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MEMORANDUM

To: Shawna Purvines, Principal Planner, El Dorado County
From: Cathy Spence-Wells, Principal
Subject: Biological Resources Policy Update Decision Points 8 through 10
Date: March 20, 2015
Attachment(s): Figure 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the Board of Supervisors hearing on January 13, 2015, the approach, timeline, and 10 Decision Points for the Biological Resources Policy Update project were presented to the Board for approval. The Board generally agreed with the steps and timeline proposed to update the General Plan biological resources policies. As summarized below, the Board has provided direction on Decision Points 1 through 7. This memo provides a detailed analysis of Decision Points 8 through 10 to facilitate the Board's discussion of these final Decision Points.

During the January 13, 2015 hearing, Decision Point 1 was presented to the Board and direction was given to prepare an AB 1600 Fee Nexus Study and revise the in-lieu fee with updated methodology, assumptions, and property values. At the January 26, 2015 hearing, Decision Points 2 and 3 were presented to the Board and direction was given to use oak woodland as the method for determining oak woodland impacts and necessary mitigation (Decision Point 2) and to revise the General Plan policy language to require wildlife movement studies to evaluate project-specific impacts on public safety and wildlife for projects that include new roads of 4 or more lanes or the widening of roads to 4 or more lanes (Decision Point 3). Decision Points 4-7 were presented to the Board at the February 23, 2015 hearing. For Decision Point 4, direction was given to revise the minimum parcel size criteria for projects to be exempt from oak woodland mitigation and to update the oak woodland retention standards and mitigation ratios. Direction given on Decision Point 5, was to clarify the use of exemptions and the definition of a Heritage Tree. The Board's direction on Decision Point 6 was to retain the Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) shown in the 2008 Oak Woodlands Management Plan (OWMP) and establish criteria for identifying additional conservation areas. Decision Point 7 direction was to use mitigation ratios for special-status biological resources, including vegetation communities, plants, and wildlife as a method of meeting the goal of the conservation strategy.

2.0 DECISION POINT 8: IMPORTANT BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR OVERLAY STANDARDS

Determine specific standards applicable to development within the Important Biological Corridor (IBC) overlay, such as minimum parcel size, contiguous areas, and minimum corridor widths.

Options: Determine whether to incorporate specific standards for project review in the IBC overlay as described in Policy 7.4.2.9 or establish a performance-based approach for project review with the IBC overlay.

Analysis: This discussion considers current General Plan policy requirements related to the IBC overlay, state and regional data and analysis of the need for providing habitat connections and movement corridors, and prior analysis of the potential effect of land development in the County on wildlife movement patterns.

The current IBC overlay includes 64,600 acres, linking PCAs, natural vegetation communities and/or areas having Natural Resource, Open Space, and/or Agricultural base land use designations in the western portion of the county. As described in the 2004 General Plan EIR, the strength of the IBC overlay standards will determine the effectiveness of the IBCs at conserving habitat in configurations and amounts sufficient to maintain habitat connectivity and wildlife movement opportunities.

Current County Requirements

General Plan Policy 7.4.2.9 provides that the IBC overlay shall apply to areas in the County that include high wildlife habitat value, function, and connectivity and requires that lands within the IBC be subject to certain general provisions. Further, Implementation Measure CO-N requires the review and update of the IBC overlay designation.

As described in the 2004 General Plan environmental impact report (EIR), the IBC overlay could, depending on the strength of the IBC overlay standards selected:

- Preserve opportunities for north-south movement by large terrestrial mammals through areas dominated by high- and medium-intensity land uses;
- Link the two largest polygons on the Ecological Preserve overlay;
- Protect a portion of the Weber Creek canyon and other major watercourses;
- Preserve some of the County's most valuable and pristine low-elevation habitat; and
- Comprise the first step toward a multicounty regional corridor that could benefit wildlife and preserve wildlife habitat over a large region of the Sierra foothills, because the proposed corridor crosses the entire western section of the county.

General Plan Policy 7.4.2.9 states that development within the IBCs shall be subject to the following general provisions, however it is noted that these provisions have not been incorporated into the County's Zoning Ordinance:

- Increased minimum parcel size;
- Higher canopy-retention standards and/or different mitigation standards/thresholds for oak woodlands;
- Lower thresholds for grading permits;
- Higher wetlands/riparian retention standards and/or more stringent mitigation requirements for wetland/riparian habitat loss;
- Increased riparian corridor and wetland setbacks;
- Greater protection for rare plants (e.g., no disturbance at all or disturbance only as recommended by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW));
- Standards for retention of contiguous areas/large expanses of other (non-oak or non-sensitive) plant communities;
- Building permits discretionary or some other type of "site review" to ensure that canopy is retained;
- More stringent standards for lot coverage, floor area ratio (FAR), and building height; and
- No hindrances to wildlife movement (e.g., no fences that would restrict wildlife movement).

Currently in accordance with General Plan Policy 7.4.2.9, lands that are subject to the Agricultural District (A) overlay or that are within the Agricultural Lands (AL) designation are exempt from the land use restrictions associated with the IBC policies, provided the agricultural practices do not interfere with the purposes of the IBC overlay.

General Plan Policy 7.4.2.2 also addresses the issue of wildlife movement. While it is not specific to properties within the IBCs, it requires that "critical wildlife areas and migration corridors" identified during project review must be retained onsite and protected from degradation. The policy specifies this should occur through clustering and/or density transfers.

The County adopted interim interpretive guidelines for General Plan Policy 7.4.4.4 (Option A), adopted November 9, 2006 and amended October 12, 2007. Under these interim guidelines, projects within an IBC overlay or Ecological Preserve overlay (EP), whether ministerial or discretionary, that propose the removal of oak canopy cover, require submittal of Oak/Canopy Site Assessment Form,

tree survey, biological report addressing the requirements of Policies 7.4.2.9 and 7.4.1.4, and an Important Habitat Mitigation Program. Such projects also require review by the Planning Commission to ensure consistency with the requirements of Policies 7.4.2.9 and 7.4.1.4.

The County also adopted interim interpretive guidelines for General Plan Policy 7.3.3.4, adopted June 22, 2006. In accordance with interim guidelines, a minimum setback of 100 feet from all perennial streams, rivers and lakes and 50 feet from intermittent streams and wetlands are required for projects within an IBC. A request for alternative setbacks would be considered by the Planning Commission as a policy determination. In this case, the project would require a biological report that addresses all of the provisions of General Plan Policy 7.4.2.9. In order to approve an alternative setback for a project within an IBC, the Planning Commission must consider all the evidence, conduct a public hearing and make all of the findings prescribed in County Code Section 17.22.630 (Variances) as well as conclude, based on substantial evidence, that the alternative setback would be consistent with the General Plan.

Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Movement Key Concepts

Wildlife corridors are linear features that connect large patches of natural open space and provide avenues for the migration of animals. Wildlife corridors contribute to population viability by assuring continual exchange of genes between populations, providing access to adjacent habitat areas for foraging and mating, and providing routes for recolonization of habitat after local extirpation or ecological catastrophes (e.g., fires).

Habitat connectivity or linkages are small patches that join larger blocks of habitat and help reduce the adverse effects of habitat fragmentation. Habitat linkages provide a potential route for gene flow and long-term dispersal of plants and animals and may also serve as primary habitat for smaller, more sedentary animals, such as small rodents, reptiles, and amphibians. Habitat linkages may be continuous habitat or discrete habitat islands that function as stepping stones for dispersal.

Regional Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Movement Data and Analysis

Two studies have addressed landscape-level habitat connectivity in the project region: (1) the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project (Spencer et al. 2010); and (2) the California Missing Linkages study (Penrod et al. 2001).

The California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project (CEHC) (Spencer et al. 2010) is a collaborative effort commissioned by the CDFW and the California Department of Transportation that developed a coarse-scale "Essential Connectivity Map" showing large "Natural Landscape Blocks" throughout the state and areas considered essential for providing ecological connectivity between the blocks, called "Essential Connectivity Areas." They are not

intended to be detailed linkage designs, but are "placeholder polygons that can inform land-planning efforts." As stated by Spencer et al. (2010: pp. *xi–xiii*):

> The Natural Landscape Blocks were delineated based primarily on an Ecological Condition Index devised by Davis et al. (2003, 2006) using degree of land conversion, residential housing impacts, road impacts, and status of forest structure (for forested areas) as inputs. This index was modified by also considering degree of conservation protection and areas known to support high biological values, such as mapped Critical Habitat and hotspots of species endemism. Essential Connectivity Areas were delineated using least-cost corridor models run on a data layer that represents the relative permeability of the landscape to wildlife movements, based on land cover naturalness, modified slightly to reflect conservation status.

At a very coarse scale, the CEHC Project shows that the County is primarily located in the Sierra Nevada foothills and extending to the western edge of the Sierra Nevada Ecoregion. The CEHC Project includes two large Natural Landscape Blocks in the County – one encompassing National Forest in the eastern portion of the County (primarily above 4,000 feet ASL) and the other in the southwestern portion of the County – and several smaller, almost fragmented Natural Landscape Blocks along the South Fork of the American River, North Fork of the American River, and the Rubicon River. The CEHC Project also includes a number of Potential Riparian Connections, the largest of which are along the South Fork of the American River, the North Fork of the American River, the Rubicon River, and the Cosumnes River; and two Essential Connectivity Areas providing north-south connectivity within both the western and eastern portions of the County (Figure 1).

The CEHC Project highlights potential regional or landscape-scale habitat connectivity features, and shows that the County is part of two conceptual north-south connections, as well as east-west connections along the North Fork of the American River, the Rubicon River, and the Cosumnes River.

The California Missing Linkages publication (Penrod et al. 2001) came out of a conference cosponsored by the California Wildlife Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), The Center for Reproduction of Endangered Species, and California State Parks. The conference included various scientists, conservationists, and land planners and managers representing various ecoregions in California. Participants were provided various map materials, including land cover, roads, and land ownerships, and based on their expertise, marked locations of important habitat linkages and corridors. Overall, the study identified 232 "linkages" statewide and categorized each as a Landscape Linkage (an existing large regional connection), a Connectivity

Choke-Point (a constrained linkage), or a Missing Link (a heavily impacted area with very limited or no existing connectivity). El Dorado County is on the boundary of the Sierra Nevada ecoregion. Several linkages have been identified in the region:

- SN05 – North-South Oak Woodland, Choke-Point
- SN06 – North-South Placer County Oak Woodland, Missing Link
- SN07 – Upper Cosumnes River, Landscape Linkage
- SN11 – El Dorado – Tahoe NF Checkerboard, Missing Link
- SN13 – Tahoe – Shoreline, Missing Link

SN11 and SN13 overlap with ecologically significant areas identified for California spotted owl in Penrod et al. (2001).

The western portion of the County includes SN06, which is consistent with an Essential Connectivity Corridor, and SN07, which is consistent with a Natural Landscape Block and an Essential Connectivity Corridor. SN05 (a north-south linkage across US 50 between Shingle Springs and Placerville), SN06 (a north-south linkage at the upper end of Lake Folsom) and SN07 are consistent with the County's IBCs. The eastern portion of the County includes SN13, which is consistent with a Natural Landscape Block and an Essential Connectivity Corridor. SN11 is a north-south missing link in the middle of the County (above 4,000 feet ASL) and is not consistent with the CEHC Project or with the County's IBCs but implementation of the General Plan is not expected to conflict with this missing link.

Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Movement Needs

The most energy-efficient movement areas for most large species (mountain lion, bobcat, mule deer, American black bear, and coyote) are most likely along main drainages and canyons, including the South Fork of the American River, the North Fork of the American River, the Rubicon River, and the Cosumnes River, as well as various tributaries, ridgelines, and dirt roads. For example, Dickson and Beier (2006) found that mountain lions in Southern California preferentially move along canyon bottoms and gently sloping terrain rather than ridgelines and steep terrain. Mule deer, on the other hand, are expected to use and move through all kinds of terrain, and particularly can benefit from steeper terrain that provides hillsides and steep slopes to escape from mountain lions, coyotes, and other predators (Lingle 2002; Pierce et al. 2004). With the possible exception of coyotes, which can occur in many types of natural and man-made land covers, the larger species are also most often associated with heterogeneous vegetation communities and natural features that provide food, refuge and cover for breeding and resting, and efficient movement conduits. For example, bobcats are most closely associated with brushy and rocky area nears springs and other water sources. Mountain lions are also associated with

rocky areas, cliffs, and ledges that provide cover, but are also associated with open woodlands and riparian zones that provide movement connections. Mule deer are browsers that forage from ground level (e.g., for acorns) to brushy vegetation within their upper reach and are strongly associated with early to intermediate successional stages of shrublands, woodlands, and forests and ecotones. American black bears are associated with more mature dense stands of forests and woodlands that provide denning habitat, but may use and move through a variety of land covers at different times.

Because wildlife movement corridors are inclusive of a variety of land covers and topographic features, rather than focusing on specific narrow movement corridors or pathways such as along specific drainages, the County should be viewed as a broad mosaic of topographic and vegetation features that provide a range of habitats for the different species and support diffuse movement across the landscape.

Effects of Development on Regional Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Movement

In their paper titled *The Potential Impacts of Development on Wildlands in El Dorado County, California*, Saving and Greenwood (2002) modeled the 1996 County General Plan and parcel data with various combinations of development constraints (e.g., slope, oak canopy retention, stream buffers, existing development, regional clustering, public ownership and acquisition programs). They used these models to predict habitat loss and fragmentation of natural vegetation communities. Saving and Greenwood (2002) found that constraining land uses in various combinations would result in two contiguous patches of wildlife habitat in El Dorado County, located to the north and south, respectively, of US 50. Saving and Greenwood (2002) identified a scenario to connect the northern and south wildlands: restrict select parcels from development in key areas. Specifically, they identified several vacant parcels in the Indian Creek canyon area in proximity to US 50. By modeling development restrictions for oak woodlands in this area, they were able to model a north-south connection with some parcels still compatible with development.

Possible IBC Overlay Standards

The IBCs are consistent with the modeling conducted in the CEHC (Spencer et al. 2010), Penrod et al. (2001), and Saving and Greenwood (2002). The models do consistently emphasize the importance of a north-south corridor. The recommendation below for IBC overlay standards would provide for protection and preservation of any existing north-south wildlife movement corridors within the IBCs. In addition, it may be possible to take advantage of restrictions on development opportunities due to natural features (slopes and streams) in order to preserve a north-south corridor between Shingle Springs and Placerville, such as in Weber Creek canyon, Indian Creek canyon, and/or the Greenstone area.

The Saving and Greenwood (2002) models demonstrate that constraining land uses in various combinations (stream setback widths, percentage of oak retention, percentage of wetland retention, etc.) would consistently result in two contiguous patches of wildlife habitat – one to the north and one to the south of US 50. This demonstrates that applying specific criteria for the general provisions listed in General Plan Policy 7.4.2.9 (see above) would not lead to preservation of a north-south movement corridor and therefore Dudek is not recommending establishing criteria for the draft provision categories listed in. Rather the emphasis in Dudek's recommendation is on retaining the existing habitat functions and values within the IBCs and establishing a north-south connection between the two contiguous patches of wildlife habitat.

Below are suggested IBC overlay standards for discretionary projects based on available research and on examples from surrounding counties.

- A site-specific biological resources technical report (described below) will determine the presence of special-status species or habitat for such species that may be affected by a proposed project as well as the presence of wildlife corridors particularly those used by large mammals such as mountain lion, bobcat, mule deer, American black bear, and coyote. Based on the results of the biological resources technical report, land use siting and design tools shall be implemented to achieve the objective of no net loss of habitat function or value for special-status species, as well as large mammals such as mountain lion, bobcat, mule deer, American black bear, and coyote.
- Potentially establish standards specific to a north-south corridor in the Weber Creek canyon, Indian Creek canyon, Slate Creek canyon, and/or the Greenstone area.

In order to evaluate project-specific compatibility with the IBC overlay, applicants for discretionary projects would be required to provide to the County a biological resources technical report that identifies and maps vegetation communities and special-status plants in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG (re-named to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in 2013)) 2009 *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities* and subsequent updates, and is consistent with the *List of Vegetation Alliances and Associations* (CDFG 2010) and subsequent updates. The biological resources technical report would also be required to identify special-status species (as defined in Decision Point 7) known to occur or potentially occurring on-site. The results of the biological resources technical report shall be used as the basis for establishing project-specific land use siting and design measures necessary to achieve the objective of no net loss of habitat function or value for special-status species, as well as large mammals such as mountain lion, bobcat, mule deer, American black bear, and coyote.

Properties within the IBC that are found to support wildlife movement would be required to provide mitigation to ensure there is no net loss of habitat/wildlife movement function and value.

Mitigation could occur through project design, such as use of clustering, to retain the portion of the site that provides the wildlife corridor. It could also occur by obtaining conservation easements on adjacent property that could also support wildlife movement and is contiguous with the existing wildlife corridor.

Identification of a north-south connection between the two modeled contiguous patches of wildlife habitat north and south of US 50 could support the County in achieving the goal of current Policy 7.4.2.9. Four potential US 50 crossings (three creeks and one road) between Placerville and Shingle Springs are being considered. Factors in this analysis could include location within IBCs, topography, and level of development.

Recommendation: Revise General Plan Policy 7.4.2.9 to remove currently-identified provisions and replace those provisions with the IBC overlay standards identified above for lands that occur within the IBCs to address wildlife habitat value, function, and connectivity.

This will contribute towards meeting the goal of the conservation strategy, and be further facilitated by evaluation of Decision Points 7, 9 and 10:

7: Special-Status Resource Mitigation Requirements

9: Ecological Areas In PCAs and IBCs

10: Database of Willing Sellers

This recommendation is consistent with current General Plan Policies 7.4.1.1 through 7.4.1.5 and 7.4.1.7; 7.4.2.1 through 7.4.2.6, and 7.4.2.9; and would result in minor revisions to current General Plan Policies 7.4.1.6 (which currently relies on preparation of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) to define mitigation for impacts to important habitats), 7.4.2.7 (which currently requires the formation of the Plant and Wildlife Technical Advisory Committee (PAWTAC)), and 7.4.2.8 (which currently requires the development of the INRMP).

3.0 DECISION POINT 9: IMPORTANT ECOLOGICAL AREAS

Determine which important ecological areas identified by the Plant and Wildlife Technical Advisory Committee (PAWTAC) (e.g., aquatic environments, important habitat for migratory deer herds, Pine Hill areas, valley oak woodland, etc.) to include with the PCAs and Important Biological Corridors (IBCs) as we develop a conservation strategy.

Options: Determine whether General Plan policy should incorporate other important ecological areas in addition to the PCAs and IBCs to form the basis for the County's conservation strategy or rely primarily on PCAs and IBCs.

Analysis: This decision follows the February 23, 2015 Board decision regarding Decision Point 4, to establish a two-tiered oak mitigation approach; Decision Point 6, to retain PCAs as delineated in the 2008 OWMP and establish within the OWMP criteria that would be used to identify conservation lands outside of the PCAs; and Decision Point 7, which established mitigation ratios for special-status biological resources, including vegetation communities, plants, and wildlife.

Current General Plan Policy 7.4.2.8 outlines an approach to identify important habitat in the County and establish a program for habitat preservation and management. The program would develop a conservation strategy that conserves:

- Habitats that support special-status species;
- Aquatic environments including streams, rivers, and lakes;
- Wetland and riparian habitat;
- Important habitat for migratory deer herds; and
- Large expanses of native vegetation.

Per the current policy, the goal of the conservation strategy is to conserve and restore contiguous blocks of important habitat to offset the effects of increased habitat loss and fragmentation elsewhere in the County. Under the existing General Plan policies, this goal and strategy would be accomplished through development and implementation of the County's INRMP. However, the biological resource policy update project will include modifications to General Plan policies to remove the requirement to prepare an INRMP. This is consistent with conservation/mitigation approach selected by the Board during the October 7, 2014 hearing. In the absence of an INRMP, the updated biological resource policies are expected to outline a program for habitat preservation and management.

Background

Beginning in September 2006, the County worked to implement Policy 7.4.2.8 by retaining consultants to conduct a public workshop process, preparing a work program for development of the INRMP, retaining consultants to prepare the INRMP, and convening two advisory committees—the INRMP Stakeholders Advisory Committee (ISAC) and the PAWTAC. The purpose of the ISAC is to provide recommendations to County staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board in defining the important habitats of the County and in the creation and implementation of the INRMP. The PAWTAC is a committee that advises the Planning Commission and Board on plant and wildlife issues and is formed of local experts in the field. County staff also reviewed and updated the Initial Inventory based on newer and more accurate GIS layers, inventoried existing regulatory constraints related to important habitat, prepared a

Protected Lands Map, and compared the Initial Inventory and Protected Lands maps with the County's Land Use designations. In 2008, the Board directed that the boundary of the Study Area for the INRMP was set at the 4,000-foot contour.

On April 1, 2008, the Board adopted the INRMP Initial Inventory and Mapping, satisfying the requirements of General Plan Measure CO-M (the Habitat Inventory). Following months of input from the ISAC and PAWTAC, Sierra Ecosystem Associates (SEA) was retained by the County in December 2009 to prepare Phase I of the INRMP. In 2010, the Board adopted the Updated IMRMP Initial Inventory and Mapping and accepted both the Indicator Species Report and the Wildlife Movement and Corridor Report.

In September 2102, the Board of Supervisors directed that the General Plan biological resources policies should be updated. As part of that process the Board considered several options or approaches for updating those policies. At the Board hearing on October 7, 2014, the Board directed staff to proceed with Policy Option 3 (Mitigation/Conservation option). Under Policy Option 3, the intent is to amend the General Plan policies to redefine the County's program for management of and mitigation for biological resource impacts. Through selection of the mitigation/conservation approach, the County has directed Dudek to evaluate other options to meet the goal of the conservation strategy in lieu of implementing the INRMP.

Conservation Strategy

We are evaluating the effectiveness of the PCAs and IBCs, together with the important biological areas, in supporting sufficient quantities and configurations of vegetation communities to support the County's conservation strategy established through Decision Points 4, 6 and 7.

Dudek estimated impacts to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) vegetation communities using the high and medium intensity land use categories as described in the 2004 General Plan EIR Biological Resources chapter. The PCAs and the IBC overlay do not in and of themselves support sufficient acreages of vegetation communities to achieve the mitigation ratios established through Decision Points 4, 6 and 7. The important ecological areas identified by the PAWTAC (e.g., aquatic environments, important habitat for migratory deer herds, Pine Hill areas, valley oak woodland, etc.) could be prioritized to supplement the contributions of the PCAs and IBC overlay towards meeting the County's goals for management of special-status resources.

Consistent with the Board's direction on Decision Point 6, the County could allow developers to identify conservation opportunities outside of the PCAs and IBCs, within or outside of important ecological areas. This could be accomplished by defining specific criteria that must be met by these additional conservation lands. Providing more specific, quantifiable standards could help to streamline the process of approving additional conservation areas, eliminate the need for

interpretation, and ensure consistent implementation for all projects. Should the Board direct that additional criteria be developed, draft criteria would be presented to the Board with the draft updated General Plan policies. The following are some preliminary concepts that could be included in such criteria:

- Prioritization of important ecological areas identified by the PAWTAC;
- Minimum parcel size of 20 acres;
- Woodland, forest and shrub communities shall be diverse in age structure;
- Woodland and forest communities shall include large trees and dense canopies;
- There are opportunities for active land management to be used to enhance or restore natural ecosystem processes; and
- Has the potential to support special-status species.

As described for Decision Points 7 and 8, a site-specific biological resources technical report will determine the presence of special-status biological resources that may be affected by a proposed discretionary project. Vegetation communities and special-status plants would be mapped and assessed in accordance with the CDFG 2009 *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities* and subsequent updates, and will be consistent with the *List of Vegetation Alliances and Associations* (CDFG 2010) and subsequent updates. The results of the biological resources technical report shall be used as the basis for establishing mitigation requirements in conformance with the County's conservation strategy.

Recommendation: Rather than expand the PCAs and IBCs, allow developers to identify conservation opportunities outside of the PCAs and IBCs, within or outside of important ecological areas. Define specific criteria that must be met by these additional conservation lands, including criteria that prioritize use of the important ecological areas identified in the INRMP Initial Inventory and Mapping (adopted by the Board in 2008 and again in 2010).

This will contribute towards meeting the goal of the conservation strategy, and be further facilitated by evaluation of Decision Points 7, 8, and 10:

7: Special-Status Resource Mitigation Requirements

8: Specific standards for the IBC overlay

10: Database of Willing Sellers

This recommendation is consistent with current General Plan Policies 7.4.1.1 through 7.4.1.5 and 7.4.1.7; 7.4.2.1 through 7.4.2.6, and 7.4.2.9; and would result in minor revisions to current General Plan Policies 7.4.1.6 (which relies on the INRMP to define mitigation for impacts to

important habitats), 7.4.2.7 (which requires the formation of the PAWTAC), and 7.4.2.8 (which requires the development of the INRMP).

4.0 DECISION POINT 10: DATABASE OF WILLING SELLERS FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Define the County's requirements for maintaining a database of willing sellers within PCAs and IBCs and/or other important biological areas.

Options: Determine whether General Plan policy should incorporate specific requirements related to the County's creation and maintenance of a database of willing sellers within the PCAs and IBCs and/or other important biological areas or determine that such a database is not necessary.

Analysis: The database of willing sellers is seen as a supporting component to facilitating identification of appropriate mitigation land for acquisition, either by developers, the County, and/or a third-party land conservancy or other appropriate non-governmental organization in implementation of the County's conservation strategy, including the OWMP. The General Plan policy and associated implementation measures would define the key characteristics of this database program.

The database could be generated by various combinations of methods including:

- Passive voluntary program (no solicitation on County's part).
- Active solicitation of interested land owners whereby the County sends mailers/contacts parcel owners within PCAs and IBCs and/or other important biological areas, and/or those areas meeting the selection criteria for additional conservation areas as defined in Decision Points 4 and 9. Parcel owners would be informed of the intent of the database and could be asked either to opt-in or to opt-out of the database.

The database could include the following information:

- Property owner name
- Assessor Parcel Number
- Parcel acreage
- General vegetation communities from FRAP database

A passive voluntary program is not expected to generate an extensive list of willing sellers. However, an active solicitation program may raise concerns from property owners regarding property rights.

Recommendation: Incorporate within General Plan policy a requirement that the County establish a database of willing sellers within the PCAs, IBCs, and other important biological areas. Further, require that the County manage the database as a voluntary program wherein landowners must opt-in to being included in the database by contacting the County.

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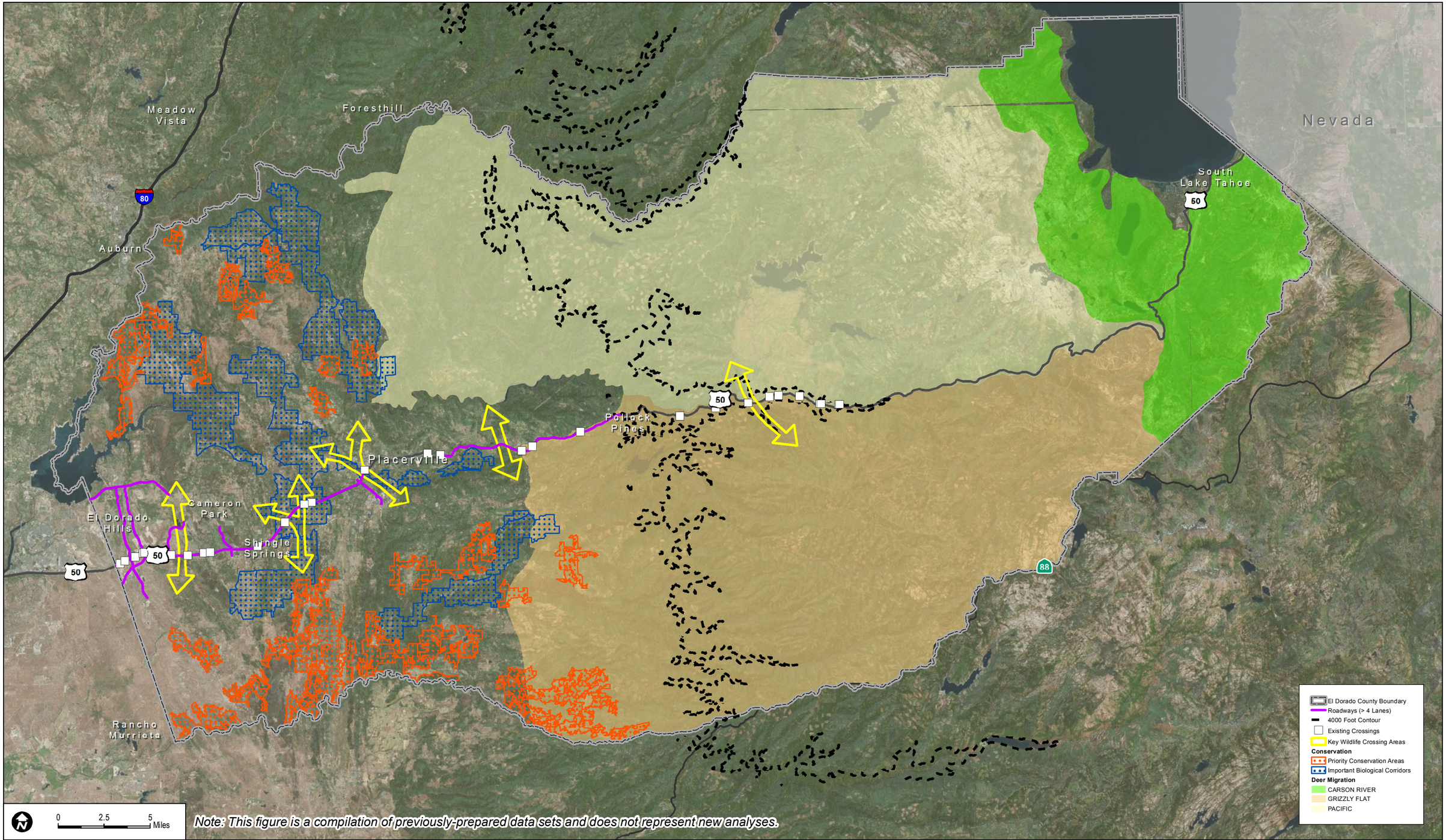

Note: This figure is a compilation of previously-prepared data sets and does not represent new analyses.

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SOURCE: Bing Maps 2014; CPAD 2014; FRAP 2006; El Dorado County 2014

FIGURE 1

Wildlife Movement

Biological Resources Policy Update Decision Points 2 and 3