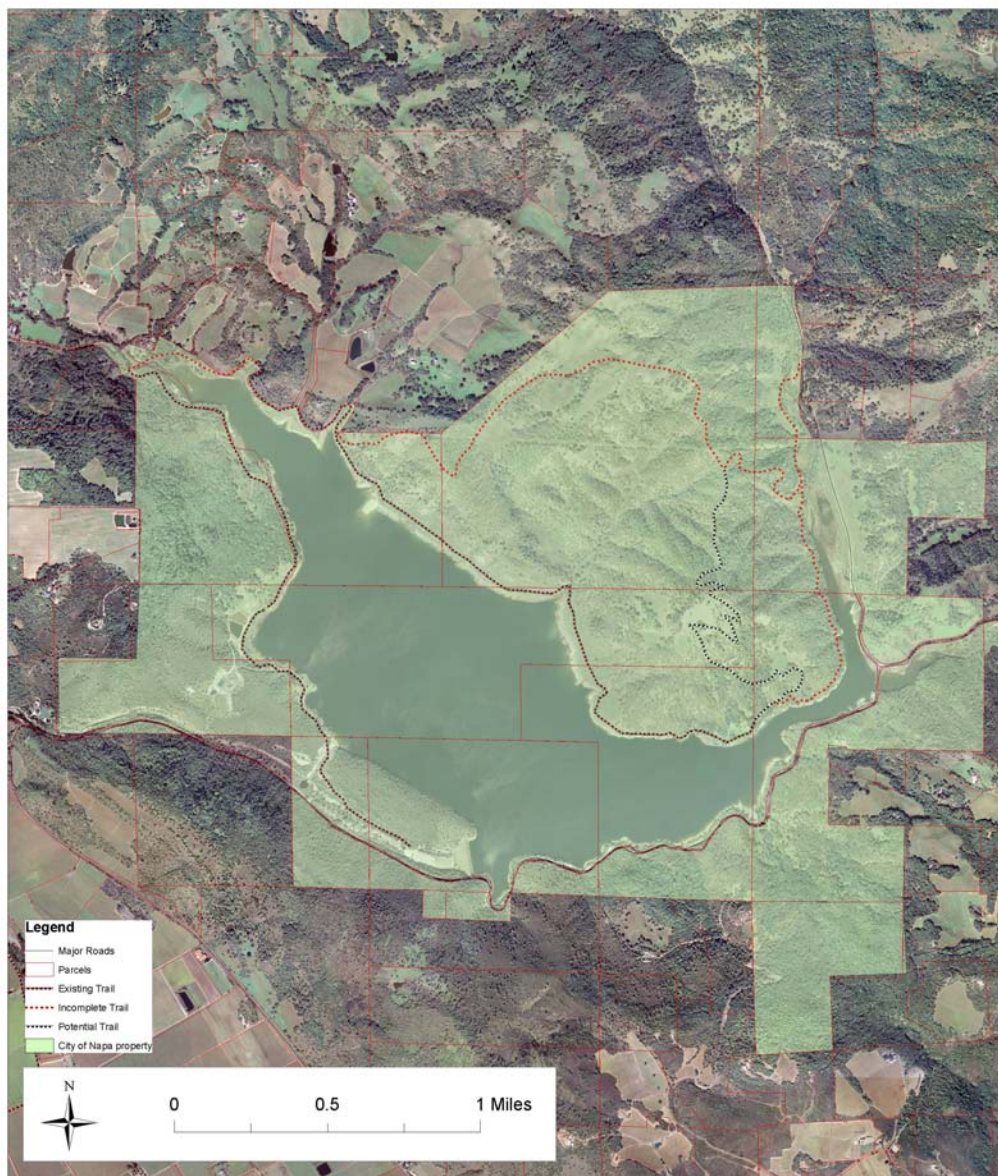


subsequently. The preliminary estimated cost of the trail improvements and associated signage is \$10,000 to open up existing dirt roads, and another \$50,000 to construct the proposed new single-track trails.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete CEQA review and draft trail plan by June, 2009
- B. Finalize agreement with the City of Napa by September, 2009.
- C. Apply for project grant funding by December 2009
- D. If grant funding is secured initiate construction of trail system by April 2010.

### Lake Hennessey Trails





Project A.8

Napa River  
Ecological Reserve  
Public Access  
Improvements

**Description:** Improve public access to the Napa River Ecological Preserve.

**Background:** Between 2006 and 2008 initial improvements were completed using State Proposition 12 Per Capita grant funds. These improvements included paving of the parking lot, installation of boulders to control vehicular access, refurbishing of the entry signage and construction of a trash and recycling enclosure. In addition, a more effective maintenance program was established. Future improvements include improving the pathway leading from the parking area to the Napa River levee to make it accessible to people with mobility limitations, restoring the loop trail on the north side of the Napa River, and providing an appropriate River crossing. The District in 2008 received a \$100,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy, \$10,000 of which can be used to fund trail improvements and the design of a pedestrian bridge crossing of the Napa River. The remainder of this grant is for native habitat restoration work (see Project B.1)

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** The Napa River Ecological Reserve is one of the few locations where the public can access the non-tidally influenced portion of the Napa River (north of Trancas Street in the City of Napa). The proposed improvements will enhance enjoyment of this important riparian habitat. The reserve provides walking, bird watching, other nature observation, swimming and environmental education opportunities. Allowable uses at the Reserve are prescribed by the California Code of Regulations. The solution for providing a bet-





ter river crossing has not yet been identified.

**Other Partners:** Improvements and changes to the Reserve require the approval of the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), which owns the Reserve. In addition, the joint management agreement between the County and DFG needs to be amended, first to formally transfer County responsibilities to the District, and second to update the delineation of responsibilities to reflect current and expected future conditions.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** With the recent completion of the initial improvements and the popular use of this recreational facility, finishing the rest of the access improvements as soon as practical is desirable. The trail to the levee is expected to be improved in late 2008 or early 2009; the expected cost of about \$3,000 will be funded by the already-awarded Conservancy grant. Restoration of the loop trail primarily involves brush pruning, which will either be done with volunteers at no cost or as part of an invasive species removal project (see project B.1), and can hopefully be accomplished in 2008. The cost and time frame for developing a better river crossing will not be known until the appropriate solution is identified.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Finalize Coastal Conservancy grant contract by March, 2009.
- B. Improve river access trail by August 2009.
- C. Identify river crossing solution by June 2009; construct when funding is obtained.
- D. Restore loop trail by August 2010.

### Napa River Ecological Reserve



**Legend**

--- Trail  
 --- Boundary



0 270 540 1,080 Feet

Jointly managed by the  
 California Department of Fish and Game  
 and the  
 County of Napa



Project A. 9

## Newell Open Space Preserve Improvements

**Description:** Assist the City of American Canyon in developing improvements for the Newell Preserve.

**Background:** The City of American Canyon owns the 640 acre Newell Open Space Preserve, which was donated by Jack and Bernice Newell to the Land Trust of Napa County, who then donated it to the city. Unfortunately, the property does not have access from American Canyon which can be utilized by the general public. It can currently be accessed only through the Lynch Canyon Open Space in Solano County off Highway 80, or from American Canyon for limited authorized groups. In addition, the property does not have a utility easement through the private property separating it from the City, with the result that municipal water cannot be piped to the site for use at a proposed group camp site. The property and the adjacent private land is outside of the city limits of American Canyon.

Project Location



This project involves assisting American Canyon in making improvements to the Preserve. This includes resolving the public access limitations, either by obtaining an access easement from the Town Center area of the city, or acquiring title to or access easements across other private lands separating the site from a public road, or both. It also includes developing a drinking water supply. As part of an arrangement which the District negotiated with the Land Trust of Napa County, the land trust has agreed to assist with the water problem by providing funding for a solar water pump and distribution system, assuming the City is successful in drilling a well on-site. The project also includes developing a picnic and group camping area.

**Benefits and Issues:** The Newell Open Space Preserve is ideally located to



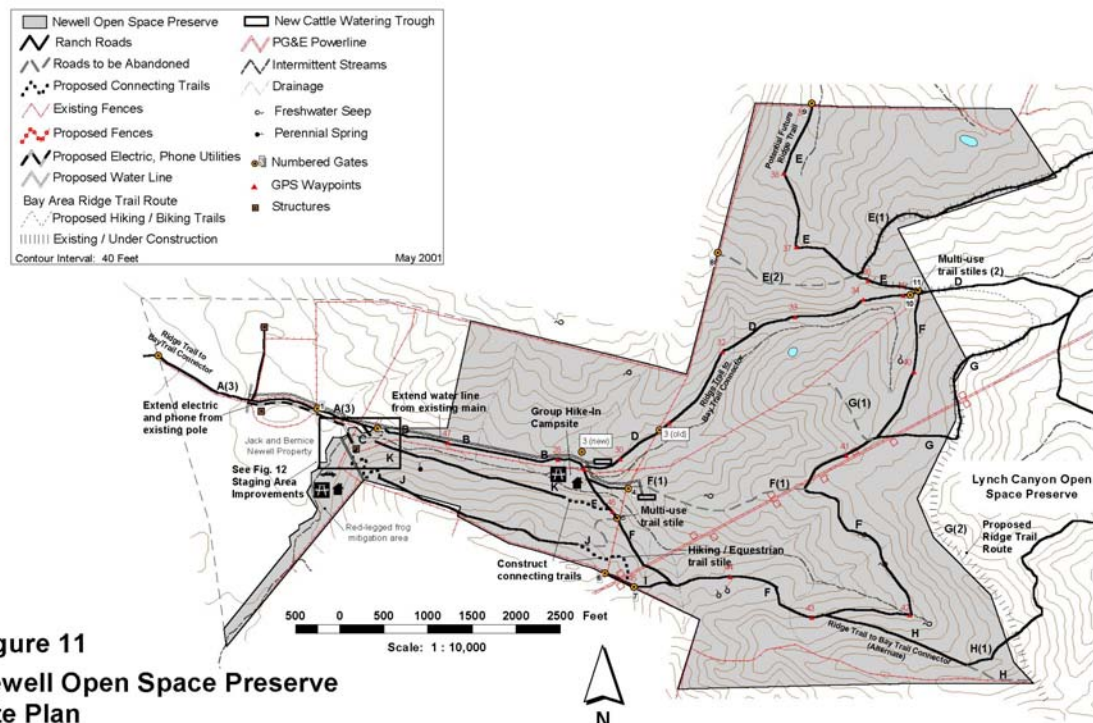
provide a regional park experience—including hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, bird watching and other nature observation—for South County residents, as well as a group camping facility. Resolving the access issue will enable the Preserve to fulfill this function. The development of an on-site water supply will encourage increased public use and the development of a group campground. Resolution of the access issue may be easiest to resolve through a cooperative effort of the City, the County and the District. Resolution of the water supply issue is dependent on the City drilling a well that produces adequate water of sufficient quality. The first test well drilled in early 2008 produced no water.

**Other Partners:** The City of American Canyon is the lead on this project, with the District serving in a supporting role. Other partners include the Land Trust of Napa County, Solano County and the Solano Land Trust.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The City of American Canyon is planning on drilling a second test well in 2008; if successful, the Land Trust of Napa County is willing to provide the estimated \$10,000 needed to install a solar-powered pump and distribution system. Resolving the public access issue is a very high priority, but the cost and timing cannot be determined at this time, because the solution depends on factors outside the control of the District and its partners.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete installation of solar water pump and distribution system after City successfully drills well.
- B. Assist in identifying and establishing one or more public access routes into the Preserve.
- C. Support efforts to find funding to develop the picnic and group camping area.



**Figure 11**  
Newell Open Space Preserve  
Site Plan





Project A.10

## Lake Berryessa Trail Development Phase I

Project Location



**Description:** Develop a multiuse non-motorized recreational trail circumnavigating the shoreline of Lake Berryessa.

**Background:** The Bureau of Reclamation's Visitor Services Plan Record of Decision, adopted in 2006, lays out the Bureau's long range vision for Lake Berryessa. Included in the Decision is a commitment to work in partnership with other agencies, landowners and organizations to develop a multipurpose shoreline trail circumnavigating the lake. The non-profit organization Berryessa Trails and Conservation (BT&C) is assisting the Bureau with planning and constructing this trail. BT&C in 2007 obtained grant funds to initiate planning for the trail.

**Benefits and Issues:** The Lake Berryessa Trail is a critical component in a long-range goal of the Bureau, which is also shared by Napa County, to broaden available recreational experiences at, and thereby the economic base of, the Lake Berryessa area. One section of the shoreline trail that is of particular interest to the District, referred to by BT&C as the Seventeen Creeks Trail, will provide overland trail access to the District's Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park. Another trail segment of strong interest to the District will provide a trail connection between Camp Berryessa and the main shoreline of Lake Berryessa, and along the eastern shore of the Putah Creek arm of the lake.

**Other Partners:** Planning and construction of the Lake Berryessa Trail requires

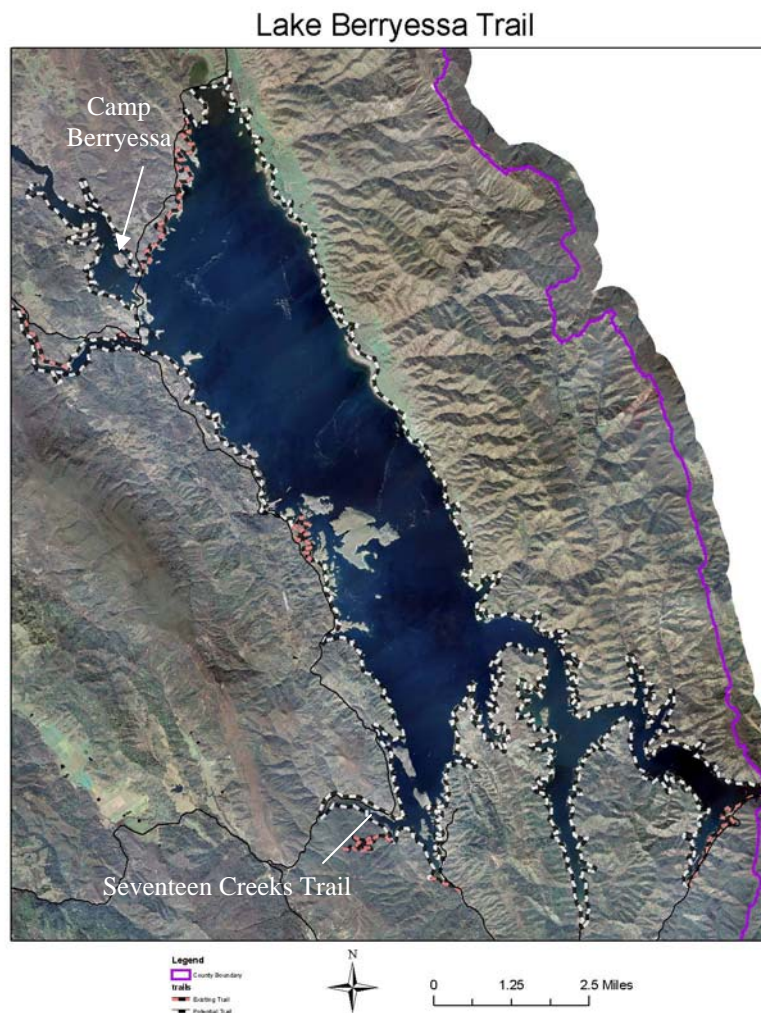


continuing and expanding the working relationship between the Bureau of Reclamation, BT&C and the District. The District expects to primarily play a supporting role for this project.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Alignment planning and preliminary design began in 2007, and is expected to be completed in 2009, together with initial environmental reviews. If cooperative agreements can be completed and funding obtained, construction of the first trail segments could begin in 2010. Completion of the entire trail is a long-range endeavor. The cost to construct and operate the trail will be estimated during the planning phase currently under way.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Cooperate with the Bureau of Reclamation and Berryessa Trails and Conservation in planning, obtaining funding for and constructing the trail, during 2008 and 2009.
- B. Seek to have an approved plan and funding for the Seventeen Creeks Trail by December 2009, and to complete construction by October 2010.
- C. Seek to have an approved plan and funding for the sections of the Lake Berryessa Trail that serve Camp Berryessa by June 2010, and to complete construction by June 2011.



M A S T E R P L A N 2 0 0 8 - 2 0 1 3

Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District





Project A.11

**Berryessa Peak  
and Blue Ridge  
Public Access Development**

**Description:** Develop public access to Berryessa Peak and along Blue Ridge.

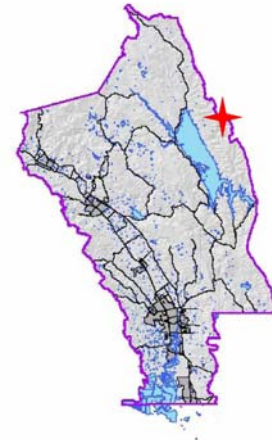
**Background:** Blue Ridge defines the eastern boundary of Napa County. The northern section extends from Cache Creek in Yolo County to Putah Creek at Monticello Dam and the out-fall of Lake Berryessa. This magnificent range of rocky cliffs dominates the skyline of much of Napa County; views from the ridge extend east across the Central Valley to the Sierra Nevada, south across the Delta to Mount Diablo, west across San Francisco Bay to Mount Tamalpais and north to Snow Mountain.

**Benefits and Issues:** Most of the upper elevations of Blue Ridge are owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), although the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is also a major public agency landowner. Additional properties are owned by non-profit land conservation organizations. However, much of this area is inaccessible to the public due to gaps between the public lands and the lack of trails. The Land Trust of Napa County has an option to obtain the approximately 800-acre Todd property. If acquired, this would enhance access via the Old Toll Road, which historically provided access to and over Blue Ridge, connecting the Knoxville Berryessa Road a few miles north of Lake Berryessa with Yolo County. It may also be possible to obtain trail easements between discontinuous public lands, providing public access south along the Ridge to Berryessa Peak and even beyond to Putah Creek. The public lands are used primarily by hunters and hikers.

**Other Partners:** BLM and DFG are the primary public land managers in the area. The District's role will be to take the lead in closing gaps between public lands, coordinating with the public land managers, and constructing and operating hiking trails.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The District in September 2008 secured a trail easement across private sections of the proposed route, and the Land Trust of Napa County and the Department of Fish and Game are in escrow to purchase another key parcel. The timing and

Project Location

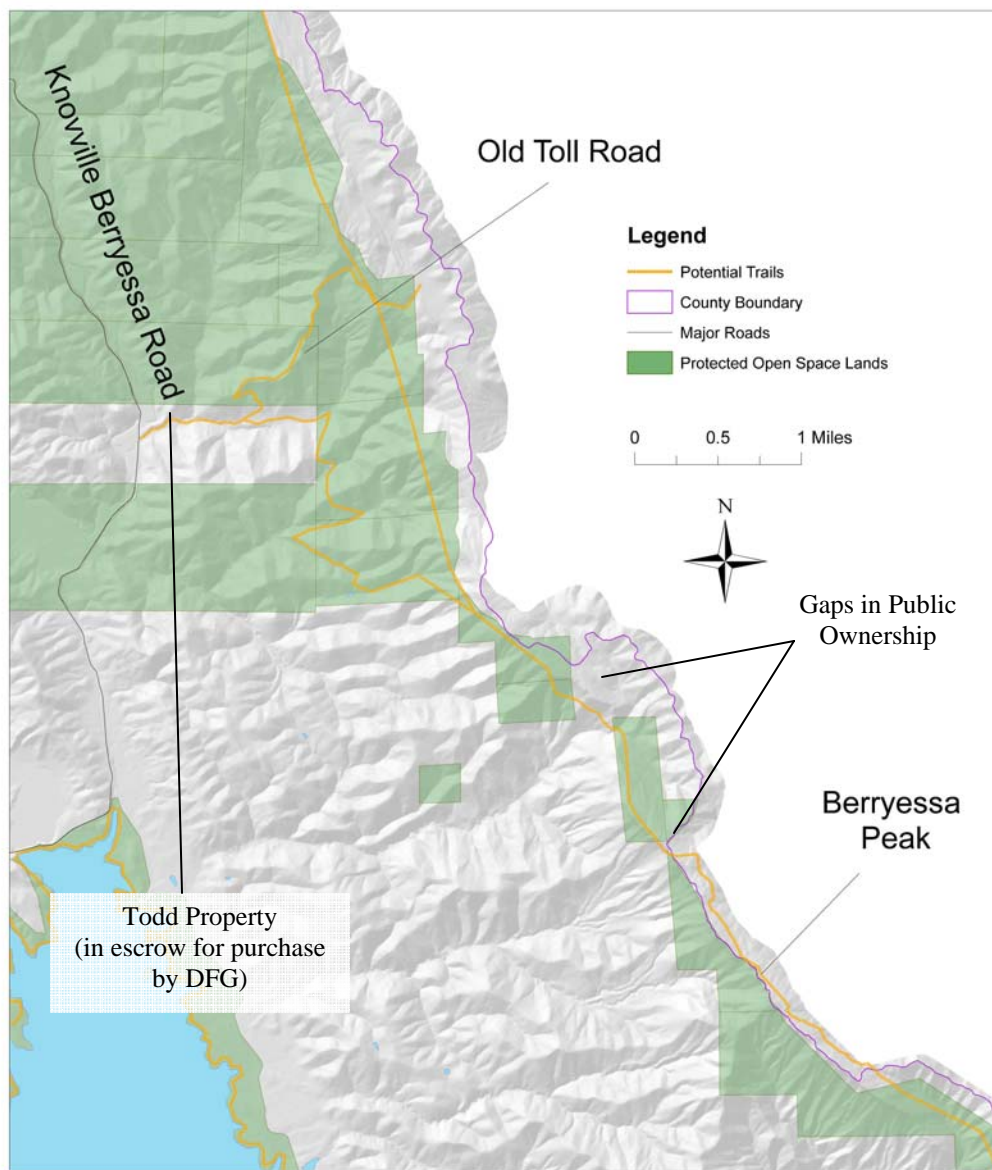


cost of improving and/or constructing trails has not been determined.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Trail easement closing gaps in public ownership north of Berryessa Peak donated to District in March 2009.
- B. Pursue acquisition of key parcels and easements south of Berryessa Peak as possible.
- C. Provide coordination and management between public agencies, and work with non-profit organizations to plan, identify funding for and repair or construct the trail along Blue Ridge to Berryessa Peak by June 2010.

### Berryessa Peak/ Blue Ridge Potential Trails







Project A.12

## Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Improvements

Project Location



**Description:** Repair and develop connecting loop trails and primitive camping site with related facilities at Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park.

**Background:** In 2008 the District acquired the 224 acre Berryessa Vista property from the Land Trust of Napa Valley for use as a wilderness park. The Land Trust of Napa County retained a conservation easement over the property which assures protection of the property's habitat, wildlife and water resources. Since the acquisition, District volunteers have completed mapping of existing jeep trails and identified potential walk-in camp sites. The project objective includes developing primitive camping areas with water, fire pits and picnic tables, together with nature-based recreational trails, consistent with protection of the site's conservation values.

**Benefits and Issues:** The development of a camping facility would provide a public camping opportunity in a wilderness park facility very different from existing camping facilities in the Lake Berryessa area. The park is appropriate for hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, native wildlife viewing, plant observation, bird watching, star gazing, hike-in camping and other related recreational activities. Gates are needed to control damage and erosion caused by off-road vehicles. This property is now only accessible to the public by boat using Lake Berryessa.

**Other Partners:** Volunteers are helping to monitor and maintain the park. Development and use of the park will be strongly affected by plans for the Lake Berryessa Trail (Project A.10), which will provide overland public access.

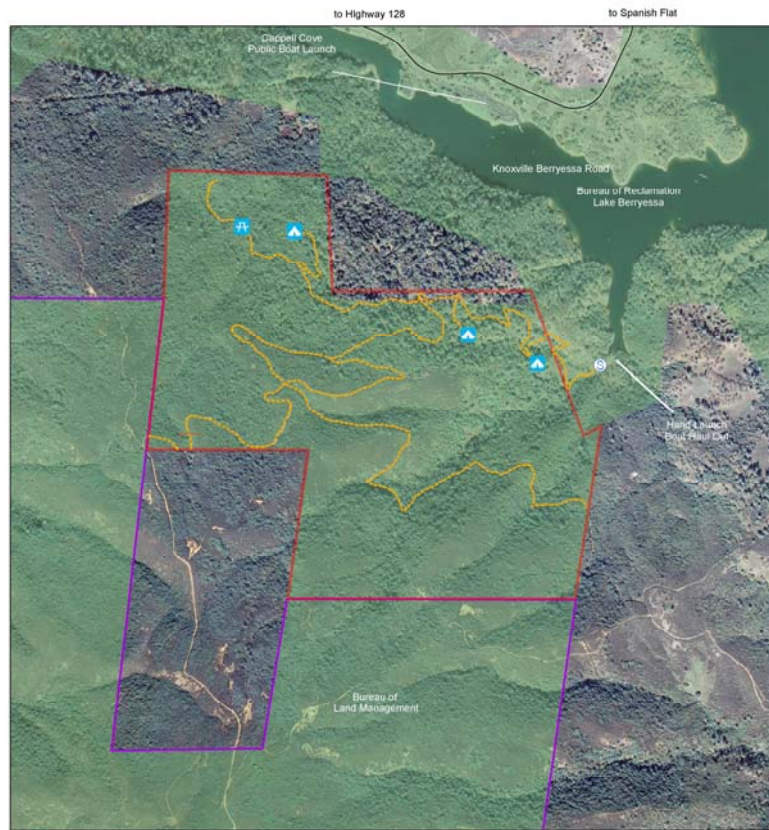


**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Once the section of the Lake Berryessa Trail connecting the Knoxville-Berryessa Road and Steel Canyon Road is constructed (see project A.10), the next step will be the development of a primitive walk-in campground at Berryessa Vista. Development of such a campground will be inexpensive (less than \$50,000); annual operating costs are preliminarily estimated at \$25,000, with the actual cost depending on the degree to which volunteers continue to be actively involved in caring for the park.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Install boundary and trail signs and gate(s) by December 2009.
- B. Work with partners to plan and complete connecting trails by October 2010.
- C. Complete plans and entitlements for a camp site by the spring of 2011.
- D. Complete primitive camp during summer of 2011.

**Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Improvements**



**Legend**

- Existing Trails
- Berryessa Vista Boundary
- BLM Boundary
- Public Open Space Lands
- Potential Improvements**
- potential bench
- staging area
- potential gate
- potential campsite







Project A.13

Pope to Putah Creeks  
Trail Development

**Description:** Develop trails connecting from Pope Canyon Road to Putah Creek, and north along the west side of Putah Creek to Lake Berryessa Estates

**Background:** A collection of parcels owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) provides a continuous corridor of public land extending from Pope Canyon Road just west of Walter Springs to Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) property on the Putah Creek arm of Lake Berryessa. If a few short gaps between existing public holdings can be closed either through acquisition of fee title or trail easements, public access could be extended north to Lake Berryessa Estates.

**Benefits and Issues:** The project would provide about 10 miles of trails ideal for hikers, equestrians and mountain bicyclists, crossing a mixed terrain of Gray Pine, Oak Woodland and Chaparral. It would also offer access to the Putah Creek arm of Lake Berryessa, providing trail users with welcome opportunities to swim and cool off.

**Other Partners:** Cooperative agreements are needed with the BLM giving the District permission to construct the trail, and with the BOR granting the public the right to cross between federal and non-federal land. In addition, arrangements with private landowners will be needed to close gaps between public land holdings.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Construction is dependent on funding and the ability to negotiate gap closures with willing property owners. The project does not currently have an estimated time frame or cost.

Project Location

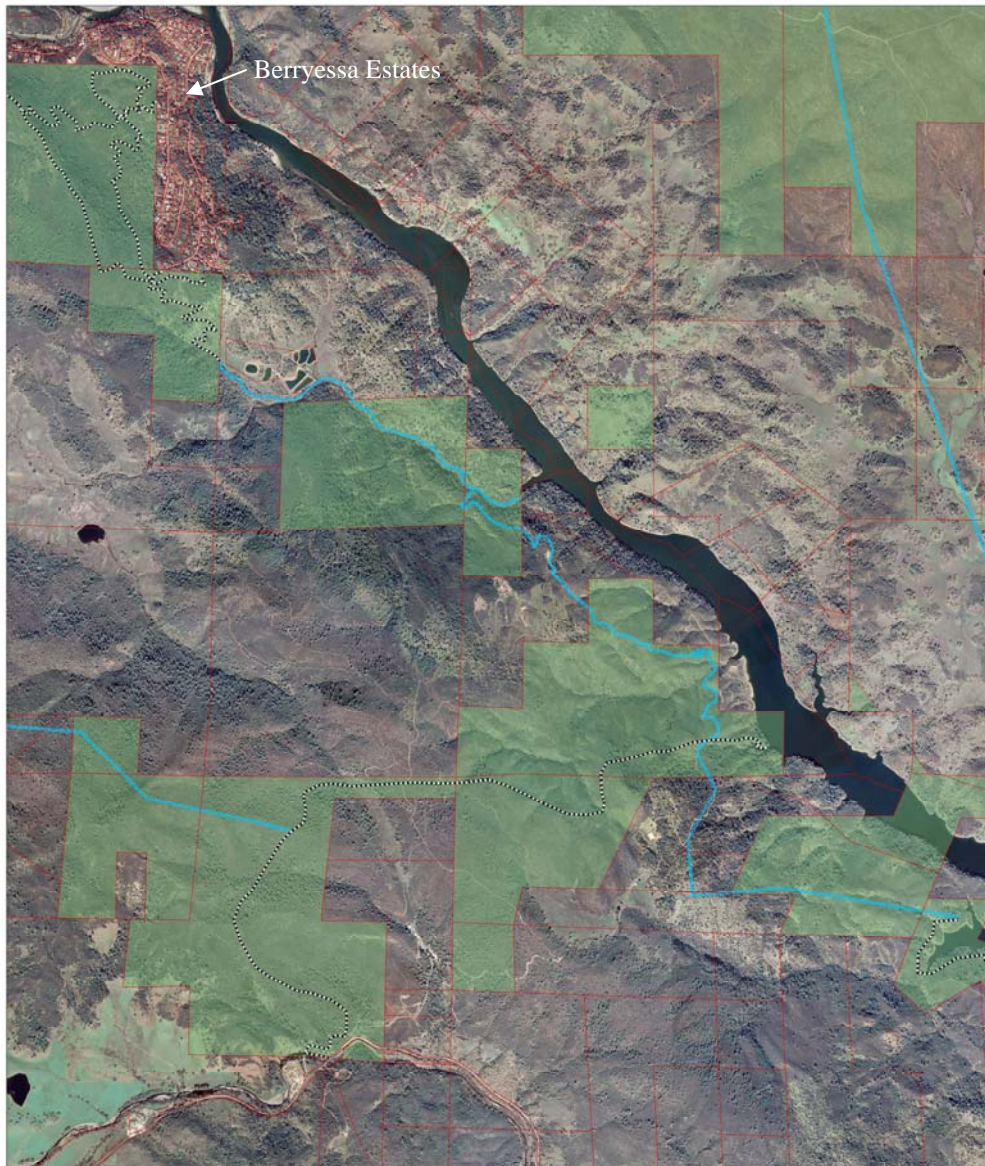




**Action Objectives:**

- A. Acquire and/or support acquisition of key parcels and easements when there are willing sellers or donors.
- B. After gaps between public lands can be closed, obtain agreement from BLM to allow District to construct and manage the trail.

## Pope to Putah Creeks Trail Development



**Legend**  
□ Parcels  
..... Proposed Trail  
— Hypothetical Trail Corridor  
■ Protected Open Space Lands



0 0.5 1 Miles

M A S T E R P L A N 2 0 0 8 - 2 0 1 3

Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District





Project A.14

## Skyline Park Improvements Phase II

**Description:** Construct new facilities at Skyline Park including a covered arena and a second greenhouse for native plant propagation.

**Background:** Skyline Park consists of 850 acres of state property leased to the County of Napa, which in turn leases it to the Skyline Park Citizens Association, for use as a public park. While day-to-day operations are managed by the Association, the County has periodically provided funding and assistance for major improvements. The most recent was the provision of \$171,240 in Proposition 12 grant funds to repair Lake Marie Road and pave the loop road which serves the developed lower portion of the park. As with the County's responsibilities for the Napa River Ecological Reserve, the County is looking to the District to provide support and oversight at Skyline Park, although at this point the District's role is informal and only advisory.

Project Location



The Napa/Solano chapter of the California Native Plant Society has long been involved at Skyline Park, constructing and operating the Martha Walker Native Plant Garden, as well as propagating native plants for use in local restoration projects. The Chapter in 2006 obtained the donation of a larger greenhouse, and is now seeking permission to install it at Skyline Park so they can expand their native plant propagation program.

Equestrians have also long been involved with Skyline Park. In 2006 a group of equestrians formed Skyline Riders, and set a goal of raising funds for and constructing a covered horse arena to supplement the existing uncovered arena.

**Benefits and Issues:** Native plants grown with local seed varieties are in great demand for restoration projects. A covered arena would greatly enhance the functionality of Skyline Park for equestrians, as well as other groups who need a covered outdoor space. One issue raised by the proposed improvements is that the current Master Plan for Skyline Park is not very informative, and is now nearly 30 years old. Having a more comprehensive and up-to-date Master Plan would make it more efficient to manage and improve the park.

**Other Partners:** Determination by the State Department of General Services that these improvements are consistent with



the original master plan and purpose of the State's lease with the County is necessary before the improvements can be constructed. The County will also need to concur with the proposed improvements. The District's role at this time is to provide support and coordination as needed to help move these projects forward, as well as to develop an updated Master Plan for the park (see Project B.8) which will provide clear guidelines for the operation of these improvements.

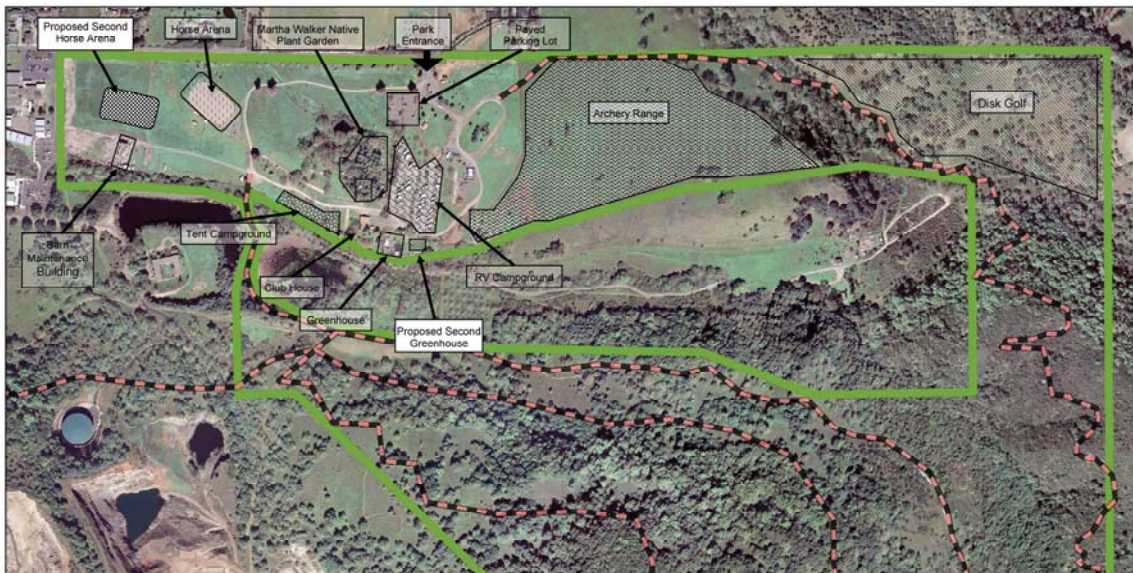
**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The new greenhouse was donated; the cost to install it is estimated at \$15,000. The covered arena is estimated to cost approximately \$275,000 for the construction of the arena including permits, electrical and plumbing work. The sponsors of each project propose to fundraise to pay for their respective projects.

#### Action Objectives:

- A. Assist with obtaining State and County approvals for the greenhouse and covered arena by August, 2008.
- B. Assist with developing an up-to-date Master Plan for the park by June 2009.

#### Skyline Park Proposed Improvements

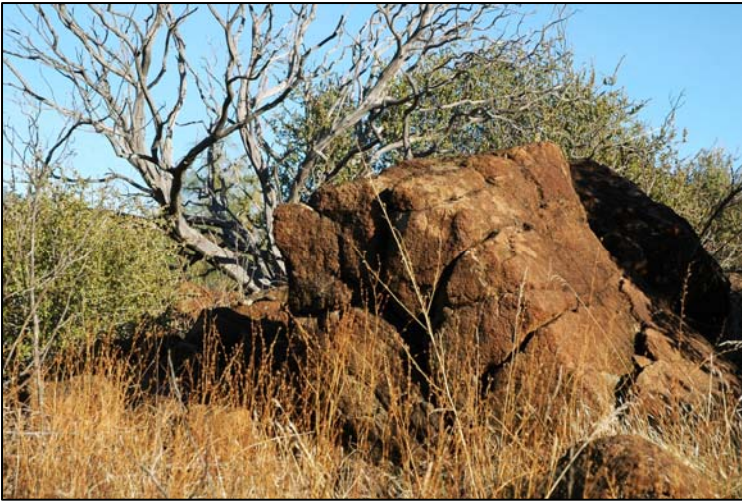
December 2007



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Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District





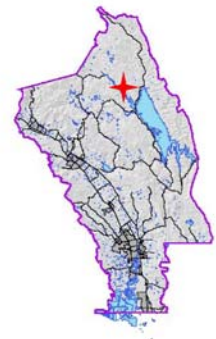
Project A.15

## Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area Trail Development

**Description:** Obtain needed right-of-way and construct a multiuse trail connecting Camp Berryessa and the Knoxville Recreation Area.

**Background:** The District is working with the Bureau of Reclamation to construct and operate an environmental education camp at Camp Berryessa (project A.3). The camp location features great water access, but lacks trails to explore and learn about the upland ecology of the area. The proposed Lake Berryessa Trail (project A.10) would meet part of the need for a trail serving the camp. The proposed Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area trail would vastly expand opportunities for exploring upland areas.

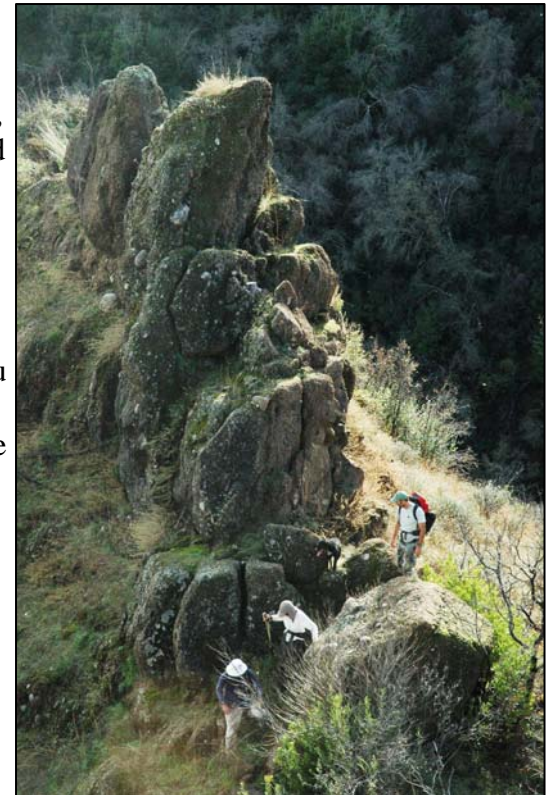
Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** If an approximately 2 mile of gap between public lands can be closed through acquisition of fee ownership or trail easements, Camp Berryessa would have access to more than 20,000 acres of public land to the north, offering tremendous opportunities for hiking and riding, and experiencing the ecology of a part of the County which is little changed from the days before European settlers came to California.

**Other Partners:** The District will need cooperative agreements with the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation to obtain permission to construct and manage the trail. In addition, the acquisition of easements or fee title ownership from willing property owners will be necessary to close gaps between the public lands..

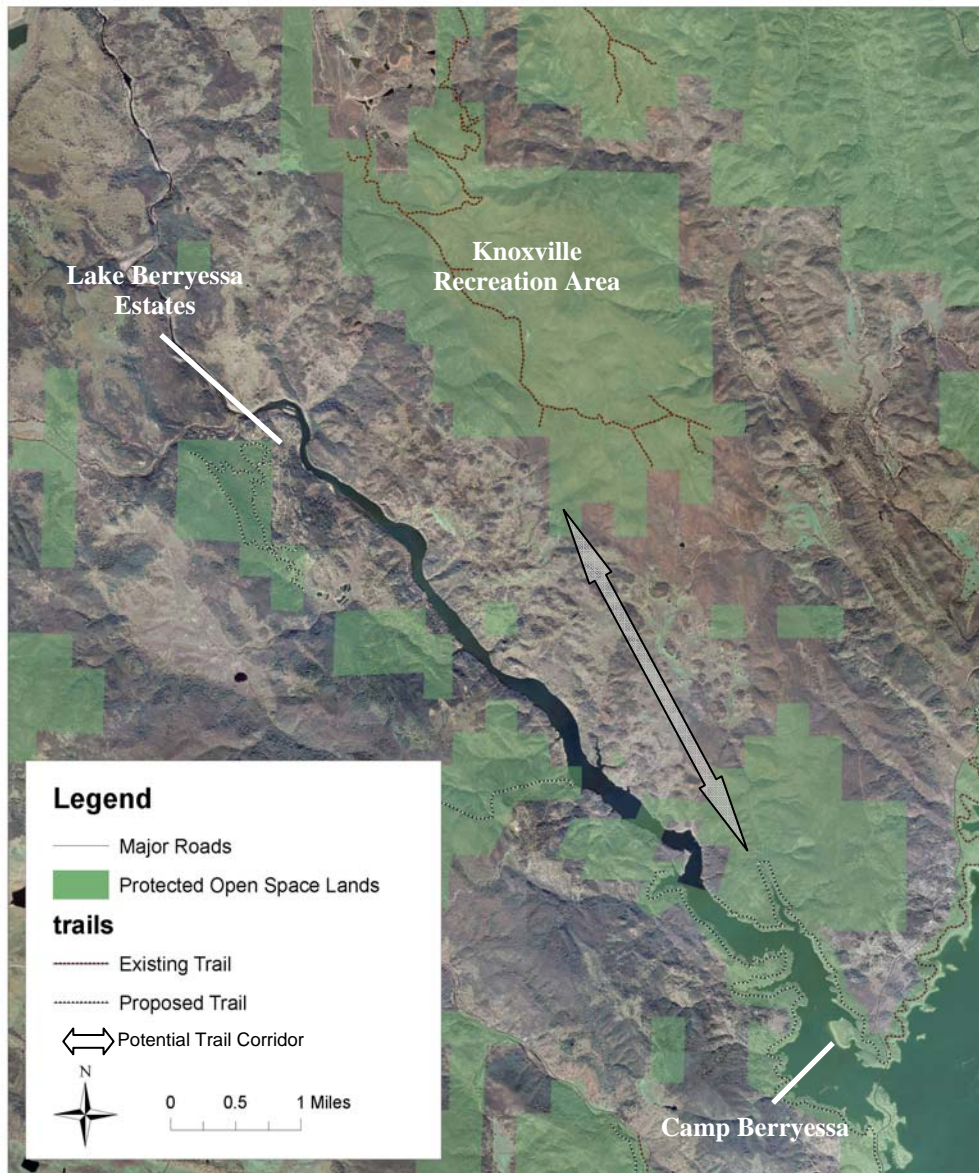
**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** This project will most likely be pursued after Camp Berryessa is constructed and in operation, although this timing could be moved up if the opportunity to work with any of the affected owners of private lands presents itself.



**Action Objectives:**

- A. Acquire and/or support acquisition of key parcels and easements, as opportunities arise.
- B. Develop agreements with the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Land Management to enable the District to construct and operate the trail on public lands after easements across private lands are obtained.

### Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area Trail Development







### Project A.16

## Napa Crest Trail Development

**Description:** Develop a trail circumnavigating the Napa Valley generally following the ridges and open spaces surrounding the Valley.

**Background:** The concept for a Napa Crest Trail was first identified as a long range goal in the Park and Recreation Plan for Napa County adopted in 1976. As currently envisioned, it follows the presently designated alignment for the proposed Bay Area Ridge Trail between Solano County and mid-Napa Valley (see Project A.19). However, rather than cross the Napa Valley at the Yountville Crossroads, as is planned for the Bay Area Ridge Trail, the Napa Crest Trail would continue north from the Milliken Reservoir to Lake Hennessy, Las Posadas Demonstration Forest, and the Wild Lake and Duff Ranches. It then either heads west on the Oat Hill Mine Trail and crosses the Napa Valley through the City of Calistoga then south to Bothe-Napa State Park, or continues northwest through Robert Louis Stevenson State Park to Mt. St. Helena then south to Bothe-Napa State Park. From there the Napa Valley Crest Trail would continue south on or near the main ridge of the Mayacamas Mountains, through Sugarloaf Ridge State Park and eventually to the Napa-Sonoma Marshes.

In recent years significant steps have been taken that advance the feasibility of such a trail, including (a) the expansion of Robert Louis Stevenson State Park resulting in the construction of the Palisades Trail, (b) the Land Trust of Napa County 2006 acquisition of Wild Lake Ranch and the 2008 option to purchase the Duff Ranch, and (c) the exercise in 2007 by Napa County of its retained easement rights to the Oat Hill Mine Road and concomitant agreement with the District to manage the road as a non-motorized trail. These actions make possible continuous trail connections between Angwin and Mount St. Helena, with a western extension to Calistoga and an eastern extension to Aetna Springs Road. In addition, the District in 2007 initiated planning ef-

Project Location



forts with the City of Napa to construct trails on city lands in the Milliken and Lake Hennessey watersheds. The District is also in negotiations with the Vallejo Water District, in cooperation with the Solano Land Trust and others, to obtain surplus lands in the Vallejo Lakes area. Finally, if the proposed acquisition of property in the Moore Creek watershed (Project B.9) is successful, only a 4,000 foot gap in public ownership will remain for the section between Lake Hennessey and Angwin.

**Benefits and Issues:** The Napa Valley Crest Trail is an ambitious concept. Completing the entire trail would take decades, and some gaps are likely to always remain, but completing even selected segments of the trail would offer significant recreational benefits, due to the beautiful and varied terrain, sweeping views, and close proximity to where most Napa residents live and where most visitors wish to go. The purchase of 1,100 acres in both Napa and Solano Counties which the City of Vallejo Water District hopes to sell, and acquiring property which is for sale in the Moore Creek watershed are critical near-term needs. Working with the Land Trust of Napa County and California State Parks to resolve long term management issues for the public lands between Angwin and Mt. St. Helena is another important objective for the next few years. Closing other gaps in the trail will require negotiations with willing landowners and should be undertaken as opportunities arise.

**Other Partners:** Constructing, improving and opening the trail on existing public and protected lands requires negotiating cooperative agreements with the City of Napa, California State Parks, the Land Trust of Napa County, and possibly the California Department of Veterans Affairs. It also involves purchasing surplus Vallejo Lakes property from the Vallejo Water District.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The acquisition of surplus Vallejo Lakes property depends on how quickly the City of Vallejo proceeds, but is likely in either 2008 or 2009. The Land Trust of Napa County in 2008 began preparation of a management plan for the public lands between Angwin and Mt. St. Helena, which should be completed in 2009. This planning effort will cost approximately \$350,000, and utilize grant funds provided by the State Coastal Conservancy. Because of the existence of old ranch roads that can be rehabilitated for use as the trail, construction costs should be minimal in both the Vallejo Lakes and Angwin to Mt. St. Helena areas. See descriptions for trails at Milliken Reservoir (Project A.2) and Lake Hennessey (A.7) for their costs and time frames. Other costs, for acquisition and improvement, are not known at this time.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. If funding can be obtained, acquire Vallejo Lakes property within Napa County in 2009.
- B. Acquire Moore Creek property by December 31, 2008, and construct that section of trail by the end of 2009.
- C. Obtain agreement from the City of Napa for public access on their Milliken and Hennessey properties, and construct and operate the trail in these sections by December 2010.
- D. Coordinate with the Land Trust of Napa County and California State Parks in developing the plan for managing the trail between Angwin and Mt. St. Helena by December 2009.
- E. On an ongoing basis, seek willing landowners for acquiring fee ownership and/or trail easements necessary to close gaps between existing public lands.



### Project A.17

## Napa River Access Development

**Description:** Provide public access to the Napa River at appropriate points along the River

**Background:** The Napa River is a defining natural feature for Napa County. However, outside of the cities of Napa and Calistoga and the Napa River Ecological Reserve, the public can only catch glimpses of the River from a handful of bridges. Over the years many proposals have been put forward regarding a Napa River Trail running the length of the Napa Valley and connecting its communities. None of these proposals have been implemented, however, due to the fact that most of the River's banks are in private ownership, land values are very high, and concerns have been expressed about the impact that such a trail might have on adjacent agriculture and on the animals which rely on the River's riparian habitats.

**Benefits and Issues:** While a continuous riverbank trail is unlikely, it may be possible to provide public access to specific points along the river. Such access would be important for educating the public about River functions and for building support for protecting and improving its water quality and riparian habitats. During the salmon run, for example, people often park on the narrow shoulders of Zinfandel Crossroad to observe the salmon; a turnout and benches would make this a safer and more enjoyable experience. At the River Ranch farm worker housing east of the City of St. Helena, it may be possible to improve excess land at this site with a soccer field and picnic area benefitting both farm workers and the general public without impacting agricultural operations. One significant limitation to any District initiative is that the Agricultural Preserve zoning which applies to most of the Napa River does not include parks and recreation as an allowed or conditionally permitted use.

**Other Partners:** Friends of the Napa River has been a leader in efforts to protect the River, and should be a partner in any efforts to provide public access to the River. The County of Napa is also critical to any effort, since the County is not subject to the zoning restriction noted above, or alternatively could consider possible modification to the Zoning Ordinance.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** No specific projects have been developed.

### **Action Objectives:**

- A. Specific project access points and objectives will be developed for the 2011 Master Plan update..

Project A.18

## San Francisco Bay Trail Completion in Napa County

**Description:** Completion of the San Francisco Bay Trail from the Solano County line south of American Canyon to the Sonoma County line in the Carneros area

**Background:** The San Francisco Bay Trail is a planned 500+ mile recreational trail circumnavigating San Francisco and San Pablo Bays. To date, approximately 300 miles of the alignment have been completed. Senate Bill 100, authored by then-state Senator Bill Lockyer and passed into law in 1987, directed the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to develop a plan and specific alignment for the Bay Trail. In 1990, the San Francisco Bay Trail Project was created as a nonprofit organization dedicated to planning, promoting and advocating implementation of the Bay Trail. While the Bay Trail Project provides some grant funding for trail planning and construction, implementation and operation of the trail is dependent on local jurisdictions. In Napa County, sections of the Bay Trail have been constructed as a Class I path along Wetlands Edge Drive in American Canyon, in Kennedy Park in the City of Napa, and in parts of the Carneros area west of the Napa River. A Class II bicycle lane serving as the Bay Trail has also been constructed on the Imola Bridge and through portions of the Carneros area. The District is working to complete the gap between the cities of American Canyon and Napa (see projects A.5 and A.6).

**Benefits and Issues:** The Bay Trail provides easily accessible recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts, including hikers, joggers, bicyclists and skaters. It offers a setting for wildlife viewing and environmental education, and it increases public respect and appreciation for the Bay. It also has important transportation benefits, providing in many areas a commute alternative for cyclists. The major challenges for completing the Bay Trail in Napa County involve (a) identifying design solutions to minimize impacts on sensitive habitats, (b) overcoming traffic safety hazards at a few key gaps in the trail and (c) resolving the future of the privately-owned Napa Pipe property south of Kennedy Park. If the Napa River and Bay Trail (projects A.5 and A.6) proves feasible, the designated alignment of the Bay Trail should be changed to this route, and removed from its default location along Highway 29.

**Other Partners:** Other than the trail segments related to projects A.5 and A.6, the District's role is primarily to support other partners who have lead responsibility. These include the City of American Canyon, for making the link south to the Solano County line, the City of Napa for closing gaps at either end of the Imola Bridge, completing the Golden Gate Drive segment and finishing intersection improvements to provide a safe crossing of Highway 121, and the County of Napa in completing the Las Amigas Road segment.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** In early 2008, the City of American Canyon started a study of the missing connection to Solano County; costs will be determined as part of this study. Intersection improvements for the Highway 121 crossing should be complete in 2008. Napa County is scheduled to complete the Las Amigas segment by mid-2009. Both of these

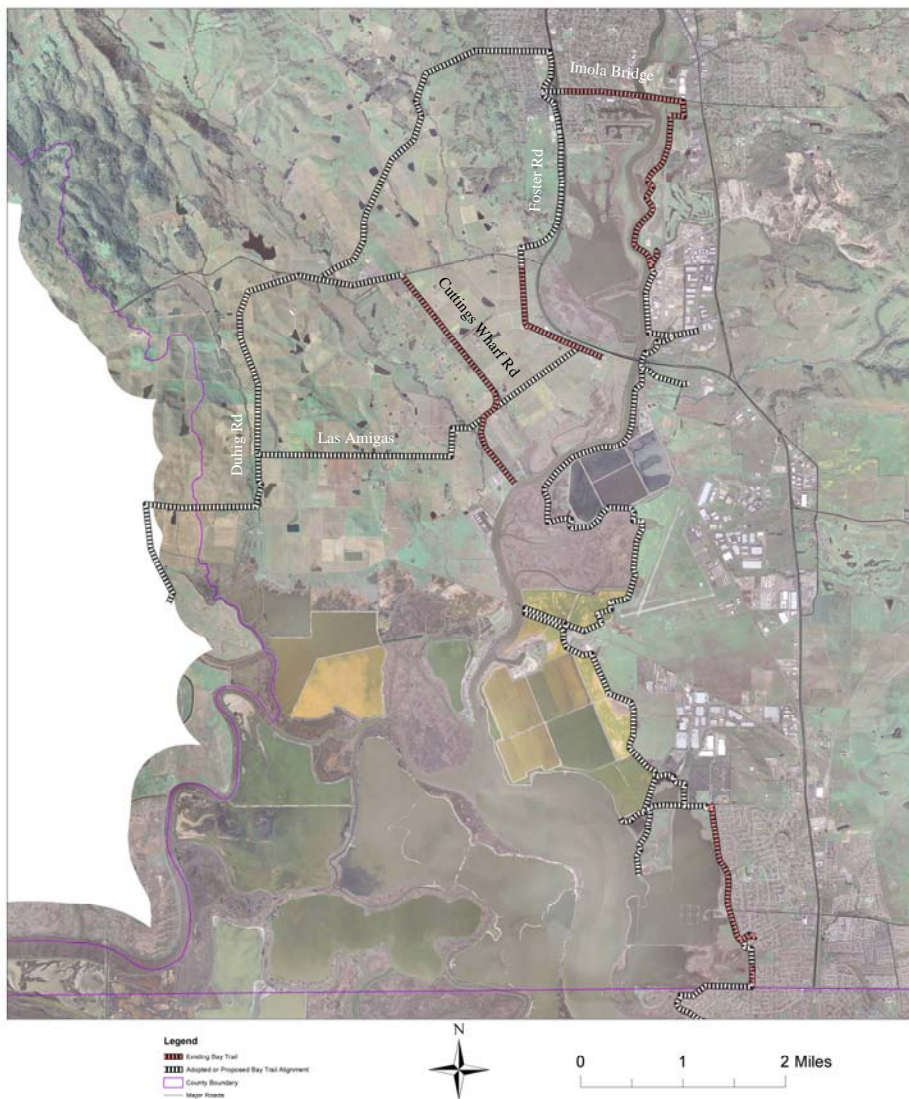


projects are already funded. A schedule and cost estimate for the other remaining gaps has not been prepared.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Support as needed the efforts of the City of American Canyon, City of Napa and Napa County, both to identify solutions and to obtain remaining needed funding.
- B. If the Napa River and Bay Trail project proves feasible, seek approval from the San Francisco Bay Trail Project to change the designated alignment for the trail from Highway 29 to the Napa River and Bay Trail route.
- C. Work with the San Francisco Bay Trail Project to resolve other alignment uncertainties and amend the designated alignment when the preferred alignments are determined.

**San Francisco Bay Trail Alignment  
Adopted or Proposed**



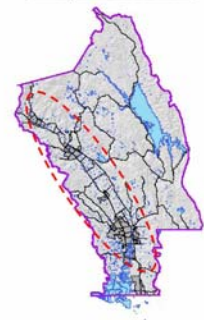


### Project A.19

## Bay Area Ridge Trail Completion in Napa County

**Description:** Completion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail from the Solano County line east of American Canyon to the Sonoma County line in the vicinity of Sugarloaf Ridge State Park.

Project Location



**Background:** The Bay Area Ridge Trail is a proposed 550+ mile multi-use trail encircling the San Francisco Bay generally following the ridgelines within sight of the Bay. A little over 300 miles of the trail is completed and has been dedicated for use by the public. Sponsorship and planning for the trail at the regional level is primarily handled by the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, a community-based non-profit organization. With assistance from the State Coastal Conservancy's Bay Area Conservancy Program, the Council is able to provide some planning and implementation grant funding to local agencies who are responsible for most construction and operation of the trail. The Napa County General Plan recognizes the Bay Area Ridge Trail as an important regional trail within Napa County. The trail is currently proposed to connect to Solano County at the Newell Preserve in American Canyon, and to Sonoma County at Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Within the County, it is proposed to follow the mountains east of the Napa Valley as far as Yountville, where it crosses the valley and heads in a circuitous route toward Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. To date, 15.5 miles of Ridge Trail have been dedicated in Napa County—a short segment in the Newell Preserve leading into Lynch Canyon in Solano County, another loop trail segment on private property utilizing a trail easement donated by the Tuteur family east of Skyline Park to the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, and a cross-valley, road-based segment utilizing the Yountville Crossroad and Solano Avenue.

**Benefits and Issues:** The Bay Area Ridge Trail is generally a multi-use recreational trail, serving hikers, mountain bicyclists and equestrians, though these uses are in some situations more limited based on local conditions. It is intended to provide easily accessible recreation and nature appreciation. It also serves as an organizing principle, helping



to connect public lands and natural habitats, and providing a physical and emotional connection that links communities across the region. Projects A.2 and A.4 are designed to complete segments of the trail on existing public lands. The biggest challenge for the Ridge Trail in Napa County involves finding ways to link trail segments on these existing public lands to make for a continuous or at least longer trail experience. One option currently under investigation by the District, others in Napa County and the Ridge Trail Council, is a change in the planned alignment of the trail to take advantage of local opportunities. This option involves changing the Ridge Trail alignment to follow the Napa Crest Trail north from Milliken Reservoir to the Oat Hill Mine Trail, then west down the Oat Hill Mine Trail to Calistoga, through and south of Calistoga utilizing existing or potential Class I paths, then west through Bothe-Napa State Park to the Sonoma County line, then south to Sugarloaf Ridge State Park, before continuing west through Sonoma County. This alignment, though longer, may actually be more feasible to implement, though more study is needed.

Key sections of the existing or proposed Bay Area Ridge Trail alignment within Napa County cross areas that in 2008 were identified by the Association of Bay Area Governments as Priority Conservation Areas, including the Vallejo Lakes Area, the mountains in the vicinity of Lake Hennessey, and the Wild Lake/Palisades area.

**Other Partners:** Partners include the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council for planning and strategic assistance, the State Coastal Conservancy and California State Parks for funding, the City of Napa for permission to utilize their Milliken watershed lands, the California Department of Veterans Affairs to utilize their Rector Ridge property, the City of Vallejo for obtaining ownership of surplus lands and trail easements in the Vallejo Lakes area, and numerous private landowners willing to provide trail easements. If realigned as discussed above, additional partners include the Department of Forestry to provide access through the Las Posadas Demonstration Forest, the Land Trust of Napa County to utilize the Wild Lake and Duff ranches, Napa County to utilize the Oat Hill Mine Trail, California State Parks to utilize Bothe-Napa and Sugarloaf Ridge State Parks, and the City of Calistoga for the trail crossing of the Napa Valley through that city.

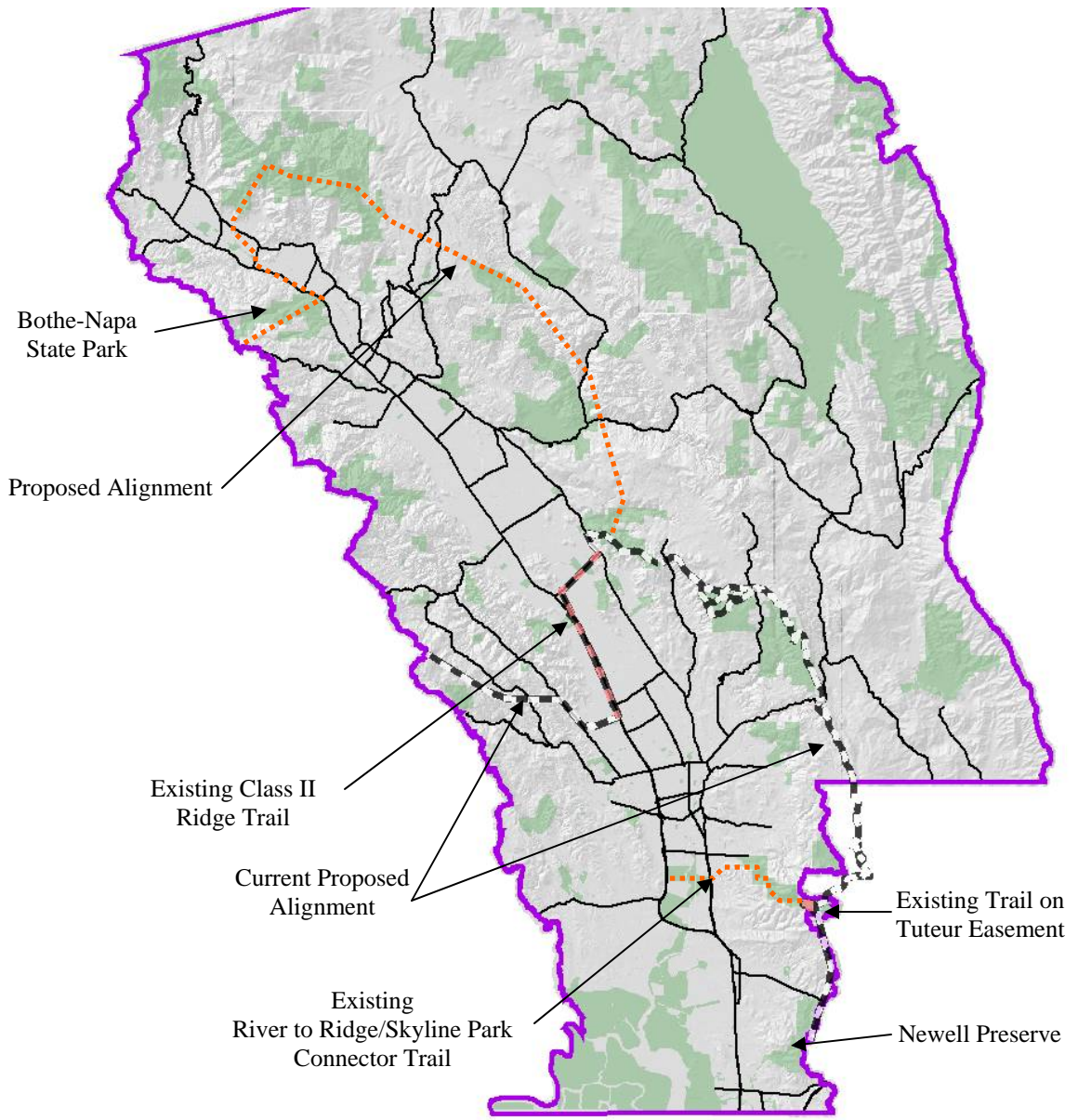
**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The Bay Area Ridge Trail through Napa County is an ambitious, long-term goal. It will be constructed in segments as opportunities arise. Some of the individual segments are included in other project descriptions; there is no set schedule or estimated cost for the complete trail.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Continue to obtain approvals for and implement projects A.2 and A.4.
- B. Work with the Napa County Committee of BARTC to prioritize gap closure projects.
- C. Coordinate with BARTC and agencies and organizations in Napa, Sonoma and Solano Counties to identify and implement trail connections across County lines.
- D. Seek approval from the BARTC for revision to the proposed alignment.
- E. Work with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, the County of Napa and the Skyline Park Citizens Association to transfer the Tuteur trail easement from the Council to the District, with management by the Association.
- F. On an on-going basis, engage in dialogue with interested private property owners, and pursue opportunities as they become available.



# Bay Area Ridge Trail Current and Potential Future Alignment for Napa County





Project A. 20**Backcountry Camping Facilities in the Palisades Area**

**Description:** Construction of both primitive and rustic overnight stay facilities in the backcountry of the Palisades.

**Background:** The thousands of acres of protected public open space lands in the Palisades area provide a unique chance for a multi-day recreation experience utilizing a linked series of primitive and rustic overnight stay facilities. The Oat Hill Mine Trail serves as the primary access into this near-wilderness area, while the Table Rock Trail, Palisades Trail and proposed Napa Crest Trail offers connections north to Mt. St. Helena and south to Wild Lake and Angwin.

**Benefits and Issues:** Due to extensive public land ownership and trail connectivity, this is the one location within Napa County with the potential to offer a multiple-day camping, hiking, horseback riding and mountain bicycling experience. Development of several primitive backcountry camps, as well as rustic tent cabins, appropriately spaced along the major trails, would enable both the hardy and those with less physical stamina to enjoy the exceptional natural beauty of this area. The feasibility of this project will depend to a considerable degree on the results of the cooperative management plan being developed under the lead of the Land Trust of Napa County for the Palisades area (see project B.7). Operation of the facilities may best be managed through a concessionaire agreement in which a private company offers packaged tours in addition to managing overnight stay locations. If tent cabins are located on non-State or non-federal land, the Napa County Zoning Ordinance would probably also need clarification indicating that rustic tent cabins fall within the definition of campgrounds allowed within the Agricultural Watershed/Open Space zoning district. Additional targeted acquisitions by the District of appropriate camping locations may also be necessary.

**Other Partners:** Coordination with the Land Trust of Napa County, the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Bureau of Land Management would be needed to fully develop a linked group of overnight stay facilities.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The timing for the planning for this project is tied to project B.7, which will take 12-18 months to complete. Primitive camping areas can be developed very inexpensively (on the order of \$100,000); a camping area utilizing tent cabins or yurts would be somewhat more expensive (adding another \$10,000 to \$15,000 per tent cabin). Both types of facilities should be able to be financially self-supporting in terms of operations: the higher maintenance costs related to tent cabins would be offset by the higher user fees which can be collected.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Coordinate with the Land Trust of Napa County in completing a master plan for the Palisades area, by December 2009.
- B. Prepare plans and complete environmental review for proposed facilities
- C. Construct facilities once grant funding is obtained.



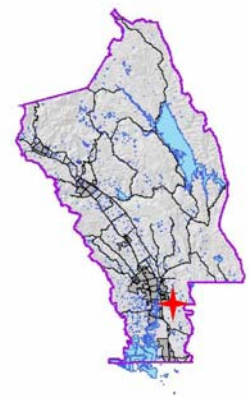
**Project A. 21**

**River To Ridge Trail  
Encroachment Resolution**

**Description:** Approval of a lot line adjustment and trail easement amendment to correct an encroachment problem with the River to Ridge Trail between Kennedy and Skyline Parks.

**Background:** The River to Ridge Trail directly connects Kennedy Park to Skyline Park, utilizing a trail easement obtained by Napa County on land owned by the State of California. It passes between Napa State Hospital on the north and the privately-owned Syar Quarry on the south. Subsequent to the construction of the trail several years ago, the State declared as surplus and sold to Syar Industries a parcel of land adjacent to the quarry and generally south of the trail. Subsequent to the sale, Syar surveyed the parcel and discovered that two short segments of the trail were actually constructed outside of the trail easement as it had been recorded, and encroached a up to about 20 feet onto the parcel acquired by Syar. Syar intends to install a fence along the parcel boundary to increase security for the quarry operation, but has held off on installing the fence until the encroachment can be corrected. Analysis of conditions on the ground indicates the trail was constructed in the location which makes the most sense given the topography of the area. Thus, the best solution would be a minor lot line adjustment that would swap a small amount of state property for an equal amount of Syar property, such that the encroachment could be eliminated. If this were done, the trail easement could then be modified as well to reflect the actual location of the trail.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** The River to Ridge Trail connects the Napa River and Bay Trail to the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and is important to developing an integrated off-road trail network in the southern part of Napa County. Because Kennedy Park is served by public transit, the trail provides access to a wilderness park experience to those who use public transit. The trail also has the potential to provide interpretation of the natural, economic and historical context of the area (Project C.3)

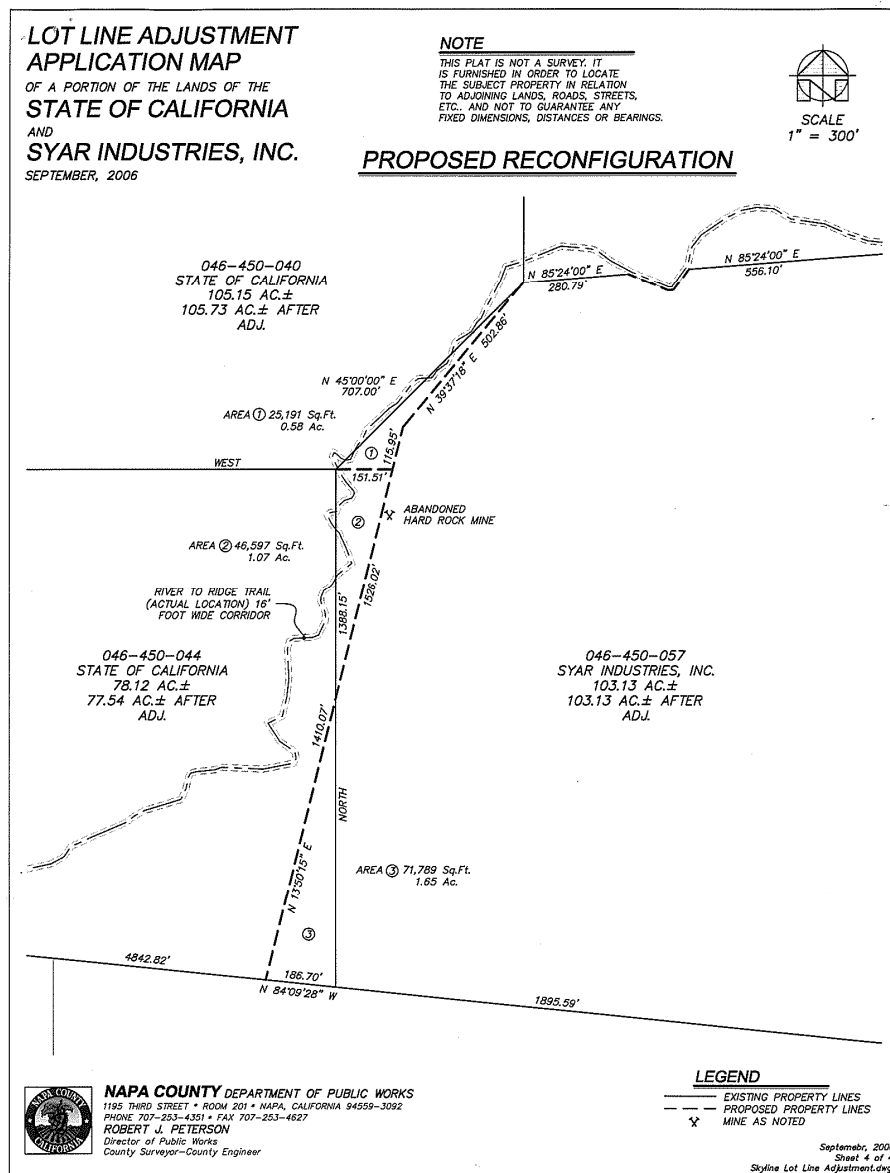
**Other Partners:** The lot line adjustment must be approved by both the State Department of General Services and Syar Industries, while the trail easement realignment must be approved by the State Department of General Services and the County of Napa. The District's role is to act as facilitator and agent for obtaining these approvals. Maintenance and operation of the

trail has been and will continue to be handled by the Skyline Park Wilderness Association.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The lot line adjustment has been approved by Syar Industries; approval by the Department of General Services has been delayed by staffing changes and at the state agency, and differences of opinion within the agency regarding its authority to process a lot line adjustment . Most recently the agency has indicated it would need legislative authorization; if this holds true, legislation could not be passed and become effective until January 1, 2010.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Obtain state approval for the lot line adjustment and trail easement realignment.







### Project A. 22

## Moore Creek Park Trails, Picnic Area and Campground Development

**Description:** Development of multi-use trails, picnic area and overnight stay facilities in a semi-wilderness setting in the Moore Creek watershed.

**Background:** The District has obtained an option to acquire approximately 680 acres in the Moore Creek watershed (Project B.9). This acquisition would make it possible to open up several miles of existing dirt roads as recreational trails, as well as construct picnic and camping facilities. Two existing houses on the property could serve as residences for caretakers.

**Benefits and Issues:** Moore Creek has the advantage of being close to population centers in the Napa Valley while simultaneously offering a near-wilderness experience. Driving time is about 20 minutes from the City of St. Helena or the Town of Yountville, and about 30 minutes from the City of Napa. The Moore Creek property connects on the south to City of Napa lands around Lake Hennessey, and would provide an ideal staging area for the Lake Hennessey North Shore Trail Development envisioned by Project A.7. The north boundary of the property is within about 4,000 feet of the state-owned Las Posadas Demonstration Forest. If a trail easement or fee title can be obtained in this area, the proposed Napa Crest Trail (Project A.16) would effectively be complete (if rural residential roads in the Angwin area are used) all the way from the southern side of Lake Hennessey all the way to Mt St. Helena. Proposed trails could serve hikers, mountain bicyclists and equestrians. Both group and family camping could be provided. Recreational vehicle camping is probably not feasible at this site because of physical access constraints and limited flat land. A swimming pool located next to a modest 1950's ranch-style residence could be a popular public amenity.

Project Location





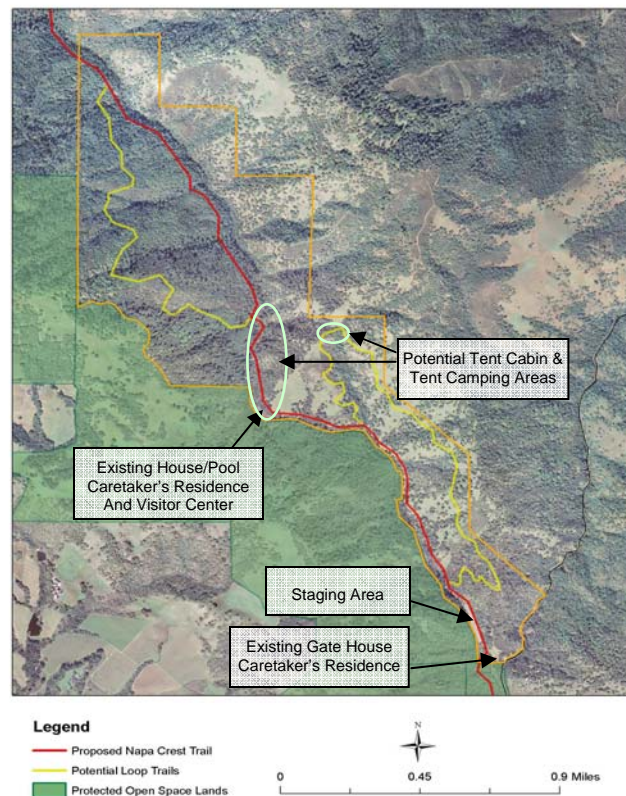
**Other Partners:** This would primarily be a District project, working in conjunction with volunteers, one or more resident caretakers, and potentially a concessionaire. A Use Permit issued by Napa County for public recreational use of the area will be required.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The Moore Creek acquisition is scheduled to close by December 31, 2008. Existing dirt roads could be opened to the public relatively quickly, after some brush clearance and minor repairs, and construction of a parking area near the entrance. A camping facility will require development of water and septic infrastructure. Perimeter fencing will also be necessary along at least a portion of the property. The cost of improvements is preliminarily estimated at \$500,000, and expected to take about one year; detailed projections will be prepared prior to exercising the option to purchase the Moore Creek property.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Prepare cost estimates and obtain grant funding by October 2008.
- B. Acquire property by December 2008.
- C. Obtain Use Permit by September 2009.
- D. Repair existing dirt roads and buildings, construct staging area, and open the park for public trail use by October 2010.
- E. Construct camping facilities by October 2011.

Moore Creek Wilderness Park  
Conceptual Site Plan





### Project A.23

## San Francisco Bay and Napa River Water Trail Development

**Description:** Support development of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail along the tidal sections of the Napa River.

**Background:** The San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail is a vision for a network of launch and landing sites, or “trail heads,” to allow people in human-powered boats and beachable sail craft to enjoy the historic, scenic and environmental richness of San Francisco Bay through continuous, multiple-day and single-day trips on the Bay. The trail will promote safe and responsible use of the Bay, while protecting and increasing appreciation of its environmental resources through education and coordinated, strategic access to the Bay. Planning for the trail was authorized through State legislation, with planning and implementation led by the State Coastal Conservancy and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. Sites in Napa County included in the regional water trail plan include the existing Cutting’s Wharf, the existing boat launch at Kennedy Memorial Park, the Green Island Boat ramp proposed for by the Department of Fish and Game for the former salt plant site, the Riverside Drive boat ramp, and the private Napa Valley Marina. No overnight facilities are proposed for Napa County in this plan.

In addition to the regional Bay Area Water Trail, a proposal for public docks at 27 locations along the Napa River between American Canyon and Trancas Park was put forth in 2003 by an ad hoc Dock Coalition convened by Friends of the Napa River. A prime focus of the proposal was for facilities that would serve environmentally friendly, hand-launched watercraft and increase the ability of the general public to learn about and enjoy the Napa River. If implemented, this would significantly expand the utility of the Water Trail.

**Benefits and Issues:** The water trail is designed to enable people to learn about and enjoy the tidal section of the Napa River. In addition to the on-shore facilities themselves, the biggest need is for coordination and information dissemination, so the public is aware of the possibilities for exploring the river and marshes between San Pablo Bay and the City of Napa.

**Other Partners:** The projects currently included in the regional plan are the lead responsibility of other agencies. The District’s role is primarily to assist these partners where District involvement will help support existing launches and advance completion of the proposed launch. One role for which the District should take the lead is coordinated public outreach and education about the boat launches, where to obtain equipment is that is needed, maps, tide tables, etc.

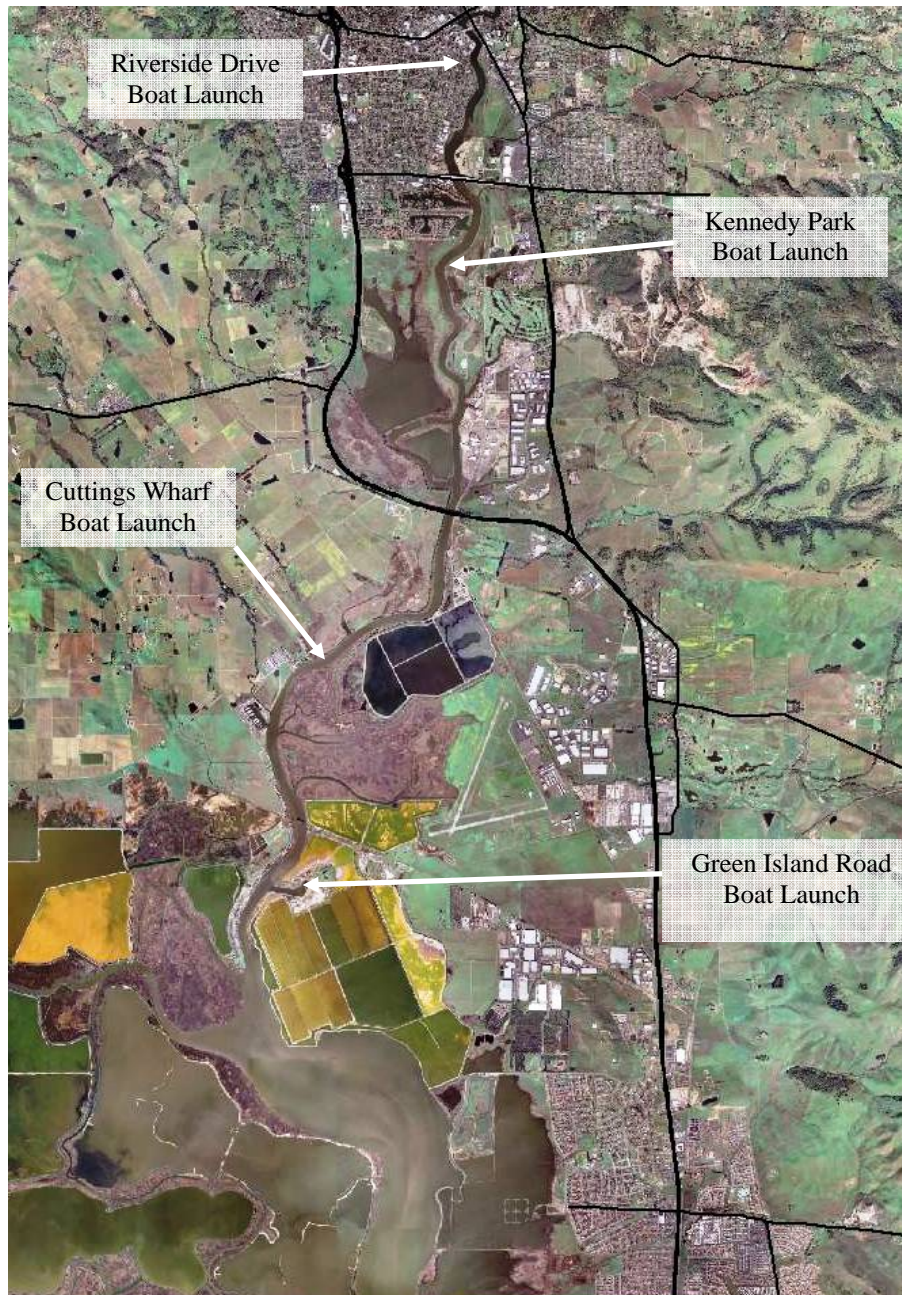


**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The cost for developing and disseminating information about the boat launches and how to explore the river is minimal, and could be done within a relatively short period once the District's web site is operational.

**Action Objectives.**

- A. Assemble maps, links to tide tables, and other information.
- B. Post water trail information on the District web site.

## San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail Public Boat Launches in Napa County



Project A.24

## Napa Valley Greenway / Vine Trail Development

**Description:** Develop a Class I non-motorized bicycle and walking path extending from Calistoga to the Vallejo Ferry Terminal.

**Background:** Many ideas for a Class I bicycle and walking path connecting the cities of the Napa Valley have been put forward over the years. Most recently, the Napa County Transportation Planning Agency (NCTPA) with financial support from the County and each of the cities, completed a feasibility study in September 2008 that evaluated potential routes. The Vine Trail Coalition, a non-profit organization, was subsequently formed to spearhead implementation of one or more of the trail alignments. Sufficient land in public ownership or public rights of way exist for most of the distance between the City of Napa and Town of Yountville, and much of the distance between Calistoga and St. Helena. It may also be possible to share or acquire the railroad right of way between Napa and St. Helena. Not evaluated in the feasibility study, but potentially an important component of the overall project, could be the development of rest stops at strategic locations along the trail. One such rest area could be located on the land set aside for a park in the Zinfandel Lane Subdivision. The existing Solano Avenue Bike Rest Stop is another location that could also be readily incorporated into the Greenway.

**Benefits and Issues:** A Class I path extending the length of the Napa Valley would have significant recreational, commute and public safety benefits. It would benefit residents and visitors alike, providing an enjoyable alternative to bicycling and walking on the shoulders of busy Highway 29 and the Silverado Trail. This would reduce automobile traffic and the potential for accidents between cyclists and drivers. The northern section of this Class I path could also serve as the connector between the Oat Hill Mine Trail and Bothe-Napa State Park, and become part of the potential future alignment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The NCTPA feasibility study estimated the cost of a trail connecting from Calistoga to the Vallejo Ferry Terminal could range from \$34.1 to \$48.5 million, depending on which trail alignment options were selected.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Work with the NCTPA, the Vine Trail Coalition and other groups to determine whether the District's involvement would assist with the implementation of this trail and, if so, to participate as appropriate in its development.



Project A.25**Henry Road/Milliken Peak Area Trail Development**

**Description:** Construct recreational trail in the vicinity of Henry Road and Milliken Peak.

**Background:** As part of the City of Napa's approval of the Hussey Ranch subdivision south of Browns Valley, the developer agreed to an easement for a future public recreational trail. This would provide access to the top of the ridge on the north side of the Carneros Valley. The Carneros Valley itself, which is in just a few land ownerships, is currently used for cattle grazing and for vineyards. Some of the properties are protected by conservation easements held by the Land Trust of Napa County. South of the Carneros Valley and accessed from Highway 12 is the diRosa Preserve, an indoor and outdoor art museum which is open to the public with advance reservation. The Preserve property extends north to Milliken Peak and the southern ridgeline of the Carneros Valley; this area is also protected with a conservation easement. Henry Road extends most of the east-west length of the Carneros Valley.

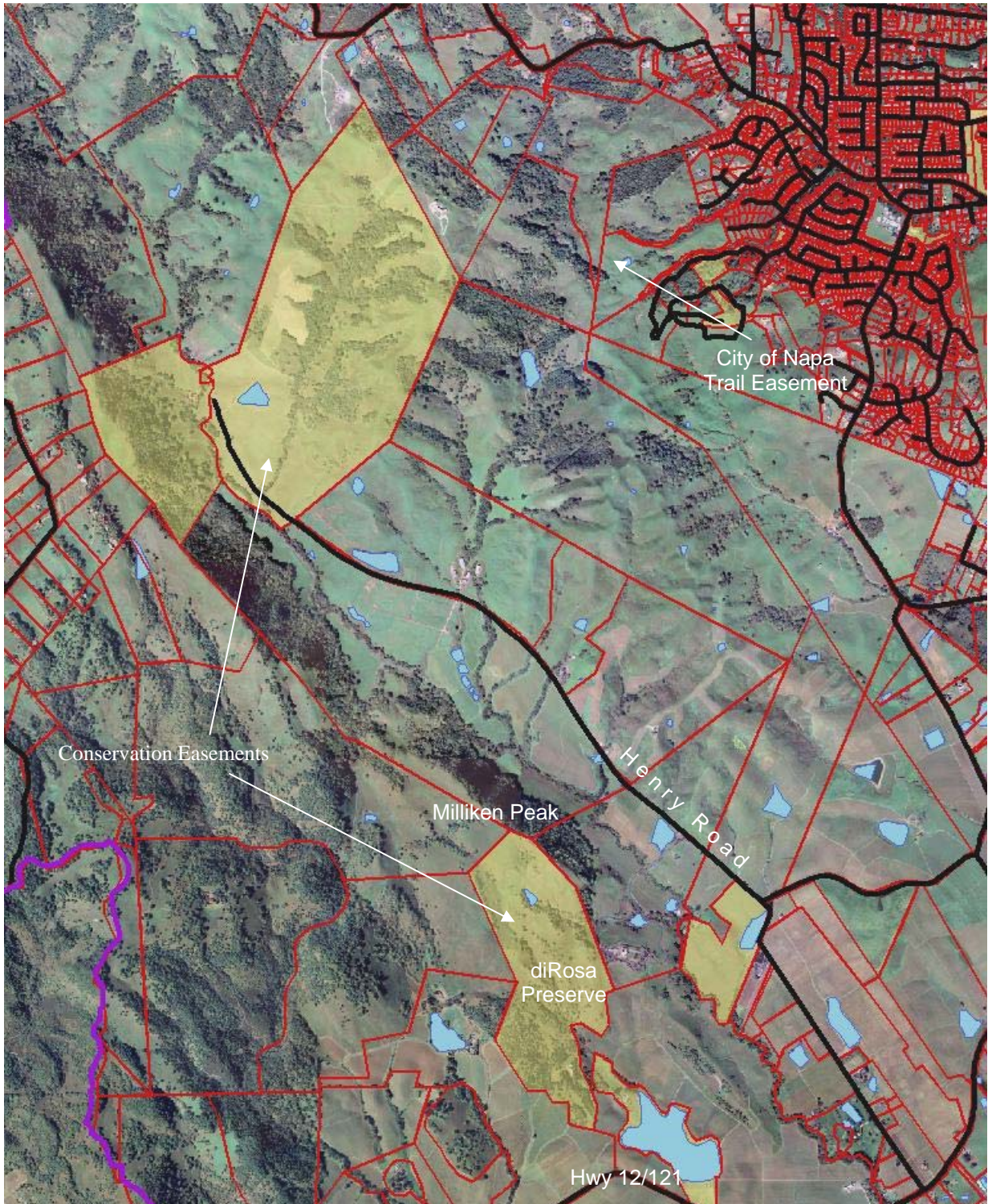
**Benefits and Issues:** One or more trails in the Carneros Valley and surrounding area would allow the public to enjoy the Oak Woodlands and open grasslands of the area. The ridgetops also offer sweeping vistas of San Pablo Bay, Mt. Diablo to the southeast, Mt. Tamalpais to the southwest and even downtown San Francisco to the south. Preliminary discussions with some of the property owners in the area indicate a willingness to consider allowing a public recreational trail on their property. Most of the potential trail routes already have existing dirt roads, making construction relatively easy. This could make it possible to provide a few relatively short and discontinuous but very nice trails. Connecting these together into a continuous trail connecting the City of Napa easement to the diRosa Preserve would require obtaining permission from additional property owners. Any trail in this area would likely require seasonal or other limitations to avoid conflicting with vineyard operations.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Assuming property owner agreements can be obtained, trail construction is relatively simple—signage, some fencing and gates, and probably one bridge. Actual costs cannot be determined until precise distances and alignments are known.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Continue discussions with property owners and the City of Napa and if possible enter into agreements or obtain easements that would allow the District to construct and operate one or more trails in this area.

# Carneros Valley and Environs



M A S T E R P L A N 2 0 0 8 - 2 0 1 3

Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District



Project A.26

## Countywide Trail Network Development

**Description:** Construct the countywide trail network identified in the County General Plan

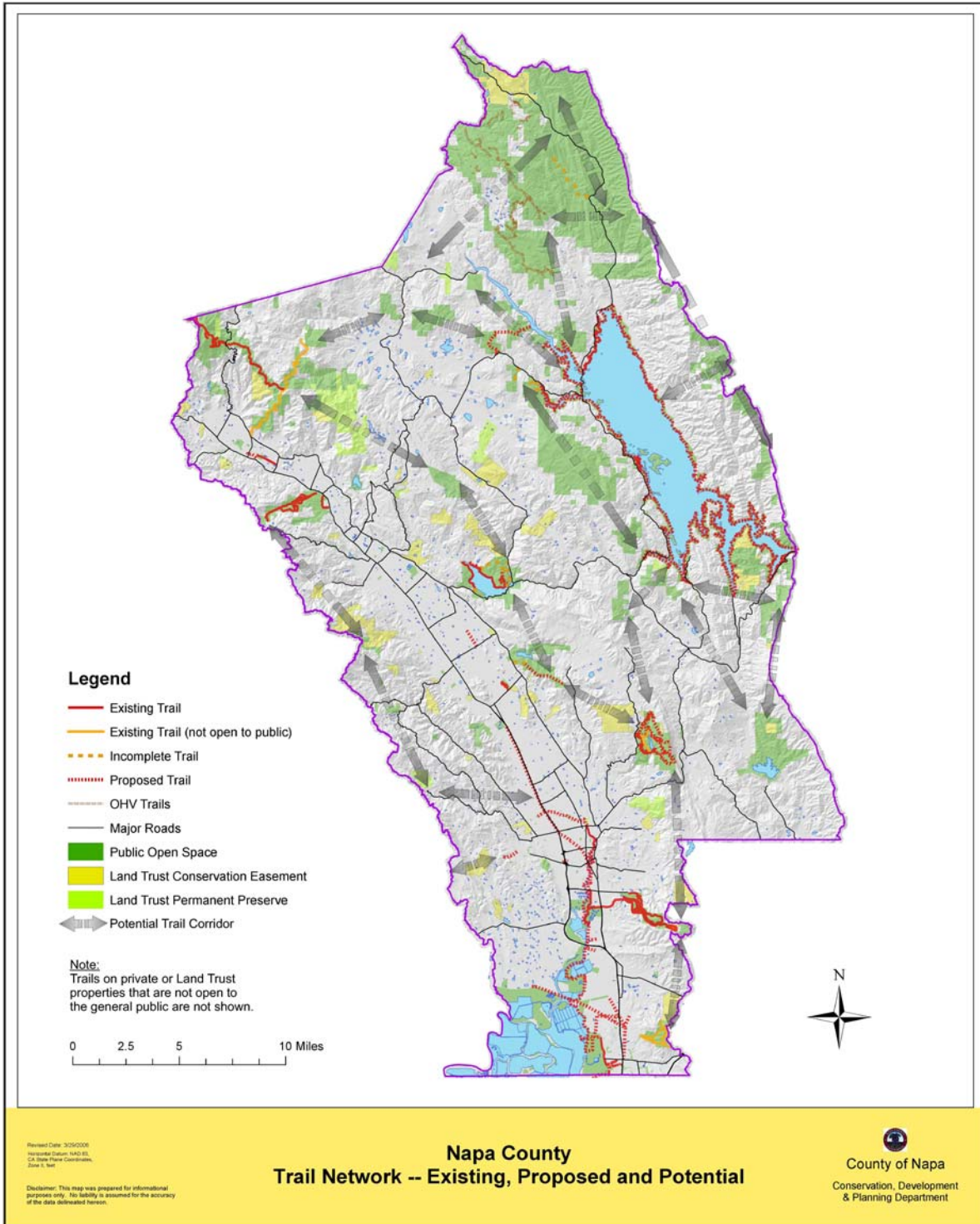
**Background:** The Recreation and Open Space Element of the County of Napa General Plan, as updated in 2008, identifies a network of potential regional trails that build on the mosaic of existing public lands. Because much of this potential network is located on privately-owned lands, the General Plan does not indicate precise alignments. Instead, it shows where connections would be desirable, both to connect the existing discontinuous public lands and to provide public access to presently landlocked public lands.

**Benefits and Issues:** A connected network of regional trails would provide great public benefit, especially for equestrians and mountain bicyclists who seek longer recreational experiences. If designed and constructed in conjunction with backcountry camping areas, a network of trails would also allow for extended multi-day trips—something which is currently not available in Napa County. Construction of the trail network depends on strategic purchases of land from willing sellers, and/or obtaining trail easements either through donation or purchase.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Because construction of an interconnected countywide trail network depends on acquisitions and donations from willing property owners, it is not possible to commit to any particular time frame or to estimate costs. Rather, the District needs to monitor events, develop relationships with property owners, and take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. On an ongoing basis, identify potential trail locations, engage in discussions with interested property owners, and take advantage of opportunities when they arise.





## Goal B

Preserve, Restore and Protect Open Space Lands,  
Natural Resources and Important Habitats





Project B.1

## Napa River Ecological Reserve Restoration

**Description:** Restore native habitat at the Napa River Ecological Preserve.

**Background:** The District in early 2008 obtained a \$100,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy, primarily for the purpose of removing invasive, non-native plants from an approximately 5 acre meadow between the Reserve entrance and the Napa River, and replanting the area with appropriate native species. The District is also working with the California Department of Fish and Game to obtain funding for the removal of invasive, non-native plants (primarily Himalayan Blackberry and Vinca) from the heart of the Reserve north of the River.



**Benefits and Issues:** The Reserve protects a significant stretch of native riparian habitat on the Napa River (most of which has been eliminated due to past agricultural development and flood control projects). Unfortunately, non-native plants dominate in the entry meadow. Restoration of this area will be particularly beneficial for public users of the Reserve, most of whom never get much further than the meadow and south bank of the Napa River. By improving habitat, restoration will provide better opportunities for nature observation. Restoration of native habitat is consistent with the California Code of Regulations that apply to the Reserve.

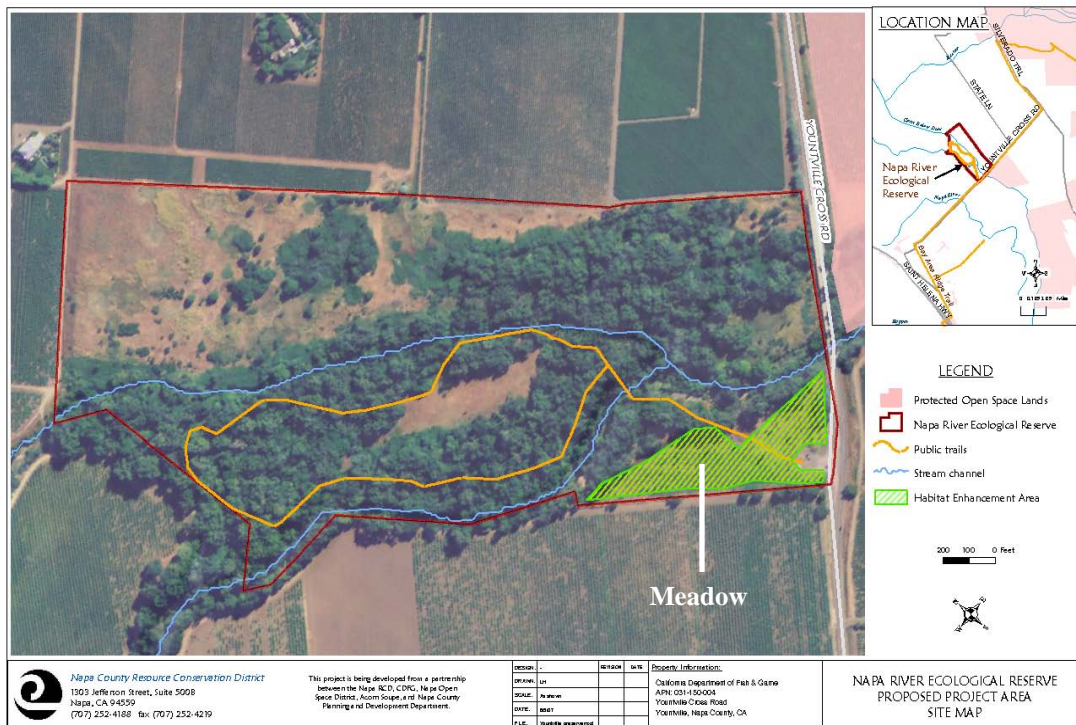
**Other Partners:** The District is contracting with the Napa County Resource Conservation District to develop the restoration plan for the meadow. The plan will require the approval of DFG which owns the Reserve. Under the joint management agreement for the Reserve, DFG has primary responsibility for the area north of the river, but due to funding and staffing cuts DFG is interested in partnering with the District to assist with the restoration of this area.



**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Restoration of the meadow will take place over a three year period from 2008 through 2010, which includes one year of maintenance after the initial removal of non-native plants. The meadow restoration can be accomplished with the \$100,000 grant obtained from the Coastal Conservancy. Removal of non-native plants from the remainder of the reserve will begin in 2008 if funding is obtained; due to the extent of the problem, however, invasive plant removal will need to continue into the foreseeable future; annual funding of at least \$20,000 would be needed to make continued progress in this effort.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Finalize Coastal Conservancy grant contract by March, 2009.
- B. Complete restoration of the meadow south of the river by December, 2009
- C. Complete maintenance and sustainability of restored meadow by June, 2011.
- D. Complete first round of non-native plant removal from area north of the river by December 2009.
- E. Seek continued funding each year for on-going non-native plant removal.







Project B. 2

## Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space Preservation

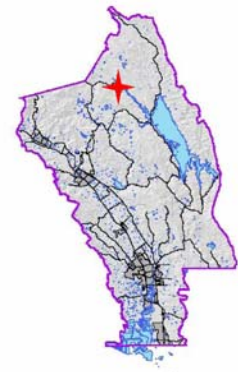
**Description:** Preserve Lake Berryessa Estates open space lands through obtaining ownership and assuming management of 160 acres of open space land owned by the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

**Background:** BLM has declared 160 acres next to Berryessa Estates as surplus and expressed willingness to transfer this property to the District under their Recreation and Public Purpose Act procedure.

**Benefits and Issues:** This property would provide permanent open space primarily benefiting the residents of Lake Berryessa Estates as well as potentially serving as the northern trailhead for a future trail between this area and Pope Canyon. Obtaining this property from the Bureau of Land Management would assure that the property is not sold for development. Wildfire hazard in this area is very high due to dense chaparral growing next to the Lake Berryessa Estates development. Ownership of the property by the District would make it easier for adjacent residents at Lake Berryessa Estates to obtain permission to clear and maintain fire safety zones around their homes. A trail constructed along the major north-south ridge through this property would also serve as a fire break and facilitate access by firefighters in the event of a wildfire. It is important to pursue this project at this time because of the Bureau's desire to surplus this property. A trail heading south from this property would only be constructed at such time as permission to cross private property is obtained (see Project A.13)

**Other Partners:** The project needs to be approved by BLM under the Recreation and Public Purpose Act. Effective management of the property depends on developing a good working partnership with local residents.

Project Location



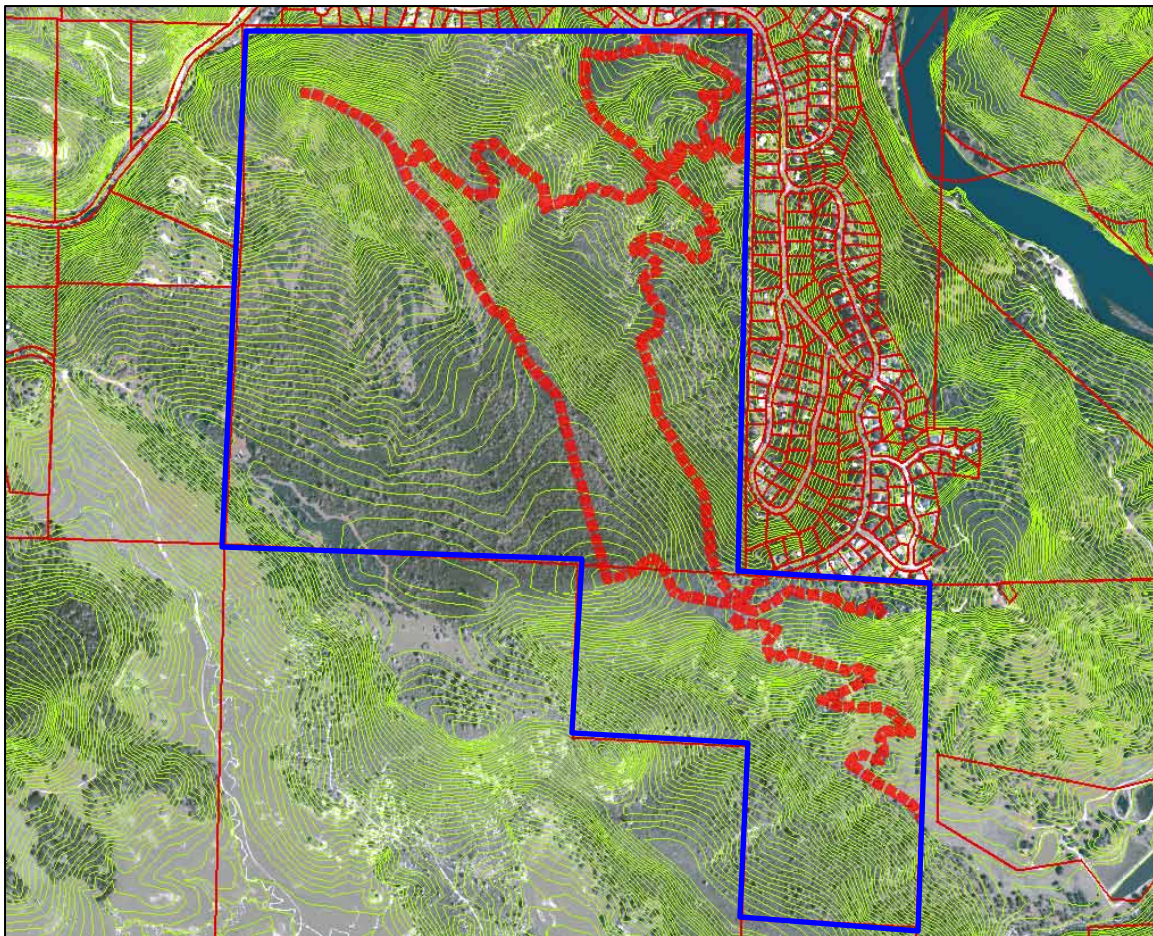


**Estimated Cost and Time Frame:** There would be no cost for the transfer of the property from the Bureau to the District exclusive of minimal processing costs. Most of the proposed trail construction can be done very inexpensively through contract with the California Department of Forestry as part of their fire prevention program. Total capital costs should be less than \$50,000.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete draft trail plan by January, 2008
- B. Complete outreach to Berryessa Estates residents by March 2009.
- C. Prepare and submit the Recreation and Public Purpose application to BLM by March 2009.
- D. Complete transfer of property to District by December 2010.
- E. Use California Department of Forestry to clear brush for a combined firebreak and trail along main ridge within six months of transfer of the property from BLM to the District.
- F. Construct secondary trails as funding becomes available.

BLM Property and Potential Trails  
Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space







Project B. 3

**Berryessa Vista  
Acquisition**

**Description:** Acquisition of 224 acres of open space on the western side of Lake Berryessa from the Land Trust of Napa Valley (Land Trust) for use as a public park.

**Background:** The County Board of Supervisors approved the use of Proposition 12 funds to purchase this property from the Land Trust. The District Board approved proceeding with the purchase and completed the property appraisal and environmental review. The Federal Bureau of Reclamation has approved use of Lake Berryessa for the public to access this property. The County has approved the Use Permit for using the property as a wilderness park and the State has approved the terms of the land tenure agreement required by Proposition 12.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** This acquisition would provide a significant open space addition to the Lake Berryessa area that is contiguous to other publicly owned lands. The major issue is access which will initially be by boat with future shoreline trail access.

**Other Partners:** State approval of the land tenure agreement.

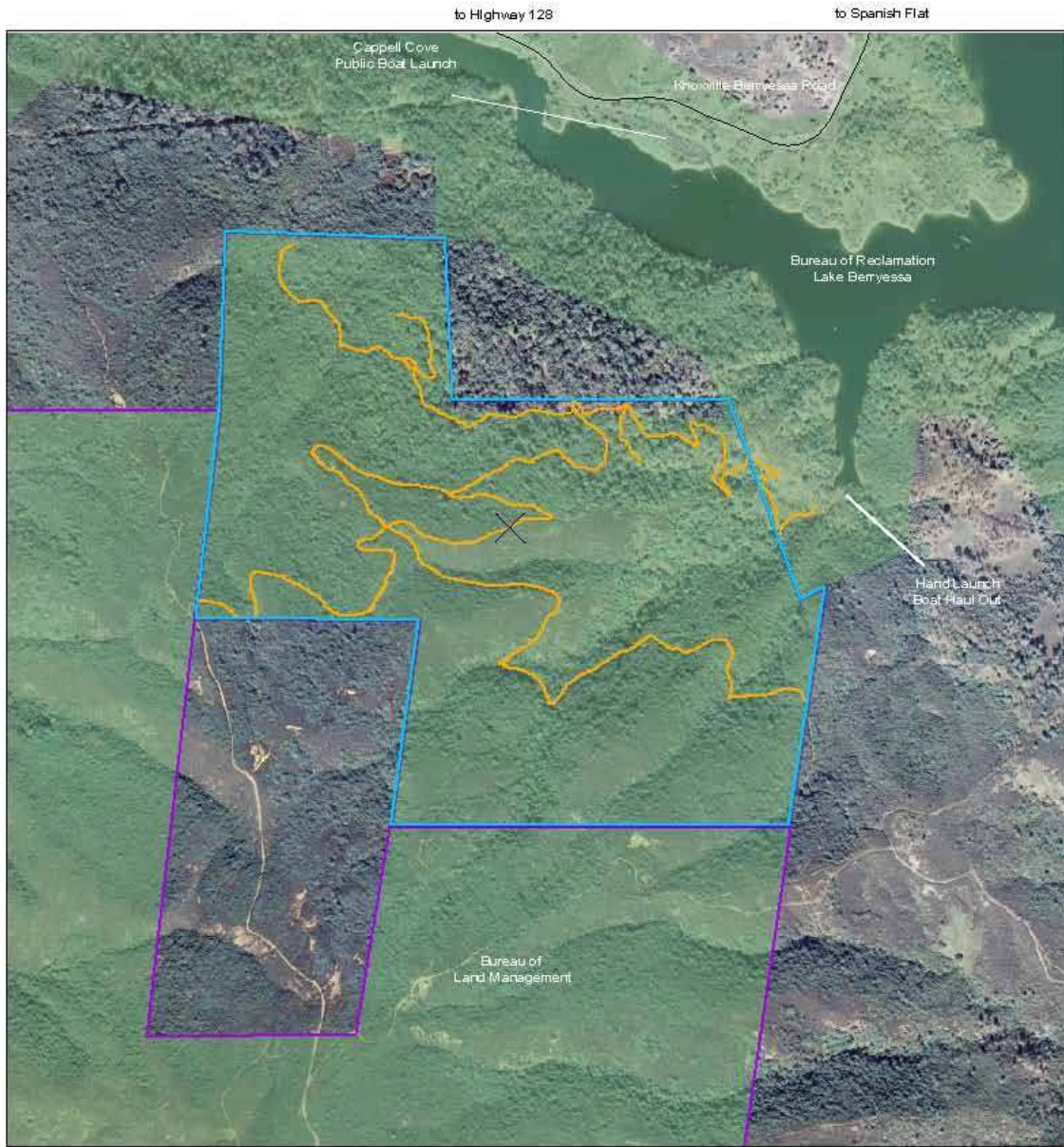
**Estimated Cost and Time Frame:** The land purchase cost paid by the District to the Land Trust which was funded from Proposition 12 funds was \$121,000, approximately one-third of its appraised value, with a total cost including closing and staff costs of 128,000. An estimated \$10,000 is needed to install gates and signage. Monitoring of the property is being done by volunteers, so District operational costs are minimal.



**Action Objectives:**

- A. Acquisition done February 2008.
- B. Acquire nearby properties when possible to round out boundaries and improve access.

# Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park



## Legend

- Existing Trails
- Berryessa Vista Boundary
- BLM Boundary
- Public Open Space Lands



prepared May 2008

M A S T E R P L A N 2 0 0 8 - 2 0 1 3

Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District





**Project B.4**  
**Vallejo Lakes  
 Surplus Property  
 Acquisition**

**Description:** Purchase approximately 135 acres of the 1100 acres of surplus City of Vallejo water program property as an addition to Skyline Park.

**Background:** The City of Vallejo has approved selling a number properties used by their water department operations for financial reasons. The property in the Vallejo Lakes area is of particular importance to the District because approximately 135 acres is within Napa County adjacent to Skyline Park. The Solano County Land Trust has expressed interest in acquiring the remaining 965 acres of this property within Solano County.

**Benefits and Issues:** The property is connected to Skyline Park by a segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail utilizing an easement donated by the Tuteur family. It would make a great addition to Skyline Park. The City of Vallejo's decision to sell the property represents a one time opportunity for the District to acquire this property for Skyline Park, as well as a threat that it could be sold to private interests for development. This proposed purchase will require coordination with Solano County representatives and a funding source to acquire it by the District. Since the City of Vallejo has already started the process of surplusizing the property, the District needs to act quickly.

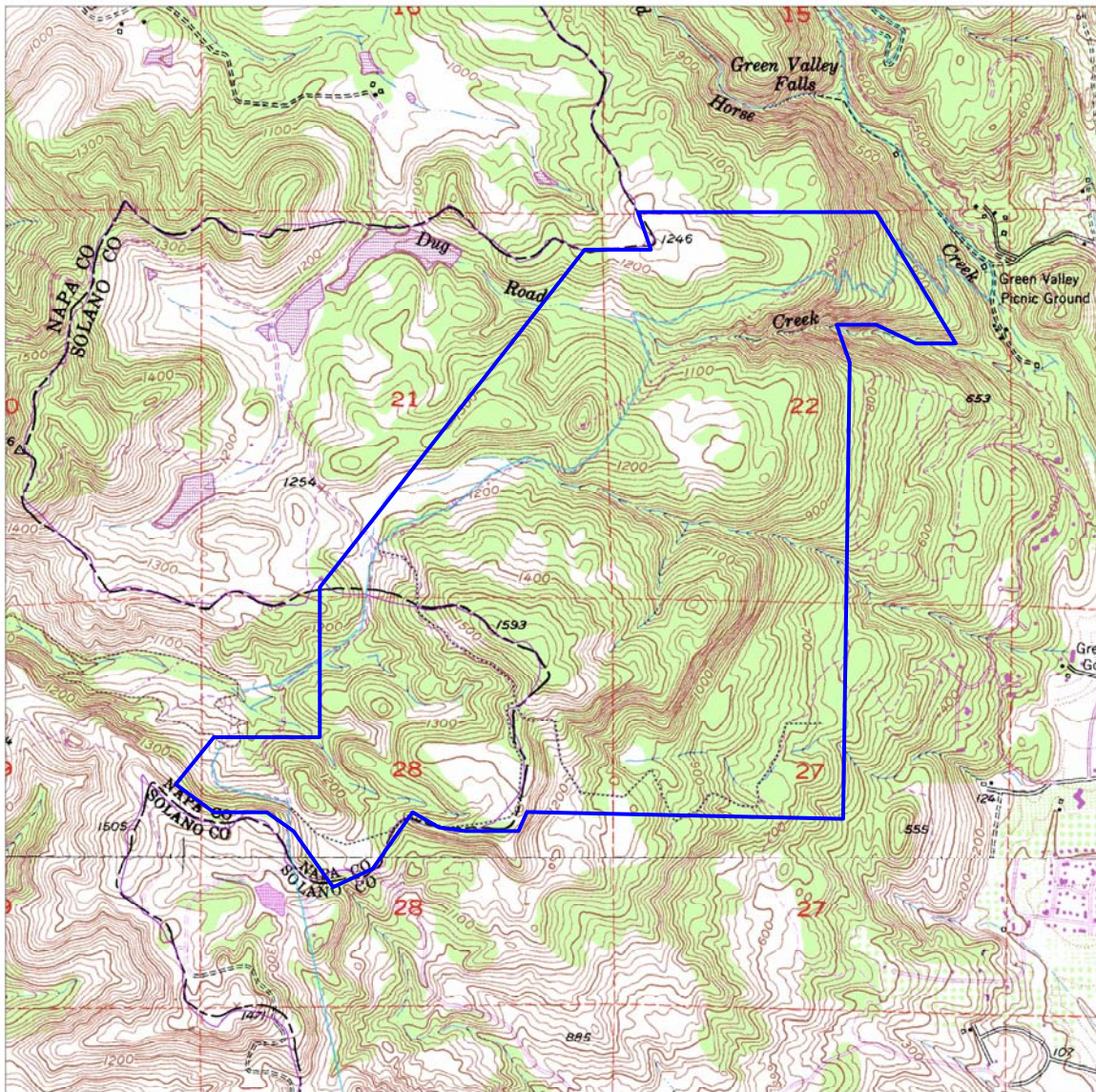
**Other Partners:** The purchase of this property needs to be coordinated with Solano County and be negotiated successfully with the City of Vallejo.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** An estimated cost of this proposed property acquisition has not been developed yet.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Initiate staff discussion with the Land Trust of Napa Valley, Solano County, Solano Land Trust and the City of Vallejo to determine joint interest and feasibility of acquisition of this property by December, 2008
- B. Complete memorandum of understanding with interested agencies identifying responsibilities and financial interest in the acquisition of this property by March, 2009
- C. Complete the acquisition of this property by July, 2009 if funding is available.

# Vallejo Lakes Surplus Property



### Legend

- Approximate Property Bound-
- - - Existing Trail
- - - Potential Trail
- Bay Area Ridge Trail Corridor



0 0.5 1 Miles

M A S T E R P L A N 2 0 0 8 - 2 0 1 3

Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District





Project B.5

## South Napa Wetlands Habitat Acquisition

**Description:** Transfer of approximately 600 acres of tidal wetlands and uplands west of the Napa River south of the City of Napa to the District by the Napa Valley Flood Control District for management as open space and habitat, consistent with on-going flood control objectives.

**Background:** The Napa Flood Control District acquired this property as part of their flood control program. Since this District is not organized to provide recreational services, ownership of the northwestern upland portion of this property has been transferred to the City of Napa. The District in early 2007 indicated its willingness to transfer ownership of the remainder of the property to the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District. The staff of the two districts are currently developing the terms under which transfer of this property could occur.

**Benefits and Issues:** Ownership of this property by the District would facilitate students and others in experiencing a local open space area with considerable bird habitat and Napa river access, and being involved in habitat restoration efforts (see project C.6). The upland portion of the property, adjacent to the land owned by the City of Napa, may have potential for the development of a bird viewing deck. The extent of public access and involvement will be determined by the need to restore wetland and upland habitat and to protect sensitive bird species which are believed to nest and feed in the area. It will also be shaped by agreements which the Flood Control District previously entered into with the prior and adjacent property owners, and by the plan which the City of Napa adopts for its adjacent property. Finally, the Flood Control District will need to retain access and management rights and responsibilities related to its obligation to provide ongoing flood protection and to honor commitments made in conjunction with the financing of the flood project.

**Other Partners:** The District needs to comply with the terms and conditions of





the purchase agreement between the original property owner and the Flood Control District. Potential uses of the property needs to be reviewed with the River Parks residents.

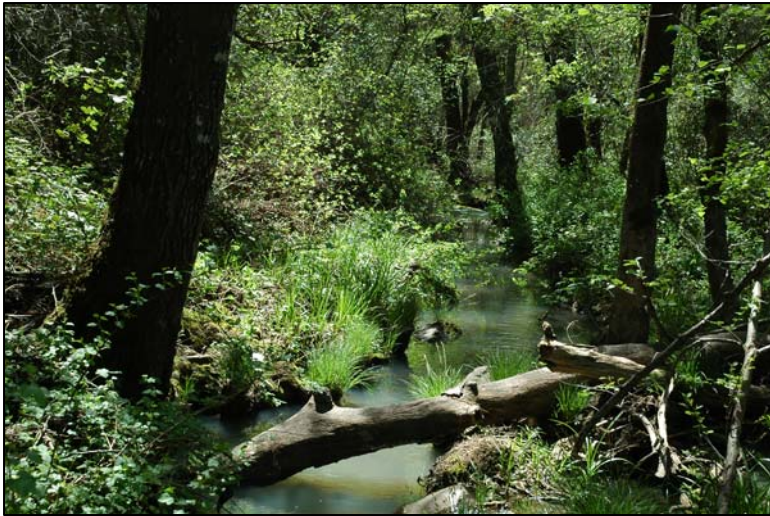
**Estimated Cost and Time Frame:** The property transfer to the District can be made without cost. The Flood Control District would retain the obligation for levee maintenance and mosquito control.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Negotiate and prepare property transfer documents.
- B. Complete transfer to District.
- C. Develop a management plan for the area.

South Wetlands Preserve





### Project B.6

## **Linda Falls Conservation Easement Acquisition**

**Description:** Accept the donation of a conservation easement over a 39 acre parcel southwest of Angwin that includes Linda Falls.

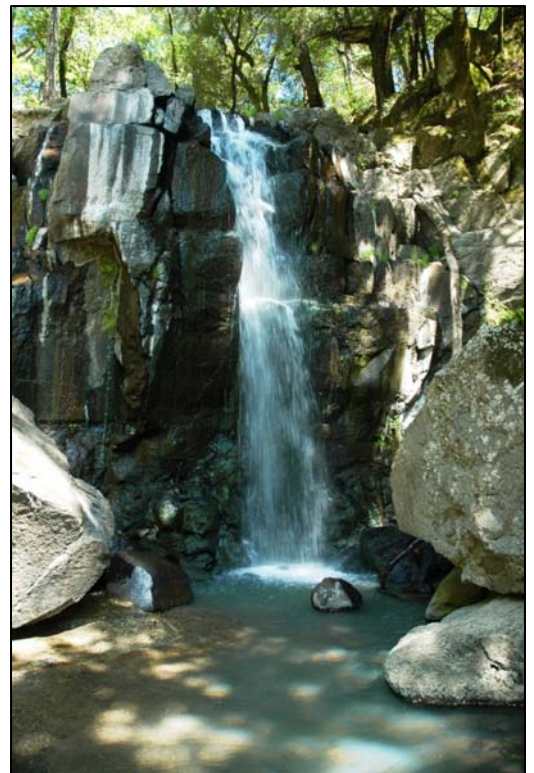
**Background:** The Land Trust of Napa County in 2007 accepted a conservation easement over a 39 acre parcel that includes Linda Falls, and will be receiving a donation of fee title ownership in late 2008. The land trust would like to transfer the conservation easement to the District to assure the conservation values of the property are protected in perpetuity. It is an increasingly common practice among land conservation organizations to combine fee title ownership by one entity with a conservation easement held by another entity. This provides a dual level of protection, thereby minimizing any risk that the conservation values of the property could be lost due to financial, legal or political difficulties.

Project Location



Acceptance of the conservation easement advances the mutually beneficial partnership which the land trust and the District formed with the bargain-price purchase by the District from the land trust of the Berryessa Vista property. In that situation the land trust retained a conservation easement over the property.

**Benefits and Issues:** The conservation easement protects a biologically rich forest community including mixed oaks, Douglas Fir, Ponderosa Pine, Chemise and riparian vegetation. It also is located in an important broader context. Immediately south of the subject parcel is a 98 acre parcel which the land trust owns in fee title. Immediately north of the subject parcel is a 42 acre parcel owned by Heitz Wine Cellars over which the land trust holds a conservation easement, and for which the property owner is committed before the end of 2008 to donate to the land trust the easterly approximately 25 acres. This 25 acre area includes the unofficial trail which provides access to Linda Falls from the public road. The District may eventually take title to and be involved in allowing





public access compatible with the conservation values of the area.

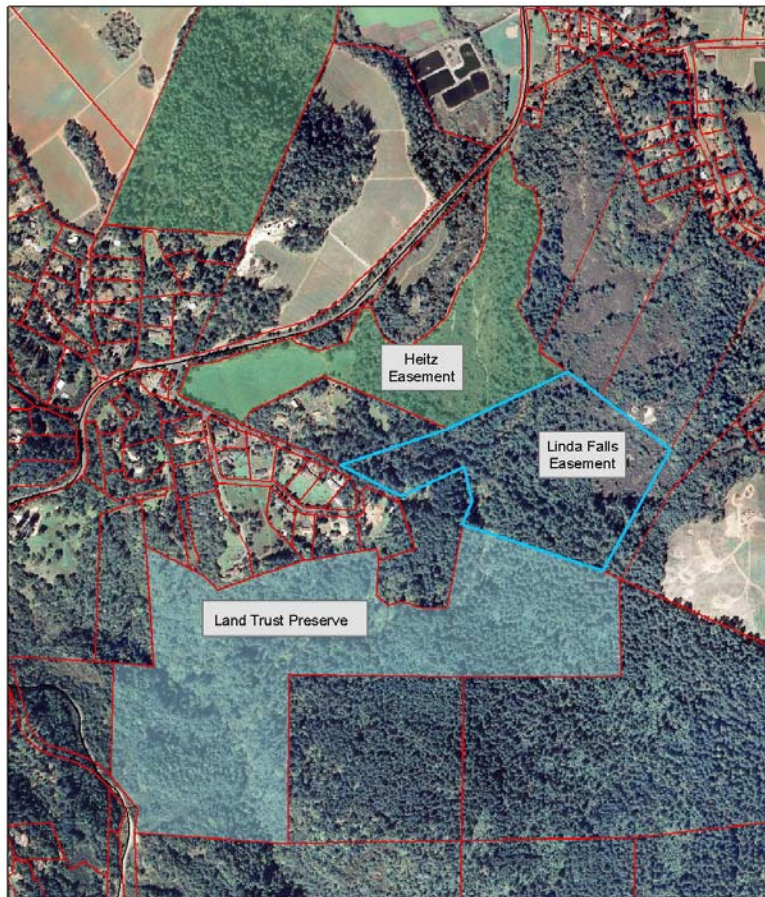
**Other Partners:** The primary partner is the Land Trust of Napa County. The prior and current property owners who have or will donate easements and/or fee title ownership rights are indirect partners.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The easement will be donated to the District by September 2008, at no cost to the District. There will be a minimal long-term cost associated with monitoring the easement to ensure its conservation values are protected.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Easement documents prepared May 2008.
- B. Acceptance of easement completed July 2008.

**Linda Falls Conservation Easement**



Prepared by the  
Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District  
May 28, 2008





Project B. 7

## Palisades Cooperative Management Plan Development

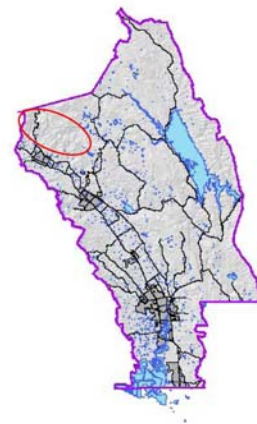
**Description:** Support the Land trust of Napa Valley develop a master plan and joint management agreement for the use and operation of the protected open space lands in the Palisades area, including Wildlake Ranch, the Duff property, Robert Louis Stevenson State Park, State School Lands and the District-managed Oat Hill Mine Trail.

**Background:** The Land Trust acquired the 3,045 acre Wildlake Ranch in 2007, and in the same year obtained an option to purchase the 1,000 acre Duff property, with the goal of integrating these open space lands with other state and federal lands to a 13,000+ acre permanently protected open space area in the northeast part of Napa County. The Land Trust is currently raising funds to complete the purchase of the Wildlake and Duff properties. The Land Trust has obtained a grant from the Bay Area Conservancy Program of the State Coastal Conservancy to develop a master strategic management plan for all of these properties. The Land Trust intends to work with the District and other partners in exploring alternatives for the joint management and operation of these lands.

**Benefits and Issues:** The public properties in the Palisades region contain exceptional biodiversity, offer stunning views and include existing ranch roads which have the potential to provide habitat protection and recreational opportunities on a scale previously unknown in Napa County. To realize these benefits, a multitude of public partners needs to work together to develop an effective and coordinated management plan.

**Other Partners:** The Land Trust of Napa County is the lead entity in preparing the cooperative management plan. Other partners include the District, the California Department of Parks and Rec-

Project Location

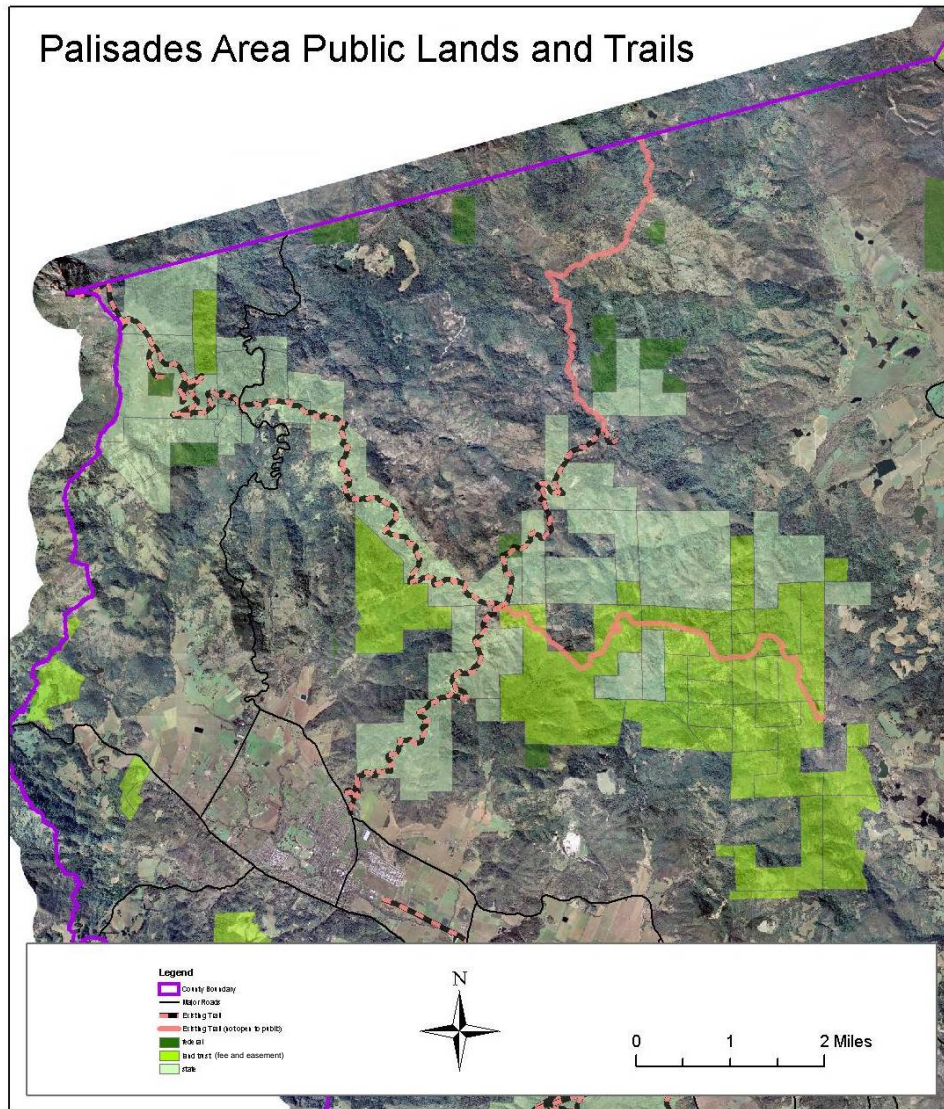


reation, the federal Bureau of Land Management and the County of Napa.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The acquisition of these properties needs to be completed with the next few years. The land trust’s fundraising campaign for their properties includes creation of an endowment sufficient to pay for the ongoing maintenance and operation of these public lands. The size of the endowment and long-range management costs will be determined through the preparation of the management plan.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. With support from the District, the Land Trust of Napa County in May 2008 secured grant funding from the State Coastal Conservancy to develop an Interim Management Plan for the Robert Louis Stevenson Park and surrounding lands.
- B. Determine through discussions with the Land Trust and other partners what long-term role, if any, the District will take, by July, 2010.







### Project B.8

## Skyline Park Protection and Update of Park Master Plan

**Description:** Protect and improve Skyline Park as a public park through General Planning, Zoning, updating of the master plan and eventual acquisition.

**Background:** Skyline Park is located on 850 acres of state land east of the Napa State Hospital which is no longer needed for hospital purposes. The County of Napa has a long term lease, which runs until 2030, to utilize the property as a public park. The County in turn has a concession agreement with the Skyline Park Citizens Association, a non-profit organization, to operate and maintain the park.

Project Location



The State of California has over the past decade twice attempted to sell Skyline Park to the highest bidder; the County has successfully rebuffed these attempts due to the existence of the County's lease. However, the threat of losing the park led the County Board of Supervisors to seek State approval for the County to purchase the property at fair market value. Bills authorizing such a sale were passed by the legislature in 2005 and 2007, but were vetoed by the Governor due to an unrelated but continuing disagreement between the administration and the legislature over the process for surplus State land. Due to this political stalemate, the District Board has recommended, and the County is now pursuing, the strategy of applying a public park overlay zoning designation to the property. This would largely remove the threat of the property being sold for estate home development. The recently-adopted General Plan for Napa County includes policy language calling for the adoption of a park overlay zoning designation, and its application to public lands such as Skyline Park. If and when there is a resolution of the disagreement between the State legislature and Administration over surplus property, the issue of local purchase of the property can be revisited.

The County's existing lease with the State allows the County to improve and operate the park consistent with a master plan which was prepared in 1979. The master plan is vague on many points and is in need of clarification and updating.







Project B.9

## Acquisition of Moore Creek Watershed

**Description:** Acquire and preserve/restore the Moore Creek watershed and water quality in Moore Creek

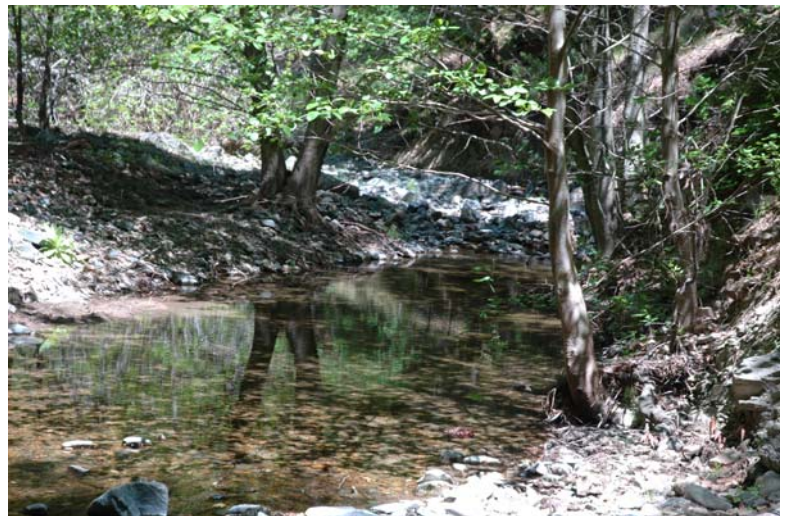
**Background:** The Moore Creek watershed is an important source of water for Lake Hennessey, which is the primary drinking water supply for the City of Napa. It is the least developed of the watersheds flowing into Lake Hennessey. Most of the western slopes of this watershed are protected through conservation easements held by the Land Trust of Napa County, and a portion of the upper watershed is protected as part of the state-owned Las Posadas Demonstration Forest. The District in June 2008 obtained an option to purchase the central 673 acres of the watershed.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** The proposed acquisition of 673 acres in the heart of the watershed would protect 3 miles of the perennial Moore Creek, and 1.2 miles of intermittent streams which flow into Moore Creek. This will provide significant protection for one of the important sources of drinking water for the City of Napa. It will also improve water quality by enabling changes to grazing practices in the watershed—removing cattle from the creek, reducing soil erosion due to overgrazing, and changing the timing of grazing to reduce the potential for pathogens to enter Moore Creek.

**Other Partners:** Funding partners include the State Coastal Conservancy, the state Department of Parks and Recreation and the County of Napa. Volunteers will be important for helping with fencing and erosion control projects. The District will also need to work cooperatively with other private landowners in the watershed, as well as the Land Trust of Napa County, which holds conservation ease-





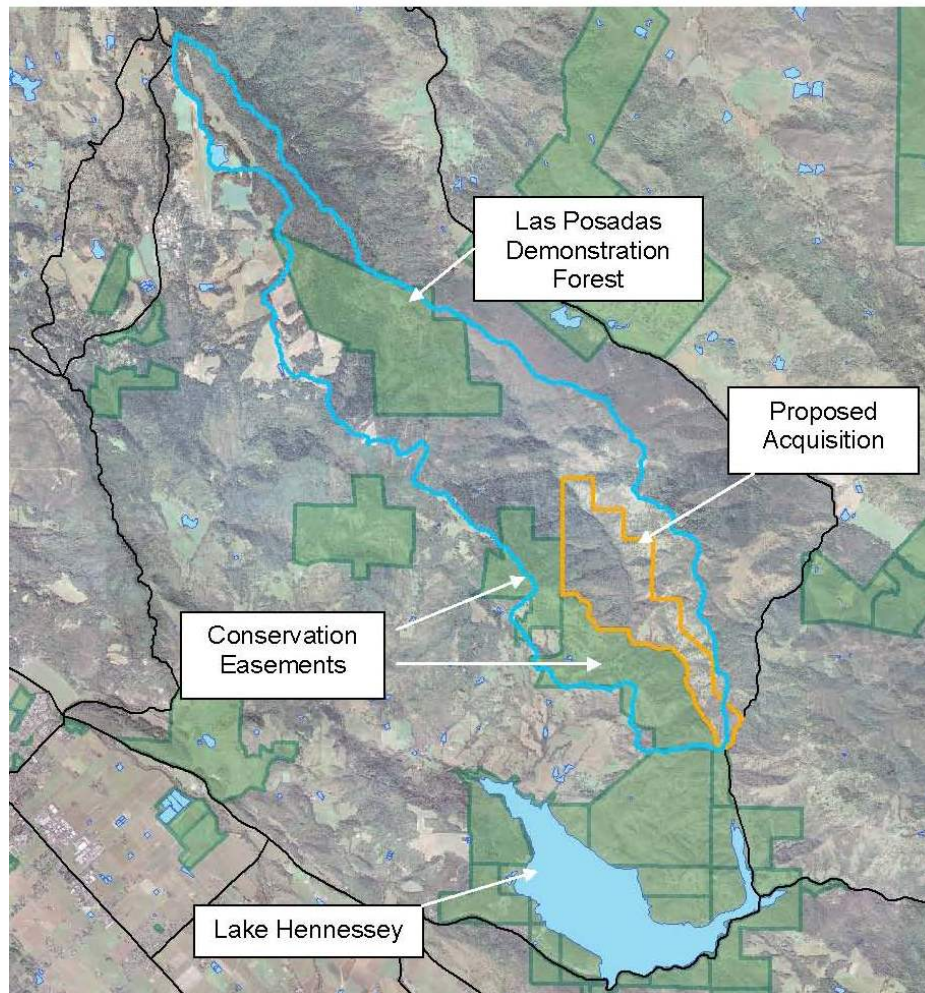
ments over nearly 800 acres of the watershed. The federal Natural Resources Conservation Service is available to assist with the development of an improved grazing management plan for the property.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The District has until October 15, 2008 to decide whether to exercise the purchase option; if exercised, the purchase will close prior to the end of 2008. The option price is \$2.8 million (compared to an appraised value of \$3.0 million). The District is seeking a grant of \$1.65 million from the State Coastal Conservancy, and just under \$900,000 from the Proposition 40 per capita formula grant program administered by the State Department of Parks and Recreation. The remainder is being requested from the County of Napa's Special Project Fund set-aside for park and open space purposes.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Exercise the option by October 15, 2008
- B. Acquire the property by December 31, 2008
- C. Develop a new grazing management plan by September 2009
- D. Install fencing and off-stream water supplies called for by the grazing management plan by June 2010.

Moore Creek Watershed





Project B.10**Other High Priority Habitats Preservation**

**Description:** Preservation of high priority habitats and watersheds as identified in the Land Trust of Napa County Biodiversity Assessment and other habitat and watershed evaluation processes.

**Background:** Napa County is one of the biodiversity “hot spots” of the United States, as discussed in Section V of this Master Plan. The conservation values found in Napa County are partially protected through regulatory mechanisms such as the California Environmental Quality Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Napa County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and the Measure J initiative which restricts changing the County’s General Plan designation of Agricultural Watershed and Agricultural Preserve lands without a vote of the electorate. The Land Trust of Napa County has also actively protected high priority habitats and watersheds through its conservation easement and open space preserve programs. Additional protection has been provided by public ownership of approximately one-fourth of the lands of Napa County by various public agencies.

**Benefits and Issues:** Preservation of high priority habitats and watersheds in the county is important for ecological and economic reasons. These lands provide much of the water supply for Napa County residents and businesses, and their preservation is essential to the viability of agriculture, the quality of life of Napa residents, and the continued strength of tourism which is a major contributor to the economy of Napa County.

**Other Partners:** In some situations the District will take the lead in preserving high priority habitats and watersheds, but often will work in partnership with others including the Land Trust of Napa County, the County of Napa, and various state and federal agencies. The District’s role as a partner will in some cases involve holding conservation easements over other public and land trust lands to add an additional layer of assurance that changed circumstances affecting these partners will not threaten the conservation values of the property they own. In other cases the District’s role will be assist with the management and restoration of these lands (such as is currently the case at the Napa River Ecological Reserve with Project B.1) In yet other cases the District’s role will be to accept funding or land to implement mitigation requirements imposed by government regulation of public and private developments.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** There is no set time frame or cost for this project. Rather, this project description is intended to convey the fact that the District will seek to be flexible and available to assist with the preservation of high priority habitats and watersheds as opportunities and/or threats arise.

**Action Objectives:**

No specific objectives.

## Goal C

Provide historical, cultural and environmental education program opportunities





### Project C.1

## Camp Berryessa Outdoor Education Programming

**Description:** Facilitation of outdoor education programming at Camp Berryessa.

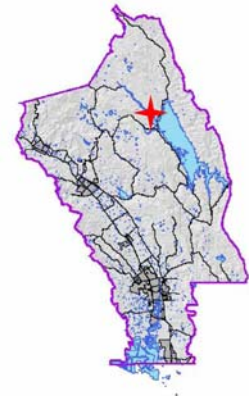
**Background:** Following the installation of water, sewer, electrical and other facility improvements at Camp Berryessa (see Project A.3) this camp will be ready for outdoor education programs. Under an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation, the District has initiated a planning process to determine the appropriate mix of facilities to provide at the camp in order to support outdoor education programs. The District is evaluating a range of options from a very primitive setup (water outlets, toilets and showers with tent site locations) to a modest level of improvements (including rustic cabins and group cooking and eating facilities) to a full-service program (with prepared meals and staffed activities). The most likely arrangement will involve the District providing facilities, with the groups that use the facility providing their own programming.

**Benefits and Issues:** The redevelopment of Camp Berryessa will provide non-profit and community-based groups with a special opportunity to offer outdoor educational programs.

**Other Partners:** Partners include the Bureau of Reclamation, which must provide the long-term lease to the property, and potential user groups such as K-12 schools, colleges non-profits such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and 4-H, and other environmental and community-based groups.

**Timing and Estimated Cost:** The camp is projected to be available for use by 2010 or 2011. Operation of the camp must be cost-neutral to the District. This will need to be achieved through a combination of user fees, cost minimization through the use of volunteer camp hosts, and a reliance on the programming provided by the groups which use the facility.

Project Location





**Action Objectives:**

- A. Initiate feasibility study for development of the property as a group outdoor educational camp by July, 2008.
- B. Complete feasibility study by December, 2008.
- C. Complete project environmental review by June, 2009.
- D. Negotiate and complete lease agreement with the Bureau by September 2009.
- E. Complete and submit grant application for final engineering and construction of project by October 2009.
- F. If grant funding is approved, start construction in the spring of 2010, and open the facility by December, 2010.

## Camp Berryessa





### Project C.2

## Develop Napa River Ecological Reserve Interpretive Materials and Environmental Education Programs

**Description:** Restore and improve interpretive materials and support environmental education programs at the Napa River Ecological Reserve

**Background:** A multi-panel display interpreting the ecology of the Napa River Ecological Reserve constructed about two decades ago in the meadow near the entrance to the Reserve is severely deteriorated due to age and vandalism. In addition, a self-guided nature walk through the northern part of the Reserve has become functionally useless due to the loss of numbered markers and the lack of associated brochures. These interpretive elements are the victim of lack of funding for the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF), which was responsible for their initial installation.

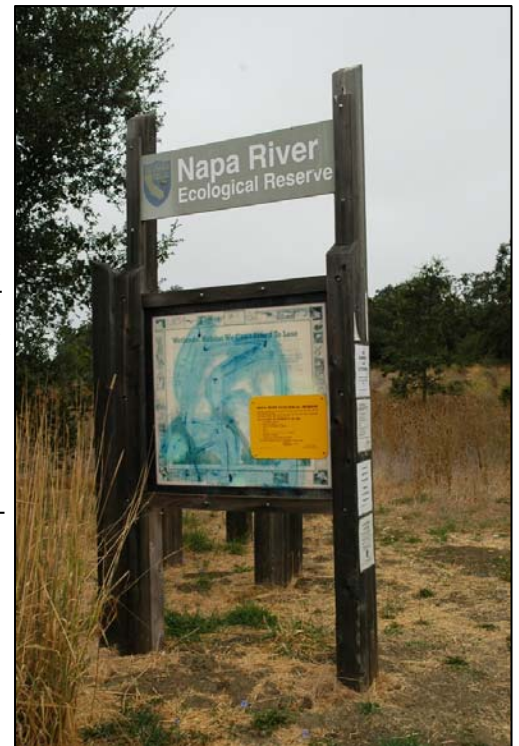
Project Location



Use of the Reserve for school-based environmental education programs is limited, both due to the poor state of the interpretive facilities at the Reserve, and to the lack of coordination with education programs and the state curriculum standards which now strictly guide K-12 education.

A \$100,000 restoration grant obtained by the District in 2008 includes working with environmental education non-profits active in local schools, to involve students in restoring and caring for native habitat at the Reserve. (see also Projects A.8 and B.1 for a discussion of other uses of this grant).

**Benefits and Issues:** The Napa River Ecological Reserve has the potential to be a valuable site for school-based as well as general public natural ecology education. Located within a 20-minute drive of most Napa County residents, it is the only site along the Napa River where the public can readily experience a largely intact riparian habitat. The major challenges for realizing the Reserve's educational potential include replacing the existing deteriorated interpretive display and re-establishing





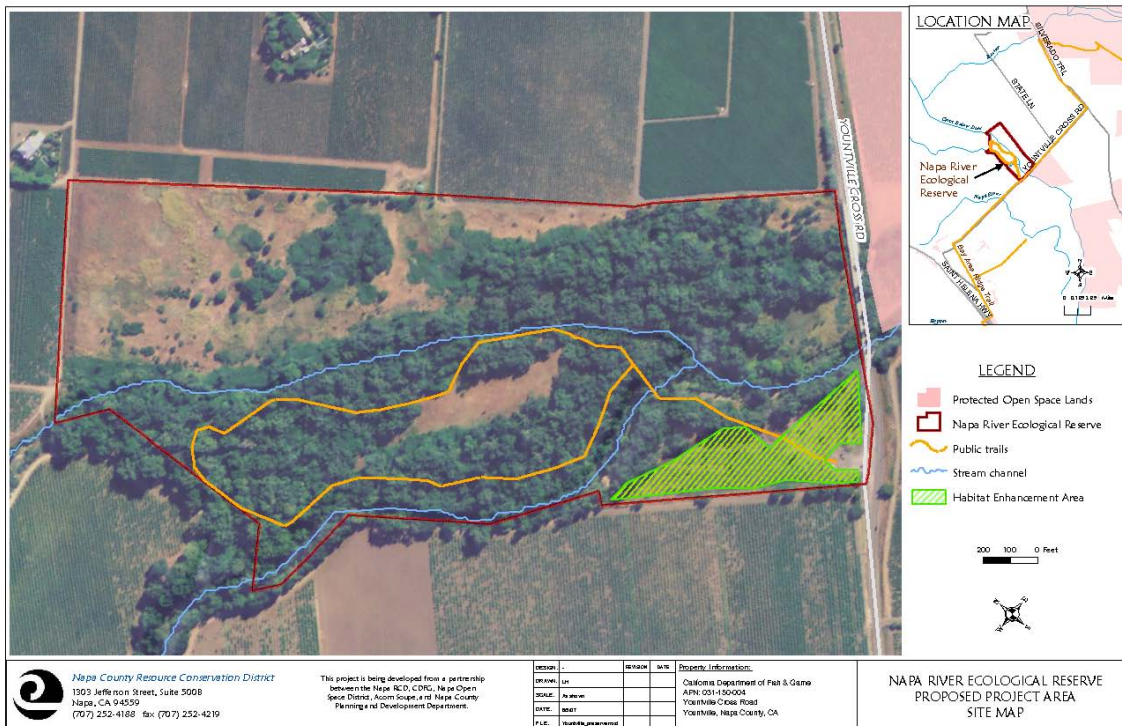
the nature trail, using educational content which is aligned with state educational standards, and using new technologies which can be sustained despite limited maintenance funding. The latter includes developing new electronic media for use on the nature trail which have the advantage of not requiring the cost of continually producing and distributing printed materials, as well as appealing to increasingly electronics-oriented younger generations.

**Other Partners:** Improvements and changes to the Preserve require the approval of State Fish and Game.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Environmental education programming in will begin in 2009 when the restoration of the meadow at the Reserve entrance is in full swing. Approximately \$13,000 of the grant which was obtained by the District from the State Coastal Conservancy will help support this program in 2009 and 2010. If grant funding can be obtained, the interpretive display located in the meadow should be repaired and updated in 2009; the design and cost has not yet been determined. The District hopes to be able to restore and improve the nature walk in 2009 primarily using volunteers, but will need to obtain grant funding to prepare audio interpretation materials.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Finalize contract by March 2009..
- B. Obtain funding to prepare content and design for the interpretive display and audio materials by December 2009.
- C. Complete the interpretive display by June 2010.
- D. Complete audio materials and restore the nature walk by December 2010.







Project C.3

## Napa River to Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development

**Description:** Develop an educational interpretive path on a portion of the existing Napa River to Ridge Trail that goes from Kennedy Park to Skyline Park.

**Background:** The River to Ridge Trail connects Kennedy Park to Skyline Park southeast of the City of Napa. The first approximately 1,000 feet of the trail heading east from Highway 221 suffers from being confined within a 10 foot wide corridor with high chain link fence on both sides.

**Benefits and Issues:** The close proximity of the fenced corridor section of this trail to Kennedy Park, public transit and the neighborhoods where a majority of Napa residents live, as well as adjacent land uses, offers a unique opportunity to create an interesting, multi-faceted interpretive path. In early 2007, the District worked with an Eagle Scout candidate to fabricate and install a series of metal silhouettes of common birds and mammals which can be found in Skyline Park. Still needed for this project is the development of informational materials identifying and describing the habits of the species depicted by the silhouettes. Other topics for interpretation which would be appropriate for this area include the history of gravel mining (the Syar Quarry is located immediately to the south of the trail) and the history of the Napa State Hospital (which is immediately to the north of the trail).

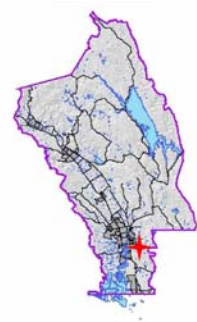
**Other Partners:** The Skyline Park Citizen's Association is responsible for maintaining the River to Ridge Trail. Additional partners may include educators, and public health, environmental and arts organizations.

**Time Line and Estimated Cost:** This interpretive path can be developed in phases as partners interested in developing interpretive materials are identified.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete the development of interpretive materials related to the animals which live in Skyline Park by December 2008.
- B. Solicit interest of educators and other organizations to develop additional interpretive materials.

Project Location





#### Project C. 4

## Rector Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development

**Description:** Develop an educational interpretive path on a portion of the planned Rector Ridge trail that focuses on the agricultural and natural history of the Napa Valley.

**Background:** The District is proposing to develop a staging area and six miles of Bay Area Ridge Trail (see Project A.4) climbing east from Silverado Trail near Rector Creek on property owned by the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Benefits and Issues:** The rapid rise in elevation of the Rector Ridge Trail, and its location immediately east of the north-south center of the Napa Valley, offers a unique ability to interpret the agricultural history of the Napa Valley. The interpretation could include a display which identifies the location of various vineyards and several of the grape-growing appellations in the central portion of the valley. The trail is also well situated to describe several distinctive habitat zones along the course of the trail itself including Blue Oak, grassland and chaparral, or visible from the trail, such as riparian and Valley Oak habitat on the valley floor, and Douglas Fir forest in the Mayacamas Mountains across the valley to the west. Finally, the trail is ideally located to describe the role of the Veterans Home in the development of the Napa Valley, and the link between Rector Reservoir and water supply for the Veterans Home and the Town of Yountville. The location of the trailhead on the Silverado Trail just north of the Yountville Crossroad would make this interpretive path both convenient to residents as well as popular with visitors to the valley.

**Other Partners:** The Yountville Veterans Home and State Department of Veterans Affairs will need to approve the development of the trail. Coordination with Napa County, the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council and the Department of Fish & Game will also be instrumental.

Project Location

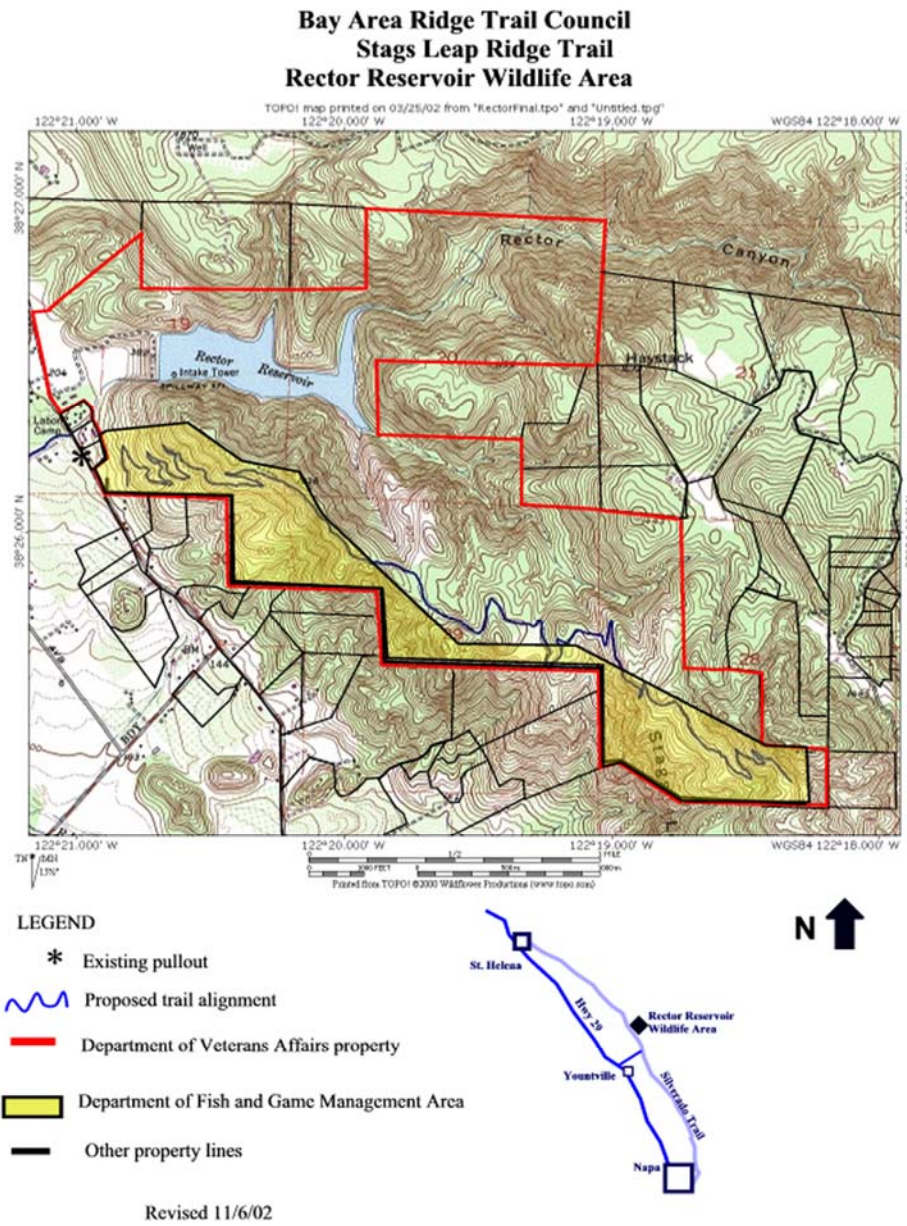




**Time Line and Estimated Cost:** The interpretive path needs to wait for development until after the first stage of the Rector Ridge/Stags Leap Ridge Trail project is complete in the fall of 2009. The cost of developing the interpretive facilities should be minimal, and can likely be funded by local businesses and/or a community organization.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Solicit interest of business and community organizations in helping develop the educational interpretive path.
- B. Complete plans for and install the interpretive materials in conjunction with or shortly after completion of the trail (see Project A.4)







### Project C.5

## Napa River and Bay Trail Interpretive Path

**Description:** Develop an interpretive path on a portion of the planned Napa River/Bay trail from American Canyon to Napa.

**Background:** The District is planning to develop approximately 8 miles of recreational trail between the cities of American Canyon and Napa generally following the Napa River and interior levees of adjacent wetlands. This trail will traverse or be adjacent to existing, restored and soon-to-be restored wetlands, as well as several other historical and current human activities, which makes it a very suitable trail for interpreting the natural and human history of the area.

Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** The trail offers the unique ability to educate the public about a variety of topics, including freshwater ecology, restored brackish wetland ecology, salt production, salt pond to tidal wetland restoration, wastewater reclamation, landfill technology and methane recovery for co-generation purposes, Napa River and San Pablo Bay watershed morphology, and agricultural history. In addition to fixed interpretive displays, the District is proposing a concept for audio interpretation that is developed jointly by students working with experts on the respective topics.

**Other Partners:** The interpretive path is being developed in cooperation with the City of American Canyon. The State Department of Fish and Game, the County of Napa and the Napa-Vallejo Waste Management Authority, which own various sections of the land over which the trail will travel, have agreed to enter into the necessary agreements with the Districts. The District will also need to partner with interested teachers and students.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The interpretive path will need to wait for



grant funding and subsequent construction of phase one of the Napa River/Bay Trail (between American Canyon and Green Island Road). Ideally the interpretive materials will be developed in conjunction with trail construction. The estimated cost of the interpretive path is approximately \$100,000. Funding for this project is included in a pending grant application to the California River Parkway grant program for this trail development.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Complete plans for the educational interpretive path by September, 2009.
- B. Install the interpretive path materials by June, 2011

**Napa River and Bay Trail**  
American Canyon to Green Island Road





### Project C.6

## South Napa Wetlands Habitat Interpretive Facilities and Programming Development

**Description:** Develop interpretive facilities and materials for the South Napa Wetlands that can be used by students, environmental organizations and docent-led groups.

**Background:** The District is in discussions with the Napa County Flood Control District to take fee title ownership to 774 acres of property located between the Napa River, Highway 29 and Newport Drive (see Project B.5). Ownership of this area by the District would facilitate District development of interpretive facilities and materials.

**Benefits and Issues:** With its close proximity to and easy access from the major population center of the City of Napa, the South Napa Wetlands provide a very special environmental education opportunity that focuses on wetland ecology including local and migratory waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species. Issues to be resolved include the extent and timing of public access to avoid harm to sensitive and protected species, including access both by walking and by hand-launched watercraft.

**Other Partnerships:** The District's role is primarily to provide appropriate facilities and materials. As such, the success of this project depends on developing partnerships with educators, organizations and volunteers willing to utilize the interpretive facilities and materials which are developed. The Napa County Flood Control District will retain a variety of responsibilities for managing this area, including maintain levees and controlling mosquitos. Coordination with the City of Napa, which owns the property to the northwest of the wetlands, is also important.

**Time Line and Estimated Cost:** This project can be developed at any time after the District takes ownership of the property. The estimated cost for its development is under consideration and could likely be funded by grants or by local service or environmental organizations.

#### **Action Objectives:**

- A. Solicit input from educators, environmental experts and area residents and prepare an interpretive program concept plan by April, 2009
- B. Prepare interpretive materials as local partnerships are formed and funding is obtained.

Project Location





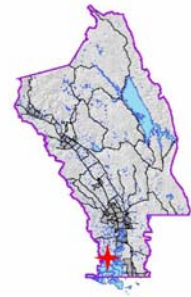


Project C. 7

## Huichica Creek Wetlands Interpretive Path Development

**Description:** Develop an educational interpretive path and improved access in the Huichica Creek area at the north end of the Napa-Sonoma Marshes.

Project Location



**Background:** The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) owns and manages the Napa-Sonoma Marsh Wildlife Area which cover an area of almost 9,000 acres at the southern end of Napa County and extending into Solano County. The area is used primarily by boaters and hunters via boat and along existing levee paths. Buchli Station Road at the southern end of the Carneros area provides the primary land access to this wildlife area. The few people who know of this area use it for hunting, bird watching, nature observation and related activities. DFG has installed some signs with wildlife information at the parking lot.

**Benefits and Issues:** The development of additional wildlife-oriented and historical/cultural educational materials would be appropriate at this location. These may be physical interpretive panels, or audio information delivered via cell phone and podcasts. Ensuring compatible use between hunters and non-hunters is one important issue. Another is that, while DFG has constructed a small parking lot and installed a vault toilet at the trailhead, public access is problematic because the southernmost section of Buchli Station Road is not currently a legal public road (the County abandoned the road, but retained easement rights for future public road purposes), and the road's railroad crossing just before the parking area is technically a private, not a public crossing.

**Other Partners:** Access improvements and the development of an interpretive path would require approval of DFG. Formally reopening the southernmost stretch of Buchli Station Road would require County of Napa approval. Converting the railroad crossing to a public crossing would require approval by the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) which owns the track, and the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which has regulatory authority over railroad crossings. Collaboration with the Napa County Resource Conservation District may be useful as they own an interpretive working landscape in the immediate area of Huichica Creek.

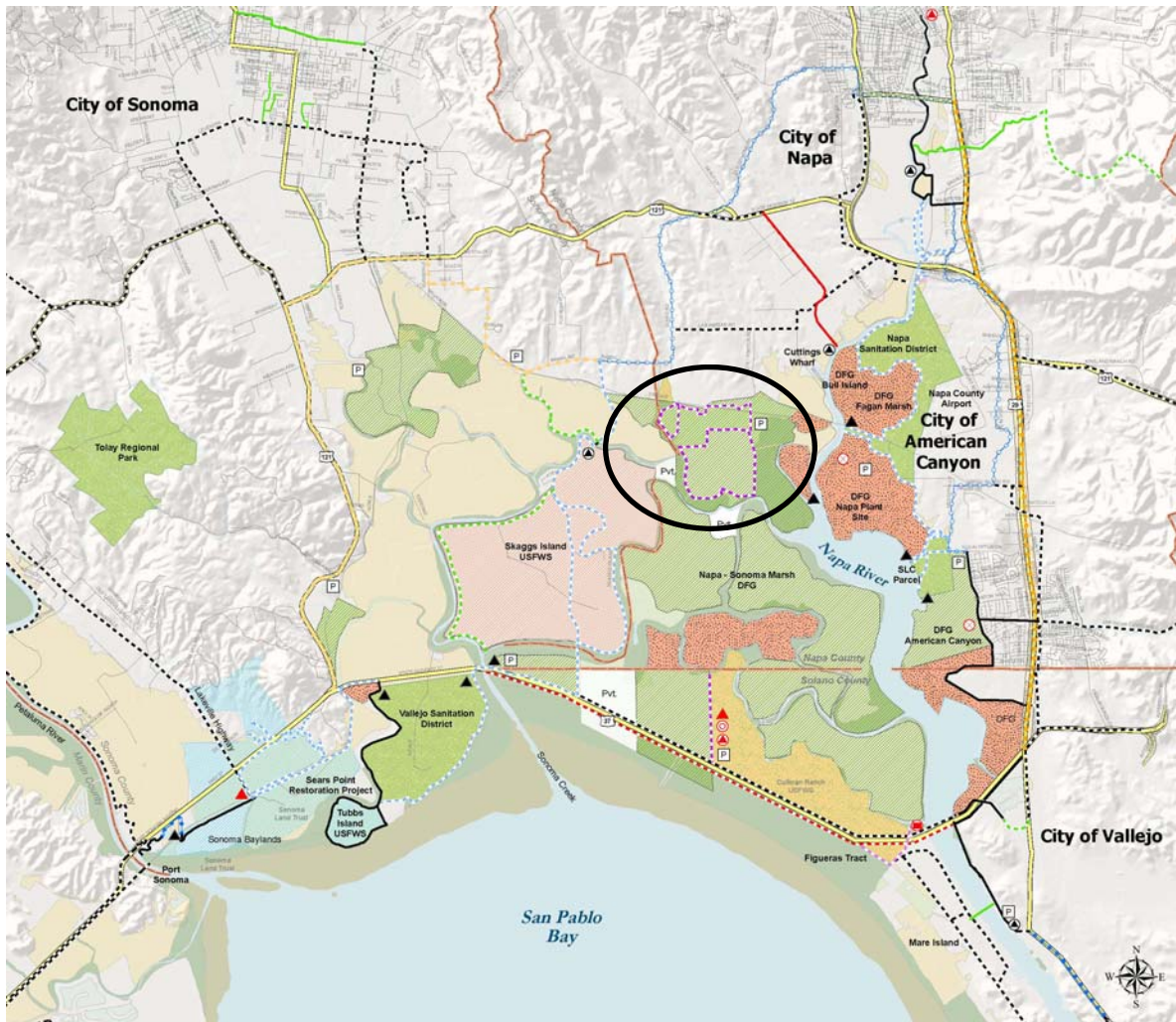
**Time Line and Estimated Cost:** This project has no set time frame, but can proceed once

access issues are addressed. The cost of developing interpretive materials has not been identified but would be relatively low. The cost of resolving the railroad crossing access would likely be quite expensive—on the order of \$250,000, judging from what was required to legalize a similar crossing on the same railroad line at the Sonoma Baylands in Sonoma County.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. If DFG is receptive, seek County approval to exercise its retained road easement rights, and seek railroad public crossing approval from the PUC.

**Huichica Creek Unit  
Public Access via Buchli Station Road**







### Project C.8

## Oat Hill Mine Trail Interpretive Path Development

**Description:** Develop informational materials and an interpretive path on the geology, history and plant life that can be observed along the Oat Hill Mine Trail.

**Background:** The Napa County Board of Supervisors in 2007 approved the reopening of the abandoned Oat Hill Mine Road easement for public non-motorized recreational use, and entered into a management agreement with the District to improve and manage the trail. The District formally opened the trail in May 2008 after installing signage, removing brush overgrowing the trail, and addressing some of the erosion problems. The Oat Hill Mine Trail provides access to an historically, geologically and ecologically significant area of Napa County.

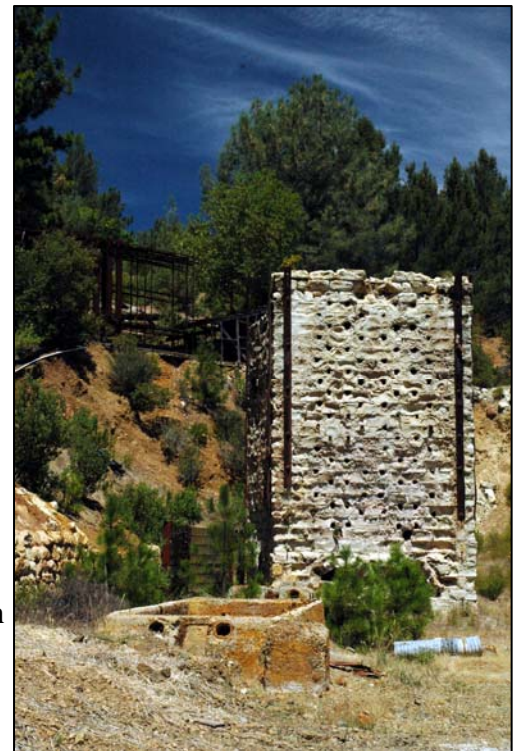
Project Location



**Benefits and Issues:** The Oat Hill Mine Trail is the most heavily used recreational trail in Napa County. Most users, however, are unaware of the history, geology and ecology of the area. Fortunately, considerable research on these topics has already been completed. With minimal effort, these could be turned into informational materials provided to users of the trail.

**Other Partners:** The Napa Valley Historical Society could help in the preparation of the historical informational materials on this trail. Local resident and geologist Dean Enderlin has already prepared information for a self-guided tour of the area's geology, which could readily be refined, linked with trail markers, and distributed. Partnering with local botanists would be important for preparing materials on the ecology of the trail. The materials should be prepared in coordination with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, which manages the state park lands over which a portion of the trail travels.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Now that the trail is for-





mally opened, preparation of the interpretive materials should be undertaken as soon as feasible. The cost of printing and distributing informational brochures may be able to be covered through sponsorship by local businesses associated with the visitor services industry, which benefit from the trail's existence.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Prepare material interpreting the geology of the area and post on the District's web site.
- B. Seek business sponsorship of a printed version of the geology brochure.
- C. Prepare material interpreting the history of the Oat Hill Mine Trail, and post on the District's web site.
- D. Seek business sponsorship of a printed version of the history brochure.
- E. Prepare material interpreting the ecology of the Oat Hill Mine Trail, and post on the District's web site.
- F. Seek business sponsorship of a printed version of the history brochure.



### Project C-9

## Cedar Roughs Interpretive Materials Development

**Description:** Develop signage and informational materials interpreting the natural ecology of the Cedar Roughs wilderness area.

**Background:** Cedar Roughs is a wild natural area with Napa County with a remarkable diversity of native plants and animals, including the endemic Sargent Cypress. The area managed by the Bureau of Land Management was designated as a federal wilderness in 2007.

**Benefits and Issues:** Cedar Roughs is the second largest protected open space area in Napa County (only the combined protected lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the California Department of Fish and Game in the Knoxville area is larger), and is the least disturbed by human activity. Limited public access to Cedar Roughs is possible from two locations along Pope Canyon Road. However, there is no signage to indicate the location of the short trails in this area, and no information about the rich ecological values of the area. Interpretive signage would enable travelers along Pope Canyon Road to gain a better appreciation of this natural area and why it is important.

**Other Partners:** The California Department of Fish and Game manages the land which provides one of the access points into Cedar Roughs. The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for management of nearly all of Cedar Roughs itself. In addition, the Bureau of Reclamation manages the property along the western section of Pope Creek. Restoration and improvement of the Pope Canyon Trail on BOR property would provide an excellent opportunity for the public to experience the northern edge of the Cedar Roughs wilderness. The non-

Project Location

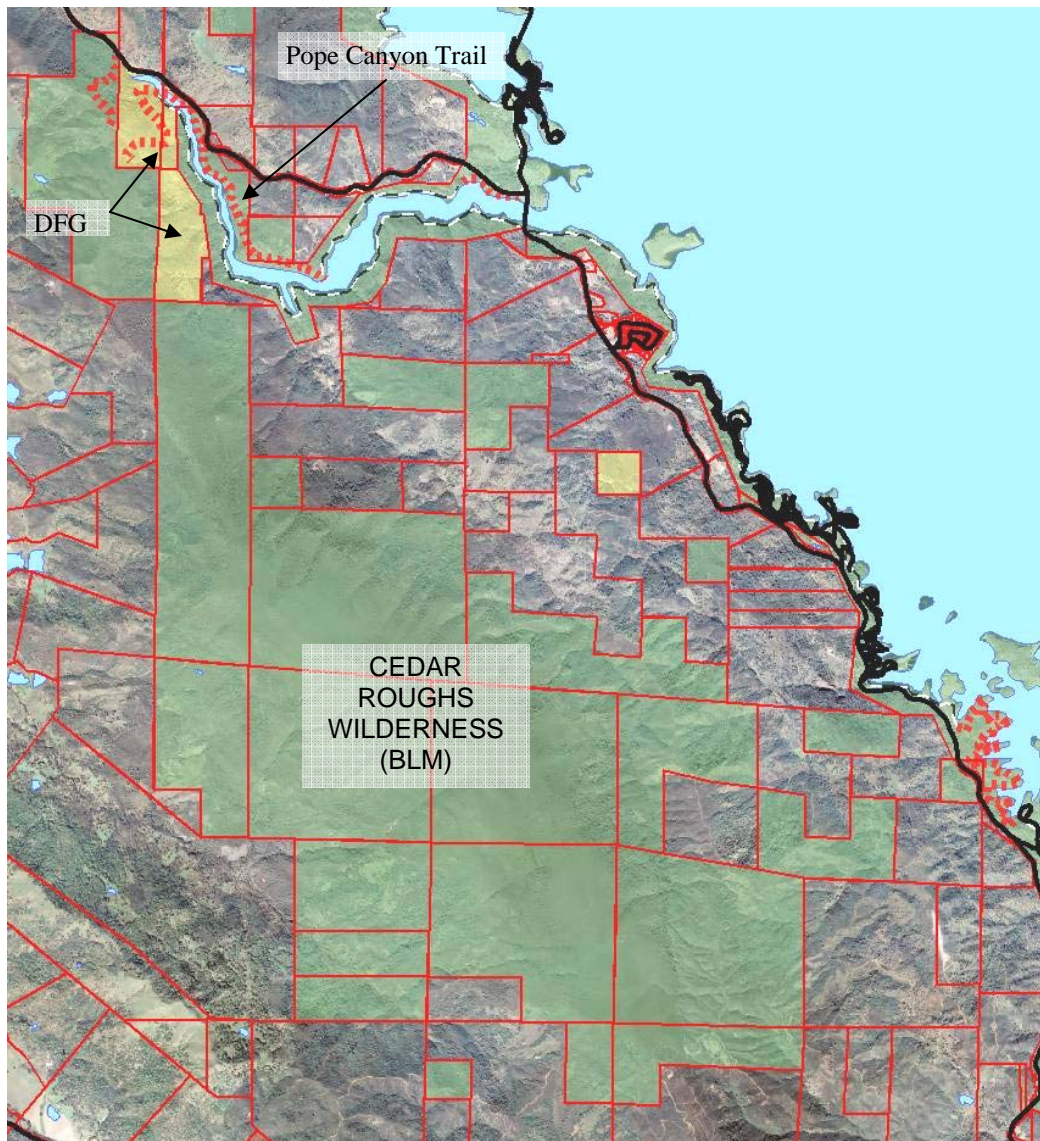


profit organization Berryessa Trails and Conservation will likely take the lead in restoring this trail.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Once agreement among the affected agencies is obtained, interpretive materials could be produced and installed relatively quickly. The cost for such materials would likely be less than \$10,000 up front. Maintaining interpretive materials in a clean and graffiti-free manner could however cost that much again every few years.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Seek agreement with the Bureau of Land Management and California Department of Fish and Game regarding the placement and design of interpretive materials by June 2010.
- B. Once agreement is obtained, seek funding to construct and install the interpretive materials.





## Goal D

Provide for District management and partnerships



Project D.1

## Develop and Implement a Multiyear Budget and Service Plan for the District

**Description:** Develop District budget options including long-term revenue strategies.

**Background:** This Master Plan describes existing conditions related to open space, natural resources and park facilities. It goes on to convey the needs for protection, restoration and public enjoyment of the outdoors as articulated through various community processes and reflected in various reports and studies, including in particular the 2008 County General Plan. Based on existing conditions and identified needs, the Master Plan proposes 56 specific projects for the District. Some of these are virtually complete, some are in early stages of implementation, and some are only proposals for future implementation. The Plan provides an initial prioritization for these projects by categorizing them as Tier One or Tier Two. As discussed in Section Eight of this Plan, the District's current level of revenues and staffing is sufficient to implement some, but by no means all of these projects. Section Eight recommends a preferred budget alternative which assumes a modest increase in revenues over the course of the first five years, but it recognizes there are many factors both within and beyond the control of the District which will determine the feasibility of this recommended alternative.

**Benefits and Issues:** This Master Plan develops a preliminary staffing and service plan. The next step is for the District to refine its analysis of the specific projects and levels of service which it could provide under different revenue assumptions, and to engage in extensive discussion with its partners regarding which course of action it should pursue. The District must develop a general consensus among its partners prior to embarking on any particular budget strategy. By laying out the range of specific objectives which the District could pursue, this Master Plan provides the factual basis for informed discussion. How effectively the District operates, and the progress it achieves in its first years using the resources it has been granted by Napa County and others, is a second critical factor that will inform this discussion.

**Other Partners:** Napa County is the District's most significant public agency partner. Also important are the values and objectives of the four cities and one town within the County, as well as other special districts and school districts. Most fundamentally, the District must engage its community partners—non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, service clubs, organized interest groups, and the general public.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The District's is now in the second year of a three year funding agreement with Napa County. Prior to the completion of this agreement, the District and County need to reach agreement on their future relationship. If new tax revenues are part of the District's future, the earliest any such proposal could be considered is 2010.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Adopt this Master Plan by November 2008.
- B. Engage in active consensus building with District partners through December 2009.
- C. Develop a new funding agreement with Napa County by June 2010.
- D. Decide by July 2010 whether to seek new tax revenues in November 2010.

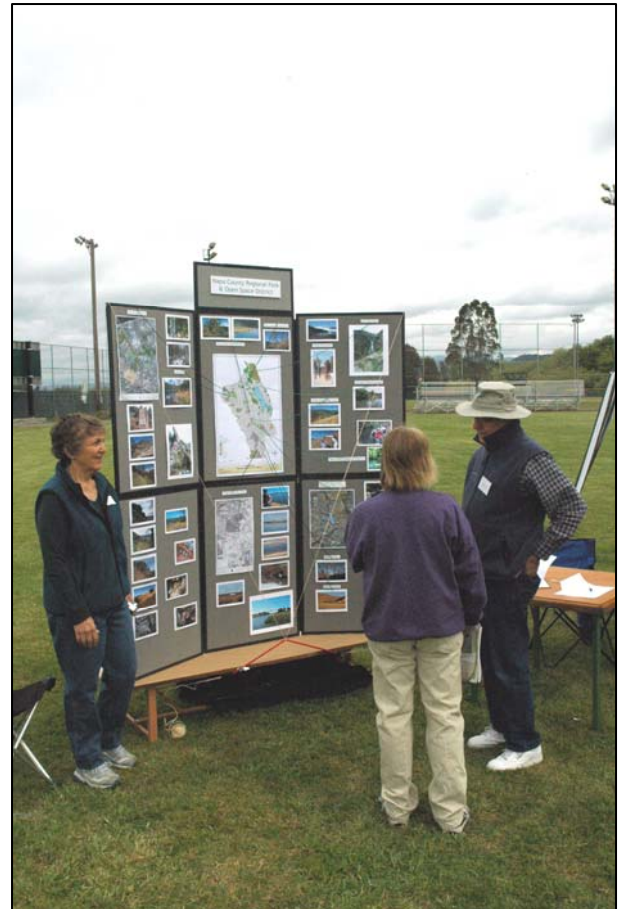
**Project D. 2****Develop Public Information Program**

**Description:** Develop a comprehensive program for providing information to the public regarding District operations, policies, and park and recreation facilities.

**Background:** The District has an important obligation to provide information to the public about District operations, including existing and proposed policies, pending decisions, and how the public can participate in shaping the work of the District. The District also needs to efficiently and effectively provide up-to-date information to the public about how they can utilize District park and open space facilities, as well as recreational opportunities available through other public agencies with facilities and programs in Napa County. Finally, information should not simply flow outward in an impersonal stream; the District needs to seek two-way conversations through which the District learns what the public wants, and through which the public becomes engaged and involved with the District.

**Benefits and Issues:** There are four distinct methods for disseminating information to the public: through the internet, at District facilities, through written materials disseminated by mail or through partners, and through presentations and participation in events. The internet has become a tool through which up to date and comprehensive information can be quickly and efficiently provided to nearly all segments of the population. It is particularly useful for distributing information about meetings and current issues, as well as maps, background information, and up to the minute news about district facilities including fire hazards, hunting seasons, and other park and trail conditions. By using links, the District web site can serve as a clearinghouse of information for people interested in all forms of outdoor recreation, regardless of which agency or organization is the provider. However, the internet is essentially a passive medium, in that information only gets to those who make the effort to seek that information or who subscribe to news feeds that deliver the information. Further, to realize the real-time power of the internet requires an active investment of staff time.

Materials provided at district facilities, such as flyers, brochures and maps included at trailhead kiosks, are excellent for providing targeted information to





existing users of district facilities. Such information is more likely to be noticed than what is posted on the internet, but is more expensive to maintain.

Written materials such as brochures and displays are more limited than the internet in terms of what they can cover but are useful for reaching out to new audiences. Written materials in particular support presentations to new groups and participation in events, which bring the potential for real dialogue and engagement, although a considerable investment of time is required.

**Other Partners:** Key agency partners are the County of Napa, the four cities and one town within the County, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation. Non-profit partners include the Land Trust of Napa County, the Skyline Park Citizens Association, and a wide diversity of community organizations and service groups.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Outreach is an on-going task, and the greater the investment, the greater the payoff.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Update the Introduction to the District brochure in January of each year with current information.
- B. Update the District's Display of Projects on a regular basis.
- C. Establish a basic District web site by July 2008, and expand and update content on a regular and frequent basis.
- D. Add a park finder module (including links to the appropriate park agencies) to the District web site by June 2010.
- E. Add a reservation system to the District web site by December 2010.
- F. Install kiosks at each District facility at the time it is opened, and maintain and update information on a regular basis. Do this for the Oat Hill Mine Trail by May 2008.
- G. Continue presentations to other organizations, groups and agencies on a regular basis, updating them on District plans and activities.

Project D. 3**Consider Establishing Non-Profit Foundation**

**Description:** Consider establish a non-profit foundation whose purpose is to fundraise and support District programs and projects.

**Background:** Many park and open space agencies have developed foundations for the purpose of fundraising in support of specific programs and projects. The East Bay Regional Park District Foundation is an excellent example of how a non-profit foundation associated with a public agency can be highly effective. The foundation is staffed by District staff, but the governing board is composed of community leaders, especially within the business community. The foundation has been particularly effective is raising funds for programs which enable low income and special needs children to enjoy the parks and receive hands-on outdoor educational experiences, by funding scholarships, transportation and targeted programs.

**Benefits and Issues:** The foundation structure enables busy community and business leaders to efficiently support district-related programs--not having to devote a lot of time to administrative details but receiving the respect they deserve for their efforts, and able to ensure the funds they raise will be spent as intended. The composition of the Board of Directors for the foundation is the key to its success. As an alternative to forming its own foundation, the District could also partner with an existing community foundation to provide a structure for funding District programs.

**Other Partners:** The primary partners are business and community leaders with extensive contacts, who enjoy the respect of their associates and the community, and who are willing to serve on the Board of Directors.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** A foundation can be established quickly and with little expense, but should only be undertaken after the programs which the foundation is initially intended to support are in place, and after a core group of individuals interested in serving on the Board have been recruited.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. The District Board ad hoc committee formed to work on this project prepares a proposed structure for the foundation for consideration by the full Board of Directors by June 2009.
- B. If the Board decides to move forward with establishing a non-profit foundation, the ad hoc committee recruits the initial group of board members by December 2009, at which time the organization is formally established with the adoption of by-laws and the filing of incorporation papers. Alternatively, if the District decides to not proceed with formation of its own foundation, work to establish a partnership with an existing community foundation.

**Project D. 4****Consider Forming District Advisory Committee**

**Description:** Consider forming an advisory committee of organizations and users groups who have expertise and an interest in the policies and practices governing the use of District parks and trails.

**Background:** As the district acquires, develops and operates parks and trails, it will be important to adopt policies and practices which both assure the protection of the important natural, cultural and historical resources associated with those facilities, as well as provide for equitable and compatible use by different types of public users.

**Benefits and Issues:** An advisory committee composed of representatives from a broad range of interests and backgrounds can go a long way toward ensuring that district policies are reasonable, equitable and effective. By providing a forum for communication between different groups, it can also help avoid the development of conflicts between user groups and amicably resolve conflicts which do emerge. For an advisory committee to be successful, the composition of the committee is critical; members must have standing and respect from the groups and interests which they are intended to represent, while at the same time being willing to listen, acknowledge other points of view and seek compromise. A clear focus for the advisory committee is also critical so that both public and staff time is well spent. Finally, a successful advisory committee requires good staff support. The District Board of Directors will need to balance the benefits which can be provided by an advisory committee with the commitment and staff time and resources needed to support such a committee.

**Other Partners:** Examples of groups and interests which should be considered for inclusion in the advisory committee include hikers, mountain bicyclists, equestrians, dog walkers, bird and wildlife observers, native plant experts, hunters, fishermen, kayakers and canoeists, and farmers and ranchers.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** A decision on whether to form an advisory committee would be made once the District is in the position of needing to develop park and trail use policies. Out-of-pocket expenses related to the advisory committee will be minimal, but staff and Board time necessary to support the committee would be significant if the work of the committee is not carefully focused. Because of the need for staff support, some increase in District staffing will be necessary before the advisory committee is established.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Consider a structure and initial work program for the advisory committee by December 2009.
- B. If the Board of Directors decides to proceed with an advisory committee, solicit nominations for and appoint committee members by June 2010.



Project D.5

## Establish Partnerships with Public Art, Historical and Cultural Interpretation Organizations

**Description:** Integrate public art, historical and cultural interpretation programs with the work of the District through partnerships with art organizations, historical societies and museums, and Native American tribal councils.

**Background:** While the mission of the District is to focus on the preservation and enjoyment of the county's open space resources, this mission can be enhanced through close partnerships with compatible organizations and interests. A number of the existing and planned recreational facilities in Napa Valley are suitable for public art exhibits and temporary or permanent art displays. The Oat Hill Mine Trail is just one example of a recreational facility with a rich history deserving of interpretation.

**Benefits and Issues:** An interdisciplinary perspective regarding the preservation and enjoyment of open space has obvious value for broadening the public's appreciation of the District's work. As a result, many of the projects identified in this Master Plan incorporate elements of public art, historical and cultural interpretation. The effectiveness of this approach would be enhanced by building relationships with other organizations that transcend individual projects. This requires the District to become more familiar and involved with the work of these organizations by regularly attending the meetings and events of these other entities.

**Other Partners:** Potential partners include the Arts Council Napa Valley, the Napa Valley Historical Society, local museums, diRosa Preserve and Native American tribal councils.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** There is no immediate time requirement and no anticipated District cost initially. Given the District's limited staffing, implementation of this project will depend primarily on utilizing and expanding the relationships which individual members of the Board of Directors have with art, historical, and cultural organizations.

### Action Objectives:

- A. Initiate dialogue with the Napa Valley Arts Council to explore the potential and plan for the development and placement of public art in at District facilities.
- B. Initiate dialogue with the historical societies and museums in Napa County to explore the potential for jointly exhibiting and interpreting the history of Napa County.
- C. Initiative dialogue and establish procedures for consulting with Native American tribal councils.



### Project D.6

## Proactively Develop Volunteer Participation

**Description:** Develop and implement a comprehensive District volunteer program

**Background:** Most park and open space agencies utilize volunteers for a variety of purposes, such as restoring habitat, monitoring and maintaining trails, and leading recreational and interpretive activities.

**Benefits and Issues:** In recognition of the District's limited operational funding, it is essential that the District utilize volunteers as much as possible. Using volunteers rather than contracted services has the added benefit of building a cadre of people who care about and support the District. Volunteers don't just happen, however. Obtaining volunteer assistance requires an agency culture which welcomes volunteer participation, procedures which make it easy for volunteers to participate, and consistent efforts at recruiting volunteers and organizing opportunities for their participation.

**Other Partnerships:** In addition to direct recruitment efforts, the Volunteer Center is a resource which the District utilizes to recruit volunteers. Coordinating with organizations that regularly engage in community service, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, and Leadership Napa Valley, is another way the District recruits volunteers for group projects.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost.** Active efforts to recruit and support volunteer participation is already underway, and needs to continue on a regular basis. The District should devote as much of its budget to this effort as it can.

### **Action Objectives:**

- A. Implement one major (150-200 people) volunteer event each year, starting with the opening of the Oat Hill Mine Trail in May 2008.
- B. Implement three smaller (25-50 people), District-led volunteer



events each year.

- C. Implement a volunteer trail patrol focusing initially on the Oat Hill Mine Trail, by July 2008.
- D. Implement additional volunteer trail patrols as other trails are constructed and opened, including the Ridge Trail segments at Milliken and Rector Ridge (see Projects A.2 and A.4) and the Napa River and Bay Trail (see Projects A.5 and A.6).
- E. Continue to support and strengthen the Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park “Friends of” group (see Project B.3 and A.12).
- F. Implement a neighborhood-based “Friends of” group for the Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space when that acquisition is complete (see Project B.2).
- G. Implement a volunteer camp host/trail host program in conjunction with the opening of the District’s first campground or trail system designed to utilize a resident trail host (see Projects A.2 and A.3)
- H. Develop a trained group of docents to lead trips to the South Napa Wetlands in conjunction with the acquisition of that area (see Project B.5)



Project D.7

## Prepare and Adopt District Purchasing and Contracting Policies and Procedures

**Description:** Develop purchasing and contracting policy and procedures that are customized to a park and open space district established pursuant to Section 5500 *et seq* of the Public Resources Code of the State of California

**Background:** The District currently operates under the Napa County purchasing policy and procedures. While the County purchasing policy and procedures work for the District, because of their larger size and broader scope of services, state purchasing and contracting law for county governments, as well as County-adopted procedures, are in many ways more restrictive than what is prescribed for special districts.

**Benefits and Issues:** Tailoring purchasing and contracting policies and procedures to reflect state law as it relates to special districts formed pursuant to Section 5500 *et seq* of the Public Resources Code would result in more streamlined and efficient operations.. This new purchasing policy should be developed and implemented in 2008.

**Other Partnerships:** Since the District contracts with Napa County for many of its services, the District needs to consult and coordinate with the County auditing and accounting staff in developing the District's own policies and procedures.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The staff time needed to develop new purchasing and contracting policies will over time be more than offset by the time saving associated with implementation of those policies and procedures.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Prepare and adopt new purchasing and contracting policies and procedures tailored to the District's enabling legislation and needs by June 2009.

Project D.8

## Prepare and Adopt District Policies and Ordinances for Public Use of Facilities

**Description:** Prepare and adopt District policies and ordinances governing the use of District facilities.

**Background:** The District is authorized pursuant to Section 5500 et seq of the California Public Resources Code to adopt policies and ordinances regulating how District owned and managed facilities are used, and to impose fines and penalties for violations. The District has not yet exercised this authority, although it has begun to develop and disseminate advisory guidelines for public use. The only legally-binding regulations which apply to District facilities are those contained in federal, state or local laws, codes and ordinances.

**Benefits and Issues:** As the District gains experience operating parks and trails, it will need to consider adopting ordinances tailored to specific issues not otherwise addressed by federal, state and local laws. Caution needs to be exercised in adopting District ordinances, however, because ordinances without effective enforcement are not beneficial (see Project D.11 regarding building enforcement capacity). Therefore, the District's first and primary strategy should be monitoring, adopting advisory policies and education to encourage voluntary compliance.

**Other Partnerships:** The District should work closely with the County and other agencies, especially for those facilities where the District is managing facilities owned by other agencies. For example, the District manages the Oat Hill Mine Trail on behalf of Napa County; if additional trail use regulations are necessary, it may be more appropriate to adopt or amend County ordinances than for the District to adopt its own.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** District policies and ordinances should only be considered when dictated by experience. The actual adoption of ordinances involves minimal cost, but can be costly to enforce.

### Action Objectives:

- A. Evaluate the need for a trail use ordinance for the Oat Hill Mine Trail by June 2009.
- B. Evaluate the need for an ordinance guiding the use of the Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park by June 2009.
- C. In conjunction with the Department of Fish and Game's tri-annual review of the State Code of Regulations, by 2011, evaluate the need for changes to the Code for the Napa River Ecological Reserve.
- D. Prior to opening the Napa River and Bay Trail on the Department of Fish and Game's salt plant site in 2011, work with the Department to determine whether the Department's existing public use and resource protection regulations are sufficient or should be supplemented with a District-adopted ordinance.

### Project D.9

## Adopt Policies and Develop Partnerships, Sponsorships and Donation Programs for Use and Promotion of District Facilities

**Description:** Adopt policies and develop partnerships with other organizations and private businesses to expand recreational facilities and programs on District owned and/or managed parks and trails.

**Background:** As the District acquires or takes on management responsibilities for parks and trails, it will likely receive requests for the short or long term use of these facilities by outside non-profit and for-profit organizations and businesses for their programs and activities. There are also opportunities for organizations and businesses to sponsor improvements, programs and materials provided by the District. Some park districts prohibit any commercial activities on their properties. Others license commercial activities such as privately-provided interpretive walks or tours by bicycle or kayak. In other cases agencies enter into formal concession agreements and even long-term leases, such as for constructing and operating stables and providing horseback trail rides. In terms of sponsorships and donations, there is also a wide variation among park agencies, with some allowing no explicit acknowledgement of sponsors or donors, and others actively seeking advertisers and publicly-recognized sponsors.

**Benefits and Issues:** Partnering with non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses can have the benefit of expanding the range and improving the quality of available facilities and programs. Partnerships and sponsorships can also provide a source of revenue to fund District operations. At the same time, it is important to have clear policies and procedures for such partnerships to ensure that District facilities are available in a fair and equitable manner reflective of the overall public nature of the facilities as well as specific District goals and policies.

**Other Partners:** The range of potential partners depends on the policies which the District chooses to adopt.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The District has already adopted policies for donations and advertising related to the Oat Hill Mine Trail and associated maps and brochures. While there is some staff time cost associated with establishing partnerships and obtaining sponsors and donors, the net effect should be revenue-positive.

#### **Action Objectives:**

- A. Review the experience with donations and sponsors for the Oat Hill Mine Trail by December 2008, and if appropriate extend this policy to encompass other District parks and trails.
- B. Adopt a policy related to commercial use of District parks and trails by December 2009.
- C. In conjunction with the acquisition and development of new parks, campgrounds and trails, explore the feasibility and desirability for licenses, concession agreements and leases with non-profit and for-profit organizations.



**Project D.10****Consider Develop District Deputized Ranger Capacity**

**Description:** Consider developing the organizational capacity to have deputized District rangers.

**Background:** At such point as the District adopts its own ordinances related to the protection and public use of District lands and facilities, the District will need to give serious consideration to the development of the organizational capacity to enforce those regulations. If education and encouragement are insufficient to obtain voluntary compliance with District ordinances, the District may be able to enter into cooperative agreements with the other law enforcement agencies to issue citations and make arrests, but at some point may prefer to have its own deputized staff.

**Benefits and Issues:** Voluntary compliance is clearly preferable to issuing citations and making arrests, and this should be sought to the maximum possible extent through thoughtful facility design and through educational efforts. Cooperative agreements with other law enforcement agencies are also desirable, but in most cases the types of issues which the District will have to confront are unlikely to be the first priority of other law enforcement agencies. Further, the remoteness of many District facilities will make it difficult for other agencies to respond. At the same time, it will be expensive for the District to have its own deputized staff is expensive

**Other Partners:** Potential partners include the County Sheriff, city police departments, and Department of Fish and Game wardens. If the District does decide to have deputized staff, it will be important for the District to coordinate with the County District Attorney and the court system.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** In-house enforcement capacity should only be developed at such time as it is needed, in response to experience in the field.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. By December 2009, research and identify the steps that would need to be taken to establish a District deputized ranger capacity.
- B. Develop deputized ranger capacity when and if needed. Alternatively, strengthen cooperative relationships with existing law enforcement agencies.

**Project D.11**

## Prepare and Adopt Green Standards for Construction and Operations

**Description:** Develop and adopt District policies that promote facility designs, construction materials and techniques, and operational practices, that minimize the use of non-renewable natural resources, energy consumption and waste generation.

**Background:** Public agencies are becoming increasingly aware of the need to approach all aspects of public works construction and operations from the perspective of sustainability. Fortunately, knowledge of appropriate design, construction and operational practices has improved considerably in recent years, and the necessary building materials and supplies are increasingly available.

**Benefits and Issues:** As an agency dedicated to the preservation of open space resources, it is appropriate for the District to be a leader in demonstrating the highest standards of environmental sustainability. Although the capital costs associated with sustainably produced materials and energy and water efficient design are typically higher than with conventional materials and designs, the operation and maintenance costs can be lower. This is particularly important for the District, which has limited operating funds but is eligible for a variety of grant funds for capital investments.

**Other Partners:** The County of Napa's Environmental Management Department is a source of ideas and funding for promoting recycling and reducing the use of hazardous materials. Financial incentives associated with energy conservation and pollution reduction are also available from PG&E, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and various other grant programs.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Green building and operations standards are evolving rapidly. The District should therefore adopt an evolutionary approach, identifying options and adopting best practices as they relate to each project or program the District undertakes.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Identify and adopt guidelines for minimizing waste and maximizing recycling at District events.
- B. Identify and adopt best building practices for campgrounds and staging areas as part of the planning for the development of Camp Berryessa (see Project A.3), Moore Creek Open Space Park (see Project A.22) and the Milliken and Rector Ridge Trails (see Projects A.2 and A.4).

**Project D. 12****Develop and Implement Cooperative Strategies for  
Habitat Restoration**

**Description:** Develop strategies for remediating past environmental damage and restoring native habitat on District open space lands working in partnership with other agencies, organizations and volunteers.

**Background:** Napa County is considered a significant biodiversity area with a large and diverse number of plant and animal species. Most of its native plant and animal habitat areas have suffered at least some degradation, however, due to the spread of non native plants and animals and poor management practices. The purpose of this project is to work cooperatively with other agencies, public and private property owners, organizations and individuals to identify and implement the strategies with the greatest potential for success. Opportunities for the establishment of a volunteer program to install and maintain small projects in selected open space areas to restore special habitats which sustain and attract native plant and animal species.

**Benefits and Issues:** Remediation and restoration is not an easy task. Realistically, only a small part of the total need can be addressed, both because of fiscal constraints and because biological processes are dynamic and only partly amendable to human intervention. Landscape-wide attention to individual invasive species is sometimes appropriate, such as with cooperative efforts to remove invasive *Arundo donax* from the Napa River watershed. In this instance, the District needs to assure that it is addressing the problem on the properties which it manages. In other situations, comprehensive ecosystem restoration of small areas managed by the District is appropriate; recognizing that comprehensive restoration is not realistic on a wide scale, the objective in this situation is primarily for research and education, demonstrating the functions and interrelationships of a relatively intact ecosystem. aggressively and on an ongoing basis to ensure significant regeneration.

**Other Partners:** Collaboration with resource specialists at the Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Napa County Weed Management Area is key for identifying restoration targets and designing restoration strategies. Other important partners include public agencies including the Napa County Flood Control District and California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), as well as private property owners concerned about the stewardship of their land, and non-profit environmental education organizations.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Restoration efforts must be ongoing, and there is no limit to the amount of funding which could productively be utilized. The District therefore needs to be selective in choosing which projects to initiate and/or participate in.



**Action Objectives:**

- A. Join the Napa County Weed Management Area by July 2008.
- B. Obtain funding for and initiate the Napa River Ecological Reserve comprehensive habitat restoration project (see Project B.1) by July 2009 as a means for establishing a restoration partnership model with the RCD, NRCS, DFG, the California Conservation Corps and other non-profit environmental education and restoration organizations.
- C. Initiate erosion control work on the Oat Hill Mine Trail by May 2008 (see Project A.1), and then organize periodic volunteer teams to continue the work until all major erosion problems are resolved.
- D. Develop restoration goals and strategies for each District property at the time it is acquired or comes under District management.
- E. Develop by December 2008, and thereafter maintain a current list of small-scale restoration projects which can be undertaken by volunteer groups, and publicize these restoration opportunities.



**Project D. 13****Update Inventory of Protected Open Space Lands**

**Description:** Update the Geographical Information System (GIS) inventory of protected open space lands.

**Background:** The new County General Plan calls for working with the District to update and maintain an accurate inventory of protected open space lands. The inventory includes lands owned in fee title by public agencies or non-profit land conservation organizations for open space purposes, as well as lands protected through conservation easements. The data associated with the inventory includes detailed information about these lands, including fee title owner, easement holder if any, the degree to which the land is accessible by the public for recreation and/or educational and research purposes, and the conservation values of the land.

**Benefits and Issues:** The inventory of protected open space lands is a valuable planning tool; it is useful in identifying areas which need attention in terms of public stewardship, as well as areas which are important for providing habitat and recreational trail connections. The inventory is also important for providing the basis for public information about outdoor recreational opportunities in the County. The existing inventory is only partially complete, however. The last inventory was prepared in January of 2006, and many data fields are not complete. In addition, there continue to be definitional issues, such as how to categorize cemeteries, wastewater treatment ponds, golf courses, and more.

**Other Partnerships:** The County of Napa is the primary partner, because the data prepared by the District will assist the County in meeting an objective of the County General Plan. Updating and improving the inventory requires working closely with other agencies and land conservation organizations, including federal and state agencies, local cities and towns, and various land trusts.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Updating and improving the protected lands database will involve approximately 80 hours of District staff time in 2008. Future updates will require approximately 40 hours of District staff time per year.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Update and revise the protected lands database by December 2008.
- B. Prepare updates to the database on or around January of each year.

Project D. 14

## Update District Master Plan

**Description:** Update the District Master Plan biannually.

**Background:** The Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, prior to recommending the formation of the District, researched and developed an informal “concept plan” describing the types of projects and activities which a District should be empowered to undertake. Since the formation of the District in December 2006, the Board of Directors has worked with staff to develop and begin implementation of a diverse set of projects that built on the concepts recommended by the Advisory Committee. With the adoption of the Master Plan, a formal framework together with goals, principles and specific projects has been established. This Master Plan is intended to provide a logical and methodical road map for focusing District efforts.

**Benefits and Issues:** The Master Plan is intended to be a living document. As the District gains experience, goals and principles will need refinement. In addition, the District needs to be able to flexibly and effectively respond to new opportunities. Recognizing this is the District’s first Master Plan, the District expects in 2010 and biannually thereafter to evaluate, update and where necessary revise this Plan.

**Other Partnerships:** The Napa County General Plan provides the land use policy and regulatory framework within which the District operates in the unincorporated areas. Although the County is not directly involved in reviewing or approving the District Master Plan, the District should continue to work closely with the County to ensure a coordination of efforts and consistency with the General Plan.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The 2010 update to the District Master Plan will be accomplished with existing District staff, and should not require a specific budget appropriation.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Evaluate and revise the Master Plan by October 2010.
- B. Thereafter, biannually evaluate and as necessary update the Master Plan



Project D.15

## Establish Partnerships with Local Land Conservation and Public Recreation Organizations and Agencies

**Description:** Establish long-term partnerships arrangements with key land conservation organizations such as the Land Trust of Napa County and local recreation agencies, which addresses areas of mutual cooperation.

**Background:** The most effective land protection efforts in the Bay Area involve partnerships between park and open space districts and non-profit land conservation organizations. Similarly, the most successful delivery of public recreation programs and facilities involve partnerships between regional park and open space district and city and county recreation departments. A fundamental premise of the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District at the time of its establishment was that the District would work closely with both non-profit and other public agency partners to take advantage of unique abilities and deliver a comprehensive range of benefits while avoiding any duplication of effort.

The District and the Land Trust of Napa County have already completed two transactions that illustrate the benefits of partnership (the acquisition of Berryessa Vista from the Land Trust, and the acceptance from the Land Trust of a conservation easement over Linda Falls). Similarly, the District has worked closely with Tuleyome in obtaining a donated trail easement providing access to the Blue Ridge and Berryessa Peak on the Napa-Yolo County border. Further, the District is working closely with the Solano Land Trust to acquire the Vallejo Lakes property to protect this important habitat area and expand Skyline Park. The District has also been working with Berryessa Trails and Conservation on the planning for the Lake Berryessa Trail and various land conservation efforts.

In terms of local agency relationships, the District has been working closely and very effectively with the City of American Canyon on the Napa River and Bay Trail, and is in active discussions with the City of Napa to expand public use of the City's Lake Hennessey and Milliken properties. The District has also been working closely with the City of Calistoga in improving the Oat Hill Mine Trail.

**Benefits and Issues:** Public agencies and private non-profit organizations bring distinctive inherent strengths to protecting and stewarding land. Public agencies have many advantages when it comes to providing public access and ensuring compliance with rules and regulations. Non-profit organizations, on the other hand, can be more nimble and have a greater capacity to privately fundraise for projects. In the best-functioning relationships, non-profit organizations focus on acquiring open space lands, and then transferring them to public agency partners for long-term management. In terms of public recreation, the County General Plan notes that the cities of Napa County have played, and should continue to play, the primary role for providing urban parks and organized recreation programs. The District can complement the work of the cities by focusing on nature-based recreation, providing links (such as regional trails) between cities and between population centers and special outdoor spaces, and by making District facilities available for appropriate programming by City Park and Recreation De-

partments (for example for camping, guided nature hikes, and other forms of outdoor education).

**Other Partners:** While the Land Trust of Napa County is the principle land trust operating in Napa County, other important partners for the District include Berryessa Trails and Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area Partnership, as well as land trusts active in adjacent counties such as Tuleyome, Solano Land Trust, Sonoma Land Trust and LandPaths. In terms of recreation, it is important for the District to continue to expand and formalize relationships with the park and recreation programs of the County's four cities and one town.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** The District should move as quickly as feasible to solidify and formalize the relationships which it has already initiated, and seek to develop additional relationships with other key potential partners. The only cost involved in strengthening these relationships is some dedication of staff time, and this cost is easily outweighed by the savings that accrue from working together.

**Action Objectives:**

- A. Establish a monthly meeting protocol between the District General Manager and Land Trust of Napa County Executive Director by January 2009.
- B. Establish a periodic reporting relationship in which the District reports on its progress to the Land Trust Board of Trustees, and the Land Trust reports to the District Board of Directors, by March 2009.
- C. Explore the concept of a joint memorandum of understanding between the Land Trust and the District regarding such matters as respective roles for real estate transactions.
- D. Explore establishing more formalized relationships and understandings with Berryessa Trails and Conservation, the City of Napa and the City of American Canyon, by the end of 2009, building on the existing projects the District shares with these entities.
- E. Explore with the cities methods for jointly scheduling/sponsoring/promoting nature hikes and other forms of outdoor education and nature-based recreation on District facilities.

Project D.16

## Prepare and Adopt Habitat Stewardship Guidelines

**Description:** Prepare and adopt guidelines for habitat protection and stewardship to guide the District land protection and management activities.

**Background:** The need in Napa County to protect important habitats—including unique habitats, representative examples of more common types of habitat, and connections between core habitats—is enormous. The need to restore degraded habitats, reduce and control invasive species, and proactively address long-term issues such as habitat fragmentation and climate change, is equally huge. The District has a very small operating budget, which limits what it can do to restore and enhance important habitats, and even with the assistance of significant grant funding, the high cost of land in Napa County means it will only undertake a limited number of property acquisitions.

**Benefits and Issues:** A very judicious focusing of the District’s funding and staff resources is necessary if the District is to have a meaningful impact preserving, restoring and enhancing Napa County’s world-class biodiversity. It is also important for the District to have clear guidelines in place for how it will steward the natural resources and habitats on the properties which it does acquire.

**Other Partners:** A variety of non-profit organizations and public agencies are involved with restoration and enhancement projects, including the Napa County Resource Conservation District, the federal Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Napa County Weed Management Area, the Napa County Flood Control District, California Native Plant Society, Napa-Solano Audubon Society, Friends of the Napa River, the Land Trust of Napa County, and the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area Partnership. Partnering with these and other agencies and organizations can help the District accomplish more with its own limited resources. Habitat inventory and prioritization data developed by NatureServe, the Land Trust of Napa County and The Nature Conservancy offers exceptionally good information which the District can utilize when deciding where to focus its land preservation efforts.

**Time Frame and Estimated Cost:** Developing habitat stewardship guidelines will require some dedication of staff resources, but thanks to the studies and inventories which other organizations have already made, further expensive big picture analysis is not needed. Implementation of on-the-ground restoration projects is quite expensive and time-consuming, however, and so the timing and extent of such work will be largely dependent on the District obtaining grants and volunteer assistance.

### Action Objectives:



## Section VIII

# MASTER PLAN PRIORITIES, IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND FUNDING OPTIONS

This Master Plan has been prepared to identify an implementation plan for the acquisition, preservation, development and operation of a countywide system of regional parks, trails, water resources, natural habitats and open spaces in Napa County for the period from 2008 to 2013. Section III of this plan first identified the policy foundation for this Plan's development by reviewing the County General Plan with its associated Recreation and Open Space and Conservation Elements and the development and formation of the new Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District. This was followed in Section IV by the explanation of the principal goals and guiding principles for this Plan.

Sections V and VI then provided informational background needed for identifying specific projects, by reviewing the Napa County natural environment and special habitat areas, existing park, recreation and open space facilities, and future needs. The review of facility and program needs focused on studies done by the Land Trust of Napa County, the Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee and the County of Napa Baseline Data Report.

Taken together, these sections provide the basis for the identification and development of the 61 projects presented in Section VII. These projects are also the outgrowth of a monthly Plan of Projects Status Report which the District has been developing and refining over the first 18 months of its existence. This monthly report, reviewed and discussed at the Board's regular public meetings, has been the vehicle by which the District has identified priorities and tracked progress.

These projects are intended to provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, to preserve and restore open space and natural resources, to facilitate outdoor educational programs, and to strengthen the District's organizational capacity.

As noted in the discussion at the beginning of Section VII, these 61 projects provide the framework for the District's work program over the coming five years. These are the projects which the District will research, evaluate and, if determined to be feasible, then consider for implementation. However, inclusion of these projects does not guarantee that they will be implemented. Before a project can be implemented, agreements with potential partners must be negotiated, permits from regulatory agencies obtained, capital funding obtained and long-term operational funding identified. The number and scope of these projects is greater than the District will be able to achieve with existing financial and staff resources, and certainly more than can be achieved during the next five years. The reasons for developing concepts for more projects than can be implemented within the first five years are to document important needs and project concepts, provide a framework within which individual projects can be

compared and their benefits weighed, and to give the District the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and opportunities when they arise.

Section VIII now addresses how the District will approach the implementation of these identified projects. This section first reviews proposed criteria and recommendations for prioritizing these projects. This section then reviews implementation strategies focusing on the District's relationship with the County and other public and non-profit county agencies and organizations. Next, this section reviews existing and future alternative staffing and operational funding levels to implement the projects identified in Section VII. Finally, this section reviews funding options for implementing this Master Plan.

## A. PRIORITIES




Table VIII-1 presents a matrix showing timelines for all of the Plan's projects. The projects are categorized by the District's four main goals presented in Section IV. Some locations have more than one project, depending on whether the project involves acquisition, development or programs. For each project, the table indicates when during the first five year planning period the project will be in active planning and/or implementation, although no time frames are offered for projects whose implementation will either start after the five year period, or where it is not possible at this time to indicate an implementation schedule. It should also be noted that some of the projects have already been completed. They are included in this Master Plan to provide a complete picture of the District's goals, objectives and progress historically as well as for the long term..

The timelines presented in Table VIII-1 generally represent the most optimistic time within which each project could proceed, assuming agreements with other partners are reached expeditiously, permits obtained without significant delay, adequate grant funding is secured, and sufficient District staff and operational funding is available. These assumptions will obviously not hold true for all projects as each is subject to conditions which are often beyond the control of the District. Proposed project partners each have their own priorities and constraints which the District must respect. Many required permits are discretionary, and some may turn out to not be obtainable. Grant programs and the amount of money available are continually changing. Finally, funding available for District operations and staffing is constrained, and will continue to be so.

While developing concepts for a wide variety of projects is important for setting a high bar and retaining flexibility, the District also needs to ensure that its progress is deliberate and balanced. District projects are therefore divided into two tiers. Tier One includes those projects which will have higher priority for District resources. These are the projects on which staff will devote the most time, and toward which discretionary funding will be directed. It is essential to keep in mind that some Tier One projects will prove to be infeasible, due to inability to obtain permission from public agency owners, permits from regulatory agencies, or grant funding for improvements. Of the remainder, many will not be completed within the first five years period. Nonetheless it is the District's intent to have at least made significant progress within this time frame on those of the Tier One projects which prove to be feasible.

**Table VIII-1 Project Implementation Timeline**

The time frames shown here represent the earliest possible implementation dates, and assume projects prove to be feasible. Actual implementation will vary, generally with later implementation than shown, since most projects depend on approvals and actions by partners beyond the control of the District, as well as on funding which must first be obtained. Tier One projects are those which will receive priority consideration for limited funding and staffing. The meaning for the shading used in the charts is indicated below:

-  Advance Planning and Preparation Phase
-  Active Implementation Phase
-  Unscheduled Actions

Project No.	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Tier One
<b>Goal A. Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation through the development of a system of parks, trails, water resources, open space and related facilities</b>							
A.1 Oat Hill Mine Trail Improvements	█						YES
A.2 Milliken Creek Trails and Picnic Area Development					█	█	YES
A.3 Camp Berryessa Redevelopment				█	█		YES
A.4 Rector Ridge/Stag's Leap Ridge Trail Development				█	█		YES
A.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Phase I Development				█	█		YES
A.6 Napa River and Bay Trail Phase II Development				█	█		YES
A.7 Lake Hennessy North Shore Trail Development					█	█	YES
A.8 Napa River Ecological Reserve Public Access Improvements					█	█	YES
A.9 Newell Preserve Access Development							
A.10 Lake Berryessa Trail Development					█		YES
A.11 Berryessa Peak and Blue Ridge Public Access Development					█		
A.12 Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park Development					█		YES
A.13 Pope and Putah Creeks Trail Development							
A.14 Skyline Park Improvements Phase II							YES
A.15 Camp Berryessa to Knoxville Recreation Area Trail Development							
A.16 Napa Crest Trail Development					█	█	YES
A.17 Napa River Access Point Development							
A.18 San Francisco Bay Trail Completion in Napa County							
A.19 Bay Area Ridge Trail Completion in Napa County							
A.20 Backcountry Camping Facilities in the Paliades Area							
A.21 River to Ridge Trail Encroachment Resolution							
A.22 Moore Creek Trails, Picnic Area and Camping Facilities Development						█	YES
A.23 Napa River Water Trail Development							YES
A.24 Napa Valley Greenway / Vine Trail Development							
A.25 Henry Road/Milliken Peak Area Trail Development							
A.26 Countywide Trail Network Development							



**Table VIII-1 Project Implementation Timeline (continued)**

Project No.	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Tier One
<b>Goal B. Preserve, restore and protect open space lands, natural resources and habitat areas</b>							
B.1 Napa River Ecological Reserve Restoration							YES
B.2 Lake Berryessa Estates Open Space Preservation							YES
B.3 Berryessa Vista Acquisition							YES
B.4 Vallejo Lakes Area Acquisition							YES
B.5 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Acquisition							YES
B.6 Linda Falls Conservation Easement							YES
B.7 Palisades Cooperative Management Plan Development							YES
B.8 Skyline Park Protection and Master Plan Development							YES
B.9 Moore Creek Watershed Protection							YES
B.10 Other High Priority Habitats Preservation							
<b>Goal C. Provide historical, cultural, environmental education programming opportunities</b>							
C.1 Camp Berryessa Outdoor Education Program Facility Development							YES
C.2 Napa River Ecological Reserve Environmental Education Program Development							YES
C.3 Napa River to Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development							
C.4 Rector Ridge Trail Interpretive Path Development							
C.5 Napa River and Bay Trail Interpretive Path Development							YES
C.6 South Napa Wetlands Habitat Interpretive Facilities and Programming Development							
C.7 Huichica Creek Wetlands Interpretive Path Development							
C.8 Oat Hill Mine Trail Interpretive Path Development							
C.9 Cedar Roughs Interpretive Materials Development							
<b>Goal D. Provide for District management and partnerships</b>							
D.1 Develop and Implement a Multiyear Budget and Service Plan							YES
D.2 Develop Public Information Program							YES
D.3 Consider Establishing Non-Profit Foundation							
D.4 Consider Forming District Advisory Committee							
D.5 Establish Partnerships with Public Art, Historical & Cultural Interpretation Organizations							YES
D.6 Develop Volunteer Participation							
D.7 Prepare and Adopt District Purchasing and Contracting Policies and Procedures							YES
D.8 Prepare and Adopt District Policies and Ordinances for Public Use of Facilities							YES
D.9 Adopt Policies and Develop Partnerships, Sponsorships and Donation Programs for Use and Promotion of District Facilities							YES
D.10 Consider Developing District Deputized Ranger Capacity							
D.11 Prepare and Adopt Green Standards for Building and Operations							
D.12 Develop and Implement Cooperative Strategies for Habitat Restoration							YES
D.13 Update Countywide Inventory of Protected Open Space Lands							YES
D.14 Update District Master Plan							
D.15 Establish Partnerships with Land Conservation and Public Recreation Organizations and Agencies							
D.16 Prepare and Adopt Habitat Stewardship Guidelines							

M A S T E R P L A N 2 0 0 8 - 2 0 1 3

Generally speaking, Tier Two projects will be pursued during the coming five years to the extent that District staff and discretionary funding is not needed for Tier One projects. For this reason, Tier Two projects typically do not have specific dates associated with specific objectives.

Although Table VIII-1 distinguishes between Tier One and Tier Two projects, it is important to keep in mind that because so many of the factors affecting project implementation are beyond the control of the District, this initial tiering is not set in concrete, and the District will need to make adjustments when unanticipated challenges and opportunities arise.

In addition to guiding principles presented in Section IV, the basic factors which have been used to identify Tier One projects include the following:

- 1 Balance. At the end of the first five years of operation, the District should have implemented a set of projects which are balanced in terms of geographic distribution around the County, the demographics of those who are served, and the types of benefits provided.
- 2 Fiscal sustainability. Given the District's limited funding, projects which can be financially sustained with the least ongoing operational subsidies should receive priority.
- 3 Risk and opportunity. Projects associated with immediate risks and/or one-time opportunities should receive priority over projects which are not time-sensitive.
- 4 Broad support and consensus. Projects with broad public and partner support, and widespread consensus regarding their value and design, should receive priority over projects for which such support and consensus is not as strong.

The right-hand column of Table VIII-1 indicates Tier One projects. Project tiering has not been used for those projects which are related to Goal D—Provide for District Management and Partnerships. The reason is that these administrative and organizational projects are not really amendable to prioritization, but are actions which need to be undertaken in the normal course of business.

## B. Implementation Strategies

### 1. Institutional Framework and Relationship with Napa County

The District since its formation has contracted with Napa County for basic professional and administrative services. County employees and officials serve as the District's Officers, including General Manager, Treasurer, Controller and Secretary. The County also provides a variety of professional services to the District, such as accounting, auditing, computing, communications and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support. This institutional structure is a natural result of how the District was established, with the County providing the leadership and resources that led to the formation of the District.

The District proposes to retain this institutional structure through the life of this first Master Plan, because it has several distinct advantages. First, at present levels of operation, it is more

cost effective for the District to contract with the County for basic professional services than to set up its own personnel and financial systems. Second, given the District's present lack of guaranteed long-term operational funding, it is more prudent to contract for staff services than to take on the relatively fixed, long-term obligations that come with hiring its own employees and maintaining its own offices and equipment. Third, given the District's current reliance on the County for basic operational funding, it is important for both the District and the County to maintain a close working relationship, and contracting with the County for professional services is an effective way to ensure this.

This institutional structure also has distinct advantages for Napa County. It enables the County to participate in the permanent preservation of open space, and to help meet the park and outdoor recreation needs of its residents, as called for in the County General Plan, in a focused, efficient and accountable manner. There are five reasons why it is advantageous for the County to fulfill its goals by working with the District. First, as a single-purpose independent entity, the District is able to partner with other public agencies and organizations without the distractions of unrelated issues which can impede progress. Second, the State enabling legislation which authorizes independent special districts recognizes their primary purpose is to implement specific goals and deliver specific benefits; as such, they enjoy more streamlined procedures than those which State law has imposed on counties. Because counties have broad regulatory and other powers, State law imposes considerably more procedural constraints on counties. Third, the visibility provided by having a directly elected Board, with a discrete budget, means it must be responsive to public input and is easily held accountable. Fourth, by having the District contract with the County for professional services, there is a high level of built-in coordination between the County and the District. Finally, by providing contract services to the County, the County is able to allocate some of its administrative overhead costs with the District.

The County-District relationship also makes sense given that a large park and open space agency with lots of staff and a big budget is not really needed, certainly not at this time. The goals articulated by the former Napa County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, and as documented in the County General Plan, call for incremental improvement. The County-District institutional relationship makes it possible to work toward these goals without creating a major new bureaucracy or imposing an unnecessary new burden on County taxpayers.

Looking forward, the District intends to continue using an evolutionary approach to building institutional capacity. Institutional capacity, and related policies and procedures, will track actual current needs, rather than jump into a fully developed end-state. In its first year, the District adopted policies and procedures only as required for an independent special district, such as By-Laws, a Code of Ethics and local procedures for implementing the California Environmental Quality Act. It also expanded staffing capacity only modestly, by adding the equivalent of a new half-time field representative. It refrained from creating a personnel system and hiring employees, choosing instead to contract for services. Similarly, the District has the authority to adopt and enforce regulations regarding the use of its facilities, but it has not, and does not intend to do so unless and until such time as existing laws adopted and enforced by other public agencies prove to be inadequate to meet clearly demonstrated needs.



## 2. Partnerships and Volunteers

The projects presented in Section VII are largely built around partnerships with local cities and districts, with state and federal agencies, and with non-profit and community-based organizations. The primary partnerships are noted below:

- State Coastal Conservancy. The Bay Area Conservancy Program of the State Coastal Conservancy was established by the State of California in 1997 to support a close working partnership between the State land conservation and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Through this partnership the Conservancy provides regional planning, coordination and funding, while its local partners are responsible for most project implementation.
- US Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM is the largest public agency landowner in the county, but has virtually no staff for stewarding its lands. Many of the projects identified in this master plan involve the District partnering with BLM to expand public access to BLM lands.
- US Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). BOR owns Lake Berryessa, which is the single largest public recreational facility in the County. BOR's primary focus is in water supply, however, not recreation, so it relies on concessionaire arrangements to provide most of the Lake's recreational amenities. Several of the projects in this master plan involve the District partnering with BOR to provide recreational and outdoor educational facilities which are not amendable to the concessionaire model.
- California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). DFG is a major landowner in the county, with a mandate to protect habitat and allow wildlife-dependent recreation. DFG's budget is very constrained, however, which restricts it to only focusing on its core mission. Several of the projects in this master plan involve the District working with DFG to provide recreational and educational facilities which are compatible with DFG's mission, but beyond its capacity and focus.
- California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Several of the projects in this Master Plan involve the District working with DPR to provide public access to, in the vicinity of and within current or proposed state parks. These projects are either outside the scope of DPR's authority, or beyond its financial ability to implement.
- Local municipalities. Several of the projects in this master plan involve working closely with one or more local cities to provide recreational amenities which serve the residents of those cities but are outside of city limits or have region-wide significance.
- Land Trust of Napa County. Many of the projects in this master plan are the result of the District's close working relationship with this non-profit land conservation organization. The two entities share many land conservation goals, but bring different strengths to implementing these goals. In particular, the District is better suited to providing public access to open space lands than is the land trust; thus, several of the projects in this master plan involve the District working with the land trust to provide such access on lands which the land trust has protected. Several of the projects also involve the two entities jointly protecting open space lands and resources, thereby providing stronger and more permanent protection to those

lands and resources than either could provide on its own.

- Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Several of the restoration and environmental education projects in the master plan rely on a close partnership with the RCD (a State-authorized special district) and the NRCS (a federal agency within the Department of Agriculture). These two agencies provide valuable scientific expertise and project management skills.
- Bay Area Ridge Trail Council. The Ridge Trail Council is the non-profit sponsor of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, providing leadership, expertise, volunteers and planning and funding assistance to encourage the completion of the Ridge Trail throughout the nine-county Bay Area.
- San Francisco Bay Trail Project. The Bay Trail Project is a non-profit organization formed and staffed by the Association of Bay Area Governments. The Project is the sponsor of the nine-county Bay Trail, providing leadership, expertise, planning and funding assistance to encourage the completion of the San Francisco Bay Trail.
- Berryessa Trails and Conservation (BT&C). This non-profit organization has entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Bureau of Reclamation to plan, design, fundraise and construct the Lake Berryessa Trail. BT&C is also an important partner with the District on other trails and conservation projects throughout the eastern portion of Napa County.

This reliance on partnerships is fundamental to the District's implementation strategy, and reflects a commitment made by many of those who supported formation of the District. The commitment was that the District would work cooperatively with other governmental agencies to improve the stewardship of and the public's ability to enjoy existing public lands and natural resources. In some cases the District's role is to assist its partners accomplish common goals by bringing additional financial, professional or institutional resources to bear on their work. In other cases the District's role is to utilize the land or resources owned by its partners, to provide public benefits that are compatible with but go beyond the missions of its partners.

A focus on empowering and supporting volunteers is another fundamental aspect of the District's implementation strategy. For example, the formal opening of the Oat Hill Mine Trail was accomplished through a major volunteer effort. Similarly, on-the-ground monitoring and planning work at the District's first property—the Berryessa Vista Wilderness Park—is primarily being handled by volunteers. The District plans to continue and expand on this model of volunteer involvement as much as possible with each of its future projects.

Using volunteers is obviously advantageous in that it enables the District to provide more services than would otherwise be possible. However, the advantage goes further than this. Faced with a choice between spending a dollar to pay for work being done, and spending a dollar to organize volunteers to do the job, the District as a matter of policy prefers the latter approach. This is only partly because a dollar spent organizing volunteers will usually accomplish much more than a dollar spent on hiring the work done. More importantly, working with volunteers has the added long-term benefit of building community support and the sense

of public ownership that is critical to the sustainability of the District's projects. Parks, trails and interpretive facilities need to be adopted by individuals and organizations in the surrounding community if they are to be well cared for. This is true everywhere, but is especially important given the District's limited resources and lack of dedicated long-term funding.

This reliance on partnerships and volunteers has significant ramifications for how the District operates. The District cannot be an entity unto itself, but must respect and support a wide range of interests and opinions. Projects must be based on consensus. The District must be flexible and willing to compromise. Decision-making must be participatory, not top-down.

Consistent with the emphasis on volunteers, when the District in its first year entered into a contract for part time park ranger-type services, it defined the job as primarily being responsible for recruiting, organizing and supporting volunteers in the field.

### 3. Staffing Levels

The District has several types of staffing needs. These include the following:

- General management
- Board of Directors support
- Project planning and administration
- Grant writing and management
- Records management
- Financial accounting
- Financial auditing
- Legal counsel
- Risk management
- Office supplies, equipment and facilities support
- Field operations management
- Field operations
- Community outreach
- Volunteer recruitment and management

In its first year of operations, these functions were handled through the District's contract with Napa County and limited other contracts. General management, Board of Directors support, grant writing and management functions, field operations management and most of the project planning and administration functions were carried out through using 90% of the time of a professional planner employed by the County and contracted to the District. Records management and financial accounting services were contracted from County staff in the Conservation, Development and Planning Department and the Department of the Auditor/Controller. Legal counsel was obtained by contracting through the County Counsel's office. Risk management and insurance broker services were contracted through the County Executive Office. These functions in total provided staff support of approximately 1.5 FTE (full-time equivalent). Each of these staff in turn received support from other departments in the County for office supplies, equipment, and facilities. The total cost of these contracted services and associated overhead amounted to a little over \$150,000 for the year FY 2007-08. These costs are documented in Table VIII-2, which presents the preliminary year end budget



## Table VIII-2: Preliminary Year End Budget Actuals 2007/08

prepared July 8, 2008

<u>Accounting_Cat</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Budget</u>	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter	Total for Year
<b>REVENUES</b>							
	County Special Project Fund Operations Grant	\$264,863	\$35,837.15	\$51,520.01	\$51,484.62	102,811.63	\$241,653.41
	County Special Project Fund Capital Grant	\$75,000				8,807.99	\$8,807.99
	Prop 12 Cnty Per Capita grant	\$125,818				125,818.00	\$125,818.00
	Donations	\$1,156	\$1,155.70			\$1,000.00	\$2,155.70
	Interest Income		\$277.59	\$292.99	-\$179.62		\$390.96
	Other Revenues	\$5,000		\$5,000.00			\$5,750.00
	Carryover	\$16,963					-\$8,296.66
	<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	\$488,800.00	\$37,270.44	\$56,813.00	\$51,305.00	\$239,187.62	\$376,279.40
<b>EXPENSES</b>							
	County Staff Services (GM, Secretary, Auditor- Controller, other)*	\$203,000	\$34,249.00	\$38,634.00	\$33,701.15	\$44,927.00	\$151,511.15
	Accounting and Auditing	\$5,000		\$896.56	\$150.25	\$3,266.75	\$4,313.56
	Transportation and Travel	\$2,500				\$0.00	\$0.00
	Office Expense	\$1,500		\$882.95	\$42.40	\$268.70	\$1,194.05
	Legal Services	\$8,000	\$1,288.15	\$1,999.44	\$2,544.87	\$2,141.26	\$7,973.72
	Professional Services Contract (volunteer coordination and facility management)	\$37,500		\$3,024.03	\$14,861.10	\$10,827.73	\$28,712.86
	Reserve/contingency/special projects	\$153,300		\$3,500.00	\$184.85	\$167,198.19	\$170,883.04
	Oat Hill Mine Trail	\$25,000				\$8,807.99	\$8,807.99
	Camp Berryessa	\$25,000					\$0.00
	Napa River and Bay Trail	\$25,000					\$0.00
	Insurance: Liability	\$1,500		\$1,583.03			\$1,583.03
	Memberships	\$1,500	\$300.00	\$1,000.00			\$1,300.00
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$488,800.00	\$35,837.15	\$51,520.01	\$51,484.62	\$237,437.62	\$376,279.40

**Notes**

- (1) Auditor billed to PSS-Admin for quarter one, then put into PSS-Audit/Accounting
- (2) special projects include \$2,000 grant to Ridge Trail Council for Tuteur Trail repair; \$121,914 for Berryessa Vista acquisition; \$35,000 for Moore Creek acquisition option; \$8284.19 for web site development

**Table VIII-3: ADOPTED BUDGET FOR FY 2008-9**  
June 16, 2008

## REVENUES

Description	Amount
Operating Grant from Napa County	278,100
Elections Cost Grant from Napa County	130,000
Special Projects Grant from Napa County	168,892
State Coastal Conservancy Grant	70,000
Donations	0
Miscellaneous	
Prop 12/County Grant	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$646,992</b>

## EXPENDITURES

Description	Amount
	2009
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FROM COUNTY	170,000
VOLUNTEER, OUTREACH AND STEWARDSHIP SERVICES	51,800
LEGAL EXPENSE	8,240
INSURANCE:LIABILITY	2,060
MEMBERSHIPS	1,600
OFFICE EXPENSE	1,750
INDEPENDENT AUDIT	5,150
ELECTION SERVICES	130,000
CONTINGENCIES/ SPECIAL PROJECTS	35,500
TRANSPORTATION & TRAV	1,000
TRAINING	1,000
Project: NAPA RIVER&BAY TRAIL	50,000
Project: OAT HILL MINE TRAIL	41,192
Project: CAMP BERRYESSA	77,700
Project: NAPA R ECOLOGICAL RESERVE	70,000
Project: BV	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$646,992</b>

actuals for the District's first full year of operation. The Table shows budgeted revenues and expenses for the year, together with actual revenues and expenditures broken down by fiscal quarter.

For the latter three quarters of the fiscal year, the District through another contract added the equivalent of a half-time employee to work on outreach, volunteer recruitment and management and field operations. Finally, miscellaneous other professional services—independent financial auditing, insurance, web development and property appraisal services--were obtained through other small contracts.

Because the District in fiscal year 2007-08 was in start-up mode, its basic operations budget of just-under \$265,000 was less than the \$300,000 to \$350,000 annually which the County Board of Supervisors has authorized from the County Special Project Fund to be used to support District operations during its first three years of operation. In addition, because the District was ramping up during the course of the year, it used about 20% less of the County operations grant than budgeted. Approximately half of these one-time savings of about \$50,000 was converted to capital investments, and the remainder was returned to the County's Special Project Fund.

The adopted budget for the District's second year (see Table VIII-3) includes a County operations grant of \$278,000 plus biannual election costs. This represents a five percent increase in the operations budget over the prior year, reflecting the effect of inflation and routine salary step increases. Two-thirds of the operations grant is budgeted to be used to fund County staff who provide park and open space services for the District.

The District has an urgent need to obtain additional capacity to develop project plans, obtain permits, and secure and manage additional grant funding for projects. The lack of sufficient project planning and grant funding staff support is at this point the primary limiting factor in how quickly the District moves forward. Increasing professional project planning staff is therefore the highest human resources priority for the District. Fortunately, in light of the operational savings achieved by the District in its first year, the District in its second year should have sufficient funding to be able to consider increasing its contracted professional staffing by 0.5 FTE. At the same time, it should be noted that by the end of the first five year Master Plan, this additional half-time professional staff position will need to have been increased to a full-time position if the district is to be able to expeditiously continue developing and opening new facilities.

The second human resources priority for the District is to add more capacity for field operations. By the end of this first five year Master Plan, the District is expected to have constructed, improved and opened between 6 and 8 facilities, including parks, trails and campgrounds. The revenue-generating potential of some of these facilities (particularly campgrounds) should be sufficient to cover direct operational costs at those facilities. However, even with the use of concessionaires, caretakers, camp hosts, partnerships and volunteers, the number and scope of projected facilities will require another approximately 1.0 FTE of staff to implement field operations and to coordinate contractors, partners and volunteers.



The final projected human resource need for the District is for administrative support services. Currently, these are handled by a variety of County staff through a contract with the District. The projected growth in the number of parks and trails managed by the District will result in a modest increase in need for administrative support. By fiscal year 2012-13, this need is expected to be equivalent to approximately one full-time position, up from the current 0.5 FTE. Depending on the actual number of project undertaken by the District, and the rate at which they progress, more project management staff support may be needed than projected here. This issue will be reviewed as part of the next update of the Master Plan in 2010, once the pace of project development is more clearly known.

To summarize, if the District is to continue to develop new facilities through this five year time frame, **and** have the capacity to continue to develop and open new facilities beyond this time frame, by the end of this first five year planning horizon the District should work toward the following operational staffing goal:

<b>Existing and Projected Staffing</b>		
<u>Function</u>	<u>FY 2008-09</u>	<u>FY 2012-13</u>
	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
General Management	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
Administration and Professional Services	0.5 FTE	1.0 FTE
Project Management	0.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
Outreach and Field Operations	<u>0.5 FTE</u>	<u>1.5 FTE</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.0 FTE</b>	<b>4.5 FTE</b>

General Management refers to the work of the General Manager, who is the chief administrative officer of the District, responsible for overseeing all aspects of the District as well as managing many of the projects and carrying out much of the day-to-day work of the District. Administration and professional services includes legal counsel, financial auditing and accounting, risk management, and clerical. Project Management involves developing projects, obtaining funding and permits, constructing and inspecting improvements, and implementing programs. Outreach and Field Operations includes meeting with community groups, recruiting and organizing volunteers, soliciting donations, monitoring public use of parks and trails, and maintaining facilities.

The proposed operational staffing is assumed to continue to be provided through contracts with Napa County and other agencies or businesses.

#### 4. Operational Funding

The District is currently operating under a three-year policy for the County’s Special Projects Fund which has been adopted by the Napa County Board of Supervisors . This fund is derived from the increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) approved by the voters in

2004. Under the policy, which the Board adopted in July 2007, 60% of the Special Projects Fund, plus any unspent remainder each year after other specified amounts are granted for the arts and for visitor services, is to be used for park and open space purposes. In FY 2007-8, this worked out to just under \$600,000. Less than half of that amount was used for District operations, with the rest currently reserved for specified capital projects. Of the amount reserved for capital projects, \$200,000 per year is being set-aside for the future acquisition of Skyline Park. The TOT has in recent years been increasing by about 10% per year, during a period when inflation has been running between 3 to 5 percent per year, for a real growth of 5 to 7 percent per year.

<b>Projected Budget Assuming Projected Staffing</b>		
(excluding inflation)		
	<u>FY 2007-08</u>	<u>FY 2012-13</u>
	(actual)	(projected)
District Operations	\$265,000	\$515,000
District Elections (1)	\$25,000	\$25,000
Capital Projects	\$311,000	\$225,000
Total (2)	\$600,000	\$765,000

Notes

1. Biannual elections for District Directors could range from no cost if there are no contested elections to as much as \$130,000 if all five wards have contested elections. In 2008, all five wards held elections, but only one was contested. In the future, only two or three wards will be up for election each even numbered year. For planning purposes, an average annual cost is assumed to even out cash flows between even and odd years.
2. Assumes the set-aside for parks and open space in the County Special Projects Fund increases at a rate of 5 percent per year excluding inflation.

Excluding the effects of inflation, the transition from existing staffing to the proposed operational staffing goal presented above would have the effect of increasing the District’s total operational funding needs from \$264,000 in FY 2007-8 to approximately \$515,000 in FY 2012-13.

If the County Board of Supervisors decides to continue its current policy of setting aside 60 percent of the Special Projects Fund for parks and open space, and assuming the TOT continues to grow by five percent per year after the effects of inflation, the District could have sufficient funding to cover the staffing and operational needs proposed above. However, over time more of the County’s funding would need to be dedicated to operations, rather than split fairly evenly between operations and capital investments, as it is at present. As noted earlier, under the County Board of Supervisor’s current policy for the TOT, there should be sufficient operational funding to allow the District to add 0.5 FTE of staff during FY 2008-9. Any additional increase in staff support would require the amount set aside for capital investments to decrease to accommodate the increase in operational expenses. This would require a change to the Board of Supervisor’s current policy of dividing the park and open space funds approximately one-half to operations and one-half to capital projects. If the proportion allocated

to operations were to be increased as projected above, and assuming the Board of Supervisors continues to set aside \$200,000 each year for the possible purchase of Skyline Park from the State, by FY 2012-13 there would be virtually no remaining funds available each year for use as local match for grants for capital projects.

The Napa County Board of Supervisor's existing policy regarding the distribution of the Special Projects Fund runs through middle of 2010. In 2009 the District Board of Directors will need to evaluate the types of staff services which are most needed, as well as the optimum balance between capital and operational funding, and develop a recommendation for consideration by the Board of Supervisors as it evaluates its policy for the Special Projects Fund.

The above discussion assumes County TOT revenue continues to grow at approximately the same pace as in recent years and the County budget overall continues to be fiscally sound. However, the District recognizes that a variety of factors—such as changes in County priorities, economic recession or changes in State law related to the County's share of tax revenues—could result in flat or decreased funding from the County to the District.

If sufficient operational funding is not available to support the above staffing plan, either because of County policy or because the TOT does not continue to increase at historic rates, the District would most likely need to take staff resources dedicated to new projects and instead devote those resources to maintenance of what has been developed up to that point. Under this scenario, only a small subset of the Tier One projects identified in Table VIII-1 could be implemented, and few of the Tier Two projects would be achievable. In extreme circumstances, the District may also need to consider closing parks and trails. Another option would be to seek voter approval for a new dedicated tax.

These cautions notwithstanding, the currently projected need for operational funding needs is relatively small, and by itself does not merit a stand-alone ballot measure for dedicated tax revenues. This is a major reason why the District is not at this time proposing such a ballot measure (see subsection "C.1 below:).

## 5. Capital Funding

Grants from local, state, federal and private non-profit foundation sources are often available for capital investments. Example of such grant sources include:

- Bay Area Conservancy Program (State Coastal Conservancy)
- Habitat and agricultural protection grants (State Wildlife Conservation Board)
- Habitat Conservation Fund (State Department of Parks and Recreation)
- California River Parkway Grant program (State Resources Agency)
- Per Capital Formula Grants (California Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Regional Trails Program (California Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Boating and Waterways grants (California Department of Boating and Waterways)
- Federal Transportation Act (most recently SAFETEA-LU)(California Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission)
- Federal Assistance (Title 28) matching grants (with BOR and BLM partners)
- EQUIP grants (U.S. Department of Agriculture)



- Private foundations

It must be emphasized that the amount and ease of obtaining such funds varies dramatically over time and by purpose. To be effective in obtaining grants, the District must be flexible in deciding which projects to pursue, and be able to act quickly. Most grants also require matching funds. A steady local funding stream for capital matching grants is the most effective means for obtaining such funds in a timely way.

The past eight years have been good in terms of the availability of state grants. This is because the voters of California have approved a series of park and natural resources bond measures: Proposition 12 in 2000, Propositions 40 and 50 in 2002, and Proposition 84 in 2006. These bond measures have put money into each of the state grant programs listed above. Without future state bond measures, these grant programs will run out of funding within the next few years.

In the past few years, Napa County received funding from the per capita formula grant programs contained in Propositions 12 and 40, as well as two small planning grants from the State Coastal Conservancy's Bay Area Conservancy Program competitive grant process. The Proposition 12 funds have been fully expended, partly through projects managed by the County, but mostly through grants to other agencies and organizations including the Skyline Park Citizens Association, the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, the Land Trust of Napa County and the District. Approximately one-third of the Proposition 40 per capita formula grant funds available to Napa County were distributed to the County's four cities and one town for urban recreation projects. The remainder was approved by the Board of Supervisors to be used to assist with the acquisition and improvement by the District of the Moore Creek property (see projects B.9 and A.22). In addition, the District in June 2008 secured a \$1,032,300 competitive grant under the River Parkway Grant Program funded through Proposition 50.

There are no per capita formula grant funds in Proposition 84. Rather, Proposition 84 funds are either reserved for various state agencies, or will be distributed to local agencies and non-profit organizations on a competitive basis over the coming three to five years. Once Proposition 84 funds are expended, future state grants will become extremely tight unless and until such time as the voters approve another resources bond measure. Considering the imbalances facing the State budget, the weak economy, and the accumulated debt load at the State level, it may be some time before there is another resources bond measure.

A major challenge for the District, therefore, is to complete advance planning for as many worthy projects as possible, as quickly as possible, to maximize the District's ability to bring State grant funds to Napa while they are still available.

A second major challenge for the District is to obtain matching funds. The portion of the County's Special Projects Fund set aside for park and open space capital improvements is especially useful for this purpose because there is local control over how these funds should be allocated, and decisions can be made relatively quickly. However, as noted in the discussion above regarding operational funding, if the full-staffing plan proposed in the above discussion on staffing were to be funded from the Special Projects Fund, that would leave little

additional funding for capital projects beyond the set-aside for the eventual acquisition of Skyline Park.

Private foundation grants are another source of matching funds for capital projects. Foundations are generally much more interested in funding capital projects than ongoing operational expenses. The disadvantage of foundation grants is that foundations typically prefer to award grants that close a remaining funding gap for a project, as opposed to being the primary funder on that project. This can create a “chicken and egg” problem when putting together project funding packages. The problem is particularly challenging for larger projects, who often need to have funds come from a multitude of sources. Unfortunately, each additional source of grant funding on a project increases the complexity of and slows down project implementation. For these reasons, having a sufficient and predictable local funding stream for capital projects, such that any given project need only rely on a combination of one outside grant matched by local discretionary funds, dramatically increases efficiency.

## C. FUNDING OPTIONS

### 1. Public Funding

When the establishment of a park and open space district was first recommended by the County’s Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee, it was hoped that the district would seek and obtain voter approval for a dedicated funding source. While this continues to be a long-term objective, the District does not have immediate plans to seek dedicated funding.

There are several reasons for this. First, the District believes it is essential to demonstrate what it can do with existing public funding, before considering whether it should ask the voters for additional taxpayer funding. Second, the inability of a proposed county sales tax for transportation to obtain the required 2/3 voter approval in November 2006 means there continues to be a significant unfunded need for transportation. It does not make sense to have potentially competing funding proposals before the voters at the same time. Third, given the present state of the economy, with little expectation for improvement in the near future, in the District’s judgment now is not a good time to be asking voters for more taxes. Fourth, as noted earlier, the increase in annual operational funding needed by the end of the first five year period is only about \$250,000, assuming the TOT continues to grow as it has in the recent past and the County continues its current policy regarding the TOT. For this level of funding need, it may not make sense to seek a whole new tax funding measure. Finally, and most fundamentally, if the County Board of Supervisors is willing to continue using the Special Projects Fund for park and open space purposes, the District can continue making solid progress on the projects identified in this Master Plan without having to ask the taxpayers for additional funding.

The above notwithstanding, the District’s present ability to protect the County’s significant open space land and natural resources is very limited. To make more than marginal progress in acquiring and preserving the County’s important natural resources, new sources of revenue

will be needed. One potential though small source of revenue, as called for in the County of Napa General Plan, is for the County to require new developments to mitigate for environmental impacts and increased need for outdoor recreational facilities, through the payment of in-lieu fees in those cases where impacts and needs cannot be addressed on-site. Such fees could then be used to fund District projects related to those impacts and needs. It should be noted, however, that since there is only limited development in the unincorporated portions of the County, development impact fees would only generate limited revenues.

In the future, if there is strong public interest in having the District undertake a more active program of protecting significant open space resources in the County, it will most likely be necessary to seek voter approval for a dedicated local revenue stream, either to fund District operational needs and thereby free up County Special Project funds for preservation projects, or to directly provide capital funds for acquisition and preservation projects.

## 2. Project Self-Sufficiency

The concept of financial self-sufficiency is incorporated in the projects contained in the work program to the extent possible without undermining the guiding principle that the District should attempt to provide benefits to people of all ages and income levels.

One aspect of financially self-sufficient projects is cost minimization. As discussed earlier, this can be done in part by encouraging volunteers to “adopt” particular parks and trails, and to serve as camp hosts, trail monitors, docents and laborers. Physical assets such as existing residences on District property (such as at Moore Creek) can be used to obtain caretaker services at no cost to the District. Concessionaires can be used to provide services at lower cost than can generally be provided directly by public agency employees. Combining facilities (such as co-locating trail staging areas with campgrounds) reduces routine operating costs. Projects can be designed to avoid amenities (such as grass turf and other labor-intensive landscaping) which require high levels of maintenance. Finally, the District’s role with environmental education and interpretation can be restricted to providing physical infrastructure and on-line informational materials, which are then available for use by schools and other community-based organizations, rather than having the District directly attempt to provide educational and interpretive programming.

A second aspect of financial self-sufficiency is revenue generation. The potential for revenues from user fees varies by type of activity. While fees for day use of trails is generally not practical nor desirable, the public does expect to pay to use campgrounds. Campgrounds, particularly those which involve recreational vehicles and tent cabins, are capable of generating sufficient fees to cover their operating and maintenance costs. In addition, in at least some circumstances, equity considerations can be addressed by using revenues from the more lucrative accommodations (such as tent cabins) to subsidize more basic camp sites (such as youth-oriented group sites).

## 3. Local Philanthropy

Napa County is noted for its tradition of philanthropy. Several of the projects contained in this



Master Plan are well suited for some of the existing philanthropic organizations. These are the projects that include outdoor education, particularly where it is oriented toward youth and underserved communities. By contrast, open space preservation projects are more likely to appeal to individual donors. Several of the land preservation projects in this Plan involve partnerships with the Land Trust of Napa County. The Land Trust has a well established reputation and network of donors, and this Plan assumes the Land Trust will continue to play a leading role in raising funds for projects that involve the acquisition of open space.

The District should continue to partner with, and not seek to compete with existing philanthropic efforts. At the same time, the experience of park and open space agencies elsewhere demonstrates the value of agencies forming adjunct non-profit organizations to support specific needs. These have tended to supplement, not replace or compete with, other established philanthropic programs. For this reason, one of the projects identified in this Master Plan (Project D.3) is to evaluate the establishment of a District-sponsored non-profit foundation.

#### 4. Summary

Planning for and securing funding is the most difficult and fluid of the challenges facing the District. The District is fortunate to be receiving financial support from Napa County. The immediate challenge, therefore, is for the District to demonstrate that it can use this funding efficiently and effectively, and use it as leverage to bring additional dollars to the County. This Master Plan is an essential tool in guiding the District in meeting this challenge.

By the end of this first Master Plan, the District intends to have established a clear track record of accomplishment. This track record will demonstrate what is possible given current levels of funding, as well as show what would be possible assuming different levels of future funding support. This track record will be the basis for continued discussions with the County and other funders and with the residents and voters of Napa County over future funding support for the District.

## Section IX

# Proposals and Projects Suggested for Future Review and Development

This section is intended to document proposals and projects suggested as part of the Master Plan review process which are not yet sufficiently researched and developed for inclusion in the current Plan, but which the Board of Directors judged are worthy of consideration during the next update to the Plan.

One project was identified through the public review process which met this criteria:

Oat Hill. Oat Hill is located in the City of American Canyon, and is the highest point in the City. It is directly east of the Napa Salt Plant Site wetlands, and from the top offers sweeping 360 degree views. Public comments were received requesting that the District work with the City of American Canyon to see if it would be possible to provide a public park/viewing area on the top of the hill.

## Glossary of Agencies and Organizations that appear in this Master Plan

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council (BARTC). The non-profit sponsor of the regional Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). BCDC regulates develop within the shoreline band of San Francisco Bay, including the lower reaches of the Napa River south of Highway 12.

Berryessa Trails and Conservation (BT&C). BR&C is a non-profit organization formed to conserve open space and improve outdoor recreational opportunities in the Lake District.

Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Partnership (BRBNA). The BRBNA Partnership is an informal partnership of public agencies, non-profit land conservation organizations, recreation groups and private landowners, dedicated to protecting and enhancing the natural landscape extending from Solano County to northern Lake County, including the eastern portion of Napa County.

Boy Scouts of America (BSA). BSA was organized in 1910, and chartered by Congress in 1916, to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness. BSA troops in Napa County are part of the Mount Diablo-Silverado Chapter.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM). An agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior, BLM is the largest public agency landowner in the county

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). An agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior, BOR owns Lake Berryessa, which is the single largest public recreational facility in the County.

California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). DFG is a major landowner in the county, with a mandate to protect habitat and allow wildlife-dependent recreation. DFG is also responsible for administering a variety of state environmental regulations associated with riparian areas, wetlands and endangered species.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). CDF provides fire protection services in unincorporated Napa County. It also manages the Las Posadas Demonstration Forest southeast of Angwin.

California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). DPR manages Bothe-Napa State Park and Robert Louis Stevenson State Park. In addition, DPR administers several park, recreation and habitat-related grant programs.Local municipalities. Several of the projects in this master plan involve working closely with one or more local cities to provide recrea-



tional amenities which serve the residents of those cities but are outside of city limits or have region-wide significance.

California Resources Agency. The Resources Agency is the umbrella agency over the California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy. The Resources Agency also directly administers the River Parkway Grant Program.

City of American Canyon. One of the five incorporated cities in Napa County (population 14,306 in 2005).

City of Calistoga. One of the five incorporated cities in Napa County (population 5,223 in 2005).

City of Napa. The largest of the five incorporated cities in Napa County (population 76,346 in 2005)

City of St. Helena. One of the five incorporated cities in Napa County (population 6,006 in 2005).

Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). An agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior, FWS manages numerous wildlife reserves, including a portion of the Napa-Sonoma Marshes. FWS also has a regulatory branch which implements the federal Endangered Species Act.

Friends of American Canyon Open Space (FOACOS). A support group formed in 2005 to lend assistance to both the Newell Preserve and tidal wetlands in American Canyon.

Friends of the Napa River (FONR). FONR is a non-profit organization formed in 1994 to heighten awareness of the Napa River and to support the responsible protection, restoration, development and celebration of the Napa River.

Land Trust of Napa County. The Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting farmland and open space in Napa County through either donated conservation easements over private lands, or donated or purchases fee title ownership. Since its inception, the Land Trust has been involved in the protection of over 50,000 acres of farmland and open space in Napa County.

Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD). The RCD is a special district formed under the laws of the State of California. The RCD works to enhance and restore habitat, water quality and farmland, with a special focus on private lands. The RCD is also involved in environmental education.

Napa-Solano Audubon Society. A non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and appreciation of native birds and bird habitat.

Napa Valley Chapter, California Native Plant Society (CNPS—Napa Valley). CNPS is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving native plants and restoring native plant communities.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). An agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the NRCS works with landowners to protect, enhance and restore natural resources, with a special focus on private lands. The NRCS often partners with the RCD.

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The Regional Board has regulatory authority over both point source and non-point source pollution in Napa County. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB has jurisdiction over the Napa River watershed, while the Central Valley RWQCB has jurisdiction in the eastern portion of Napa County.

San Francisco Bay Trail Project. The non-profit arm of the Association of Bay Area Governments which sponsors the nine-county San Francisco Bay Trail.

Skyline Park Citizens Association. The Association is a non-profit organization that has operated Skyline Park since its creation under a concessionaire agreement with Napa County.

State Coastal Conservancy. The State Coastal Conservancy is an agency within the California Resources Agency. The Bay Area Conservancy Program of the State Coastal Conservancy was established in 1997 to support a close working partnership between the State land conservation and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Through this partnership the Conservancy provides regional planning, coordination and funding, while its local partners are responsible for most project implementation.

State Land Commission (SLC). SLC is an agency of the State of California which administers a variety of State lands. In Napa County, these include State School Lands (open space lands held in trust by the State for the purpose of supporting public schools) as well as public trust lands located along the lower reaches of the Napa River.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC). TNC is a national non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and restoring natural landscapes and resources. TNC has been involved in several significant land conservation projects in Napa County.

Town of Yountville. The smallest of the incorporated areas in Napa County (population 3,257 in 2005)

University of California Natural Reserve System. The UC Natural Reserve System manages open space areas around the State, with a focus on research and education. UC Davis administers the McLaughlin Reserve in Napa County north of Lake Berryessa, as well as Quail Ridge on the southern shore on Lake Berryessa.

Watershed Information Center and Conservancy (WICC). Organized under the auspices of the County of Napa, the WICC under the direction of a governing board appointed by the Napa County Board of Supervisors provides coordination, education and support for efforts to protect and improve water quality in Napa County.

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). WCB administers grant programs for both habitat preservation and enhancement and farmland protection. WCB also acts as the acquisition entity for the California Department of Fish and Game.

