

Goal OSR-1: Preserve and Protect the Natural Resources and Scenic Beauty of the County

Objective OSR 1-A: Provide a Diverse and Accessible Range of Open Space Lands

Policy OSR 1-1: The following General Plan Land Use designations shall be considered Open Space uses: Resource Conservation (RC), Designated Floodway (DF), Parks and Recreation (PR), Agricultural General (AG), and Agricultural Upland (AU).

Policy OSR 1-2: Support regional and local natural resource preservation plans of public agencies that retain and protect open space within the County, including: the Mendocino National Forest Plan, the Colusa National Wildlife Refuge Complex, the Delevan National Wildlife Refuge, the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, the Willow Creek-Lurline Management Area and the North Central Valley Wildlife Management Area.

Policy OSR 1-3: Support the preservation of open space consistent with this General Plan, via acquisition of fee title or easements by land trusts, government agencies, and conservancies from willing landowners, subject to the standards identified in Policy CON 1-3.

Policy OSR 1-4: The National Wildlife Refuges in the County should remain in their present use and any significant expansion or alterations shall be subject to the same criteria listed in Policy CON 1-3.

Policy OSR 1-5: New development should be designed and constructed to preserve open space features such as scenic corridors, wetlands, riparian vegetation, native vegetation, trees and natural resource areas where feasible and appropriate.

Policy OSR 1-6: Publicly owned lands currently used for recreational purposes or as undeveloped open space should be retained in their present use, unless designated for an alternative use by the General Plan Land Use Map.

Action OSR 1-A: Adopt regulations for habitat easements, conservation easements, and open space banking operations, including any significant alterations and/or expansions. These regulations shall include, but are not limited to, the criteria identified in Policy CON 1-3.

A **conservation easement** is a voluntary agreement that allows a landowner to limit the type or amount of development on their property while retaining private ownership of the land. After the easement is signed, it applies to all future owners of the land.

Objective OSR 1-B: Balance Open Space Preservation with Economic Development Needs

Policy OSR 1-7: Open space near transportation infrastructure, such as I-5, SR 20, SR 45 and existing railroads shall be given consideration for conversion to industrial, commercial, and other job-creating uses if there is a demonstrated need for such uses and there is not a viable alternative location already designated for urban uses.

Policy OSR 1-8: Conversion of open space to developed commercial, industrial or other non-residential job-generating uses may be allowed if needed to support economic development.