

---

# CHAPTER 7

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

---

Woodland's environmental resources--water, air, vegetation, wildlife, and open space-- contribute to the city's economy and are important elements in the quality of life of Woodland's residents. These natural resources exist in limited quantity and are at risk of destruction or degradation through continued urban development. The General Plan seeks to balance the need for growth with the need for the conservation and enhancement of the area's natural resources, frequently in cooperation with other agencies.

### GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

This chapter contains goals, policies, and implementation programs that establish the framework for the protection of valuable environmental resources in the Woodland area. The goals and policies are organized topically according to the following categories, each of which relates to a key objective for protection of Woodland's environmental resources.

- Water Resources
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Vegetation
- Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources
- Air Quality--General
- Air Quality—Transportation

#### **W**ATER RESOURCES

The availability, quantity, and quality of water is vital to natural processes and human activities. Water is essential to the development of housing, commerce, industry, and agriculture, to recreation, and to the maintenance of high quality fish and wildlife habitats.

The Yolo Bypass and Sacramento River lie two miles east of Woodland, Willow Slough is located south of the Planning Area boundary, and Cache Creek is one mile north of the city. A groundwater aquifer underlies Woodland and serves as the City's municipal water supply. Most of these resources are regional in nature and require a cooperative effort to ensure protection of water quality in these bodies. Policies in this section seek to protect these

resources and maintain the highest quality for human and natural use. Water supplies are also discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.C., "Water Supply and Delivery."

### **GOAL 7.A**

To protect and enhance the natural quantity and qualities of the Woodland area's rivers, creeks, sloughs, and groundwater.

### **POLICIES**

- 7.A.1. The City shall cooperate with Yolo County in the conservation of Cache Creek for the protection of its water resources and its open space qualities. To this end, the City shall oppose the introduction of new potential sources of pollutants to Cache Creek.
- 7.A.2. The City shall monitor any activities that may degrade the aquifers of Cache Creek as it impacts City water supply and shall support the maintenance of high water quality in Cache Creek.
- 7.A.3. The City shall cooperate with other jurisdictions in jointly studying the potential for using surface water sources to balance the groundwater supply so as to protect against aquifer overdrafts and water quality degradation.
- 7.A.4. The City shall help protect groundwater resources from overdraft by promoting water conservation and groundwater recharge efforts.
- 7.A.5. The City shall continue to require the use of feasible and practical best management practices (BMPs) to protect receiving waters from the adverse effects of construction activities and urban runoff.
- 7.A.6. The City shall encourage the protection of floodplain lands and where appropriate, acquire public easements for purposes of flood protection, public safety, wildlife preservation, groundwater recharge, access and recreation.

### **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS**

- 7.1. The City shall monitor any activities that may degrade the aquifers of Cache Creek as it affects City water supplies.

Responsibility: Public Works Department

# FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

Time Frame: Ongoing

Fish and wildlife resources in the Woodland area occur in both natural and altered habitats. Habitats altered either by agricultural cultivation or urban development make up most of the Planning Area. Although altered by human activities, these areas may still be valuable for wildlife. Natural habitats in and around Woodland include Willow Slough, some riparian areas, alkali sinks, and some natural oaks.

Yolo County and the cities in the county are undertaking a comprehensive countywide Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) to address the effects of growth throughout the county on biological resources. The primary goal of the HCP/NCCP is the conservation of 29 state- and federally-listed rare, threatened, and endangered species, and species of special concern.

Policies in this section encourage the protection of important habitats and commit the City to continued participation in the HCP/NCCP as a means of addressing the effects of growth on these habitats.

## GOAL 7.B

To protect, restore, and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels.

## POLICIES

- 7.B.1. The City shall participate in the countywide Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan and Joint Powers Agency to mitigate the impacts of growth projected under the General Plan on wildlife habitats in the Woodland area.
- 7.B.2. Until the countywide Habitat Conversation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan is adopted, prior to approval of discretionary development permits involving parcels within a significant ecological resource area, the City shall require, as part of the environmental review process, a biotic resources evaluation of the site by a wildlife biologist. The evaluation shall be based upon field reconnaissance performed at the appropriate time of year to determine the presence or absence of federally- or state-listed rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants or animals. Such evaluation will consider the potential for significant impact on these resources, and will identify feasible measures to mitigate such impacts or indicate why mitigation is not feasible. In approving any such discretionary development permit, the City shall determine the

feasibility of the identified mitigation measures.

Significant ecological resource areas shall, at a minimum, include the following:

- a. Any habitat for federally- or state-listed rare, threatened or endangered animals or plants.
  - b. Large areas of non-fragmented natural habitat
  - c. Identifiable wildlife movement zones, including but not limited to, non-fragmented stream environment zones, avian and mammalian migratory routes, and known concentration areas of waterfowl within the Pacific Flyway.
- 7.B.3. In connection with the countywide Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan, the City shall identify and protect significant ecological resource areas and other unique wildlife habitats critical to protecting and sustaining wildlife populations.
- 7.B.4. The City shall require that development in areas known to have particular value for wildlife be carefully planned and, where possible, located so that the reasonable value of the habitat for wildlife is maintained.
- 7.B.5. The City shall encourage the control of residual pesticides to prevent potential damage to water quality, vegetation, and wildlife.
- 7.B.6. The City shall support preservation of the habitats of federally- or state-listed rare, threatened, endangered, and/or other special status species. Federal and state agencies, as well as other resource conservation organizations, shall be encouraged to acquire and manage endangered species' habitats.
- 7.B.7. The City shall cooperate with, encourage, and support the plans of other public agencies to acquire fee title or conservation easements to privately-owned lands in order to preserve important wildlife corridors and to provide habitat protection of California Species for Concern and state or federally-listed rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species.
- 7.B.8. The City shall support and cooperate with efforts of other local, state, and federal agencies and private entities engaged in the preservation and protection of significant biological resources from incompatible land uses and development. Significant biological resources include endangered, threatened, or rare species and their habitats, wetland habitats, wildlife migration

corridors, and locally-important species/communities.

- 7.B.9. The City shall support the management efforts of the California Department of Fish and Game to maintain and enhance the productivity of important fish and game species by protecting identified critical habitat for these species from incompatible suburban, rural residential, or recreational development.

### **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS**

- 7.2 In conjunction with Yolo County and other cities in the county, the City shall adopt the countywide Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan to mitigate the impacts of projected growth on plant and wildlife habitats in the Woodland area.

Responsibility: Community Development Department  
 Planning Commission  
 City Council

Time Frame: FY 02-03

## **V**EGETATION

Like fish and wildlife habitat, the diverse stands of vegetation in Woodland include both native and non-native species. Named because of the abundance of native oaks in the city, Woodland is still the “City of Trees,” although most are now non-native varieties.

Policies of this section support the preservation of important plant species, and promote the use of native species where possible in new development and landscaping.

### **GOAL 7.C**

To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of the Woodland area.

### **POLICIES**

- 7.C.1. The City shall participate in the countywide Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan to mitigate the impacts of growth projected under the General Plan on vegetation habitats in the Woodland area.
- 7.C.2. The City shall encourage landowners and developers to preserve natural vegetation in visually-sensitive areas and along important transportation corridors.

- 7.C.3. The City shall require developers to use native and compatible non-native species, especially drought-resistant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of permits or for project mitigation.
- 7.C.4. The City shall support the preservation of outstanding areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.
- 7.C.5. The City shall establish procedures for identifying and preserving rare, threatened, and endangered plant species that may be adversely affected by public or private development projects, including those identified by the countywide Habitat Conservation Plan.
- 7.C.6. The City shall encourage the conservation of sufficiently large, continuous expanses of native vegetation to provide suitable habitat for maintaining abundant and diverse wildlife.
- 7.C.7. The City shall support the management of wetland and riparian plant communities for passive recreation, groundwater recharge, nutrient catchment, and wildlife habitats. Such communities shall be restored or expanded, where possible and as appropriate.
- 7.C.8. The City shall require that new development preserve natural woodlands to the maximum extent possible.
- 7.C.9. The City shall encourage the planting of native trees, shrubs, and grasslands in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well-adapted plants are maintained.
- 7.C.10. The City shall require that new development avoid, as much as possible, ecologically-fragile areas (e.g., areas of rare or endangered species of plants, riparian areas, alkali sinks). Where feasible, these areas should be protected through public acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to ensure protection.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS**

See Implementation Program 7.2

# **O**PEN SPACE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Part of the enjoyment of Woodland is its open space resources, both manmade and natural. Woodland's open space resources include parks, mature trees in the neighborhoods and along roadways, the agricultural lands surrounding Woodland, and surrounding elements of the natural environment. Other goals and policies related to open space can be found in the "Agriculture" and "Landscaping and Streetscaping" sections of Chapter 1.

## **GOAL 7.D**

To preserve and enhance open space lands to maintain the natural resources of the Woodland area.

## **POLICIES**

- 7.D.1. The City shall support the preservation and enhancement of natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible. The City shall, where appropriate, permanently protect as open space areas of natural resource value, including wetlands preserves, riparian corridors, woodlands, and floodplains.
- 7.D.2. The City shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve significant stands of vegetation and any areas of special ecological significance as open space to the maximum extent feasible.
- 7.D.3. The City shall support the maintenance of open space and natural areas that are interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity, accommodate wildlife movement, and sustain ecosystems.
- 7.D.4. Where it does not conflict with wastewater treatment requirements and public safety, the City shall consider allowing areas at the wastewater treatment plant site to function as plant and wildlife habitat and, where feasible, shall provide public access to these areas.
- 7.D.5. The City shall encourage the development of natural open space areas in regional, community, and neighborhood parks.
- 7.D.6. The City shall serve as the steward of public open space and ensure that the use and maintenance of the open space is carried out in an environmentally responsible manner.
- 7.D.7. The City shall plan and establish natural open space parkland as a part of the overall City park system.

## **A**IR QUALITY-- GENERAL

7.D.8. The City shall manage, enhance, and improve the City's tree cover as a valuable community resource.

7.D.9. The City shall investigate the benefits of annexing to the Resource Conservation District.

Woodland is located within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, in which the air quality does not meet some state and federal health standards, particularly for ozone and small particulates (PM10). While emission control requirements on motor vehicles and industrial operations have substantially reduced air pollution from these sources, increased development and the associated increase in emissions from automobiles threatens to offset these gains. The Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District monitors and regulates air quality in the Woodland area and regulates air pollution emissions of commercial and industrial operations.

This section includes policies generally addressing ways to improve regional air quality. The next section specifically addresses the transportation-related policies pertaining to air quality.

### **GOAL 7.E**

To protect and improve air quality in the Woodland area with the goal of attaining state and federal health-based air quality standards.

### **POLICIES**

7.E.1. The City shall cooperate with other agencies to develop a consistent and effective approach to regional air quality planning and management.

7.E.2. The City shall support the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District (YSAQMD) in its development of improved ambient air quality monitoring capabilities and the establishment of standards, thresholds, and rules to more adequately address the air quality impacts of new development.

7.E.3. The City shall continue its active participation in the activities of the Yolo County Air Quality Management Board.

7.E.4. The City shall require major new development projects to submit an air quality analysis for review and approval. Based on this analysis, the City shall require appropriate mitigation measures.

- 7.E.5. In cooperation with the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District, the City shall develop emission thresholds to serve as the basis for requiring air quality analysis and mitigation.
- 7.E.6. The City shall solicit and consider comments from local and regional agencies on proposed projects that may affect regional air quality. The City shall submit development proposals to the YSAQMD for review and comment in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) prior to consideration by the City.
- 7.E.7. The City shall require project-level environmental review to include identification of potential air quality impacts and to include design and other appropriate mitigation measures or offset fees to reduce impacts. The City shall dedicate staff to work with project proponents and other agencies in identifying, ensuring the implementation of, and monitoring the success of mitigation measures.
- 7.E.8. The City shall require development where feasible to be located and designed to minimize direct and indirect air pollutants.
- 7.E.9. In reviewing project applications, the City shall require consideration of alternatives or amendments that reduce emissions of air pollutants.
- 7.E.10. The City shall encourage the use of EPA-certified woodstoves and fireplace inserts in lieu of wood burning fireplaces in new development
- 7.E.11. The City shall encourage inclusion of exterior electrical outlets and natural gas hookups in new residential development to encourage the use of electric, rather than gas-powered, equipment, and to encourage the use of natural gas-fired barbecues.

The relationship between development patterns and the transportation system has important air quality implications. This General Plan encourages land use patterns and alternative forms of transportation that reduce the length and number of automobile trips (see Chapters 1 and 3). Policies in this section address specific actions to address the air quality implications of automobile transportation associated with future growth.

## **GOAL 7.F**

# **AIR QUALITY-- TRANSPORTATION**

To integrate air quality planning with the land use and transportation planning process.

### **POLICIES**

- 7.F.1. Consistent with Policy 3.A.2, the City shall require new development to be planned to result in satisfactory traffic conditions for major roadways. This includes traffic signals and traffic signal coordination, parallel roadways, and intra- and inter-neighborhood connections where significant reductions in overall emissions can be achieved.
- 7.F.2. The City shall continue and, where appropriate, expand the use of synchronized traffic signals on roadways susceptible to emissions improvement through approach control.
- 7.F.3. The City shall encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation by incorporating public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes in City transportation planning and by requiring new development to provide adequate pedestrian and bikeway facilities.
- 7.F.4. The City shall endeavor to secure adequate funding for transit services so that transit is a viable transportation alternative. New development shall pay its fair share of the cost of transit equipment and facilities required to serve new projects.
- 7.F.5 The City shall promote the use of clean alternative fuel vehicles.