

## 6 GOALS AND POLICIES





## 6. GOALS AND POLICIES

### 6.1 VISION AND VALUES

The Parkway preserves natural areas and resources important to the community's quality of life as well as to wildlife. The Parkway provides outdoor nature-oriented recreational and educational experiences for the regions' residents and visitors—of all ages and backgrounds—to enjoy and value. Some Parkway features can be experienced now, while others are being planned; the Parkway will provide a legacy far into the future.

In developing the Parkway, the Conservancy and its partners are striving to provide:

- Safe, nearby, high-quality, and affordable outdoor, nature-oriented exercise, recreation, and hobbies;
- Natural areas and parklands in a metropolitan area deficient in such amenities;
- Conservation and diversification of habitats and wildlife species that have dwindled over time; improved habitat and vitality of the wildlife of the area;
- Direct benefits to many target audiences—e.g., anglers, bicyclists, outdoors-people, families, seniors, children, etc.
- Stewardship of important resources: e.g., water, floodplains, cultural sites;
- Venues, programs, and displays for hands-on, in-the-environment learning;
- Involvement and engagement in stewardship and service;
- Connections to other regional recreational trails, open spaces, and land uses; trail systems that enhance non-motorized commuting and transportation;
- Quality scenery, aesthetics, and viewsheds;
- Services and features within the Parkway that, as a by-product, also enhance the views, character, amenities, and values of neighboring properties; and
- Assurance that future generations will enjoy these resources, recreational and educational experiences.

The values held in common in developing the Parkway are:

- The natural environment must be respected, cared for, and conserved;
- Water resources are extremely important to any community;

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- Experiences in nature invigorate, refresh, instill wonder, and educate;
- Outdoor activities contribute to individuals' health and well-being;
- The community deserves and needs broadly available, convenient public access to open spaces and parks;
- The Parkway must benefit the public and serve all constituencies effectively, efficiently, and equitably, to maximize the common good;
- The community must be involved in and have the opportunity to influence Parkway development; and
- The Parkway will preserve natural areas and open spaces for the benefit of generations to come.

The Parkway represents a partnership among state and local, government and private, business, tourism, homeowner, and environmental interests.

### 6.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals, policies, guidelines, best management practices, and mitigation measures presented and adopted within the Parkway Master Plan Update and EIR will guide the siting, location, design, and management of public Parkway lands developed, funded, or managed by the Conservancy to the extent the policies are within its authorities and jurisdiction.

The goals and policies established in this document provide the framework for consideration and action by the Conservancy and shall be considered for their discretionary adoption by all jurisdictions with Parkway management responsibilities or land use regulatory authority, including the County of Fresno, the County of Madera, and the City of Fresno. Policies requiring the cooperation of private landowners and non-member agencies are advisory recommendations.

It is anticipated that each land use jurisdiction will take separate action to incorporate these goals and policies into its General Plan or the applicable community plan. The effectiveness of these goals and policies in guiding the realization of the Parkway will depend on the extent to which the actions taken by each jurisdiction conforms to the actions of the others. The Parkway will be driven by the Conservancy's implementation of the Parkway Master Plan Update, and to a lesser extent by the policies of other jurisdictions.

Implementation of a San Joaquin River Parkway consistent with the San Joaquin River Conservancy Act's goals of natural resources protection, public education, and low impact recreation requires a Parkway Master Plan that includes natural resources, educational, and recreational elements. In recognition of the need to coordinate with private property owners and with the programs of the appropriate land use and regulatory agencies, the Parkway Master Plan Update must be programmatic and conceptual in nature.

The Parkway Master Plan Update is a conceptual plan derived from the natural features of the San Joaquin River, its wildlife and aquatic resources, and the constraints and opportunities of the river and its

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surrounding conditions. The Master Plan Update is based on the goals to preserve, protect, and restore the natural resources of the river corridor and to provide public access to the river without adverse effects.

The original Parkway goals and policies have been revised for clarity of intent and parallel construction, deleted where no longer applicable or where redundant, and added to address components/issues that were not previously included. Some original policies were subdivided into separate policies. References to original goals and policies are noted in parenthesis at the end of text. In some cases, original goals and policies were included in a narrative or did not have a specific identifier; “no #” is used to note where this is the case. Goals and policies that are new are shown in **bold**.

### 6.2.1 FUNDAMENTAL GOALS

The goals expressed for the Parkway reflect a general agreement that it should provide for a harmonious combination of low-impact recreational uses, education, and natural resource protection. The particular human activities to be provided for in the Parkway become a largely subjective effort to achieve an appropriate balance between facilitating recreational and educational pursuits, protecting wildlife, buffering habitat from human habitation and activities, and minimizing conflicts with neighboring land uses.

These goals support a varied plan that includes natural reserves where wildlife protection predominates, recreation and education areas where such use is appropriate to the environmental setting, and transitional areas that blend the interface between different Parkway and non-Parkway areas.

- FG.1      Preserve and restore a riparian and floodplain corridor of statewide and regional significance along the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the Highway 99. (FG1)
- FG.2      Conserve wildlife species that depend on the river environment. (FG2)
- FG.3      Provide education and recreation facilities and programs, including a continuous multi-use trail the length of the Parkway. (FG3)
- FG.4      Conserve, restore, and enhance natural resources and protect cultural resources, while also meeting recreational and educational needs. (FG4)
- FG.5      Conserve undeveloped areas of the floodplain to provide that they remain non-urbanized. (FG5)
- FG.6      Develop the Parkway in a transparent and cooperative manner among local and state agencies; nonprofit land trusts, conservation, and stewardship organizations; neighboring landowners; and other stakeholders. (FG3)

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- FG.7 Create a Parkway and encourage land use and management policies for the San Joaquin River, its floodplain and bluffs, that will contribute to the economic vitality of the region, and enhance the health and quality of life of the region's residents. (FG6)
- FG.8 Develop rules, regulations, outreach, and management practices to protect public health, safety, and natural resources.

### 6.2.2 SPECIFIC GOALS AND POLICIES

The following present goals and policies for specific elements of the Parkway Plan.

#### **SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM (SJR RESTORATION PROGRAM)**

**Goals:**

- Coordinate and cooperate with the SJR Restoration Program to ensure efficiency and develop projects that meet mutual objectives.
- Support, promote, and educate Parkway visitors about river history, restoration ecology, water supply, and the SJR Restoration Program.

**Policies:**

- SJRRP.1 Cooperate and collaborate in the isolation of gravel pits on public Parkway lands from the San Joaquin River. Explore and collaborate with the Program on other restoration measures, such as floodplain habitat improvement and spawning bed enhancement, to generate multiple-use benefits from public Parkway lands.
- SJRRP.2 Engage the SJRRP in Parkway planning and project design to avoid conflicting infrastructure plans or habitat restoration.
- SJRRP.3 Cooperate and collaborate in providing off-stream recreational fishing.
- SJRRP.4 Provide public information to enhance Parkway visitors' knowledge of river water resources and the SJR Restoration Program and to protect the fisheries and natural resources.
- SJRRP.5 Ensure that lawful public uses and management activities do not result in incidental violations of the Endangered Species Act, through safe harbor agreements or other methods.
- SJRRP.6 Maximize recreation and public access, while still taking into account the goals and objectives of the SJRRP.

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### HABITAT CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

#### Goals:

- Conserve, enhance, restore, and provide for public enjoyment of the aquatic, plant, and wildlife resources of the San Joaquin River Parkway. (NRG1)
- Conserve, enhance, restore and maintain contiguous and continuous native riparian, wetland and upland habitat on public lands and conservation easements for wildlife movement and refuge. (NRG2)
- Encourage conservation of habitat on private lands in the floodplain. (NRG2)

#### Policies:

- HABITAT.1 Recommend to local land use agencies requirements, conditions, and mitigation measures consistent with the Parkway Master Plan for proposed projects that are in or adjacent to the Parkway plan area, or may affect or be affected by the Parkway. (NRO6)
- HABITAT.2 Conserve the San Joaquin River as aquatic habitat. Collaborate with wildlife agencies to enhance and protect fisheries in the river and in ponds in the Parkway. (NRO1)
- HABITAT.3 Establish, through purchase, easements, or other mutually satisfactory arrangements, natural resource conservation areas, open space, and a continuous wildlife corridor along the river to facilitate the movement of large mammals between habitat areas, to provide a variety of nesting and foraging areas, and to enhance and protect the aquatic habitats of the river and associated wetlands. (NRO3)
- HABITAT.4 Collaborate to conserve a wildlife movement corridor from the Parkway to Little Table Mountain. (NP2)
- HABITAT.5 Control and remove exotic plant species from the Parkway as feasible, including in the river channel, where they threaten to displace native plant species or disrupt natural plant community structure. Employ measures that will discourage repopulation of exotic plant species. Establish management practices to control the introduction of exotic plant species from horse feed and bedding. (NRO4)
- HABITAT.6 Establish management practices to minimize the introduction of exotic species from livestock, boats, equipment, etc.**
- HABITAT.7 Enhance, restore, and maintain native vegetation, riparian, wetland, woodland, and grassland habitats within natural reserves, open spaces, and wildlife corridors. (NRO5)
- HABITAT.8 Coordinate Parkway habitat restoration programs with agencies responsible for flood protection to ensure revegetation does not displace or obstruct floodwaters. (NP4)

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- HABITAT.9 Incorporate natural features (e.g., wetlands, grasslands, woodlands, and other native vegetation) and integrate supporting artificial features (e.g. existing access roads, ponds on reclaimed mined lands) into Parkway development. (NP8.2)
- HABITAT.10 Minimize grading, except as necessary to improve hydrology, enhance and restore habitat, or protect public safety. (NP8.3)
- HABITAT.11 Exclude dogs, or require them to be leashed, in areas designated as natural reserves. (NP8.5)
- HABITAT.12 Create a framework conservation strategy for the entire Parkway to provide a broad, coordinated approach to conservation efforts, address project-level mitigation for potential impacts on species and habitats, streamline permitting, and to guide management plans for individual areas.**
- HABITAT.13 Within public Parkway lands, designate natural reserves of contiguous significant or high quality habitat (or future enhanced/restored habitat) that should receive higher levels of protection from public disturbance and use. (NP10.2)
- HABITAT.14 Designate no less than three areas of 100 acres each as natural reserves for the purposes of conserving and supporting those species that require refuge in relatively large blocks of habitat. Parkway natural reserves shall consist of areas managed to conserve native ecological associations, unique fauna or flora, geological features, and scenic qualities. Improvements shall be for the purpose of providing day use for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of the areas' natural features. Vehicular use in natural reserves is limited to paved areas and other areas specifically designed and maintained for normal ingress, egress, and parking. (NP10.2)
- HABITAT.15 Design restoration projects based on site-specific studies of soils, water availability, slopes, hydrology, and other environmental conditions. (NP13)
- HABITAT.16 Use native plant species for landscaping and vegetation restoration to the greatest extent possible. (RP5/NRD1.3)
- HABITAT.17 Generally, use locally-sourced native plant species for habitat restoration projects. (RP5/NRD1.3)
- HABITAT.18 Site new facilities in disturbed, reclaimed, or previously developed areas to avoid intrusion into sensitive habitat areas and to avoid habitat fragmentation, to the extent feasible. (NRD1.1)
- HABITAT.19 Whenever feasible, route primary and multi-use trails on the outside edges of habitat areas, rather than through the center of mature riparian stands or other high-value habitat. (NRD1.2)

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- HABITAT.20 Work to accomplish a net benefit/no net loss of habitat collectively through conservation and restoration improvements in the Parkway. (NRD1.3)
- HABITAT.21 To the extent feasible, conserve and re-establish the upper canopy of riparian habitat (i.e., oaks, cottonwoods, sycamores) to provide roosting and nesting habitat for raptors, herons and egrets, and other bird species. (NRPE3, NRD1.4)
- HABITAT.22 Use appropriate best management practices and protection measures for restoration projects to limit damage by animals. (NRD1.4)
- HABITAT.23 Provide for the managed grazing needed for fuel load reduction and invasive weed management on public Parkway lands. (NRD1.4)
- HABITAT.24 Reestablish to the extent possible a continuous corridor of riparian vegetation on both sides of the river to provide for the movement and migration of wildlife, as well as the restoration and improvement of in-stream shaded habitat. (NRD1.5)
- HABITAT.25 Use design features and signage to protect egret and heron rookeries from public Parkway uses.**
- HABITAT.26 Seasonally close specific areas of the Parkway where necessary to protect sensitive habitats during vulnerable periods, such as areas near rookeries during breeding and nesting periods.**
- HABITAT.27 Place informative signage a distance of 750 feet upstream from a rookery discouraging landing for at least the following 1500 feet and signage to indicate a "quiet zone" for river users to observe. (NRD5)
- HABITAT.28 To minimize disturbance of breeding birds, particularly those in heron and egret rookeries, and to minimize disturbance on foraging of wintering bald eagles, work with appropriate authorities to develop boating regulations limiting gas-powered vessels between Friant Dam and the Highway 99 during the months of November through July. (NRD6)
- HABITAT.29 Consider potential benefits to bald eagles in determining appropriate areas to designate as natural reserves or protected sites. (NRD7)
- HABITAT.30 Avoid removal of snags, except in public use areas and near infrastructure where they may be hazards. (NRD9)
- HABITAT.31 To the extent feasible, acquire, enhance, restore and maintain a continuous riparian wildlife corridor throughout public parkway lands with a minimum width of 200 feet and gaps of no greater than 200 feet or the minimum necessary to allow for infrastructure (e.g. roads or bridges). Where it is not feasible to conserve the corridor on both sides of the river, provide an offsetting expansion of the corridor on one side. (NRD10)

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- HABITAT.32 To the extent possible, restore a continuous distribution of elderberry shrubs throughout public Parkway lands striving for a distance no greater than 0.25 mile between elderberry plants. (NRD13)
- HABITAT.33 Enhance existing ponds, swales, and other features to increase habitat diversity. (NRPE1)
- HABITAT.34 Enhance pond habitat and associated wetland vegetation to benefit geese and other waterfowl (e.g. rocks, logs, nest boxes, artificial islands, foraging habitat). (NRPE2)
- HABITAT.35 Incorporate a habitat enhancement component into all Parkway projects. (BZ5)
- HABITAT.36 Place a high priority on riparian habitat conservation and restoration to establish and enhance wildlife habitat and corridors and improve aquatic habitat. (BZ6)
- HABITAT.37 Restore a variety of habitat types, such as Great Valley cottonwood riparian forest, cottonwood willow riparian forest, and Great Valley willow scrub, taking into account the needs of varied species. (NRPV2)
- HABITAT.38 Implement a low-impact wildlife-friendly landscape maintenance program, and minimize the use of pesticides and herbicides where possible. (RFP6)

## FLOODPLAIN AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### Goals:

- Develop the Parkway in a manner that will not interfere with the river's floodwater conveyance capacity. (FP1)
- **Protect the river's water quality through appropriate management of stormwater runoff in the Parkway.**
- Conserve, improve, and manage lands and natural resources in the Parkway to facilitate more reliable water supplies; restore important species and habitat; and contribute to a more resilient, sustainably managed water resources system.

### Policies:

- WATER.1 Design Parkway bridge crossings to minimize impacts on the natural environment, be aesthetically pleasing, meet safety requirements for cyclists and other users, and to withstand and pass flood flows as determined by regulatory agencies. (RCP3)
- WATER.2 Do not construct levees (elevated flood protection structures) in the Parkway. (NP7)
- WATER.3 Ensure Parkway facilities do not increase riverbank erosion. Design and manage Parkway facilities and improvements in recognition of natural fluvial processes including erosion and

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- meanders. Remediate riverbank erosion as necessary to protect buildings and infrastructure. (FP5)
- WATER.4 Design and site Parkway structures and amenities to ensure that such features do not obstruct flood flows, do not create a public safety hazard, or result in a substantial increase in off-site flows or water surface elevations. For permanent above-grade structures, the minimum level of design flood protection shall be the adopted 100-year event, or as regulated by state and federal agencies. (RFMP2/RDP1)
- a. Design, place, and fasten picnic tables, litter containers, interpretive displays, and vault toilets to allow flows through or around them and minimize their becoming dislodged during flood events.
  - b. Fences shall be sized, placed, and securely anchored to minimize the potential to create obstructions during high flows.
- WATER.5 Collaborate with emergency planning and response agencies to develop and implement emergency flood warning alert and evacuation procedures for Parkway visitors. (RFMP3)
- WATER.6 Allow for the restoration of channel and floodwater flow capacity by other parties, including but not limited to the SJR Restoration Program. (FP4)
- WATER.7 Install vault toilets and septic systems only in areas where community wastewater treatment is not available and feasible. Design, install, and operate such systems in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. (RFP8)
- WATER.8 Avoid, minimize, and ensure pollution prevention and compliance in the use of herbicides. (RFP5)
- WATER.9 Minimize impervious surfaces to allow natural percolation and limit runoff. (ROP1)
- WATER.10 Incorporate construction best management practices for stormwater quality management, including erosion and sedimentation controls and spill prevention and control, into construction specifications and permits. (RFP3/RFP4)
- WATER.11 Incorporate drainage swales and other appropriate post-construction best management practices into the design of Parkway improvements to manage stormwater runoff. (RDP3)
- WATER.12 Properly maintain stormwater quality management post-construction controls. (RDP11)
- WATER.13 **Facilitate projects that demonstrate multiple benefits to water quality, water supply, and/or ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration, including, but are not limited to: protecting healthy watersheds, fisheries, and stream flows; implementing projects within**

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watersheds that facilitate climate change adaptation; conserving and restoring ecosystems; collaborating and coordinating with the San Joaquin River Restoration Program and collaborating with federal agencies to protect fish and wetlands; reducing wildfire risks; improving watershed health; reducing contamination of rivers, lakes and streams; and assisting in the recovery of sensitive species by improving watersheds and associated habitat.

### MINERAL RESOURCE

#### Goals:

- Work with gravel mining companies to acquire high priority properties after they have been mined. Promote reclamation plans that enhance and complement Parkway goals and are Parkway-ready to the extent practicable. (MR1)
- Design, construct, and manage the Parkway in a manner that will not conflict with sand and gravel mining operations. (MR2)

#### Policies:

- MINERAL.1 For new mining permit applications within the Parkway planning area, provide recommendations to local land use control agencies to ensure the appropriate application of Parkway policies. (MRO2)
- MINERAL.2 For new mining permit applications in the Parkway planning area, provide recommendations to local land use control agencies to protect existing riparian woodlands, enhance or complement the revegetation of the river wildlife corridor and adjacent areas, improve excavated gravel ponds by providing for specific wildlife habitat needs or replication of natural landscapes, and to reflect public safety needs. (MRP3)
- MINERAL.3 **In public Parkway areas that have significant sand and gravel reserves that may be needed for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program or other habitat and floodplain restoration needs, site significant permanent structures where they will not preclude or interfere with future extraction of those resources.**

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

#### Goals:

- Design, construct, and manage the Parkway in a manner that is compatible with agricultural uses (crops, livestock, orchards, and nurseries). (AO1)
- Encourage the preservation of agricultural uses in the Parkway planning area. (AO1)

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### Policies:

- AGRI.1 Work with agencies that conserve farmland to secure conservation easements within the Parkway planning area.
- AGRI.2 Support community supported agriculture.
- AGRI.3 Provide buffers, fencing, signage and other measures to reduce potential conflicts between public Parkway use and nearby agriculture.
- AGRI.4 Encourage agricultural uses as buffers between the Parkway and more intensive urban/suburban uses.

## AIR RESOURCES, CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, AND SEQUESTRATION

### Goals:

- In developing the Parkway, utilize opportunities to improve regional air quality and reduce the potential for Parkway projects to contribute to air pollution. (RFP1)
- Incorporate climate adaptation and sequestration strategies in Parkway projects.

### Policies:

- AIR.1 Restore habitat and conserve natural areas to contribute toward carbon sequestration.
- AIR.2 Promote cooperative reforestation projects to maximize carbon sequestration.
- AIR.3 Maximize habitat, diversity, wildlife movement corridors, and regional habitat linkages.
- AIR.4 Work with other agencies to perform fire prevention thinning and weed abatement on property boundaries and access roads.
- AIR.5 Work with community and regional interests as a positive contributor to conservation of habitat and natural resources, and partner in the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- AIR.6 Work to minimize the GHG footprint, energy and water use of Parkway operations, Conservancy and grant projects.
- AIR.7 Participate in and implement state and regional strategies to address climate change.
- AIR.8 Explore and support intergovernmental mitigation and sequestration partnerships.

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- AIR.9**      **Develop and incorporate climate change goals and evaluation criteria in Parkway projects and grants, elevating priorities for components such as sequestration and habitat and trail linkages.**
- AIR.10      Strive to connect primary multi-use trails to increase pedestrian and bicycle travel, reduce residents' reliance on motorized vehicles, and allow for longer, contiguous sections of the Parkway trail. (no #)
- AIR.11      Utilize appropriate surfaces and maintenance methods to reduce dust generation on trails, roads, and parking areas, and from un-vegetated ground surfaces where possible. (RDP3/4)

## CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

### Goals:

- Preserve and protect cultural and historic resources on Parkway public lands. (RA1)
- Foster community pride, attract visitors and tourists to distinctive areas, provide recreational opportunities, enhance educational opportunities, and augment the body of scientific and historic knowledge through identification, appropriate recognition, and promotion of historic and cultural resources
- Utilize Parkway cultural and historic resources to educate the public about the values of this heritage (ROP10, RA1).

### Policies:

- CULTURE.1    Develop operations and management measures to protect cultural or historical resources within the Parkway, including providing training for Parkway staff. (ROP9)
- CULTURE.2    Develop educational materials and provide them at key public use locations instructing the public on value of cultural heritage and the need to leave sites undisturbed. Include what to do in the event a cultural site is disturbed or an artifact is discovered. (ROP10)
- CULTURE.3    Evaluate the potential for cultural resources at project sites and protect all such resources from disturbance during project construction. (RDP19)
- CULTURE.4    Work with local Native Americans organizations to develop programs allowing ceremonial use of Parkway lands.**
- CULTURE.5    Work with local Native Americans organizations to develop programs allowing cultivation and harvesting of culturally significant plants.**
- CULTURE.6    Solicit the views of the local Native American community in cases where development may result in disturbance to sites containing evidence of Native American activity and/or sites of cultural importance.

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- CULTURE.7 Coordinate with the City of Fresno, counties of Madera and Fresno, and relevant advisory councils to promote the preservation and maintenance of paleontological, archaeological, and historical resources within the Parkway.
- CULTURE.8 Within the Conservancy’s power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts. If significant archaeological and cultural resources are open to the public, the Conservancy shall manage public access to protect against damage or vandalism.
- CULTURE.9 Promote the placement of historical markers or signs on adjacent roadways and major thoroughfares to attract and inform visitors of important historic resource sites.
- CULTURE.10 To the extent feasible, preserve the original architectural character of significant historic structures acquired for the Parkway in accordance with the State Historic Building Code.
- CULTURE.11 As part of any required CEQA review, identify and protect important historical, archeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment from damage, destruction, and abuse to the maximum extent feasible. Project-level mitigation shall include accurate site surveys, consideration of avoidance and project alternatives to preserve archaeological and historic resources, and provision for resource recovery and preservation when displacement is unavoidable.
- CULTURE.12 Register cultural resources within public lands in the Parkway in appropriate landmark designations (i.e., National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Landmarks, Points of Historical Interest, or Local Landmark).
- CULTURE.13 Preserve and enhance historic resources for educational and cultural purposes through maintenance as feasible and through development of interpretive programs and facilities within the Parkway.
- CULTURE.14 To the extent feasible, preserve any unique geologic resources within the Parkway for public enjoyment.
- CULTURE.15 Cooperate with other jurisdictions, agencies, and organizations to collect information on historic and candidate sites in the Parkway. Coordinate with the State Office of Historic Preservation and other agencies and interested parties to determine needs, design alternatives, and funding strategies to encourage people to enjoy the Parkway’s historical and cultural features.
- CULTURE.16 Before demolishing any structures over fifty years old, evaluate the historical significance, including reviewing the historical register and records, and consulting with the State Office of Historic Preservation.

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- CULTURE.17 Before any nonemergency/nonhazard removal of historic trees or landscapes, determine potential alternative actions to avoid or otherwise preserve the resources to the extent feasible.
- CULTURE.18 If the site of a proposed project is found to contain unique prehistoric (archaeological or paleontological) resources, and the project will cause damage to these resources, reasonable efforts shall be made to permit any or all of the resource to be scientifically removed, or it shall be preserved in situ (left in in an undisturbed state). In situ preservation may include the following option, or equivalent measures: amending construction plans to avoid prehistoric resources; dedicating sites containing these resources for permanent protection and conservation; capping or covering these resources with a protective layer of soil before building on the sites; and/or leaving prehistoric sites undisturbed within parks, green space, or other open space areas.

## PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

### Goals:

- Provide river access and high quality recreation areas and facilities to meet recreational and environmental educational needs while conserving natural and cultural resources. (RA1)
- Ensure access to all segments of the population and to all residents of the region, in metropolitan and outlying areas. (no#)
- Manage recreational uses to minimize indiscriminate activities, trespass on private lands, and human impacts to natural resources in the Parkway. (RA3)
- Encourage trail corridors of sufficient width (varying with terrain, vegetation, and land) to preserve a scenic environment for users and to minimize impacts of trail use on wildlife and their habitat and on adjacent land uses. (no #)
- **Provide public information, proper maintenance, rules, and enforcement to provide for public health and safety in the Parkway.**

### Policies:

- ACCESS.1 Acquire, through purchase, easements, or other mutually satisfactory transactions, land for recreation areas and the expansion of existing parks and recreation areas. (RP2)
- ACCESS.2 Minimize potential impacts to sensitive natural resources by grouping facilities and intensive uses, or siting facilities and intensive uses in areas that are already disturbed or developed, where feasible. (RP3)

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- ACCESS.3 Locate relatively intensive recreational activity sites away from natural resources that may be sensitive to those uses (such as rookeries, spawning beds, etc.) and private residences (see Buffers). (RO1)
- ACCESS.4 Link public Parkway lands between Highway 99 and Friant Dam with a continuous, multi-use trail on land, and with canoe put-in, take-out, and rest areas along the river to create a recreation system with a variety of recreational opportunities. (RO3)
- ACCESS.5 Coordinate with local land use agencies to provide public access points where public roads and the Parkway meet. (RO3)
- ACCESS.6 **Support, as possible, implementation of the Central Valley Vision calling for river/water oriented recreation in the Valley and for the Parkway as a high-priority new park to serve the region.**
- ACCESS.7 Where feasible, provide a minimum width of 100 feet for the primary multi-use Parkway trail corridor. (no #)
- ACCESS.8 Design and build the continuous multi-use trail sufficiently wide and structurally sound to permit passage of patrol, rescue, fire, and maintenance vehicles. (RP9)
- ACCESS.9 Where possible, align and design trails and bikeways to avoid steep grades, environmentally sensitive areas, erodible soils, and potential hazards – see also Buffers. (RP9)
- ACCESS.10 Provide separate surfaces for pedestrians, wheeled vehicles, and equestrians as feasible. (RP9)
- ACCESS.11 Utilize existing paths and unimproved roads for Parkway trail alignments where appropriate. (RP9)
- ACCESS.12 Provide adequate bicycle locking facilities at recreational and educational facilities. (RDP2)
- ACCESS.13 Control access to the Parkway to the extent practicable with gates, fences, bollards, boulders, and other appropriate measures. (RP6)
- ACCESS.14 Coordinate with local agencies to provide linkages to the regional bicycle and trail systems, and to link the continuous multi-use trail along and throughout the Parkway. (RCP1)
- ACCESS.15 Facilitate alternative transportation access to the Parkway including coordinating with transit providers to develop a regional transit map showing linkages to the Parkway facilities. (RCP4)
- ACCESS.16 Encourage the use of alternative transportation to Parkway events. (RCP4)

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- ACCESS.17 Plan for transit connections/stops at trailheads, Parkway staging areas, and activity centers during project development. (RTPP1)
- ACCESS.18 Participate in regional public transit planning to secure service to the Parkway, particularly during periods of high activity such as summer weekends. (RTPP2)
- ACCESS.19 Provide sufficient on-site parking at each public recreational facility for the desired usage level during peak periods and to meet the parking recommendations of the affected local jurisdiction. (RPP1)
- a. Include landscaping to limit parking areas' visual impacts on the adjacent natural areas and residences, while ensuring safety and security for users.
- ACCESS.20 To the extent possible, schedule Parkway events to minimize traffic congestion and crowding. (RTP1)
- ACCESS.21 Develop a trails system consisting of a continuous multi-use trail the length of the Parkway and secondary trails to provide additional connectivity to Parkway facilities and amenities including but not limited to river access, hiking trails, and trail loops. (RDP7)
- ACCESS.22 Construct the continuous multi-use trail with separate, parallel trails: one with a firm granular or paved 12-foot-wide surface for cyclists, disabled individuals and other users preferring a hard surface; and one with a soft granular (e.g., decomposed granite or crushed quarry fines) or native soil 8-foot-wide surface for equestrians and hikers. Where separate trails are not appropriate or feasible, provide an extra-wide single corridor trail constructed of a 12-foot-wide firm granular or asphalt section and an 8-foot-wide soft granular or native soil shoulder on one side. (RDP7)
- a. In the event there is not sufficient width to construct a multi-use trail as described above, implement restrictions (such as signage and barriers) on horse, bicycle and foot traffic to reduce potential conflicts or effects from heavy use.
  - b. Consider paving the primary multipurpose trail system with asphalt, concrete, or other durable smooth surface materials. Consider such paving for other trails anticipated to receive heavy traffic, sections designed to provide ADA access, and other trails where long term durability is desired.
  - c. For internal trails that provide access to natural reserves, river access, hiking trails, and trail loops within the trail system, construct low-impact footpaths a minimum of 24 inches wide using soft granular material, such as decomposed granite or crushed quarry fines, or native soil.

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- ACCESS.23 To the extent feasible, locate and design any new Parkway public access features that may generate noise to reduce disturbance at the nearest noise-sensitive land uses. (RPS2)
- ACCESS.24 Maintain Parkway areas, access, and facilities in good condition and repair. (ROP4/RDP13)
- ACCESS.25 Rehabilitate and improve recreation areas and facilities that existed prior to establishing the Parkway, particularly Lost Lake Park, the San Joaquin Fish Hatchery, Sycamore Island, and Camp Pashayan, on a priority basis. (RP1)
- ACCESS.26 Provide recreation facilities, programs, and visitor services compatible with the environment of the recreation area. The types of uses potentially accommodated on public Parkway lands shall be primarily: hiking, jogging, bicycling, wading/swimming, canoeing, picnicking, fishing, golfing, equestrian riding, nature observation, nature study and educational interpretive programs, camping (tent, trailer, and RV), turf areas for informal and educational play, a limited number of visitor centers, ancillary facilities, and supporting retail and services. Playgrounds, turf areas, and sports facilities should be retained, and provided in areas designated for more intensive uses if warranted by demand. Large-scale, high-intensity use facilities, such as waterslides, amusements zones, or any recreational pursuit involving motor vehicles or motorized watercraft, other than electric trolling motors on fishing boats generally are not compatible with the Parkway or other uses currently found in the riverbottom. Spectator events or other large assemblies should be limited to an occasional basis. (RP4)
- ACCESS.27 **Utilize the Design Guidelines for San Joaquin River Parkway Public Access and Recreation Improvements (as adopted and refined over time), California State Parks design guidelines and trail classification system, and the project operator’s design guidelines, as applicable.**
- ACCESS.28 Develop, operate, and manage Conservancy projects and lands in conformance with statutory requirements (PRC §32511) and Resolution 93-4: The Conservancy shall close to the public any lands or facilities which it is unable to maintain in a clean and safe manner and to adequately protect the wildlife and rights of adjacent property owners. (RP15)
- ACCESS.29 Construct recreational projects only when there are sufficient long-term resources to provide for operations maintenance and management of that project. (no #)
- ACCESS.30 Develop and implement Parkway public education regarding appropriate behavior while on Parkway property. (ROP6)
- ACCESS.31 Provide drinking water in Parkway recreation areas where a community water system connection is available. If feasible, new public drinking water systems may be built, operated and monitored in compliance with state and local laws and regulations. (PS3)

## GOALS AND POLICIES

- ACCESS.32 Permit commercial activities needed to serve Parkway visitors, such as sales of food and beverages, camper's grocery items, and books, guides, and educational materials, under special use permits or concession agreements and consistent with other Parkway goals, objectives and policies. (CP1)
- ACCESS.33 Site, grade and construct equestrian facilities, equestrian trails, and other unpaved trails of suitable materials and with appropriate runoff best management practices to minimize the potential for sediments to be carried into adjacent waterways. (RDP11)
- ACCESS.34 Develop equestrian staging areas with a drinking water source (if potable water is available) and no ground level obstructions such as curbs. (RDP11)
- ACCESS.35 Facilitate public/private partnerships to provide equestrian facilities and services to improve equestrian trail use, such as one or more concessions, on public Parkway lands or nearby. (RDP11)
- ACCESS.36 Maintain sufficient trash receptacles, including recycling bins, in numerous locations at Parkway sites and at times with heavy public use. (RDP13)
- ACCESS.37 Implement a pack-it-in and pack-it-out policy for trash in lighter use and more remote Parkway areas.**
- ACCESS.38 Facilitate, promote, and organize community-based litter removal, stewardship, and habitat restoration programs for the Parkway. (ROP5)
- ACCESS.39 Install and properly maintain restrooms, including vault toilet restrooms in areas where septic systems and community wastewater connections are infeasible, in easily accessible locations, such as parking areas, trailheads, and public use areas. (RDP15)
- ACCESS.40 Limit access to or use of recreational areas within the Parkway, other than developed camping areas, to the hours between sunrise and sunset. (ROP7)
- ACCESS.41 Limit vehicle access within the Parkway to designated roads and parking areas, implementing appropriate traffic control as needed, to minimize off-road use, environmental impacts, and policing problems.**
- ACCESS.42 Establish and implement a Parkway management program to monitor trail conditions, canoe put-ins, and bridge overcrossing approaches and footings and for regular maintenance and repair of such features. (ROP4)

## GOALS AND POLICIES

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, INTERPRETATION AND OUTREACH

#### Goals:

- Provide within the Parkway a range of outdoor and environmental educational opportunities and programs to serve all members of the community.
- Develop support for the Parkway through outreach and engagement.
- Assure that educational opportunities highlight and incorporate the Parkway's natural resources, wildlife, and habitat.

#### Policies:

- INTERP.1 Develop Parkway exhibits, interpretive walks and trails, programs, outdoor classrooms, and self-guided brochure tours. (NRPE1)
- INTERP.2 Provide interpretive signs and display panels at recreation areas and other points of access to the Parkway. (NRPE1)
- INTERP.3 Utilize a Parkway brand in all print media and signs in order to present a unified Parkway image. (RO4)
- INTERP.4 Establish unified Parkway facility design elements for the purposes of branding the Parkway. (RP11)
- INTERP.5 Provide education programs for people of all ages and abilities. (NRPE2)
- INTERP.6 Develop public education elements in all Parkway projects, facilities and programs. (NRPE2)
- INTERP.7 Utilize educational and recreational programs developed by volunteer, school, and nonprofit organizations in the area to provide public outreach. (RP13)
- INTERP.8 Develop educational and interpretive programs to highlight the diversity of features and uses of the river. Create an interpretive theme for each area. (NRPE4)
- INTERP.9 Engage in public outreach to a variety of groups and cultures; incorporate designs, text and graphics to communicate across multiple languages.**
- INTERP.10 Develop specific outreach messages and programs to reach a variety of audiences including, but not limited to, visitors, business and economic development interests, tourism, and others.**
- INTERP.11 Lead a process to secure community consensus in support of the Parkway.**
- INTERP.12 Conduct interpretive programs as close as feasible to the site where the physical evidence of the theme being interpreted is found. (RP12)

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INTERP.13 Provide signage to discourage litter, illicit dumping, and other inappropriate behaviors.  
(ROP3/RDP14)

## BUFFER ZONES AND ADJACENT LAND USES

### Goals:

- Where possible and to the extent feasible (see BUFFER.2), implement buffer zones which protect, conserve, and enhance the Parkway's natural resources, wildlife, and habitat. (no #)
- Combine buffers, design, and management measures to adequately reduce and mitigate potential impacts from Parkway recreational uses on habitat, riparian corridors, and neighboring uses. Screen and separate recreational uses from adjacent private property, to the extent feasible. (no #)
- Encourage local land use agencies to protect habitat and natural resources of the river and floodplain through set-backs and buffers. (no #)

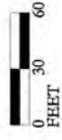
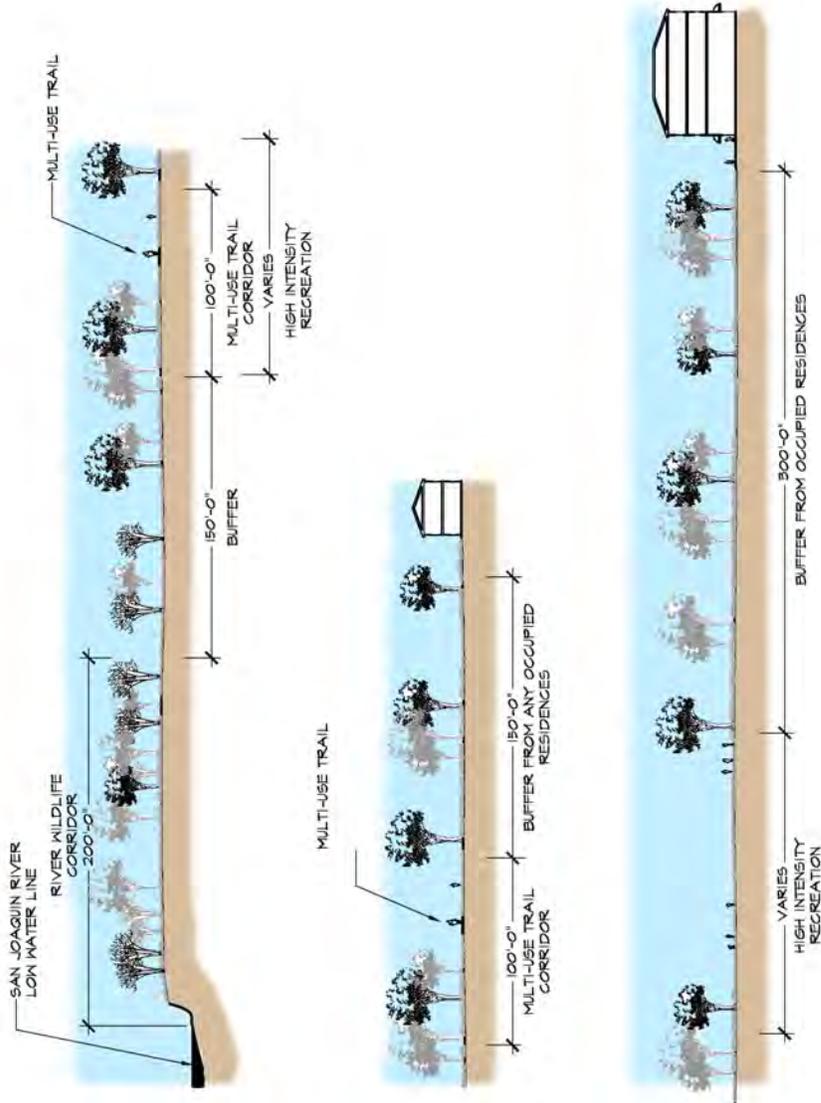
### Policies:

BUFFER.1 Provide buffer zones appropriate to the intensity of the planned Parkway recreational uses or improvements as depicted in Figure 6-1, and further described in the policies below.  
(NP8.1/BZ4)

BUFFER.2 To the extent feasible, acquire, enhance, restore and maintain a continuous riparian/wildlife corridor throughout public Parkway lands with a minimum width of 200 feet upland from the ordinary low water mark and gaps of no greater than 200 feet or the minimum necessary to allow for infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges, boat launches, etc.). Where it is not feasible to conserve the corridor on both sides of the river, provide an offsetting expansion of the corridor on one side. (NRD10/NP1)

BUFFER.3 Build trails, bikeways and other recreation areas at least 300 feet from the boundary of active mining operations and processing plants, separate them by physical barriers, and avoid trail/bikeway crossings of active haul routes. (MRP2)

BUFFER.4 Where feasible, provide a minimum width of 100 feet for the Parkway multi-use trail corridor.  
(no #)



NOTE:  
 CONSERVED RIPARIAN CORRIDOR AND BUFFERS MAY VARY FROM THESE POLICIES BASED ON  
 SITE-SPECIFIC, PROJECT-SPECIFIC REVIEW AND DESIGN, AND IN CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
 CONDITIONS AND PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, REGULATORY COMPLIANCE,  
 GOVERNMENT AGENCY GUIDANCE, COST, AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.

FIGURE 6-1  
 PARKWAY DEVELOPMENT BUFFERS

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- BUFFER.5 Provide native vegetation for screening wildlife from human activity as necessary to accommodate less width for a buffer zone. (BZ2)
- BUFFER.6 Where use is more intensive on one side of the river, provide less intensive use on the other side of the river if feasible. (NP1)
- BUFFER.7 Provide a 700-foot buffer between any Parkway improvement and sensitive habitat. (Sensitive habitat includes areas of special biological significance that provide habitat for locally unique biotic species/communities; that are adjacent to essential habitats of rare, endangered or threatened species; or any natural community vulnerable to environmental effects of projects). (BZ1)
- BUFFER.8 Require observation points and trails be designed to pass no closer than 750 feet from rookeries with screening of rookeries provided along path, or close the features during the breeding season. (NP12)
- BUFFER.9 Avoid more intensive recreational or other uses within 1500 feet of rookeries where feasible. (NP11)
- BUFFER.10 Other than water-dependent and less intensive uses, such as fishing access, individual picnic sites and benches, wading areas, boat launches, observation points, boating rest stops, and trails other than the primary Parkway multi-use trail, avoid developing significant recreational facilities within the riparian corridor or within existing riparian woodlands. (RPS1)
- BUFFER.11 Use existing vegetation or new plantings of native vegetation to buffer Parkway uses from adjacent land uses. (no #)
- BUFFER.12 Provide a buffer of 150 feet between the riparian corridor or the edge of existing riparian habitat and the primary Parkway multi-use trail and more intensive Parkway recreational activities (facilities serving concentrations of people, such as campgrounds, large picnic areas, parking, visitor service facilities, and staging areas). Where the 150-foot buffer is not feasible, consider providing an offsetting expansion of the riparian corridor on the opposite bank. (BZ8)
- BUFFER.13 Provide a minimum buffer of 150 feet between any occupied residence and the primary Parkway multi-use trail, and if possible provide screening vegetation as well. (RP7)
- BUFFER.14 Provide a minimum buffer of 300 feet between any occupied residence and any more intensive Parkway recreational use, and if possible provide screening vegetation as well. (ROP8)
- BUFFER.15 Encourage local land use agencies to require where feasible buffer zones for the protection of wildlife habitat in natural reserves and wildlife/riparian corridors. From the river wildlife

## GOALS AND POLICIES

corridor encourage 100-foot buffers from agriculture/pasture; 150-foot buffers from rural residences (less than .05 unit per acre); 300-foot buffers from medium density rural residences (.05 units per acre to less than 1 unit per acre); 600-foot buffers from business/industry or urban density development (more than 1 unit per acre); and 700-foot buffers for any development from sensitive habitat. (Sensitive habitat includes areas of special biological significance that provide habitat for locally unique biotic species/communities; that are adjacent to essential habitats of rare, endangered or threatened species; most wetland and riparian areas; or any natural community vulnerable to environmental effects of projects. See Figure 6-2. (BZ3)

**BUFFER.16** **Lighting:** Minimize lighting associated with Parkway development and encourage land use policies that minimize light impacts in the floodplain. With the exception of public safety, preclude lighting in the vicinity of the wildlife corridor or a natural reserve, to the extent possible. (BZ9)

**BUFFER.17** **Lighting:** Require all Conservancy-funded projects to reduce light pollution and intrusion; exterior luminaries should emit no light above horizontal or be Dark Sky certified. (BZ9)

## OPERATIONS, MANAGEMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Goals:

- Acquire lands to implement the Parkway Master Plan Update, including establishing natural reserves, recreation areas, a continuous wildlife movement corridor, and trail system. (LA1) Acquire lands on a willing buyer/willing seller basis. (LA2)
- Acquire lands according to established prioritization policies and criteria to ensure effective use of limited funds.
- Secure financial resources over the long-term to establish and continue the safe and efficient operation and maintenance of Parkway facilities and visitor services.
- Pursue a strategic yet flexible approach to a phased implementation of Parkway development that is responsive to funding and partnership opportunities, operations and maintenance resources, and public recreation/education needs.
- Ensure efficient and effective implementation of Parkway operations, programs, and facilities.
- Develop measureable objectives for projects, programs, and services provided on public Parkway lands.

### Policies:

**OPER.1** Place a higher priority on acquiring relatively undisturbed or fragile land with higher habitat values suitable for the wildlife corridor or a natural reserve, than on acquiring previously disturbed land for restoration or for recreation. (LO1)

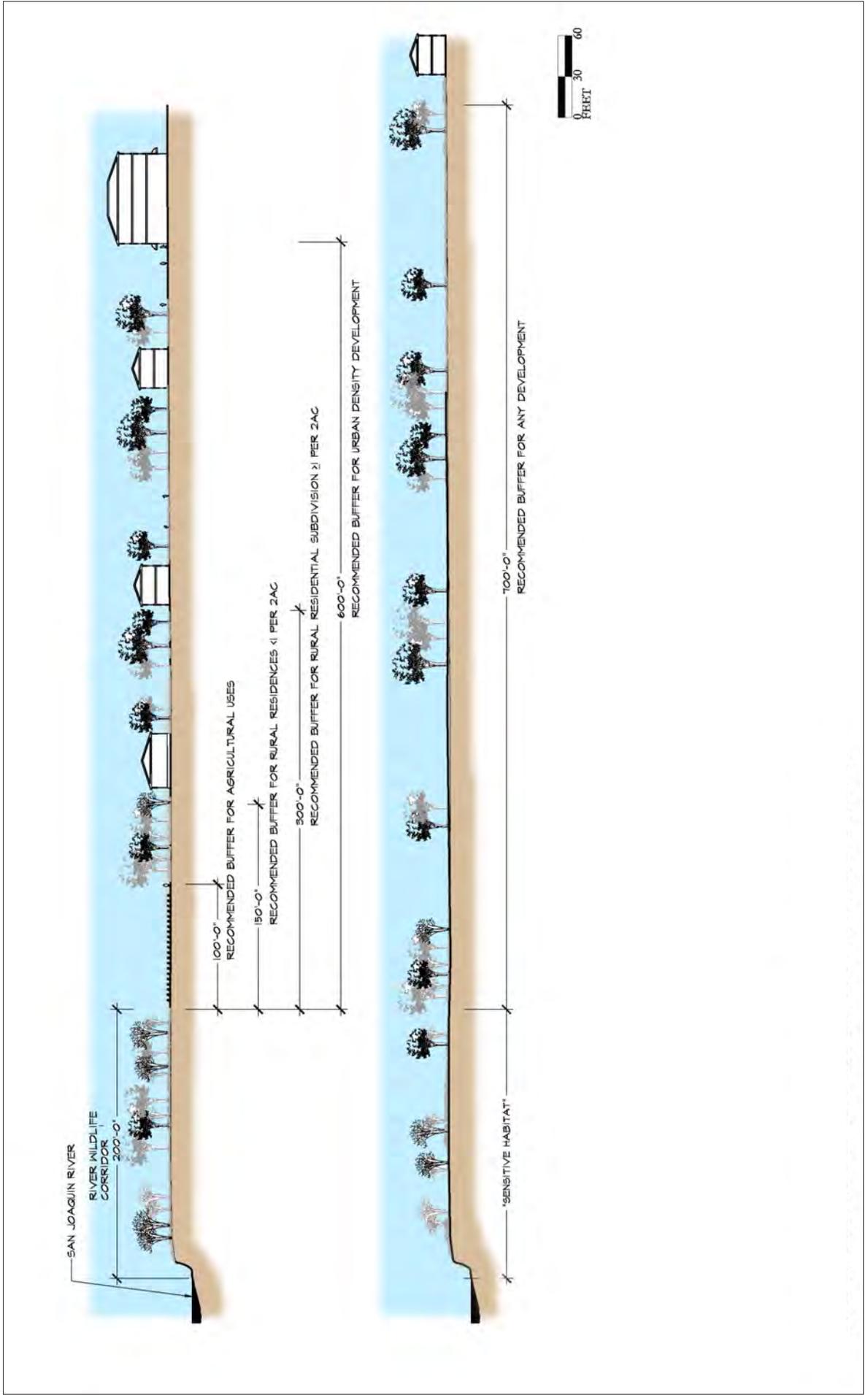


FIGURE 6-2  
RECOMMENDED LAND USE BUFFERS FROM WILDLIFE HABITAT

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## GOALS AND POLICIES

- OPER.2 In choosing among lands from willing sellers and for which acquisition funding is available, acquire land and water areas for habitat protection before acquisitions for recreational uses. (LP3)
- OPER.3 **Prioritize bond funds first to land acquisitions and second to capital improvements including but not limited to habitat enhancement, public access and recreation, resources protection and education. Land and improvements shall be consistent with the Parkway Master Plan.**
- a. **Candidate land acquisitions offered by willing sellers shall be reviewed by staff and the Interagency Project Development Committee to make recommendations to the Conservancy Board based on the following criteria: habitat values, potential for restoration or enhancement of natural resources or habitat, connectivity for a wildlife movement corridor, cultural and historical values, public access and recreation potential, connectivity for trails, contiguous public lands and uses, operations and management issues, potential lease and concession revenue, need for conservation, development threats, and other relevant criteria.**
  - b. **Candidate capital improvement projects shall be reviewed by staff and the Interagency Project Development Committee to make recommendations to the Conservancy Board based on the following criteria: identification of a potential or committed operator; public demand/acceptance; environmental impacts and benefits; connectivity for trails, other public uses, habitat and wildlife movement; project readiness; independent function of improvements; underserved population served by the project; long term benefits; demonstration of Parkway success; meets partner agency needs; potential funding/in-kind support; potential lease/concession revenue; interagency complexity; capital cost; and other relevant criteria.**
- OPER.4 Ensure that Parkway plans do not interfere with others' existing development entitlements. (LO3)
- OPER.5 Develop operating plans for each Parkway segment, including access control locations, park hours, fees, and enforcement provisions, and adopt rules and regulations to minimize undesirable activities in conjunction with affected local jurisdictions. (RTP4/RO2)
- OPER.6 Design off-site improvements needed for access to and from Parkway facilities in accordance with standards of the applicable local jurisdictions. (RTP5)
- OPER.7 Collect day use, user, and other fees to support Parkway operations and deter indiscriminate activities. Manage high-demand Parkway uses through permits or additional fees as needed. (no #)

## GOALS AND POLICIES

- OPER.8 As appropriate, seek donations, facilitate land exchanges, acquire easements, and create mitigation partnerships whenever possible to minimize expenditures of public funds for land acquisitions. (LP4)
- OPER.9 Acquire lands from willing sellers for no more than fair market value and mutually satisfactory terms. (LP1)
- OPER.10 Encourage public-public and public-private partnerships with other agencies and organizations that can assist in funding, implementing, managing, and maintaining Parkway facilities and programs.**
- OPER.11 Consider establishing a Friends of the Parkway group to provide opportunities for community involvement.
- OPER.12 To the extent possible meet multiple-purposes in developing and funding Parkway facilities and programs.**
- OPER.13 Coordinate with game wardens and enforcement authorities to prevent and control undesirable activities and unlawful conduct in the Parkway. (NP9)
- OPER.14 Develop appropriate authorities, rules, regulations, and resources to supplement enforcement capacity. (NP9)
- OPER.15 Coordinate in the development and implementation of a public safety operational plan for the Parkway with all affected state and local law enforcement agencies that addresses, but is not limited to, emergency response planning, coordination with public safety and response agencies, park closures due to high flows, and other hazards. (RFMP3)
- OPER.16 Develop and implement best management practices to encourage water safety.**