



Chapter

7

MANAGED RESOURCES

A place where all citizens enjoy opportunities to thrive in a safe, healthy, and productive community.
- The Tuolumne County Vision

Introduction

Tuolumne County has a rich history of using and producing natural resources. Prior to the development of formal industries, early inhabitants worked and lived off the land. Historic activity began intensely soon after the widely publicized 1848 discovery of gold. This discovery forever changed the face of Tuolumne County’s physical landscape.

The Managed Resources Element establishes policies and implementation programs to promote the stability and productivity of the County's timber and mineral lands and related industries. This Element is intended to provide clear guidelines for land use decisions in timberland areas and express policies that promote and protect the current and future needs of Tuolumne County's timberland resources. Further, it is desired to focus stewardship of renewable resources in public lands, in order to maximize personal property rights and economic development opportunities on privately held land.

Purpose
Recognize that working landscapes provide stewardship values for the County’s natural environment and that stewardship of the County’s natural resources includes the productive use of resources.

Overarching Vision

OAV1. Promote development in Tuolumne County that reflects the values and vision of the community and implements the latest legal, statutory, scientific, and technical changes and advances.

OAV2. Achieve, enable and preserve maximum flexibility within the constraints of state and federal law and an ever-evolving legal, cultural and environmental landscape.

OAV3. Recognize that the County has a unique role to collaborate with special districts/stakeholders within the County to promote the delivery of efficient and cost effective public services.



GOAL 7A:

Promote the stability and productivity of the County's timberlands and timber related industries.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 7.A.1: Encourage the conservation and management of timberlands through incentive programs while conforming with California forest practice law.

Implementation Programs

7.A.a - Encourage retention of existing, and management of new timberlands by continuing to provide tax incentives to timberland owners, such as Timberland Production (TPZ) zoning or Williamson Act land conservation contracts, or other State or Federal incentive programs that may be offered to conserve timberlands.

7.A.b - Encourage owners of timberlands which do not qualify for property tax incentives, such as Timberland Production (TPZ) zoning, to continue timber production through such incentives as recognition programs, or other local, State or Federal incentive programs that may become available.

Policy 7.A.2: Minimize the potential for conflicts between timberland and non-timber related uses.

Implementation Programs

7.A.c - Encourage the siting of proposed residential development (HDR, MDR, LDR and MU land use designations) on land that is not adjacent to commercial timberlands.

7.A.d - Reduce potential conflicts between timber management activities and non-timber related land uses by discouraging the development of new non-timberland uses on land adjacent to commercial timberlands. Allow flexibility in development regulations so that the overall density of the proposed development project can be concentrated in the portion of the parcel away from the timberland boundary.

7.A.e - Maintain Chapter 5.20 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, the Right to Farm Ordinance, so that it clearly includes timber management and harvesting activities within protected agricultural uses, in order to protect these timber activities, as well as the growing of timber.

1. Maintain the "management and harvesting of timber" as an agricultural use in Section 5.20.030 to prohibit an existing timber management activity from being declared a nuisance when land uses in the surrounding areas change and a conflict arises, and
2. Maintain the "management and harvesting of timber" as an agricultural use in Section 5.20.040 to require a notice to purchasers of real property filing any grant deed or land sale contract with the County Recorder that discloses the potential for timber management activities in their area, and that normal timber practices may involve operations that inconvenience local residents or generate dust, smoke, noise, lawful and proper use of chemical pesticides and herbicides, and truck traffic, and that adjacent landowners should be prepared to accept such inconveniences or discomforts as a normal and necessary aspect of living in Tuolumne County which has a strong rural character and a healthy timber sector.
3. Maintain the grievance procedures in Chapter 5.20 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance.



Policy 7.A.3: Encourage well planned timber related uses in commercial timberland areas.

Implementation Programs

7.A.f -Consider expanding the permitted uses in the Timberland Production (TPZ) zoning district and agricultural zoning districts to include facilities which are integrally related to the growing, harvesting and processing of forest products.

7.A.g - Consider expanding the conditionally permitted uses in the Timberland Production (TPZ) zoning district, and agricultural zoning districts to include timber support services or timber compatible uses.

7.A.h - Develop programs that encourage enhanced carbon storage in forests, use of durable wood products, and use of wood biomass for energy, while maintaining healthy forest ecosystems.

GOAL 7B:

Support existing and intermittently operating, and promote new, commercial mining operations within areas suitable for mineral extraction when compatible with adjacent land uses.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 7.B.1: Map the significant mineral lands classified Mineral Resource Zone 2 (MRZ-2) by the California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, and target those most appropriate for conservation and possible extraction. To be targeted for conservation and possible extraction, the significant classified mineral lands must be considered as to their location, relationship to their surrounding land uses, and economic viability under a set of established criteria. Those lands which meet the County's criteria will be designated as Mineral Preserve (-MPZ) overlay on the General Plan Land Use Diagrams. Lands not targeted for conservation and possible extraction can still be considered for mineral extraction and mining activities through the process established by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act and Chapter 8.20 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code.

Implementation Programs

7.B.a - Create and maintain Mineral Resources Maps and a database to reflect existing and new geologic information provided by the California Department of Conservation California Geological Survey, to recognize significant mineral resources classified by the State under their Statewide mineral classification study program. Update the Mineral Resources Maps to reflect changes made by the California Geological Survey.

7.B.b - Identify on the Mineral Resources Maps the following areas, which have been classified as having significant mineral deposits based upon a study approved by the State Mining and Geology Board pursuant to the State Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975. These lands and all other lands so classified in the future will be mapped on the Mineral Resources Maps:

1. The Southern Half of the Bald Mountain/ Browns Flat Gold Mining District has been classified as State Mineral Resource Zone-2 (MRZ-2b) (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Report 86-12 SAC, July 11, 1986).



2. The Jamestown Mine property has been classified as State Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a, MRZ-2b, and MRZ-3a) (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Open File Report 91-04, May 1991).
3. Portions of the Rough and Ready Creek site have been classified as State Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a and MRZ-2b) (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Open-File Report 93-11, 1993).

Various properties with precious metals, carbonate rock, and concrete-grade aggregate resources have been classified as State Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a, and MRZ-2b) (refer to Division of Mines and Geology Open-File Report 97-09, 1997).

7.B.c - Any classified mineral lands which meet the following criteria will be designated as Mineral Preserve (MPZ) overlay on the General Plan Land Use Diagrams:

1. The property has been classified by the State Mining and Geology Board as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a or MRZ-2b) under the State Classification System, as shown in Table 7.1 of the Technical Background Report (Volume II).
2. The property is not within 1,000 feet of the City of Sonora or any of the boundaries of each existing or new identified community.
3. Within 1,000 feet of the property, there is no property zoned as an urban level residential zoning district.
4. Within 1,000 feet of the property there is no property designated as any one or a combination of the following: HDR, MDR, LDR, ER, NC, GC, HC, SC or MU by the General Plan.
5. No reservoirs that are used as drinking water supplies are within 1,000 feet of the property.
6. The property has not been designated as a County landmark in the Tuolumne County General Plan or listed on the Tuolumne County Register of Cultural Resources; with the exception of historic mining resources.
7. There are no known high occupancy structures¹, such as schools, health care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, residential care homes, hotels or motels within 1,000 feet of the property.
8. The property must be within one (1) mile of a State Highway, Federal Aid System (FAS) road, railroad, or arterial or collector road as designated by the Transportation Element of the General Plan.
9. After application of the above criteria, all areas comprised of one or several properties which remain and constitute a total area of less than 37 acres in size, shall be excluded.
10. All operating or permitted mining operations which have approved reclamation plans that have been classified by the State Mining and Geology Board as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a or MRZ-2b) under the State Classification System shall be designated as Mineral Preserve (-MPZ) overlay on the General Plan Land Use Diagrams, notwithstanding any of the previous criteria which would otherwise exclude the property from that designation.

¹

For the purpose of this program, high occupancy structures are defined as those housing more than six persons in the case of skilled nursing homes and residential care homes, featuring more than six guest rooms in the case of hotels and motels, and providing facilities for more than six students in the case of schools and six patients in the case of health care facilities.



7.B.d - Maintain and update the database on the Tuolumne County Geographic Information System (GIS) to centralize known geological and mineral resource information. Geological data gathered in the preparation of the Natural Hazards Element of the General Plan, as well as State classified mineral resources, will be available in the database. The data generated by the required geologic and geotechnical studies in the various mineral resource zones will supplement the basic information. The database will serve as a convenient way to eliminate duplication of studies, facilitate future studies, and be used to maintain and update the Geologic, Mineral Resources and Geotechnical Interpretive Maps.

GOAL 7C:

Conserve the County's mineral resources for future use by encouraging well-planned, compatible uses in and adjacent to significant mineral lands and by reclaiming lands that have been disturbed by mining activities.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 7.C.1: Protect lands classified as significant Mineral Resource Zone-2 (MRZ-2) by the State Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, and meeting the criteria established in the General Plan for Mineral Preserve (-MPZ) overlay, from conflicts, such as incompatible development on surrounding land, which might prevent future mining activities.

Implementation Programs

7.C.a - Consider buffer areas between extraction sites or mining operations and non-mining land uses. The buffer areas between newly permitted mining activities and existing non-mining land uses shall be provided on lands of the new mining site. The buffer areas between new non-mining development and existing mining operations shall be on lands proposed for such new development adjacent to the existing mining operation. Mining operations which have been operated intermittently or considered idle shall be exempt from providing buffer areas at the time they are reactivated but may be subject to such buffer areas in conjunction with approval of permits for expansion of the operation. Creative solutions and flexibility should be encouraged in the creation of buffer zones. The designation of conservation easements, setbacks or open space zones for buffers shall not in any manner authorize trespass upon private property, or increase the right of public agencies to gain access to private property.

7.C.b - Existing development (commercial, residential and public facilities) as well as undeveloped private lands, shall be protected from adverse environmental effects caused by mining through appropriate impact minimization measures such as erosion control actions, native species re-vegetation plans, and noise minimization efforts.

7.C.c - The County shall use the Mineral Preserve (-MPZ) overlay on the General Plan Land Use Diagrams as a means to provide for the public awareness of the existence of significant mineral deposits and the potential for mining in that area.

7.C.d - Enhance mineral resource lands after development by reclaiming the land for future uses compatible with mineral extraction and mining operations and/or by landscaping with plants native to the local area and restoring natural habitats. The natural, undisturbed condition of each habitat type should be mimicked when creating or restoring plant or wildlife habitats and to aesthetically blend the reclaimed site into the surrounding area.



7.C.e - A reclamation plan, consistent with the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) standards, is required for all mining operations. Reclamation shall:

1. Prevent, mitigate, or minimize adverse effects on the environment.
2. Encourage the production and conservation of minerals.
3. Provide for the protection and subsequent beneficial use of mined and reclaimed land.
4. Eliminate residual hazards to the public health and safety.
5. Ensure that mined lands are reclaimed on a timely basis to a usable condition that is readily adaptable for alternative land uses.
6. Avoid the environmental and legal problems created by improperly abandoned mines.