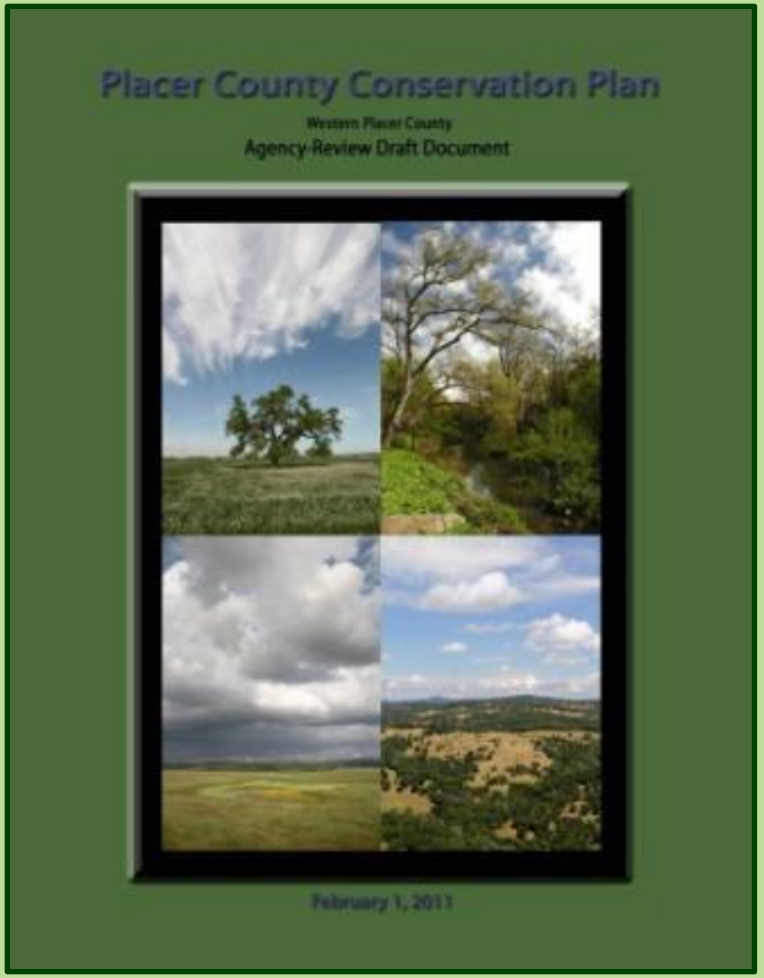
Placer County Conservation Plan

Habitat Conservation Planning – From Tahoe to the Bay

Lessons Learned

Placer County Conservation Plan

November 19, 2014



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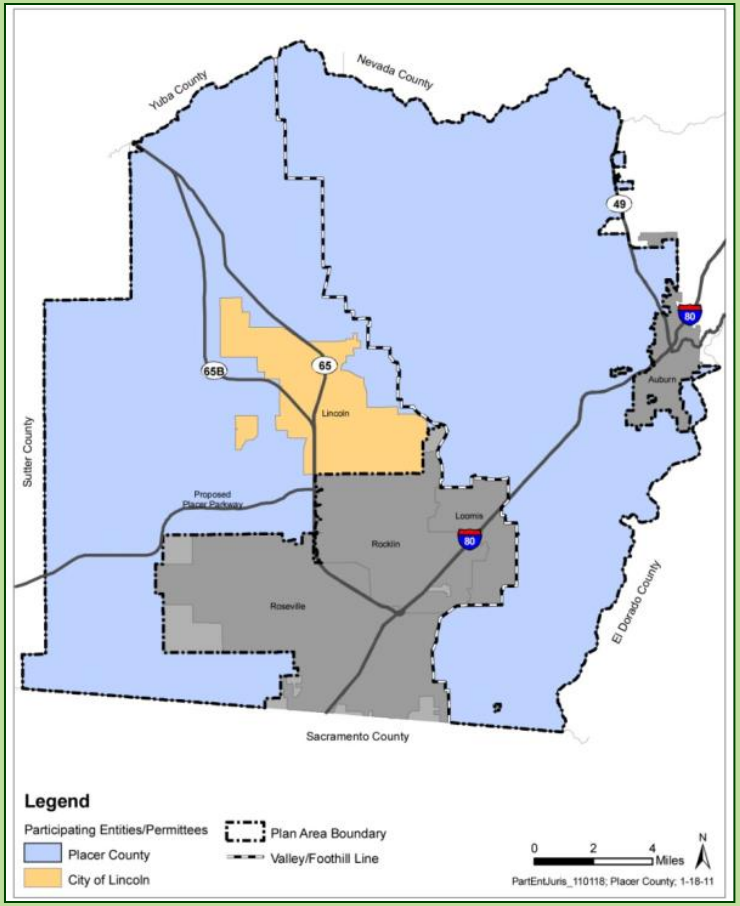
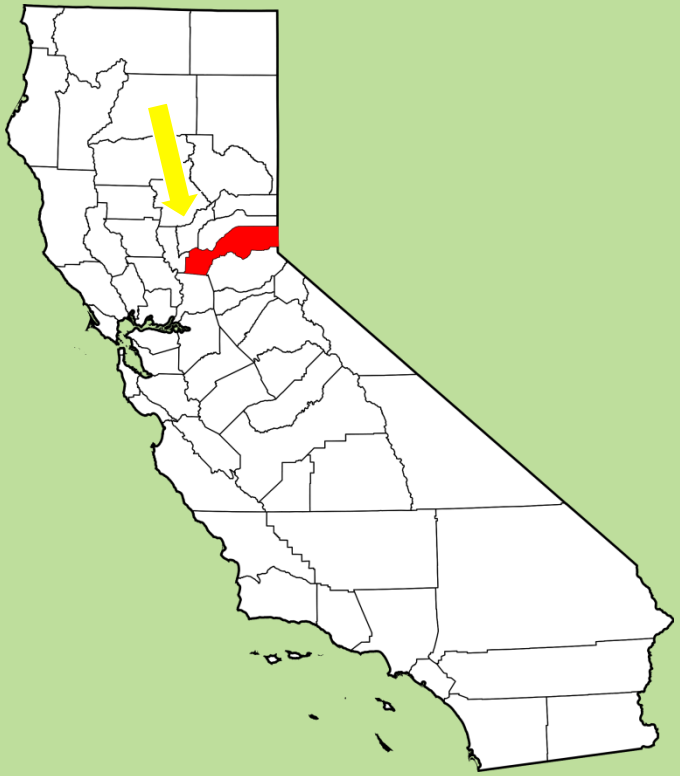
PCCP Coverage Area





The PCCP covers the unincorporated area and the City of Lincoln for all areas west of Supervisorial District 5.

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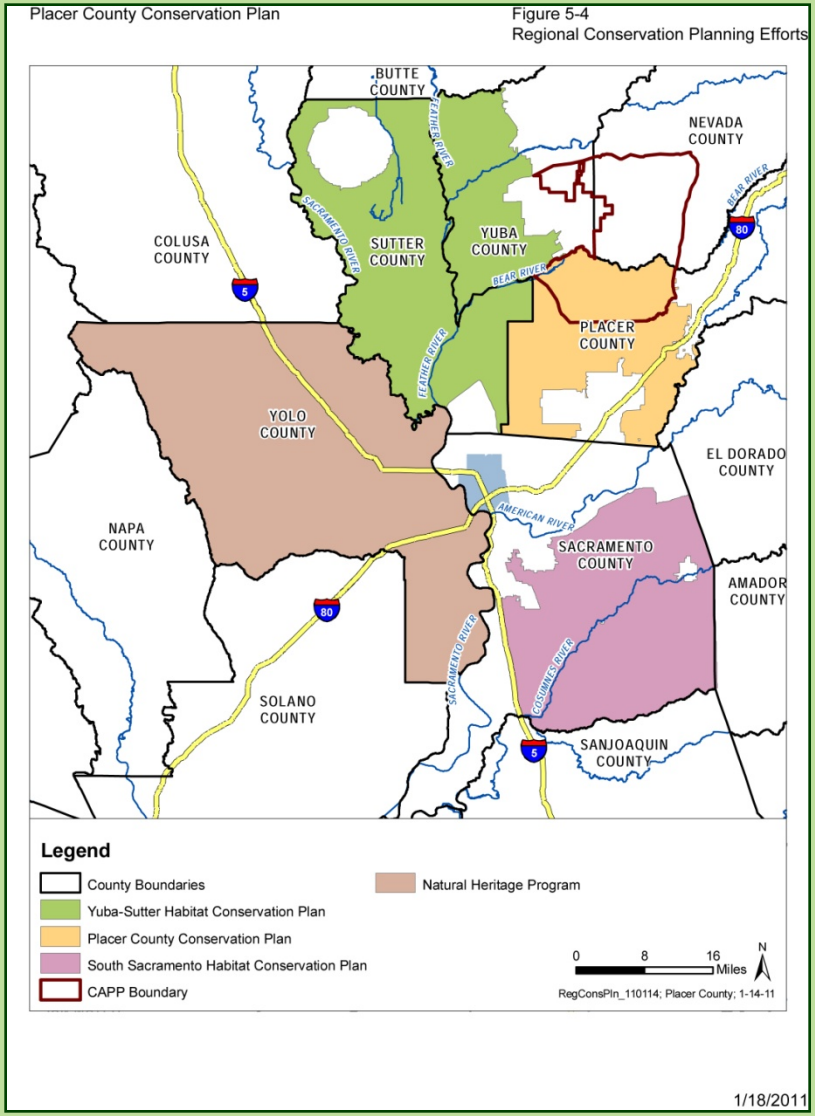
PCCP Coverage Area – Regional Conservation



The PCCP is now one of four major conservation efforts in the Sacramento Region including efforts in Yolo County, Sacramento County, and a joint effort in Sutter/Yuba County.

Placer County Conservation Plan

2060 Growth Scenario

Projections for PCCP Economic Analysis	2007	2060	2007-2060
Phase 1 Area (Including Non-Participating Cities)			
Jobs by Place of Work	149,000	445,000	296,000
Housing Units	118,000	290,000	172,000
Total Population	294,000	748,000	454,000

Participating Agencies Pop./Emp	2007-2060
Total New Population	**224,000**
Total New Jobs	**153,000**
Total New Households	**90,000**

The PCCP will cover the endangered species and wetland impacts for the 90,000 new homes and the 153,000 new jobs that will be created over the next 50 years.

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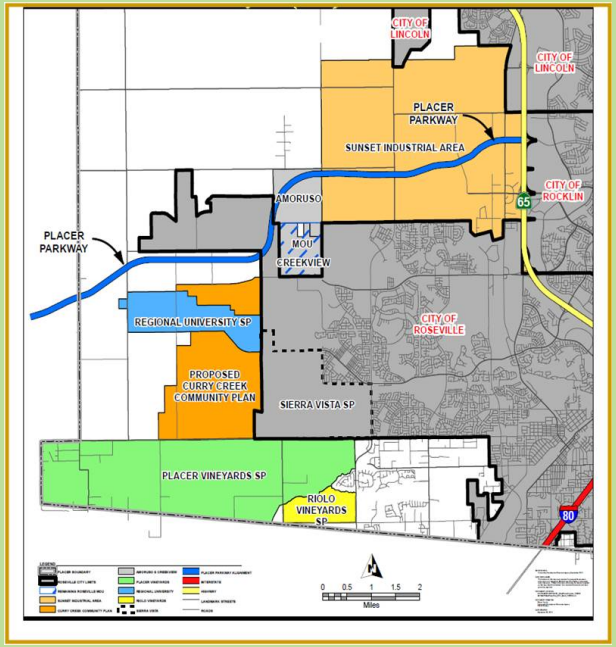
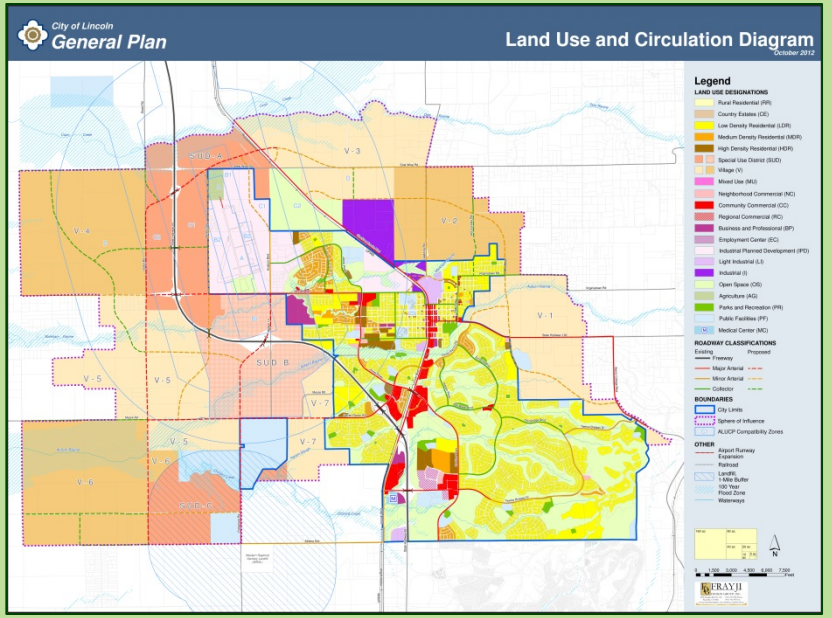
West Placer Projected Growth

Unincorporated urban development





City of Lincoln General Plan

Forecasts predict that the majority of new growth will be in the unincorporated area and Lincoln.

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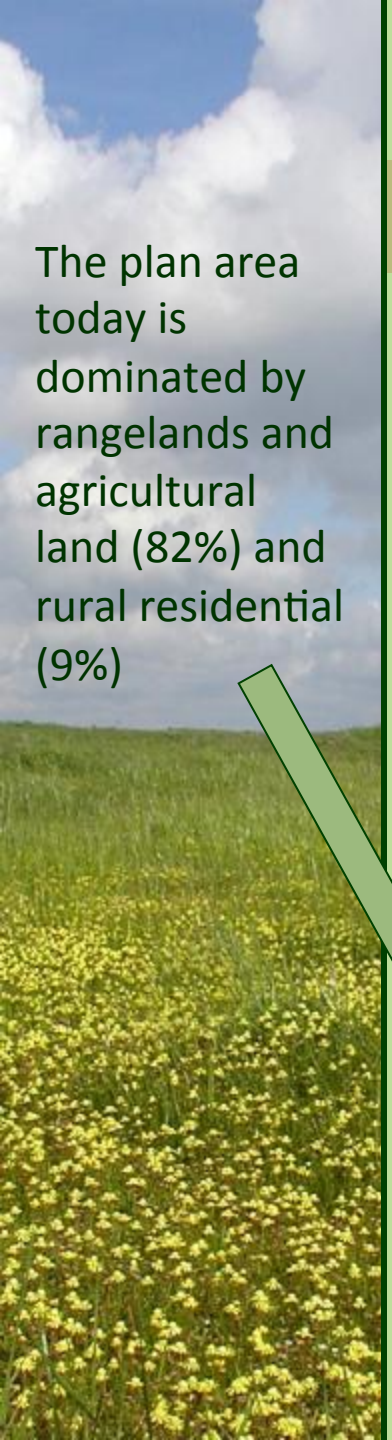
PCCP Impacts - 2060



The plan area today is dominated by rangelands and agricultural land (82%) and rural residential (9%)

Over the 50-year permit term, potential future growth in the Plan area may convert up to 29,000 acres of land for urban, suburban, and rural residential development. The PCCP proposes to establish a Reserve System of 47,000 acres which will augment the 16,000 acres of existing reserve lands in western Placer to provide long term conservation for natural communities and covered species.

Existing Land Use in the Plan Area		
Land Use Type	**Area (ac)**	**% of Total**
Urban and Suburban	18,510	9%
Rural Residential	18,871	9%
Agriculture - Cropland	24,954	12%
Agriculture - Rangeland	79,825	38%
Forest	52,234	25%
Aquatic/riverine	10,118	5%
Open Water	5,317	2%
Total	209,832	100%

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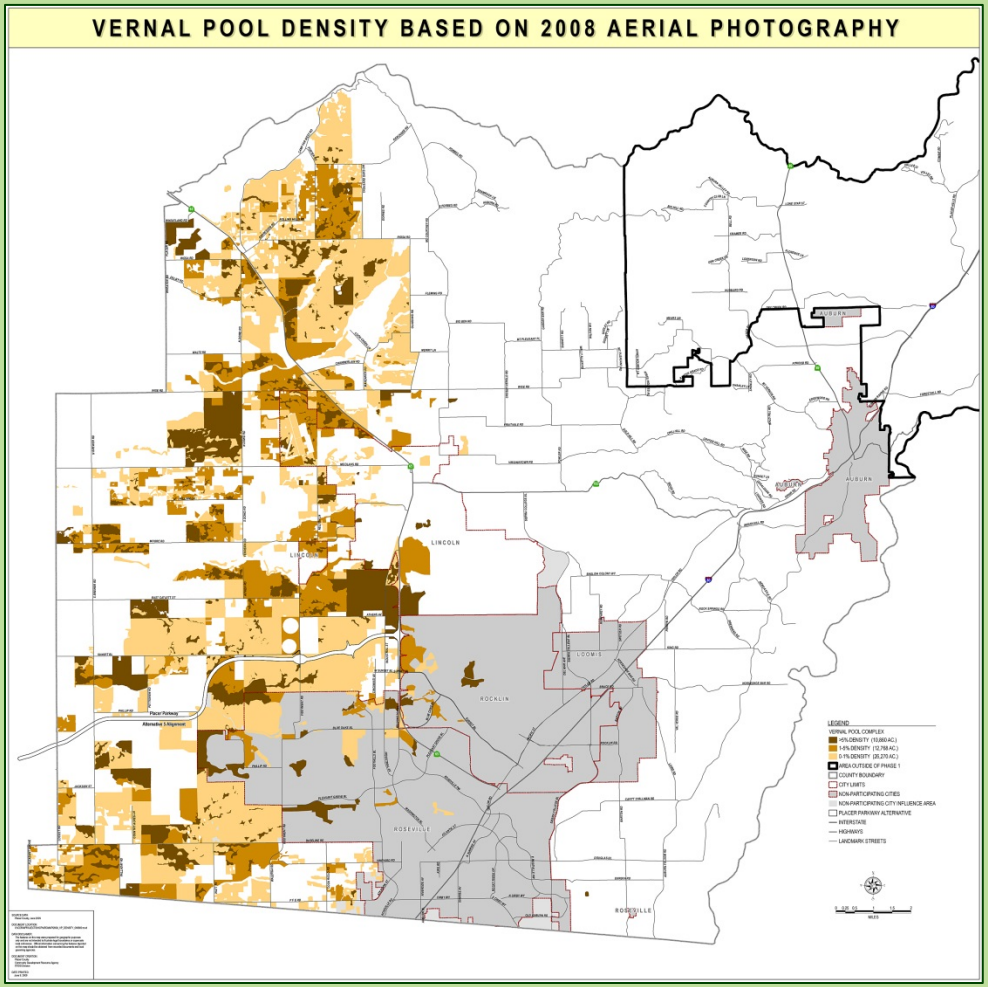
The Number One Regulatory Issue to be Addressed

Growth is following an extension of existing backbone infrastructure (highways, water and wastewater treatment).

Growth is directed towards one of the few large expanses of vernal pool grasslands in the Central Valley



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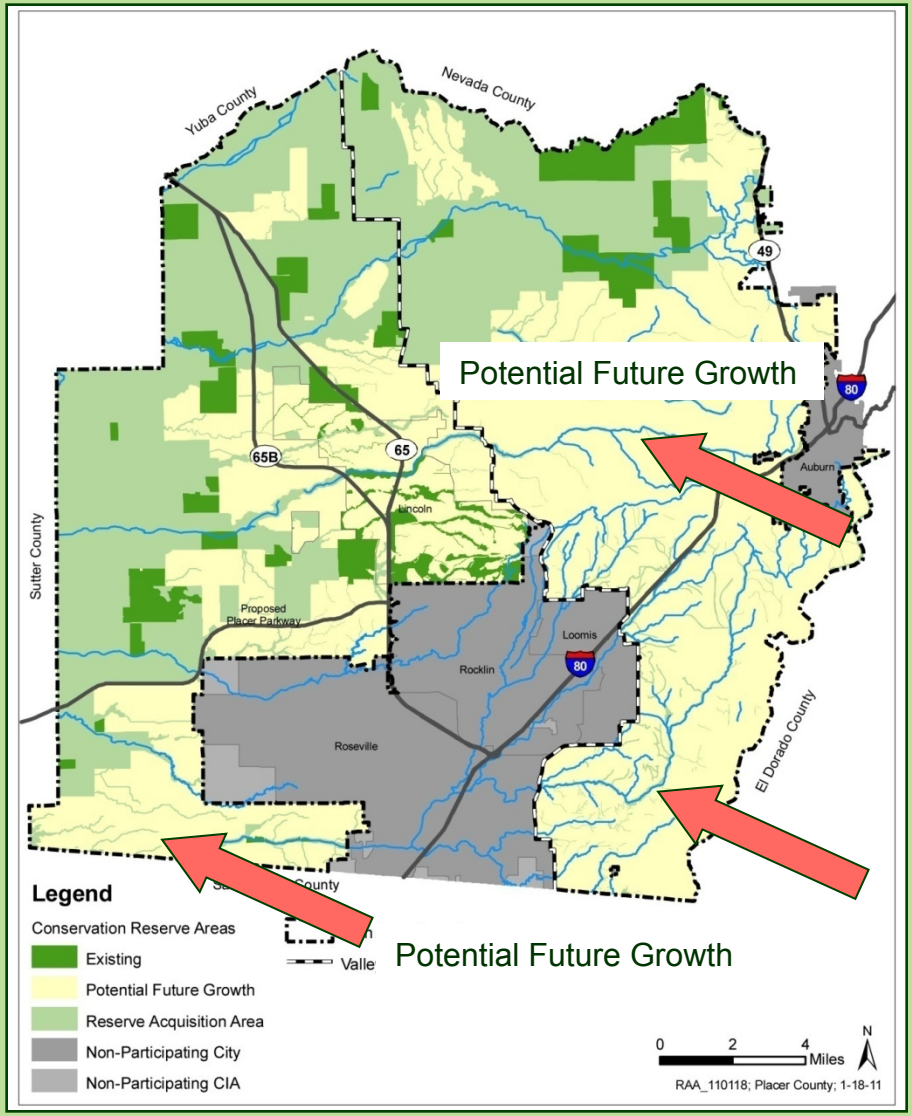
Potential Future Growth



Growth will occur in the form of suburban and rural residential infill and large scale urban developments on the valley floor.

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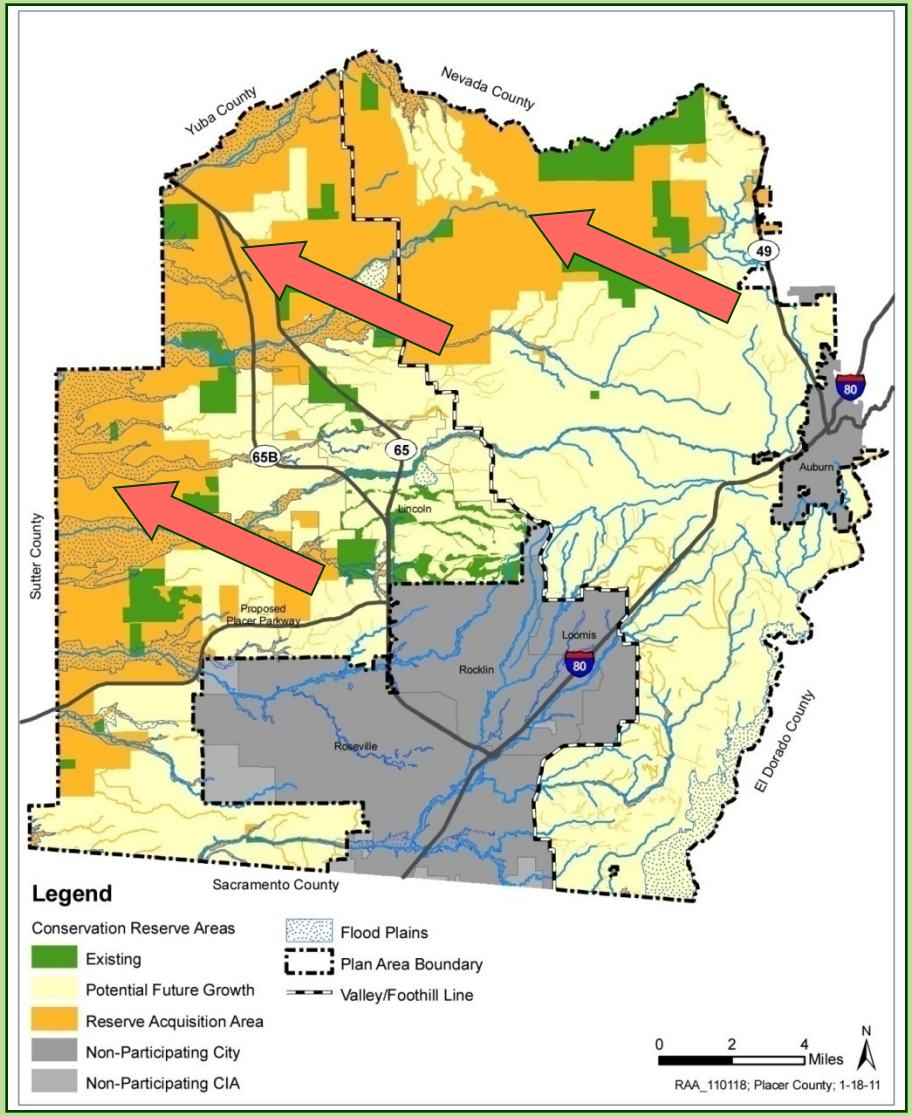
Reserve Acquisition Area



The current PCCP depicts a 70,000+ acre reserve acquisition area that identifies a region within which lands would be acquired and in some cases restored to account for 29,000 acres of anticipated impacts.

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Lessons I Should Have Learned

- Building a plan with limited occurrence data will be a challenge even with robust remote sensing data
- Not having a base of public land to build upon is a challenge for reserve design
- Developing a reserve on lands that are 100% private property is difficult (e.g., data collection, property rights, takings claims, lack of access, agri stakeholder concerns)
- No occurrence data essentially equals no take. You can't develop a plan on habitat conservation values or enhanced values alone
- Land use and conservation planning – it is oil and water and be prepared for a long policy debate if conservation vs. growth alternatives are not reconciled prior to plan preparation.

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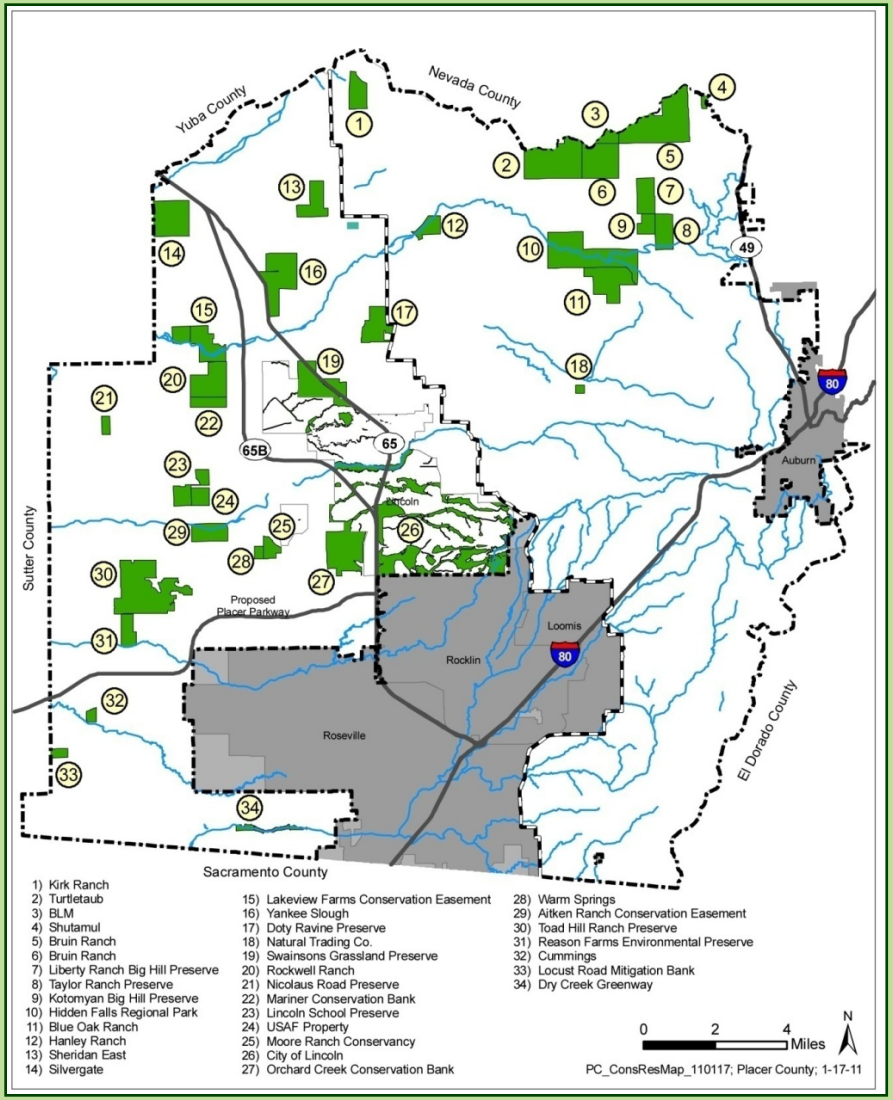
PCCP – Existing Conservation



The PCCP will incorporate a number of areas that are already preserved today through Placer Legacy, the Placer Land Trust, mitigation and conservation banks and other conservation efforts.

However, practically no public land is available to build a reserve. Most of these lands will not be part of the reserve area.

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Lessons I'm Still Learning

- Species List – keep it short and then shorten it some more
- Keep Agency staff engaged by delivering the key work products but be prepared to pay the bill.
- A HCP/NCCP may not be cheaper than status quo because of the requirement to contribute to recovery and to provide for conservation. So the plan must be more efficient than status quo.
- Keep stakeholders engaged in a relevant way while negotiating permit.

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Lessons I'm Too Stubborn to Get

- Integration – While the development of strategies that account for the CESA/FESA and CWA 404 impacts are challenging – they are still necessary; particularly in landscapes that have wetland dominated species. In a political context; they are absolutely critical.
- Salmonids – developing a conservation strategy for 3 salmonid watersheds in 3 counties (let alone Bay/Delta relationships) is a substantial challenge but one that we will continue to try to achieve.

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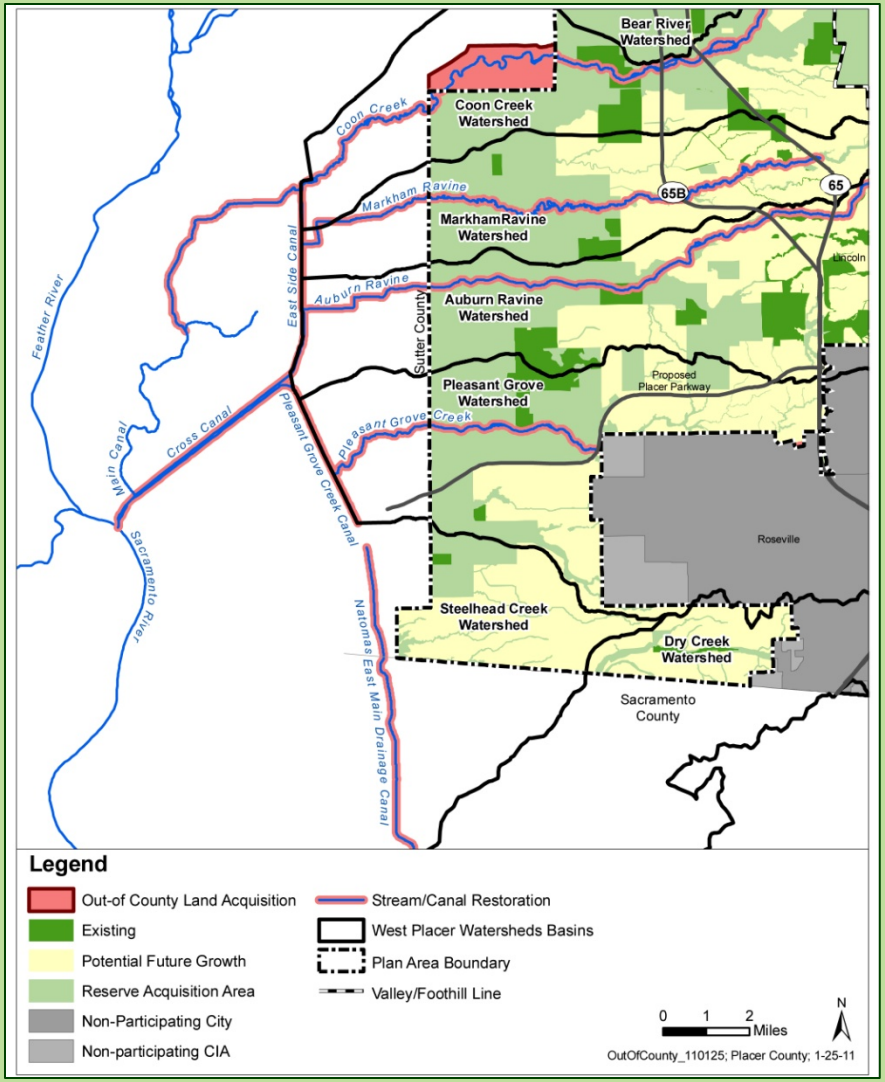
Out-of-County Coordination for Salmonids



The County is coordinating with Sutter County on fish passage efforts including land conservation along Lower Coon Creek. The salmonids present in Placer County streams can only spawn and rear via the canal and stream systems in Sutter and Sacramento Counties.

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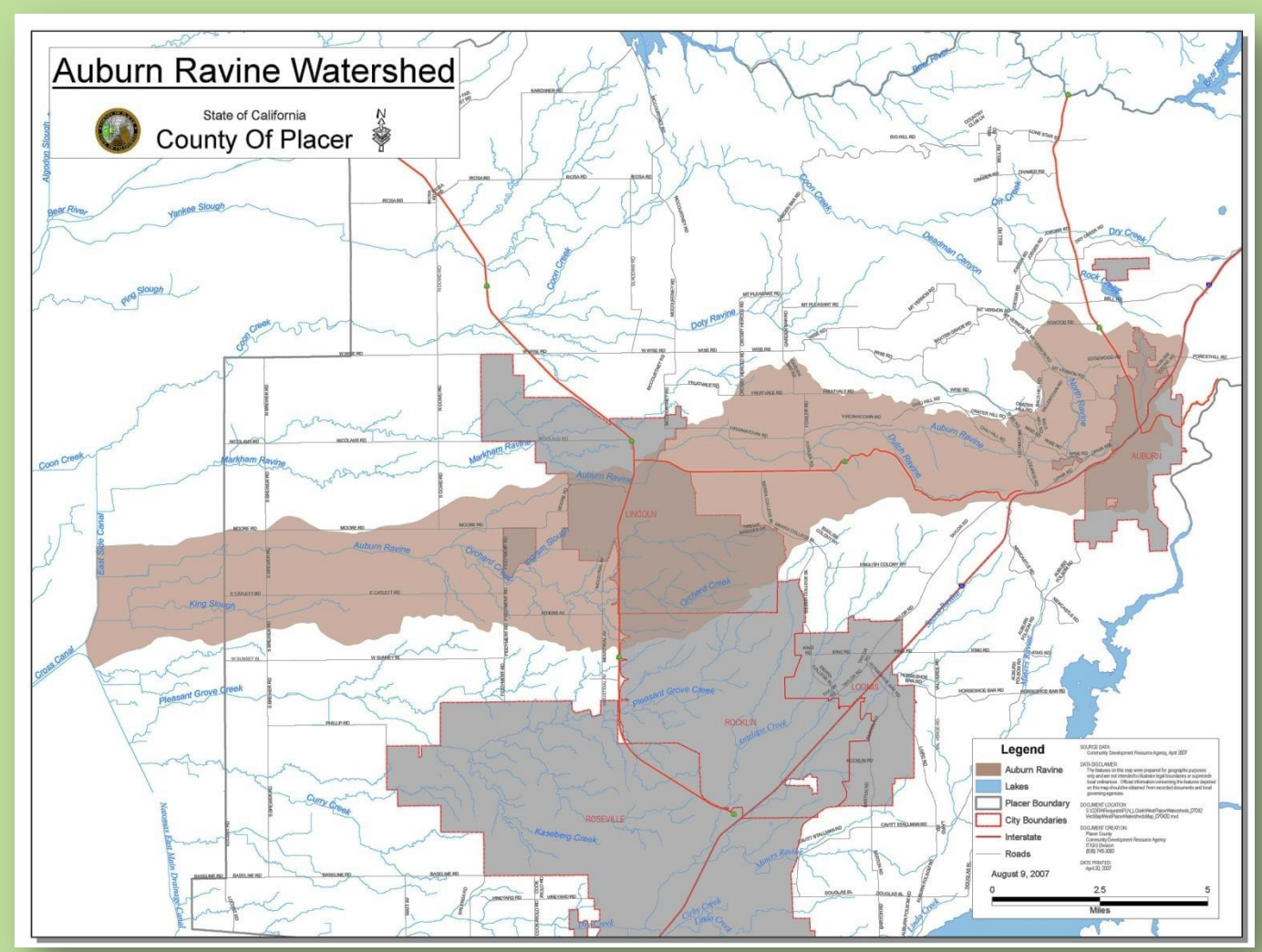
Auburn Ravine Watershed



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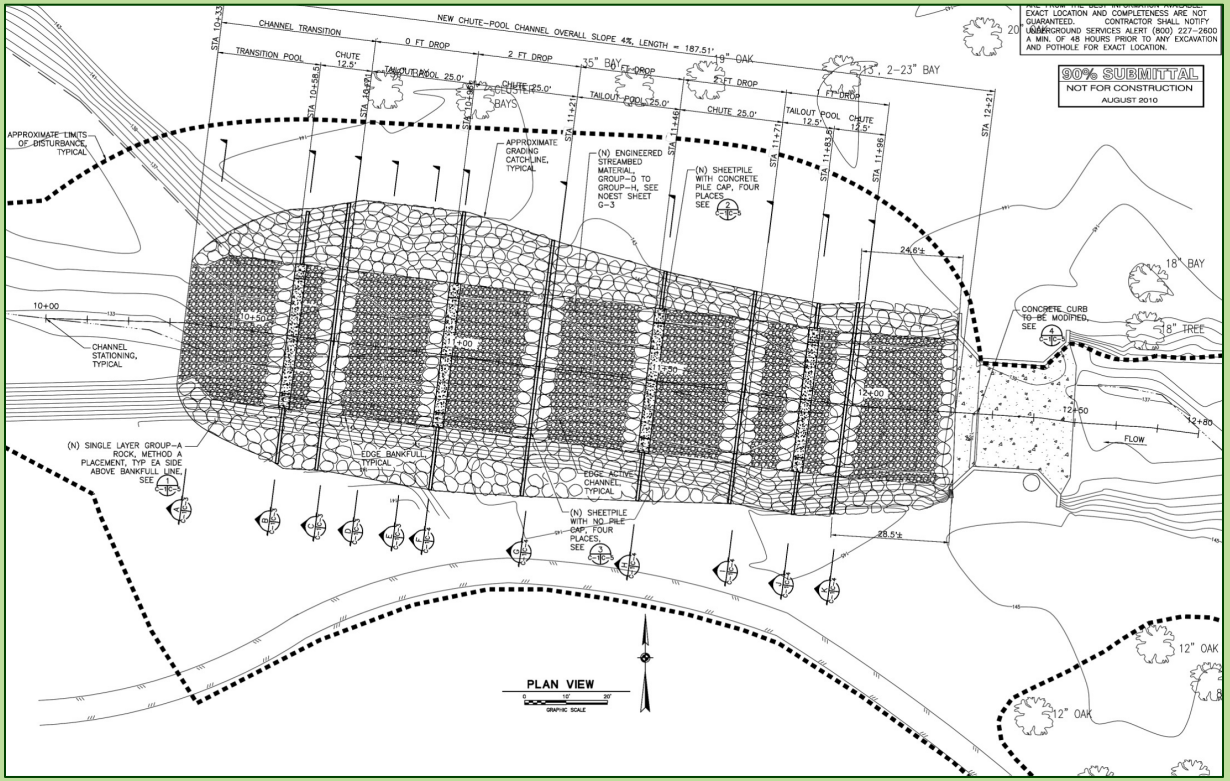
Success for Salmonids – Much more to do



Placer County and the Nevada Irrigation District jointly funded and designed a salmonid fish passage project on Auburn Ravine in down town Lincoln.

Auburn Ravine Fish Passage

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Centerline Profile of the Cascade Structure – NID Gaging Station

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Chinook Salmon on Auburn Ravine

Photo taken in 2012 above the Gaging Station

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Lessons Learned – What Should be Fixed

- **Out-of-County conservation** - We are missing out on multi-jurisdictional, watershed-level conservation opportunities by limiting conservation plan boundaries/ permit areas to political boundaries.
- **Mitigation/Conservation banks** – permit area vs. bank service area is still not fully resolved. Credits sales within the permit area; still not fully resolved.
- **Conservation of habitat vs. conservation based on occurrences** - We seem to be missing opportunities for good conservation actions because of the need to acquire land based upon presence/absence of occurrences (e.g., CRLF).
- **Funding** – we need dedicated funds for the state/ federal match with the same assurances that the plans provide for local requirements

Placer County Conservation Plan

Contact Information

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http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Planning/PlacerLegacy
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