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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 28, 2008
TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Peter N. Maurer, Principal Planner
SUBJECT: INRMP Initial Inventory Mapping

On March 25, 2008 your Board directed staff to provide for your review and consideration the initial inventory of important habitat required of General Plan Policy 7.4.2.8. This is a component and first step in the development of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP).

Policy 7.4.2.8 is an eight-part policy and mitigation measure from the General Plan EIR, setting forth a strategy to protect important habitat resources in the County. The first part is the development of a habitat inventory. This portion of the policy identifies five criteria to be mapped as a part of this inventory:

1. Habitat that supports special status species;
2. Aquatic environments including streams, rivers, and lakes;
3. Wetland and riparian habitat;
4. Important habitat for migratory deer herds; and
5. Large expanses of native vegetation.

The draft inventory map provides information addressing four of these five criteria as described below. The source of this data is from the mapping completed by EDAW, the County's consultant for the General Plan EIR, and was used in the preparation of the EIR. EDAW received the data from a variety of sources. In addition to the four criteria outlined in the policy, four other layers showing habitats that have been previously mapped have been added to the inventory. These are the red-legged frog recovery plan boundary, the Pine Hill Preserve boundary (along with the recovery plan and the County's Ecological Preserve overlay), the Oak Woodland Priority Conservation Area boundaries, and the Important Biological Corridor overlay from the General Plan.

Below is a brief discussion of each layer:

Special Status Species

The map shows the location of both animal and plant species of special concern, including species that are listed as either state or federal rare, threatened or endangered species, and those under consideration of listing. The original source of this data was the 2002 California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB).

Streams, Rivers, and Lakes

This layer shows the major rivers and streams, along with the lakes and reservoirs in the County. Streams include the various forks of the Cosumnes and American Rivers, and only the largest creeks such as Weber, Deer, Big Canyon, and Camp Creek. This data was received from the County's GIS program.

Wetlands

This layer shows both lacustrine (ponds and lakes) and palustrine (marshes and wetlands) environments. The data source is in two parts, but the original source is unclear. The eastern part of the County was developed by EDAW apparently from USGS data. The source of the data for the western portion of the County was the National Wetlands Inventory, prepared in 2000 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Migratory Deer Herds

This data was taken from the California Dept. of Fish and Game (CDFG) database. The CDFG data showed numerous subcategories of deer herd areas. We have isolated four of the categories for this map. These are critical winter and summer ranges, fawning areas, and holding areas. The holding areas are associated with the migration corridors.

Red-legged Frog

In addition to the points where the frog has been observed, the recovery plan boundary as adopted by USFWS is shown on the map. It is centered around Spivey Pond in the Weber Creek Drainage.

Pine Hill Preserve/Gabbro Soils Rare Plants

The gabbro soils rare plants (Pine Hill endemics) are represented by three different sets of polygons on the map, representing the different mapping exercises that have occurred with regard to these plants. The map shows the Pine Hill Preserve, which are the lands that have been acquired by public agencies (County, CDFG, and U.S. Bureau of Land Management) for plant protection. The map also shows the recovery plan boundaries mapped by USFWS, as well as the Ecological Preserve boundaries as set forth on the General Plan land use map.

Oak Woodlands Priority Conservation Areas

This layer shows the lands on which the County intends to acquire conservation easements from willing sellers to protect oak woodland habitat, as proposed in the Draft Oak Woodlands Management Plan.

Important Biological Corridors

The final layer shows the IBC overlay from the General Plan. While implementation of the policy that addresses this mapping overlay has yet to occur, additional oversight of project impacts on natural resources occurs on projects located within these areas.

The map does not show areas that would constitute large expanses of native vegetation. This is a category that has not yet been defined, and is likely to be subject to a great deal of public debate. This map is an initial inventory of habitats based on data that is presently available. It is staff's intent, following further direction from your Board, to refine and update these databases, work with interested parties and agencies such as the Plant and Wildlife Technical Advisory Committee (PAWTAC), CDFG, USFWS, the Agricultural Commission, and other interested stakeholders as required by Policies 7.4.2.8 and 7.4.1.6.

The Planning Commission reviewed this draft map on March 27, 2008. The commission members present acknowledged that the mapping was the first step and that refinements will be needed as the INRMP is developed. They also concurred with adding the additional layers described above.