

Chapter 4 Regulatory and Planning Influences



A variety of environmental regulations, policies, programs and planning documents (including this Watershed Management Action Plan) influence the Laguna Creek Watershed, especially because the large watershed crosses four political jurisdictions. This chapter briefly describes relevant regulations and identifies the agencies and authorities with land-use planning or related jurisdiction (e.g., water supply, flood control) in the watershed. Key local/regional policies, codes, plans and programs are briefly described, with an emphasis on how each influences or impacts the watershed. This information was reviewed and considered during the process to identify recommended actions for Chapter 6.

Appendix B presents additional details, including a more in-depth discussion of relevant national and state regulations and regional plans (e.g., related to smart growth and transportation) that can influence the watershed.

4.1 Federal and State Environmental Laws

This section briefly summarizes the major laws and associated implementing regulatory agencies that guide protection of water quality and natural resources in the Laguna Creek Watershed. See Appendix B for more details, including web site links for further research and information.



Broad Environmental Protection

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The NEPA provides a review process for considering environmental impacts of projects involving federal land, funding, or permits.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires local and state governments to consider the potential environmental effects of a project before making a decision on it. CEQA's purpose is to disclose the potential impacts of a project, suggest methods to minimize those impacts, and when an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is prepared, discuss project alternatives so that decision makers will have full information upon which to base their decision.

Water Quality Protection

Clean Water Act (CWA)

The Clean Water Act establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. It gives the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to implement pollution control programs and makes it unlawful for any person to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters, unless a permit was obtained under its provisions.

State Porter-Cologne Act/California Water Code

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code, Division 7 Water Quality) is California's statutory authority for protecting water quality. Under the Act, California must adopt water quality policies, plans, and objectives that ensure beneficial uses of the state are reasonably protected.

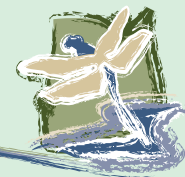
The Act requires the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) to adopt water quality control plans and establish water quality objectives, and authorizes the State and Regional Water Boards to issue and enforce permits containing requirements for the discharge of waste to surface waters and land. Any project proposing to discharge to Laguna Creek or one of its tributaries would need to comply, generally through the NPDES, TMDL and 401 Certification processes, described later in this section.

NPDES Program

Stormwater discharges are regulated under the CWA through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. Specifically, section 402 of the CWA requires the EPA to establish NPDES permit programs and issue permits to regulate discharges of stormwater and urban runoff to waters of the U.S. from certain industries, construction sites, and municipalities. EPA, in turn, has delegated authority to the State Water Board, which works locally with the Central Valley Regional Water Board to administer and enforce the NPDES program in the Sacramento area. In the Laguna Creek Watershed, the County and three cities, as well as one of the parks districts and the school district have been issued NPDES permits, as described more later in this chapter.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

Section 303(d) of the CWA requires states to identify water bodies that would not attain water quality standards and develop a *Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)* for each of the listed pollutants and water bodies. A TMDL is the amount of pollution that the water body can assimilate and still meet water quality standards. In the Laguna Creek Watershed, Elk Grove Creek is the only tributary included on the State's 303(d) List; the creek is listed as impaired for the pesticides chlorpyrifos and diazinon (see Chapter 5). A methylmercury TMDL is being



prepared by the Regional Water Board for parts of the Sacramento River, the main receiving water for the Laguna Creek Watershed.

Clean Water Act Section 401 – Water Quality Certifications

The State Water Board's Certification and Wetlands Program regulates discharges of fill and dredged material to all waters in its regulatory scope, with special responsibility for wetlands, riparian areas, and headwaters. In the Laguna Creek watershed, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Boards is responsible for issuing 401 Water Quality Certifications to projects.

Clean Water Act Section 404

Section 404 of the CWA requires a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prior to filling or dredging waters of the United States, including wetlands. Laguna Creek and its tributaries and wetlands are considered waters of the U.S.

Special Status Protection

State of California Fish and Game Code Section 1602

Diversions, obstructions, or changes to the natural flow or to the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake in California that supports wildlife resources are subject to regulation by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). Any projects proposing work on or within the stream bed or bank of Laguna Creek or its tributaries would require a 1602 permit.

Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)

The ESA is intended to minimize harm to rare or endangered species (plants and animals) through a permit program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Vernal Pool Recovery Plan addresses steps to protect a number of plants and animals that are rare, endangered, or species of

concern and that are found in vernal pools in Oregon and California, including the Laguna Creek Watershed.

California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and Fish and Game Code

The CESA and Fish and Game Code (section 2081) requires permits for projects that could result in the death of a state-listed threatened or endangered species. Sixteen species covered by CESA have the potential to occur in the Laguna Creek Watershed (see Chapter 5). The California Fish and Game Code (Section 3503) states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird (including through tree removal). Section 3503.5 specifically states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any raptors, including their nests or eggs. Numerous bird and raptor species have the potential to occur within the Laguna Creek Watershed (see Chapter 5).

Climate Change

California is on the forefront of legislation designed to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions (primarily from the burning of fossil fuels for transportation and building energy) and encourage local governments to adapt to and prepare for a changing climate. The projected changes are significant and will likely impact natural resources in the Laguna Creek Watershed. The Sacramento region is projected to have more frequent, longer, and more-extreme heat waves and longer periods of drought. Water supplies are expected to decrease and be less reliable and the risk for wildfires is projected to increase. Despite predictions for less overall precipitation, the region is also projected to have more extreme storms, meaning greater risks of flooding. Sacramento County in general, and the Laguna Creek Watershed in particular, is vulnerable to the potential impacts of climate change given the region's already high summer temperatures, flooding risks, and water supply



challenges. The watershed's agriculture industry may be impacted by changes in temperature and rainfall patterns and an increase in pests and diseases.

Two pieces of legislation have been passed to date by the State and more is on the way:

AB 32 - Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

This landmark bill requires California to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is the lead agency for implementing AB 32 and has developed a plan (CARB's 2008 Scoping Plan) for what local governments and others must do to comply. Local governments play an integral role in achieving the target emission reductions through their discretionary land use and transportation planning authority as well as in other sectors such as energy, waste reduction and recycling, and water use.

Senate Bill 375

SB 375 connects land use and AB 32 implementation. It requires the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) to align regional transportation, housing, and land use plans and prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" to reduce vehicle miles traveled as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The County and cities will need to address this when approving future development projects in the Laguna Creek Watershed. For more information about climate change, refer to: <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/publications>.

4.2 Regional Policies, Plans and Programs

Regional Land Use and Transportation Plans

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is an association of local governments in the six-county Sacramento region which provides transportation planning and funding for

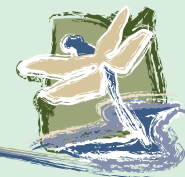
the region, and serves as a forum for the study and resolution of regional issues related to population growth. SACOG was the lead agency in establishing the award-winning Blueprint program to promote transit-oriented smart growth in the region, prepared the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and is now working on rural-urban interface and climate change issues related to growth (see the Appendix B for more details). In addition, SACOG assists other agencies in the region in planning for transit and bicycle networks. SACOG has four working committees, two of address issues affecting natural resources in the region and the watershed: 1) Land Use and Housing (Blueprint, flood issues), and 2) Climate and Air Quality (air quality and climate change issues). There is no formal function representing water quality at SACOG.

The Elk Grove-Rancho Cordova-El Dorado Connector Project (the Connector) is a proposed 4+ lane multi-modal transportation project along the existing alignment of Grant Line Road that will impact the eastern boundary of the Laguna Creek Watershed. See Appendix B for more information.

Regional Water Quality Protection Plans and Programs

CALFED Bay-Delta Program

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program, now administered by the California Department of Conservation, is a collaborative effort among state and federal resource management agencies and representatives from urban, agricultural, and environmental interests to attempt to resolve numerous water-related issues associated with the Sacramento River-San Joaquin River Delta and San Francisco Bay. The program focuses on four major problem areas: drinking water supply, water quality, levee system integrity, and environmental restoration. The Laguna Creek Watershed falls under the jurisdiction of the CALFED program, since it flows into the Sacramento River. This Laguna



Creek Management Plan, and the Assessment project that preceded it, were funded by a Prop 50 watershed grant funded by CALFED and the Regional Water Board.

Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan) defines the beneficial uses, water quality objectives, implementation programs, and surveillance and monitoring programs for waters of the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins, including Laguna Creek (see Chapter 5). The actions recommended in Chapter 6 of this Plan, particularly the water quality monitoring program (Action 38), are designed to ensure compliance with the Basin Plan objectives.

The Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership

The Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership (Partnership) includes the County of Sacramento and six cities in the County, including the three cities with jurisdiction in the Laguna Creek Watershed: Sacramento, Elk Grove, and Rancho Cordova. Those agencies are subject to an NPDES stormwater permit which requires them to conduct comprehensive programs to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable. These efforts benefit the Laguna Creek Watershed and are consistent with the goals and proposed actions for this Watershed Plan.

The Laguna Creek Watershed assessment that helped form the basis for this Action Plan was coordinated closely with the Partnership in order to share resources and results and provide complimentary data. Moving forward, it is expected that the Partnership will continue to collaborate with the LCWC in implementing actions recommended in Chapter 6, particularly monitoring.

Regional Habitat Conservation Plan

The South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) is a mitigation plan being prepared and managed by Sacramento County that seeks strategies that allow commercial, residential, and other development, while balancing the needs of sensitive plant and animal species. The Laguna Creek Watershed east of Hwy 5 is located entirely within the SSHCP area. The SSHCP is intended to consolidate environmental efforts to protect and enhance wetlands (primarily vernal pools) and upland habitats to provide ecologically viable conservation areas. The SSHCP will also minimize regulatory hurdles and streamline the development permit process for projects that are covered by and consistent with the plan.
expended.

Regional Flood Control Program

The Sacramento Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), a joint powers agency of the City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento, County of Sutter, American River Flood District, and Reclamation District 1000, has been coordinating regional flood control since its creation in 1989. In 2002, SAFCA and various other regulatory and local agencies formed the Sacramento River Corridor Planning Forum to develop a Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Management Plan containing recommendations on flood management goals and policies, with guidelines for riparian habitat protection, public access and recreation, and riverfront development. The Forum is focused on the Lower Sacramento River extending from the Fremont Weir to Courtland, the main receiving water for the Laguna Creek Watershed.

Regional Water Supply Agencies and Programs

Drinking water for residents in the Laguna Creek Watershed presently comes primarily from groundwater, either pumped



from private wells, or pumped and delivered by various water purveyors. There is a project underway now to construct a conjunctive use system which will also supply treated surface water to some upper watershed residents in the future (see Appendix B for more information).

The agencies responsible for planning for and supplying potable water, including acquiring or transferring water rights in the watershed, include: Sacramento County Water Agency (Zone 40), City of Sacramento, Elk Grove Water Service (Florin Resource Conservation District) and Freeport Regional Water Authority (collaboration of County Water Agency, City of Sacramento and East Bay Municipal Utility District). Other water and groundwater authorities responsible for planning and decision-making about water resources affecting the watershed include the Regional Water Authority and Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority.

Policies and programs implemented by these agencies, as well as pipeline, well and other facility construction projects, have the potential to impact the creek and its habitat. Therefore, it is important for the LCWC to review and comment on proposals as they become available. In addition, several actions are recommended in Chapter 6 which encourage collaboration between the LCWC and the local drinking water suppliers to look for opportunities to partner on water use efficiency projects that benefit all parties.

Regional Wastewater Programs

The Sacramento Area Sewer District (SASD) and City of Sacramento Department of Utilities operate sewage collection and pumping facilities in the watershed. Wastewater is delivered to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant near the bottom of the watershed in Elk Grove. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) operates the treatment plant and plans/constructs large sewer interceptors that travel through the watershed, carrying

wastewater to the plant from communities in the eastern portion of the county (e.g., Rancho Cordova).

As with the water purveyors, policies, plans and construction projects implemented by these agencies have the potential to impact the creek and its habitat; for example, the SRCSD's planned future sewer interceptor along the upper Laguna Creek corridor. Every effort is being made to coordinate these interests already through the ULCC corridor master plan, and the LCWC needs to ensure continued coordination to ensure watershed protection. This and several other actions which involve the SRCSD, are recommended in Chapter 6.

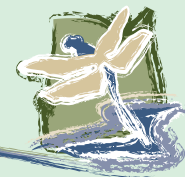
4.3 Local Policies Plans and Regulations

Overview

One of the guiding principles used to select and recommend actions for this Plan is that the proposed actions recognize and are consistent with existing plans, policies, and regulations established by the various agencies and organizations with land use and/or management authority in the watershed. Such agencies play a key role in planning and regulating development; planning, operating and maintaining infrastructure; and managing resources within the watershed. This section provides a quick overview of the role those agencies can play in watershed protection; most of these stakeholders were previously introduced in Chapter 3.

Three broad categories of tools are typically used for land use planning and management by the local agencies:

- Policies and Plans – the agencies use policies and plans to present an overall community vision
- Ordinances and codes - cities and counties implement the community vision by adopting codes which establish the local regulation/law



- Design standards and guidelines - the agencies publish standards and guidelines to specify design and engineering requirements that the development community must follow to comply with the local regulations

This section briefly discusses how the local and regional agencies with jurisdiction in the watershed can use and apply these tools to protect watershed resources; additional detail can be found in Appendix B.

Local Land Use Authorities

Counties and Cities

Four governmental agencies have jurisdictional authorities and responsibilities in the watershed:

- Sacramento County,
- City of Rancho Cordova,
- City of Elk Grove, and
- City of Sacramento.

The City of Sacramento only has responsibility for a small section of the watershed which is either developed or under development; therefore, this chapter focuses on the other three agencies responsible for watershed lands that can develop in the future.

Community Planning Advisory Councils

Community Planning Advisory Councils (CPACs) have been established in developing portions of unincorporated Sacramento County to provide a forum for public participation in land use planning issues. They review and comment on proposed development projects and advise the County Planning Commission. Four of these CPACs have responsibility for land within the Laguna Creek Watershed: Rancho Cordova, Vineyard, Cosumnes and Delta CPACs (see Figure 2-2).

Parks and School Districts

The following districts have influence over land development and related decisions, and plan, construct and operate/manage facilities and resources in the watershed:

- Parks Districts - Cordova Park and Recreation District, Southgate Recreation and Park District, Cosumnes Community Services District (CSD) Parks and Recreation Department, and City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation. Two of the districts, Southgate and Cosumnes CSD, have responsibility for many parks, trails and some open space in the watershed.
- School Districts – The boundaries for Elk Grove and Sacramento Unified School Districts cross into the watershed, but currently all schools in the watershed are part of Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD).

In addition, Cosumnes CSD and EGUSD are covered by the State Water Board's Phase II (small community) NPDES municipal stormwater general permit. The permit requires the agencies to implement programs to reduce pollutant discharges to the storm drain system and creeks from agency-owned facilities and operations.

Urban Growth Policies

The Laguna Creek Watershed is located wholly within the County's Urban Services Boundary (USB), which is the limit to which urban services, such as public water and sewer, will be provided. As such, it defines the ultimate "footprint" for urban development in Sacramento County. The Cities of Rancho Cordova and Elk Grove do not have a similar restriction within their General Plans and can propose to annex and urbanize land outside of the USB. Future annexations by the City of Rancho Cordova could impact the northern (headwaters) portion of the watershed.



The County's Urban Policy Area (UPA) is a "flexible" boundary inside of the USB that is intended to manage near-term growth – only land within the UPA can be developed with urban uses. An expansion of the UPA, which would encompass additional lands within the Laguna Creek Watershed, is being proposed in the County's draft 2030 General Plan; see Appendix B for more details.

City and County General Plans

General plans for the County of Sacramento and cities of Rancho Cordova, Elk Grove, and Sacramento each apply to the portion of the Laguna Creek Watershed within that agency's jurisdiction (see Figure 2-2 in Chapter 2).

The general plans express policies and goals and include maps showing projected future land use patterns for the community for a given planning horizon (e.g., 20 years). They are intended to guide future land use and growth decisions recommended by planning staff and acted on by appointed Planning Commissions and elected officials.

Watershed protection and water quality and quantity management principles and policies are typically included in the land use, conservation and/or open space elements of the general plans. But other elements of a general plan (e.g., transportation and utilities) are also of interest to the Laguna Creek Watershed planning process because of resulting impacts to air and water quality from siting, construction and operation of public infrastructure and facilities. Also of interest to this planning process are the climate change elements of General Plans. Agencies updating their plans now and in the future must assess climate change impacts posed by a community's land use and growth decisions and resulting greenhouse gas emissions, in order to comply with CEQA and AB 32. This is of interest to the Laguna Creek Watershed planning effort, since many of the measures likely to be selected by the local jurisdictions to curb greenhouse gas

emissions will have many environmental co-benefits such as water quality improvement.

Sacramento County Draft 2030 General Plan

The County has prepared a draft 2030 General Plan that will be adopted by the Board of Supervisors following completion of the environmental impact report (EIR) process (anticipated late 2009). This is the first major update to the County General Plan since 1993.

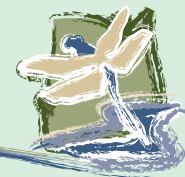
As part of their General Plan update process, the County conducted visioning processes for two areas affecting the Laguna Creek Watershed:

- Grant Line East Visioning area - about 8,000 acres east of Grant Line Road and north of the Kiefer Landfill in the headwaters area.
- Jackson Highway Visioning area - about 22,000 acres along Jackson Road between South Watt Avenue and the Urban Services Boundary at the Cosumnes River.

Both of these areas include significant amounts of agriculture and open space.

The proposed General Plan conceptually embraces the regional smart growth principles ("Blueprint") and associated growth projections put forth in 2005 by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG; see Appendix B for details). The County is proposing an expansion of its Urban Policy Area from what was shown in the 1993 Plan, which would encompass more of the Laguna Creek Watershed. In addition, the County is addressing climate change impacts through the EIR process.

The proposed Open Space element of the County's General Plan includes goals and policies that are generally consistent with the focus of the Laguna Creek Watershed Plan to preserve and enhance natural resources and values. The draft plan includes an open space vision diagram that identifies areas where acquisition of easements or land in fee title, from



willing sellers, could be directed when funding is available. As development continues to occur, it will be important to protect these natural areas as they provide valuable habitat for both humans and wildlife as well as help retain the rural character of the County that makes it a desirable place to live. See Appendix B for more information about the County's open space/rural principles that serve as the basis for the open space vision and details about other elements of the plan related to watershed protection.

City of Rancho Cordova and City of Elk Grove General Plans

The City of Rancho Cordova and Elk Grove General Plans, adopted in 2006 and 2004, respectively, include goals, policies, and actions that promote buffering incompatible land uses, preserving open space, promoting recreation, and protecting wildlife and natural resources. Both cities considered and integrated watershed and water quality protection principles into their General Plans as required by the Sacramento Areawide NPDES Stormwater Permit mentioned earlier. The General Plan goals and policies for both agencies are generally consistent with the focus of the Laguna Creek Watershed Plan to preserve and enhance creek resources and values.

City of Sacramento General Plan Update

In March 2009, the City of Sacramento adopted its new 2030 General Plan to replace the 1988 General Plan. The document includes goals and policies in various elements that promote responsible protection of environmental resources consistent with the Laguna Creek Watershed Management Action Plan. This general plan will have limited, if any, influence in the watershed due to the City's small jurisdictional area and the fact that development is either existing or in progress already (Delta Shores; see Figure 2-2 in Chapter 2).

Community and Specific Plans

Two of the County's community plans (Cordova Community Plan and Vineyard Springs Comprehensive Plan) and one of the City of Sacramento's community plans (South Area Community Plan) cover portions of the Laguna Creek Watershed. These plans implement the goals and policies of the General Plans, with greater detail and specificity. Community plans include a land use plan that delineates the location, density, and intensity of housing, commercial, industrial, public facilities, and open space. Environmental considerations unique to the designated area (e.g., protection strategies for a creek traversing the area) could also be defined. See Appendix B for more details about the three plans influencing development in the watershed.

Drainage Master Plans and Studies

Sacramento County completed various drainage studies and master plans addressing parts of Laguna, Elk Grove and Whitehouse Creeks as development proceeded in the late 1980s through late 1990s. The County continues to oversee drainage planning for the unincorporated areas of the watershed, and the cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova, which incorporated since 2000, assume this role within their jurisdictions. Up until this point in time, drainage master plans were typically created for construction of new facilities in developing parts of the watershed. The city of Elk Grove is working on a new drainage master plan now that also prescribes improvements for older developed areas served by aging, inadequate and/or failing infrastructure.

The conventional drainage master planning process focused primarily on flood protection. In the past ten years, due to evolving environmental regulations (including stormwater quality) and community interest, the focus of drainage master plans is expanding to include protection, enhancement and/or



creation of water quality, habitat, recreational and visual values. This holistic integrated stormwater master planning approach aims to consider and address a variety of related features impacted by or impacting the drainage facilities.

Sacramento County Drainage Studies and Plans

Various county studies were reviewed as background for preparation of this Watershed Management Plan, including the Lower Laguna Creek Drainage Master Plan, the Upper Laguna Creek Scoping Study, the Upper Whitehouse Creek Design Plan, and the Elk Grove Creek Scoping Study (see Appendix B for more details). As a result of those master plans and studies, large sections of the creeks were realigned and reconfigured, with the primary goal of confining the flood flows to the channel and creating more developable land.

In 1993, Sacramento County adopted a floodplain management and development policy that limited development within the 100-year floodplain as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

City of Elk Grove Drainage Master Plan

In November 2006, the City of Elk Grove published its draft Flood Control and Storm Drainage Master Plan (Drainage Master Plan or DMP, City of Elk Grove 2006) based on various drainage studies completed after the City assumed drainage responsibilities from the County. The DMP is undergoing environmental review in 2009. The Laguna Creek Watershed Council is playing an active role in the community outreach process being conducted by the City and will continue to provide comments to promote consistency with this Watershed Plan. On a related note, this Watershed Plan recommends that subwatershed plans be developed for several tributary creeks, including Elk Grove and Whitehouse (see Chapter 6). Relevant recommendations from the Elk Grove DMP should be integrated into those subwatershed plans so that drainage

improvements are coordinated with projects to protect water quality, provide recreational access, etc.

Recreation, Parks and Trails Master Plans

A number of recreation, parks, and trails master plans apply to land within the watershed. Many times, existing and proposed parks and trails are adjacent to creeks and other natural areas that provide water quality and habitat values. If planned properly, the trails can provide connections between the community and the environmental resource, promoting awareness and stewardship. The following briefly describes the status of the various plans impacting the watershed:

Southgate Recreation and Park District Master Plan

Southgate Recreation and Park District is responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining parks, parkways and creekside trails in the portion of the Upper Watershed from Jackson Highway down to Calvine Road. The Southgate Master Plan Map published fall/winter 2008 shows proposed trails along the full length of Laguna Creek through the District's jurisdiction.

Southgate owns and manages Wildhawk Golf Course, which sends some runoff to Laguna Creek via the outfall at the Vineyard Road bridge. In addition, the District has acquired open space conservation areas as the land became available, primarily through development interests. For example:

- Conservation land adjoining Laguna Creek in the area between Excelsior and Vineyard Roads (just north of the Silver Springs community)
- Vernal pool preserve on the eastern edge of Waterman Road and west of Sheldon High School/Smedberg Middle School



- Dunmore Park Preserve Area on the east side of Excelsior Road between Florin and Gerber Roads. (includes a tributary to Laguna Creek)

Cosumnes Community Services District Park and Recreation Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Department of the CSD is responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining parks, parkways and creekside trails in the lower portion of the watershed from Calvine Road down to the end of the watershed, with the exception of a small portion of the northern creekside trail system (North Laguna Wildlife Area) managed by the City of Sacramento Parks Dept, between Center Parkway and Franklin Blvd. In August 2007, the CSD and the City of Elk Grove entered into a Memorandum of Understanding and Settlement Agreement, which calls for the City and CSD to be equal partners in providing new parks and recreation facilities in all new parks in the City of Elk Grove.

The Cosumnes CSD's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 provides long-term direction for the CSD, with specific recommendations for park improvements, acquisition, programming and funding. It will be reviewed and updated annually. An important priority identified in the Strategic Plan is to acquire land at affordable prices to preserve open space for future generations. In its April 2008 Implementation Plan, the CSD identified several projects with relevance to the work proposed for this Laguna Creek Watershed Management Plan:

- B2.5 - Develop a Tree Symposium for homeowners through a partnership with the Sacramento Tree Foundation.
- B2.6 - Partner with Sacramento Tree Foundation to assist in the creation of an Urban Forest Program.
- D2.1 - Develop a Storm Water Management Program to ensure CSD practices are in compliance with storm water regulations.

- E2.1- Develop sustainability policy and implement program that focuses on reducing, reusing and recycling to decrease the District's impact on natural resources.
- F2.4 - Develop a long-range plan to reduce water consumption in District parks and corridors.

City of Elk Grove Trails Master Plan

The City appointed a Trails Committee in 2005 which supervised the development of the Elk Grove Trails Master Plan (EGTMP), published in January 2007. The EGTMP is the expression of the City's desire to have an exemplary off-street multi-use trail system that provides connectivity throughout the City and the wider Sacramento region in order to offer recreational opportunities and an alternative method for transportation for Elk Grove residents. Various projects to build new trails and connect existing trails are proposed for Laguna, Elk Grove and Whitehouse Creeks in the Laguna Creek watershed. One of the major projects will provide pedestrian access over Hwy 99 to join the east and west portions of the Elk Grove Creek trail.

The LCWC provided comments on the public draft of the plan and advocated for the creek resources to be better addressed in the EGTMP. In addition, the proposed trail alignments are shown in various maps in this Plan and are reflected on interpretive signage and the watershed brochure published by the LCWC.

The City will continue to update the EGTMP (in collaboration with Cosumnes CSD) as goals are achieved, as new funding sources become available, and in order to ensure consistency with the Elk Grove General Plan.

Cordova Recreation and Park District Master Plan

The Cordova Recreation and Park District is responsible for planning, building and maintaining parks in the uppermost



portion of the watershed, above Jackson Highway. The District does not yet manage any trail systems and does not yet have a master plan. It is anticipated that the Sun Creek and Arboretum (Waegell Villages) developments (see Chapter 6) will be the first to include parks and trails that will likely come under the District's purview.

City of Sacramento Park and Recreation District Master Plan

Due to the limited amount of land managed by the City of Sacramento in the watershed, and the fact that most of the land is already developed (North Laguna Wildlife Area), the City's master plan was not considered during development of this Watershed Plan.

Local Ordinances and Codes Related to Watershed Protection

The County and cities implement the General Plan vision and policies in part by adopting ordinances which establish or amend their municipal codes; those codes constitute the local regulation/law. In addition, local agencies publish design/improvement standards and guidelines that lay out the additional design and engineering requirements that the development community must follow. This section briefly describes requirements related to watershed protection; see Appendix B for more details.

Conflicts likely exist between some of the County and Cities' codes and the objectives of water quality treatment. Chapter 6 includes an action (Action 42) that recommends that the local agencies review their codes and consider amendments to better address watershed protection and eliminate conflicts.

Zoning Ordinance/Code

Whereas the general plan describes land use in a broad sense, the zoning ordinance more specifically spells out the zone classification and associated allowable uses for each piece of property within the community. Zoning codes may contain requirements that directly promote water quality protection. For example, a zoning code may designate natural stream buffers, open spaces or erosion-prone areas that need special protection. Zoning codes can also indirectly affect water quality; for example, limits on lot coverage result in more vegetated areas to infiltrate and filter runoff and less impervious surface.

Stormwater Quality Ordinances

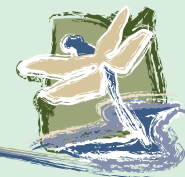
The County and the four cities with jurisdiction in the watershed have each adopted and enforce a stormwater quality control ordinance, as required by their Stormwater NPDES permits. This ordinance provides authority to the municipality to pursue enforcement action against dischargers causing pollution to enter the local storm drain system and creeks.

Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinances

All of the local agencies regulate land grading and require erosion and sediment control during construction to minimize damage to surrounding property and public rights-of-way, water quality degradation, and disruption of natural drainage flows.

Other Ordinances

Depending on their unique circumstances, the local agencies have adopted or could consider additional ordinances that directly or indirectly address the potential water quality impacts of development. Examples include water conservation and tree preservation ordinances (see Appendix B). Implementation of these ordinances may promote water quality protection or in



some cases, can pose a conflict with stormwater quality requirements.

Design Standards and Guidelines Related to Watershed Protection

Design standards and guidelines help ensure that the components of the public infrastructure (e.g., roads, drainage and sewer utilities, parks, public buildings) are designed and constructed consistently and of the highest quality. The following briefly describes the documents which influence development designs in the watershed.

Hydrology Design Standards

In the mid 1990s, the County and City of Sacramento jointly published hydrology standards specifying design requirements for the public drainage infrastructure (Volume 2 of the City/County Drainage Manual). The County has updated this document over the years and continues to make it available to the development community. The cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova have adopted the County improvement standards and design/procedures manuals.

Stormwater Quality Design Standards

The County and Cities of Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova and Sacramento worked with other partners in the region to publish design criteria for post-construction stormwater quality facilities, in the *Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento and South Placer Regions* (Design Manual, May 2007). The Design manual promotes early site planning and design that is consistent with the “low impact development” philosophy promoted by this Laguna Creek Watershed Management Action Plan. The manual includes a variety of techniques to reduce the water quality and quantity impacts associated with new

development, consistent with the general recommendations presented in this plan.

Community Design Guidelines

Sacramento County and the Cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova have published design guidelines for residential and non-residential developments.

Design guidelines include concepts and principles for planning and site design that primarily influence the aesthetics and livability of an area. Traditionally, such guidelines did not address stormwater management. However, water quality and watershed protection principles can be integrated into such design guidelines so that planners and design professionals are considering the water quality impacts of a project and pre-selecting appropriate stormwater controls during the earliest phase of site design and permit application. For example, design guidelines can emphasize the need for designs that minimize impervious surfaces by protecting/adding vegetative areas and/or permeable pavement surfaces.

4.4 Bibliography

See Appendix B.