

3.0 OPEN SPACE & RECREATION ISSUES

3.1 Growth Pressure and Demand for Open Space and Recreational Lands

In 1998, the *Draft Yolo County Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan* was published. Its purpose was to identify the future open space needs of Yolo County. The Parks Division staff felt that land should be acquired throughout the County. A community's boundaries have little relationship to the needs and resources for regional park development. As the region becomes more urbanized, the need for parks becomes greater.

To provide the County with direction in their acquisition of open space acreage in Yolo County, the *Draft Yolo County Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan* recommended the following:

- 1) Acquire additional acres of varied recreational opportunities for County residents.
- 2) Acquire sections of wooded areas adjacent to the Blue Ridge Mountains.
- 3) Achieve the most effective use of land. Land adjoining existing parkland should be acquired when the adjoining land affects the scenic character, or when future development is contemplated, compatible designs should be incorporated.
- 4) Expand outdoor recreational activities by providing public access to the Sacramento River, Cache Creek, and Putah Creek. A partnership could be developed for construction of wetlands, ponds and lakes for water-based recreational activities.
- 5) Because open space lands are of great benefit to County residents, those undeveloped lands which are least accessible, least easy to service, and least desirable for residences should be left in their natural state. Marginal lands, including the upper Blue Ridge area, wetlands, and floodplains should remain in open space. Acquisition of these areas would result in the protection and preservation of Yolo County's natural resources.

Non-agriculturally-related open space and recreation facilities will be expanded as resources permit. This will include implementation of plans for Cache Creek, the Blue Ridge Mountains and existing County parks. Implementation will be aided by public/private partnerships and joint activities with other governmental agencies. The pace of activity and level of County involvement will, however, be limited unless the resource base is expanded. Government and foundation grants will be an important source of funding encouraging the growth of private open space and recreational amenities, and also provide tax revenues that can be used to expand and improve publicly held land and facilities. Improvement in the fee structures for resident and non-resident use fees for certain recreation facilities should also be done.

The Open Space and Recreation Element provides for the County to establish and/or maintain partnerships with Cache Creek Conservancy, Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee, the Yolo Bypass Working Group and the Sacramento River Conservation Area for creation of open space along Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, the Sacramento River and within the Yolo Bypass. The Element also calls for the County to encourage and support efforts by State and

federal agencies, cities, special districts, and nonprofit and conservation organizations to protect lands containing open space resources, including but not limited to the use of conservation easements and land trusts.

To respond to growth pressure and demand for open space and recreational lands, the Open Space and Recreation Element includes policies that call for the County to provide adequate and diversified recreational opportunities and facilities to meet the demands of an expanding population, including application of parkland to population standards in new development, and creation of mechanisms for funding park acquisition and development, as well as the ongoing costs of park maintenance and recreation services.

Because most urban development in Yolo County occurs within incorporated cities, the County cannot expect to generate County revenues (e.g., Quimby fees, park impact fees, sales tax, property tax, transient occupancy tax) sufficient to fund greatly expanded recreational facilities and programs alone. The Open Space and Recreation Element provides for the County to partner with private businesses, whenever practicable, to individually and collectively supervise and manage adjacent and nearby public facilities, to lower long-term public costs and enhance public security. The Element also provides for the County to work with the cities of Yolo County to facilitate development of a regional sports park at an appropriate location between population centers.

3.2 Open Space, Recreation and Agricultural Compatibility

Open space in Yolo County is closely tied to the future of agriculture. Although other forms of open space are extremely important, without the continuation of agricultural enterprise, open space resources will be greatly diminished. The future of open space in Yolo County, therefore, is closely tied to directions and initiatives undertaken to preserve land for agriculture. At the same time, growth pressures will increase demand for open space and recreational lands accessible to an expanding regional population.

If the correct decisions are made, regional growth will be an economic incentive to preservation of Yolo County open space resources. Key to the preservation of open space lands held in private ownership will be creation of non-traditional activities, especially those associated with eco-tourism and agricultural tourism. Any existing policies that would impede these forms of recreation should be reexamined and the County should actively support the development of visitor-serving businesses that complement sustainable eco and agricultural tourism.

In its broadest sense, sustainable tourism is people enjoying a natural outdoors that is managed to be ecologically sustainable. “Ecotourism” is one form of sustainable tourism. The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people.”

According to the *Agricultural and Tourism Targeted Industry Analyses Final Report*:

Agri-tourism is an even more recent phenomena [than eco-tourism], which is built on a strong family focus. Entrepreneurial growers and ranchers have opened their

farms for day visits, overnight stays and weeklong “working” vacations with foods prepared from seasonally available produce and cooked in the kitchens of host farms. Roadside fruit and vegetable stands, farmers markets and you-pick-em gardens are all part of the movement that began among organic growers to come into direct contact with the ultimate consumers of their produce.

The report points out that, while agri-tourism can bring outside revenues into the county, it is not labor-intensive and therefore does not generate significant additional employment. The report also notes that farm operators may be reluctant to increase traffic through areas where they live and work. The report presents the following “keys” to developing agri-tourism in Yolo County:

- **Involving Organic Farmers:** Organic farmers are motivated to market their produce directly to the public. Agri-tourism extends their opportunities to do this by bringing additional consumers to the farm rather than forcing farmers to seek out consumers. If this is successful, it will generate new revenues from tourists paying to visit or stay on farms while increasing sales of produce. Additionally, using Napa and Sonoma Valley wineries as examples, some of these farms can establish small restaurants featuring foods prepared from the fresh produce grown on the farm. Again, a significant, sustained promotional effort is needed to realize the full potential of this concept.
- **Involving UC Davis:** The University of California Davis is one of the nation’s most important agricultural learning and research institutions. Involving it in agri-tourism activities would create significant additional employment and revenue-generating opportunities because of the reach and depth of its programs and reputation. Visits to the campus could be merged and coordinated with on-farm visits, educational workshops and classes to demonstrate new techniques and technologies. Given the positive relationship that exists between the University and the county, it would seem possible to coordinate a continuing cross-promotional campaign to the benefit of both entities.

A recent article in the Sacramento Bee (“Seeds of Change: Agri-tourism Grows as Farms Try to Boost Their Revenues,” August 14, 2000) reports on agri-tourism in Yolo and other Sacramento Valley counties. The article featured the Yolo Land & Cattle Co. in Winters, at which visitors can observe and participate in some activities of a 7,500-acre working cattle ranch. “Impossible Acres,” a pick-it-yourself farm outside the City of Davis, features peaches, plums and cherries, and a pumpkin patch in the fall. Certain activities that fall within the definition of agri-tourism require permits under the County’s Zoning Ordinance. In the County’s predominant agricultural zones, bed and breakfasts and lodges require approval of either a Minor Use Permit or a Major Use Permit, depending on the zone.

While Yolo County itself may not have the capacity to attract large numbers of visitors for extended stays, it does have the opportunity to attract both regional and local visitors. The greatest potential for Yolo comes in pulling visitors from the surrounding regions. Within an approximate 90 minute driving time of Yolo County, the total population is approximately 6.9 million, some of which could potentially be attracted as day visitors. The three counties compared to Yolo in the analysis above – Sacramento, Solano, and Napa - either share similar attractions or are in close enough proximity that visitors would take the time to experience Yolo

County. Those visiting Napa for wine tasting may wish to visit Yolo for the same thing, or those visiting Sacramento may wish to travel to Yolo to experience something not available, such as hiking or white water rafting. Instead of promoting individual activities or attractions, it is recommended that Yolo County participate with local visitor-serving businesses and attractions in creating a countywide identity.

Another opportunity that Yolo County may wish to explore would be something akin to a “farm trail” or other visitor serving activity in which visitors spend time moving between attractions with the same or similar theme. Currently the Putah-Cache Bioregion Project, based at UC Davis, promotes a circumdrive that traverses the Putah-Cache Creek watershed encompassing parts of Yolo and surrounding counties. In Fresno County, the Blossom Trail is touted as an auto/motorcycle/bicycle trail that highlights the region’s agriculture and historical points of interest. In the community of Camino in Placer County, Apple Hill is a popular destination with numerous farms, orchards and wineries, which hosts events and maintains an organization to attract visitors. The almond festival in Esparto could be an incubator for a similar type of organization in Yolo County.

An example of how this can be done is being undertaken in Sonoma County, where food product businesses have begun to band together to “brand” their products with the slogan “Sonoma Select” as a means to identify a unified theme of high quality and broad product group identification. The logo is being placed on packaging, local menus and in stores. Early indications of this program are that it is boosting local sales.

As part of its effort to support agriculture by developing a logo and slogan for produce and processed foods from this area, the County could help develop a plan for a Capay Valley certified kitchen where jams, dried fruits, roasted nuts, olive oil, cheeses, syrups, etc. are prepared. The County could also assist in developing a large local farmers’ market, where both processed foods and fresh produce would be available to both residents and visitors. The old railroad station in Esparto or a facility in Madison are possible locations for both or either of these facilities, since they could draw visitors from both Highway 16 and Interstate 505.

The County may also assist in implementing and operating a Yolo County Farm Trails Guide, similar to those of El Dorado and Sonoma Counties, with maps and pertinent information that would help tourists find and buy from local producers, if they preferred an on-the-ground experience. There could be arranged tours, in buses, which would help minimize impacts on traffic.

Tourists frequent places with available linked activities around a core destination/attraction. That is, during a trip they eat, shop, refuel, are entertained and stay overnight. All of these opportunities need to be present within a reasonable distance.

If properly marketed and promoted, Yolo County has the potential to become a destination for short vacations and day trips from within the Sacramento/Bay Area region. Visitors will enjoy a variety of outdoor recreational activities utilizing a wide range of natural resources, as well as agriculturally- and educationally-related activities. To establish Yolo County as a destination choice will, however, require development of additional traveler-related infrastructure.

In summary, any successful program for open space and recreation lands and facilities in Yolo County will recognize the need to create a strong economic incentive for preservation of farmland, as well as open space for scenic and wildlife purposes. These incentives are embodied in the concepts of eco- and agricultural tourism and the development of new markets and opportunities for agriculture. The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for clearly demarcated boundaries between public open space and private agricultural lands, and maintenance of appropriate zoning categories and standards to ensure land use compatibility, protection of agricultural lands, and consistency with the General Plan when visitor and tourist-oriented activities locate in Yolo County. Several policies in the Element provide for the County to encourage and support the development of private recreational facilities that preserve scenic and environmentally sensitive resources and that do not create land use conflicts with agricultural operations.

3.3 Sustainable Tourism and its Impacts on Open Space and Recreational Lands

Yolo County has abundant open space and numerous opportunities to support sustainable tourism. In its broadest sense, sustainable tourism is people enjoying a natural outdoors that is managed to be ecologically sustainable. “Ecotourism” is one form of sustainable tourism, often more narrowly interpreted. Defining Ecotourism has proven difficult given all the different players trying to define it. The International Ecotourism Society defines Ecotourism as: “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people.” Sustainable tourism should certainly include education and interpretation of the natural environment. Unincorporated Yolo County should not use its resources to develop large-scale attractions or urban recreation facilities. The County should instead focus on drawing visitors to its existing outdoor and open space attractions, and should encourage clustering of new public and private attractions and linked services.

The open space available for outdoor recreation in Yolo County can be categorized into three very specific geographic regions based on topography, natural features, and visitor use opportunities:

The Cache Creek, Putah Creek and Blue Ridge Mountains. This region contains wetland grasses, shrubland, cottonwoods, oaks, etc.

The Blue Ridge Mountains are within the Putah and Cache Creek drainage, and part of the Blue Ridge/Berryessa Natural Area. The area is currently enjoyed by thousands of visitors who appreciate the rustic beauty as well as the remoteness of the area. Recreational opportunities for visitors include wildlife and wildflower viewing, picnicking, mountain biking, fishing, white water rafting, hiking, camping, hunting, horseback riding, and sightseeing along the scenic Capay Valley. Stores in Winters, Madison, Esparto, Brooks, and Guinda, with fuel in Winters, Madison, and Brooks, provide services to travelers. Development in this area should be carefully considered so that it does not conflict with agriculture, the region’s main economic base and livelihood. The County should promote access to public land without infringing on private property rights.

The Sacramento River. The Delta/Sacramento River is that section of Yolo County following the Sacramento River. The majority of visitor-serving businesses in this area can be found in one of three communities: Knights Landing, West Sacramento and Clarksburg, with West Sacramento being by far the largest. Four County parks serve the river: Knights Landing Boat Launch, Elkhorn Boat Launch, Clarksburg Boat Launch, and Helvetia Oaks Park. Recreational opportunities in the Delta region include: boating, fishing, cycling, wine tasting, and sightseeing. A more complete listing can be found in the Background Report for this Element.

The Grasslands of the Central County. The Grasslands section of Yolo County can be considered the flat terrain making up the majority of the County. Most of this area is productive agricultural land. Regional parks make up the bulk of recreational opportunity space with the majority of visitor-serving businesses found in Woodland and Davis. Recreational opportunities, besides those commonly associated with park visiting, include: cycling, wine tasting, and agri-tourism.

The County should also acknowledge, try to capture, and provide supporting facilities for the more common rural visitor, the family who is merely driving through, has time for only one or two stops lasting between 5 minutes and two hours before moving on, and is typically not physically adventurous. These travelers do not stray from the highway without good directional signage and the promise of a free adventure. Typical activities include scenic driving, wine tasting and touring, picnicking, using the restroom, buying a snack or drink, refueling the car, walking the length of a small downtown, buying souvenirs, visiting a roadside stand or farmers market, and stopping at turnouts.

The Open Space and Recreation Element provides for creation of a tourism marketing program for Yolo County focused on recreational opportunities. The Element also calls for the County to support the location of additional recreational and traveler service facilities in unincorporated communities, so that these facilities do not significantly harm agricultural operations or open space values. Policies provide for the County to promote and support the growth of individual and collective private-sector agri-tourism and eco-tourism operations of all sizes that benefit from wide expanses of open space and agricultural land.

3.4 Recreation and Tourism as Industry

Recreation and tourism opportunities in Yolo County are not well known. If the County takes direct action to improve its tourism offerings and its marketing, tourism growth could increase, with the potential by 2005 for 110 new jobs, and almost \$100 million in new spending, including \$2.7 million in the unincorporated areas.

Yolo County is in a good position to dramatically increase visitor spending in the unincorporated areas if it takes some basic actions. Those actions include improving County recreational facilities, improving County roads, encouraging the expansion of existing private sector visitor-serving establishments, establishing a joint cooperative marketing program, and linking attractions through co-locating them and through marketing.

Most importantly, the County can enhance visitor spending by linking multiple visitor attractions. This can be done in three ways:

- Physically, by siting multiple facilities in adjacent locations, or by linking them through transit arrangements. Concentrated downtowns, food courts and a regional sports complex are three examples of co-locating multiple facilities.
- Temporarily, by sharing facilities at different times, such as parking lots, meeting rooms, restaurants, kitchens, etc.
- Conceptually, by creating the concept of closeness through marketing.

Locals and leisure travelers appreciate the ability to choose among multiple options in a small area, their stays are lengthened and their spending increases. For example, both Clarksburg and the Delta, and Esparto and the Capay Valley already have many of these options, and could develop more through revitalization and planning efforts. Optimally, on a single trip people appreciate the chance to:

- Actively recreate (e.g. raft, hike, horseback ride, swim, fish, bicycle ride, off-road vehicle use, etc.);
- Passively recreate (e.g. take driving tours, look at historic buildings, visit museums, watch sporting events, tour wineries, picnic, watch movies, star gazing etc.);
- Eat and drink – at many types of restaurants (e.g. walk-up kiosks, mobile caterers, fast food, destination restaurants, saloons, soda fountains, pizza, ice cream, cafes);
- Shop (e.g. souvenirs, gifts, foods, sundries). Farmers markets, roadside stands, tasting rooms, etc. are an excellent opportunity in the Esparto area;
- Fill service needs (e.g. groceries, banking, post-office, auto repair, gasoline, auto parts, etc.);
- For those staying more than a day, alternative lodging (e.g. motels, campgrounds, bed and breakfasts, farm stays).

The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for provision of a fully developed visitor-serving business base in the county that includes a mix of lodging, recreation/amusement services, transportation services, eating and drinking establishments, food stores and other retail, as well as creation of a Yolo County identity that will promote the county's recreational opportunities and assist in attracting visitors. A side benefit will be improvement of the County tax base and local economy. The Element further provides for the County to support the development of visitor-serving businesses that retain and complement its rural character, particularly in the Delta region and the Capay Valley, and to promote and support the clustering of commercial/recreational opportunities to provide "linked" activities for tourists. Other policies call for the County to support the development of lodging in unincorporated communities, events that showcase Yolo County products such as wine and produce, and development of critical services for travelers where needed, such as public restrooms, mini-marts, and service stations. The Element further provides for the County to support the marketing of Yolo County as a destination for vacations and day trips, through creation of a local and regional marketing program.

3.5 Implementation of a Cache Creek Recreation Plan

The Cache Creek Nature Preserve is shown on Figure 2-1 of Appendix A. The 130-acre property includes a former mining pit that has been turned into a wetlands area, a portion of Cache Creek, and forest. It was dedicated by A. Teichert and Son Inc. and is managed by the Cache Creek Conservancy. The site represents one of the least-disturbed areas along Lower Cache Creek. The stated mission of the Cache Creek Nature Preserve is to provide a natural environment where children and adults can explore and discover the relationships between humans and the historical, natural, agricultural and industrial uses of the area. The Cache Creek Conservancy is funded, in part, by a fee from four aggregate companies based on tons of gravel sold. This funding source is secured for 30 years through development agreements with Yolo County.

Figure 6-1 of Appendix A illustrates proposed recreation nodes on Cache Creek. The Off-Channel Mining Plan has designated these six areas for recreational use. These areas are conceptual in nature, and will serve to set aside land for future consideration as recreational areas. Sites are located at regular intervals of approximately two miles along Cache Creek, and generally located within the proximity of existing access, in order to function as trailheads or staging areas for a possible future system of bicycle, pedestrian, hiking, and/or equestrian paths. Recreational areas are also sited on lands included for mining, where proposed reclamation is to permanent ponds. This ensures that no additional farmland will be lost, while taking advantage of the amenities associated with the bodies of water to be reclaimed through mining.

Frontage on County roads and State highways is another important consideration, to ensure that the public would have adequate access. Also, a variety of sites were included in order to provide a range of potential recreational uses. The three easternmost areas would be located near reaches proposed for habitat restoration, and may be suitable for passive activities, such as hiking, birdwatching, horseback riding, and educational exhibits. The three westernmost sites will be located in areas of the creek that contain more open space and may be appropriate for intensive activities, including non-motorized boating, catch and release fishing, bicycle riding, and picnic grounds. Active recreational uses in the western sites would directly benefit the nearby communities of Madison, Esparto, and Capay, and could serve as a future basis for expanded tourism opportunities and economic benefits.

The Open Space and Recreation Element provides for the County to establish and maintain a partnership with the Cache Creek Conservancy for creation of additional public open space and access along Cache Creek, and to support the efforts of the Cache Creek Conservancy to preserve open space and improve scenic resources within and along Cache Creek. The Open Space Diagram identifies general locations for future public open space and access, consistent with the policies in this Element.

The Open Space and Recreation Element also calls for the establishment of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along Cache Creek, and includes policies that provide for the creation of a continuous corridor of natural open space along Cache Creek, with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway. Policies further provide that only those recreational uses that are creek-dependent,

such as fishing, canoeing, boating, and nature observation are to be located on Cache Creek. The Element also calls for recreational uses to be clustered, to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County. All access, whether by road or trail, must be through an entry point that can be controlled.

3.6 Community-Based Recreation Programs

Most recreation programs and opportunities in the unincorporated area of Yolo County are organized by private, nonprofit entities such as the Yolo Audubon Society and the Yolo Basin Foundation. Many are also educational in nature. Other popular programs, such as rafting, are operated by private concessionaires. Informal programs, such as hikes described on the Yolo Hiker website, are also prevalent. Most of what would be regarded as “traditional” recreation programs (sports, day camps, etc.) operate in the cities of Yolo County.

Bird watching (“birding”) is an important activity in Yolo County, enjoyed by both County residents and those from outside the area. The Yolo Audubon Society, a local chapter of the National Audubon Society, conducts outings on almost a weekly basis. They also host two special events each year: California Duck Days in February, and the Christmas Bird Count every December.

The Yolo Basin Foundation offers weekend field trips for the general public led by experienced Yolo Audubon members or other wildlife experts. They focus primarily on the natural history of the area.

The Open Space and Recreation Element includes, as a goal, the creation of community-based recreation programs, and as an objective, access to County-sponsored recreation programs in all major unincorporated communities. The Element provides for the County to prepare and adopt a Parks Master Plan showing how all county communities are to be served with adequate amounts of parkland, and calling for the county to work with these communities to develop adequate recreational infrastructure and facilities.

3.7 The Blue Ridge Trail

According to the Yolo Hiker website:

The Sierra Club Yolano group conceived the Blue Ridge Trail in the 70’s. So far, 8 miles of trail have been built, from Cache Creek to the end of the main tract of public lands above Fiske Creek. Ultimately, the trail would extend all the way to Monticello Dam, allowing one to hike or horseback ride from Putah to Cache Creek.

So far, the trail is either built or there is an easement at the beginning and ending portions of the trail. The middle section is all that needs access. When the trail is completed it will be approximately 30 miles long that would run the spine of the Napa and Yolo County border, along the ridge. Views from the top of the ridge are *spectacular*.

The Open Space and Recreation Element addresses the Blue Ridge Trail. It calls for the County to support efforts by the Blue Ridge Working Group to provide public access and trail improvements within the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Element also calls for the County to work closely with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), adjacent counties and other landowners to establish needed facilities and access in order to make the Blue Ridge Mountains available for mountain biking, hiking, wilderness experiences, equestrian activities and wildlife viewing. Implementation measures call for the County to seek opportunities to acquire or participate in acquisition of land in the Blue Ridge Mountains for trailheads, an equestrian center, and other recreational experiences. However, no acquisition of land is expected to occur unless it is with a willing seller.

3.8 Trail Connections to the Upper Sacramento River

The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for creating expanded public access to the Sacramento River, creation of public open space along the Sacramento River, and enhancing and improving public access to the Sacramento River Conservation Area. The Element also provides for the County to establish a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along the Sacramento River for use by the public. A continuous corridor of natural open space is called for along the Sacramento River, with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway, and possible bicycle access to select areas. Such corridors would be established through cooperation with willing landowners. The Element calls for recreational uses to be clustered at locations along the river, to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County. All access, whether by road or by trail, must be through an entry point that can be controlled.

3.9 Implementation of the Bicycle Transportation Plan

Bicycling has been very popular in Yolo County, both as a recreational sport and for commuting to work or school. The flat terrain and relatively short distances between cities make conditions favorable for bicycling. The University of California, Davis with its student population of approximately 24,600 students (1998 enrollment), is one of the main generators of bicycle traffic.

Yolo County has developed a Bicycle Transportation Plan (adopted in 1999), which outlines long-term goals and policies for achieving a countywide bikeway network. The plan proposes a system of bike routes that upon completion would encourage more bicycling in the County.

Yolo County currently has five designated bikeways in the unincorporated areas of the County, as shown in Figure 3-1 of Appendix A. They are designated as either Class I or Class II bikeways. Class I bikeways are bike paths separated from roadways, and Class II bikeways are bike paths located on roadways. The County bikeways are as follows:

- A route from Davis to West Sacramento (consisting of a Class I Caltrans -constructed bike path along the I-80 causeway over the Yolo Bypass, and Class I and II sections of County Road 32A.

- A bike lane along County Road 102 from Knights Landing to the eastern portion of Woodland, and on to Davis (Class II).
- A bike lane along County Road 99 from the southern city limits of Woodland south approximately 3.5 miles to County Road 27.
- A bike lane along County Roads 31 and 93A west from Davis to County Road 32 (Class II).
- A bike path along County Road 32 west from Davis to County Road 95A.

The County's existing bikeway system is somewhat fragmented since the above-mentioned routes do not adequately connect cities in the County. A number of the routes are lacking adequate signage. In addition, bicyclists must often travel on narrower County roads that do not have bike lanes. The proposed bikeway system is shown in Figure 3-2 of Appendix A.

The Open Space and Recreation Element provides for the County to work with interested groups to complete construction of a bicycle trail system, and to ensure that bicycle access is an integral part of future recreational facility design and facility operations.

3.10 Clustering of Development to Preserve Open Space Lands

The concept of “clustered development” is the concentration (or “clustering”) of development (usually residential) at permitted densities into one portion of a larger property, with the remaining land reserved for open space or agriculture. This concept is not particularly applicable in Yolo County, which for the most part does not permit urban or rural residential uses in agricultural areas of the county. The Yolo County Agricultural Element includes a policy that encourages farm dwellings to be clustered to minimize the conversion of agricultural lands to other uses. The Open Space and Recreation Element provides for clustering of residential development when parcels are adjacent to agricultural or open space lands. This Element also calls for recreational uses to be clustered when located near rivers and creeks, to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County.

3.11 Yolo Bypass Open Space

The Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area is located along I-80 at the Yolo Causeway between Davis and Sacramento. It is the largest public/private restoration project west of the Florida Everglades, in which approximately 25,500 acres in the Yolo Bypass floodway are being restored to wetlands and other associated habitats. The Area was established in November 1997, and is managed by the Department of Fish and Game to promote an increase in waterfowl and other bird populations. It is considered a model of a public-private partnership that shows that wildlife, flood control and agriculture can co-exist in a largely urban setting. According to the Yolo Basin Foundation website:

The establishment of the Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area and the work of the Foundation have been widely regarded as a model for planning and completion of other wetland projects in the Yolo Bypass. The bypass is a key component of the habitat restoration planned as part of the Cal/Fed Bay Delta Accord process now

underway, and is a vital element of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture's habitat restoration goals.

The Yolo Basin Foundation (YBF) was founded in 1990 as a community-based organization to assist in the establishment of the Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area. A principal goal of the Foundation is facilitating environmental education within the Wildlife Area in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Game. YBF provides the interpretation and education programs in the Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area. The YBF concentrates its work in two areas: education and restoration of the Yolo Bypass region of the North Delta and the Pacific Flyway. The YBF is currently working with other organizations to plan the building and operation of a Pacific Flyway Visitor Center near the Wildlife Area.

Portions of the Yolo Bypass also fall within the jurisdiction of the Delta Protection Commission, which is a regional land use planning agency with planning and limited regulatory authority over the Primary Zone of the Delta. For lands within the Delta, the County must ensure that its General Plan is consistent with Commission's Land use and Resource Management Plan. The County has integrated the Commission's Plan into its General Plan through previous adoption of the following policy:

The Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta adopted by the Delta Protection Commission is incorporated herein by this reference and shall apply in those areas designated with such Plan.

The Delta Protection Commission maintains a number of policies regarding recreation and access within the Primary Zone of the Delta with a focus on safety and policing, maintenance and use of existing recreational support facilities in lieu of new construction, and multiple use of Primary Zone lands.

The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for creation of expanded public access to the Yolo Bypass, and establishing and maintaining partnerships with the Yolo Bypass Working Group to preserve open space and improve scenic resources within the Yolo Bypass. The Element provides for the County to encourage and support efforts by State and federal agencies, cities, special districts, and nonprofit and conservation organizations to protect lands containing open space resources, including but not limited to the use of conservation easements and land trusts. The Element further provides that lands reserved for bypass systems such as the Yolo Bypass and Sacramento Bypass shall remain designated as open space in order to prevent flooding hazards, as shown in the Open Space Diagram. Recreation policies also call for establishment of a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities within the Yolo Bypass for use by the public. The Element provides for creation of a continuous corridor of natural and agricultural open space within the Yolo Bypass with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway.

3.12 Cache Creek Casino: Its Impact on Recreation

The Cache Creek Casino is among the larger Indian casinos in California. It is clearly the most significant tourism attraction in Yolo County. It is also one of the county's largest employers. Facilities include gaming operations, three restaurants, and two large parking lots (one for autos, one for buses). The Cache Creek Indian Casino web site states that the casino has 1,100 year-round employees, pays \$20 million per year in salaries and benefits, sells almost \$4 million in food and beverages (based on \$300,000 in sales tax to the state), and buys \$12 million in supplies from local and regional vendors. The casino also covers the cost of all or part of the following local services: sheriff, fire, library, hospital, health clinic, cultural arts, and the high school.

By working closely with the casino operator, the County could help develop beneficial cooperative arrangements such as use of the parking lot for rafting or tour group staging, arranging catered meals for outdoor users through the restaurants, etc.

The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for the County to support and participate in the formation of a cooperative Yolo County visitors and tourism council, including the various cities and communities, the casino, merchants, restaurants, wineries, motels, campgrounds, water attractions, museums and wildlife areas, agricultural exhibits and other visitor destinations.

The Cache Creek Casino facilities provide restaurant and fuel services to Capay Valley recreational tourists. Most other visitors who come to the Cache Creek Casino are there for the gaming opportunities, and do not generally participate in the outdoor recreational (more family-oriented) activities available in the area. An increase in the number of visitors to the Cache Creek Casino has resulted in increased traffic volumes on Highway 16 between Brooks and the City of Woodland. The increased volumes can make it more difficult for dual use of the Highway by bicyclists i.e., annual Davis Century Race that passes through the Capay Valley, and local farmers who need to move equipment on the road.

The Capay Valley is an area where groundwater depletion is recognized by the County as a severe problem. To the extent that the Cache Creek Casino affects the available groundwater supply in the Capay Valley, it is in the County's interest to work with the Casino to preserve a long-term water supply for agricultural production in the Capay Valley.

3.13 Property Acquisition Along Putah Creek

As described in Chapter Two, the Putah Creek Fishing Access Areas are owned by the Wildlife Conservation Board and maintained and operated under an agreement by Yolo County. The access areas consist of five sites and seven parking lots that are located along Highway 128 near the City of Winters. These areas are situated in riparian habitat that allows for a number of recreational activities ranging from birding to fishing. The Department of Fish and Game stocks the creek annually with fish. In 1996, there were 40,000 estimated visitor days.

According to the 1998 Draft Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, in recent years, the park has fallen into disrepair. First, measurable annual visitor days have declined. This can be

directly attributed to the maintenance practices of Caltrans along State Highway 128. Caltrans has over the years enlarged the pull off sites in various sections. This practice of grading larger pull off sites has made it economical for park patrons to park along the highway shoulders and enter the park. Second, fencing was removed along the highway. This has caused patrons free access and poses a safety hazard as well. As patrons exit their vehicles, they are exposed to the dangers of speeding traffic. Third, the absence of park patrons has caused revenues to fall below levels of fiscal self-sufficiency. The County is subsidizing basic park operations from general fund money that should be derived from user fees. The Element calls for improved communication between Caltrans and the State Department of Fish and Game, which owns a portion of the property, and the County to resolve the problems.

The Open Space and Recreation Element includes, as a goal, provision of expanded public access to Lower Putah Creek and, as an objective, establishing and maintaining partnerships with a variety of groups and entities such as the Putah Creek Council, the City of Winters, the City of Davis and the University of California, Davis for creation of public open space, preserving open space and improving public access to Lower Putah Creek. The Element provides for the County to encourage and support efforts by State and federal agencies, cities, special districts, and nonprofit and conservation organizations to protect lands containing open space resources, including but not limited to the use of conservation easements and land trusts. In addition, Yolo County should consider the creation of a Yolo Legacy Trust for the purpose of open space land preservation along Putah Creek and similar open space resource areas. Recreation policies call for a continuous corridor of natural open space to be created along Lower Putah Creek with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway. Recreational uses are to be clustered at locations along the creek to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County.

The Open Space and Recreation Element also addresses issues related to creation of mechanisms for funding park acquisition and development, as well as the ongoing costs of park maintenance and recreation services. All access points, whether by road or by trail, must be through an entry point that can be controlled.

3.14 Master Planning for Grasslands Regional Park

Grasslands Regional Park (Figure 2-1 of Appendix A) consists of 320 acres, most of which are undeveloped. The park possesses considerable wildlife habitat value, and hosts burrowing owls and harrier hawks, and provides foraging habitat for Swainson's hawks.

The 1998 *Draft County of Yolo Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan* includes, as a goal, development of a site master plan for Grasslands Regional Park that is reasonable to implement.

According to the Draft Master Plan, the park has been in County ownership since 1974, and only 40 acres have been developed. As outside funding sources dwindle, there will be fewer financial opportunities for capital improvements. The opportunity to protect and preserve the natural resource elements of the site may be lost. In addition to the interpretive/educational potential of

the site, it offers an opportunity to generate revenue for capital improvements, ongoing operations and maintenance.

The Draft Master Plan reports that there has been pressure from the National Park Service to develop the park in accordance with the conditions of the transfer, or impose a property reversion clause on the County. There has also been pressure from neighboring communities that would benefit from regional recreational use of the park, and from other governmental agencies to protect endangered and threatened species. The County has identified several funding sources that would allow incremental or phased development of the park.

The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for creation of mechanisms for funding park acquisition and development by the County, as well as the ongoing costs of park maintenance and recreation services. The Element also provides for the County to complete preparation of the Parks Master Plan, including Grasslands Regional Park, to identify needed recreation infrastructure and facilities, as well as funding sources.

3.15 The Sacramento River Greenway Project

In 1992, Yolo County entered into an agreement with the City of West Sacramento, the City of Sacramento and the County of Sacramento to protect and preserve the Sacramento River and to evaluate public/private projects that may arise in the project area.

Yolo County currently operates two park/recreational sites along the Sacramento River: Elkhorn Regional Park and Clarksburg Boat Ramp. The County also provides access to the river from the Knights Landing boat launch facility (see Chapter Two for a description of these facilities). There are many nonprofit organizations that support a contiguous parkway that offers both active and passive recreational facilities.

The Open Space and Recreation Element calls for creating expanded public access to the Sacramento River, creation of public open space along the Sacramento River, and enhancing and improving public access to the Sacramento River Conservation Area. The Element also provides for the County to establish a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along the Sacramento River for use by the public. A continuous corridor of natural open space is called for along the Sacramento River, with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway, and possible bicycle access to select areas. The Element calls for recreational uses to be clustered at locations along the river, to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County. All access, whether by road or by trail, must be through an entry point that can be controlled.

3.16 The Yolo County Natural Communities Conservation Plan

In 1995, the *Yolo County Draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)*, a voluntary plan, was initially prepared for local, State and Federal agencies including the Cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland, Yolo County, California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Based on a recent presentation to the “Gaining Ground” Committee

by the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the County is now pursuing a Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP), a program with a broader biological/habitat approach than an HCP alone.

The purpose of the Yolo County NCCP is to mitigate impacts of urban development on the 26 covered species by conserving and enhancing the habitat value of these species in Yolo County. In addition, the NCCP will establish a long-range strategy or framework for habitat conservation and enhancement to occur at a countywide level. In assuming buildout of the general plans for Woodland, Winters, West Sacramento, and Davis, and the community plans for Knights Landing, Esparto, Dunnigan and Clarksburg, urban development would result in the loss of approximately 11,672 acres of habitat to be mitigated by the NCCP. This acreage includes a small amount of development associated with agricultural operations of up to 1,000 acres on agricultural land in unspecified locations in the unincorporated area that is also covered by the NCCP.

In most cases, the NCCP will require that 1 acre of mitigation land be acquired for each acre of impact (1-to-1 habitat mitigation ratio). However, there are several habitat types (e.g., riparian forest) for which higher mitigation ratios have been established, with compensation ranging from 2:1 to 3:1. The majority (approximately 79 percent) of mitigation habitat will be agricultural conservation easements that maintain existing agricultural and biological values for the species of concern, with the remainder associated with riparian, wetland, grassland and woodland habitats. The Open Space and Recreation Element supports the adoption of the proposed NCCP.

3.17 Fiscal and Employment Impacts of Open Space Preservation and Enhanced Tourism

Recreation and tourism activities have significant impacts on regional economies. The money tourists spend in a community is a benefit not only in terms of direct spending, but other benefits including improved recreation facilities, expanded cultural and social opportunities, and pride in one's community. Tourist dollars are spent on food, recreation, retail sales, lodging, ground transportation, etc., and also benefit sectors throughout the community, including those not directly connected to tourism such as the construction industry.

The fiscal impacts of tourism come in three different forms. In addition to the direct spending noted above, indirect and induced effects also contribute to the local economy. Direct effects are the total amount of money spent by visitors that is circulated into the local economy. Indirect effects are the changes in sales, income or jobs in sectors within the region that supply goods and services to the recreation/tourism sectors. For example, increased linen supply sales to motels is an indirect effect of visitor spending. Induced effects are the increased sales within the region from household spending of the income earned in the tourism and supporting sectors. For instance, motel or park employees spend their income on housing, utilities, and groceries.

In 1998, tourism in Yolo County generated 2,420 direct jobs and \$212.6 million in direct sales, plus another \$31.2 million in indirect and \$66.6 million in induced effects. Assuming a reasonable growth rate of 3 percent per year, an additional \$99.8 million in total spending could be generated by 2005. Of this, \$3.6 million in spending and taxes would be generated in the unincorporated areas. As described in more detail in Section 8.2 of the Open Space &

Recreation Element Background Report, if the County acts to increase its market share, reaching an achievable 8 percent annual growth rate, it would mean another \$2.7 million in the unincorporated areas.

Visitor Spending

The California Trade and Commerce Agency estimates that travel expenditures in Yolo County totaled \$213 million in 1998. Beginning in 1992, with total visitor spending estimated at \$158 million, visitor spending has been increasing at an annual rate of 5.1 percent (*California Travel Impacts by County: 1992-1998*). The largest percentage of visitor spending is attributed to retail sales, with a little more than \$70 million, followed by eating and drinking establishments at more than \$30 million. Accommodations contributed approximately \$18 million, followed by food stores with \$17.7 million, and service stations with \$15.3 million. Total taxes generated in Yolo County by travel spending increased from \$11.1 million in 1992 to \$15.3 million in 1998. The local share of these taxes increased from \$2.3 million in 1992 to \$3.1 million in 1998.

The annual rate of growth for visitor expenditures in Yolo County has stabilized at about 3.9 percent for the past two years. The 5.1 percent rate from 1992 to 1998 is the result of more rapid growth rates of 7 to 9 percent in the early 1990s. Napa County has also stabilized in the past two years, but at a higher, eight percent per year growth rate. Solano County saw a peak of spending growth in 1997, but dropped back to 3.8 percent in 1998. In contrast, Sacramento County has seen its spending levels accelerate, increasing from about four percent per year in 1995 and 1996 to nearly eight percent in 1998.

Yolo County has seen slower growth in lodging revenues than have the surrounding counties. With the majority of Yolo County's accommodations located within the cities of Davis, Woodland and West Sacramento, most people staying in Yolo County are probably either staying or visiting for an "event" (e.g., commencement at U.C. Davis) or because of location (e.g., it may be less expensive to stay in West Sacramento than in the City of Sacramento).

Within Yolo County, the unincorporated area has seen slower lodging revenue growth than any of the cities.

For Yolo County, total spending for those staying in hotels/motels in 1998 was \$55.4 million. This is an 11 percent increase over 1992, much less than the 34.5 percent growth in total spending. Day travel has seen the greatest change in the amount spent, with an increase of 92.1 percent. Vacation home visitors' spending increased 54.5 percent, but reached only \$1.7 million in 1998.

Spending by day travelers actually saw its greatest increases in the 1990s, and since has followed a more moderate trend. In contrast, hotels/motels dipped between 1992 and 1995, and have been on an upswing since. There are two private campgrounds in Yolo County, both near Dunnigan, from which visitor spending has been negligible. The public campground, located near Rumsey in the Cache Creek Regional Park, has seen no increase from visitors staying there.

Based on the number and location of businesses in Yolo County, it is estimated that \$7.3 million of total spending in 1998 was spent in the unincorporated areas. This represents approximately 3.5 percent of all visitor spending in Yolo County. Of this amount, \$983,450 was spent on lodging, or 13.5 percent. This is a higher proportion than in the incorporated cities, where lodging accounted for 7 percent. With about 5 percent of all lodging available located in the unincorporated area (centered in Dunnigan along I-5), lodging expenditures there represent about 6.6 percent of the county total. In general, however, the unincorporated parts of Yolo County are characterized by a lack of facilities, forcing visitors to either stay or shop in the cities.

Economic Impact of Tourism Spending

Visitor spending generates a number of economic benefits, including jobs, income and tax revenues. Retail sales have the largest impact in terms of money spent and earnings garnered, with approximately 51 percent of direct sales resulting in personal income (personal income includes wages and salary income and proprietor's income). Recreation and eating and drinking establishments provide 33 and 31 percent, respectively, to personal income, and accommodations provide approximately 29 percent. Food stores provide 14 percent to personal income, and ground transport approximately 4 percent. Value added impacts, which are the total sales minus the costs of all non-labor inputs, had a total of \$31 million, with eating and drinking establishments providing the largest contribution with 44 percent of the total. The other major contributors were accommodations and retail with 26 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

Using employment as an indicator for assessing the visitor-serving business base, Yolo County added 200 jobs generated by travel spending in the five-year period from 1993 to 1998. Employment generated by visitor spending in Yolo County has been increasing at an annual rate of approximately 1.8 percent, compared to the 2 percent annual growth rate for all employment in the county during the same period. For the state, the employment generated by visitor spending has grown at an annual rate of approximately 2.6 percent.

Market Projections

Yolo County has a number of opportunities to expand its visitorship and related spending. Studies show that 94.5 percent of people in the United States participate in some form of outdoor recreation. These studies also indicate that demand for outdoor recreational opportunities in the United States is expected to increase into the foreseeable future. Federal land and water resources are a major source of outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the nation (*Local Employment and Income from Outdoor Recreation at Selected Bureau of Land Management Sites*, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 1996). In addition to its own attractions and resources, Yolo County's proximity to such attractions as Lake Berryessa mean that the county can receive economic benefits from those moving through the county on their way to such places.

Although the number of visitors to Yolo County has remained flat in recent years, surrounding counties and regions have seen increases. A key opportunity for Yolo County would be to attract day visitors from both the Bay Area and Sacramento. A current example of a Yolo County day tour is "Combines, Bovines and Fine Wines," which features three local attractions: the Heidrick

Agricultural History Center, the Yolo Land & Cattle Company and the R.H. Phillips Winery. Over time, visitors to day tours will utilize additional lodging facilities to extend their stays. Based on the growth trends in the surrounding region, it is estimated that Yolo County should be able to increase its visitorship by three percent per year. Over five years, this would bring Yolo County nearly up to the state average in visitorship per capita.

The county has already enjoyed an increase in visitor spending of about five percent per year over the past 6 years. While this growth has slowed down a bit recently, with increased promotion and development of visitor-serving facilities, the five percent rate of growth should be sustainable. Combined with a growth rate of three percent per year in the number of visitors, total spending could increase by as much as eight percent per year or more. Napa County has seen this rate of growth through a concerted effort to give visitors the opportunity to extend their stays and increase their spending. Yolo County, and particularly the unincorporated area, has even more room to grow in terms of spending potential than does Napa, which is already considered one of the premier visitor destinations in the world.

The Open Space and Recreation Element Background Report provides an indication of the dollar values of this growth potential, as well as the new job creation opportunities. The projections in the table are not forecasts assuming existing conditions continue, but rather projections of the potential growth resulting from a proactive effort by the County to add visitor facilities and to promote the county's visitor attraction. Similarly, the time frame is illustrative only. The actual pace of growth would depend on the rate of progress toward improving visitor services in the county.

With an eight percent growth rate, total visitor spending in the county could be increased by nearly \$100 million per year in five years. This would represent nearly a 50 percent increase over the reported spending levels in 1998. Based on its current market share, the unincorporated area would expect to see about 3.5 percent of the increased spending. This level of market growth would support only minimal new development of lodging and restaurant/retail facilities in the unincorporated area.

However, if the unincorporated area were to develop more on a par with the cities in Yolo County, it should nearly triple the gross revenue it captures from tourists. This scenario would see the unincorporated area double its lodging and triple its restaurant and retail business from travelers and visitors. Assuming the growth in sales has a direct impact on employment, as many as 110 new jobs would be created, and the County government would receive \$142,000 per year in transient occupancy tax (TOT) and sales taxes, in addition to increased revenue it would receive from businesses located within the cities.

While Yolo County has many recreational opportunities, it is clear that its potential is much greater than what currently exists in attracting visitors. Interviews with visitor-serving businesses confirm this. Many rely on word-of-mouth for their customer base, with few visitors appearing through happenstance. The recommendations below are based on these interviews and the economic potential of the region.

Improving Conditions for Existing Businesses

Those businesses interviewed shared common concerns regarding attracting visiting customers. The largest single concern was that of signage. Most businesses have been restricted in their use of signs to attract visitors. All felt the County's assistance in either allowing signs to advertise their business or changing current regulations regarding signs would greatly aid in attracting business.

Other common concerns were those of amenities and infrastructure. Many of the businesses interviewed exist in rural areas where road conditions are poor and drainage insufficient, causing roads to flood in winter.

Business Development and Attraction

The other major concern of businesses interviewed was the availability of other visitor-serving businesses. Most, if not all, the businesses interviewed appreciated the rural character that exists in Yolo County. Yet all felt the need for restaurants and lodging to be available in the rural areas that have the most potential for attracting visitors. All felt the presence of bed and breakfasts and boutique eateries would greatly enhance the visitor experience in Yolo County, while maintaining its rural characteristics. It was generally agreed that such establishments would have the greatest appeal in the Delta region and the Capay Valley.

Visitor Attraction

While Yolo County can help facilitate visitors by addressing the concerns of the visitor-serving businesses, its greatest assistance would come in the form of helping to attract visitors in the first place. Businesses interviewed generally saw themselves as either part of a region (i.e. The Delta) or on their own. While many expressed an affinity with the Central Valley and the rural character of Yolo County, none felt part of a Yolo County identity. The creation of such an identity would go a long way in promoting the recreational opportunities in Yolo County, and aid in attracting visitors/customers to visitor-serving businesses.

While Yolo County itself may not have the capacity to attract large numbers of visitors for extended stays, it does have the opportunity to attract regional visitors and those more localized. The greatest potential for Yolo comes in pulling visitors from the surrounding regions. Within an approximate 90 minute driving time of Yolo County, the total population is approximately 6.9 million, some of which could potentially be attracted as day visitors. The three counties compared to Yolo in the analysis above – Sacramento, Solano, and Napa - either share similar attractions or are in close enough proximity that visitors would take the time to experience Yolo County. Those visiting Napa for wine tasting may wish to visit Yolo for the same thing, or those visiting Sacramento may wish to travel to Yolo to experience something not available, such as hiking or white water rafting. Instead of promoting individual activities or attractions, it is recommended that Yolo County participate with local visitor-serving businesses and attractions in creating a countywide identity.

Another opportunity that Yolo may wish to explore would be something akin to a “farm trail” or other visitor serving activity in which visitors spend time moving between attractions with the same or similar theme. Currently the Putah-Cache Bioregion Project, based at UC Davis, promotes a circumdrive that traverses the Putah-Cache Creek watershed encompassing parts of Yolo and surrounding counties. In Fresno County, the Blossom Trail is touted as an auto/motorcycle/bicycle trail that highlights the region’s agriculture and historical points of interest. In the community of Camino in Placer County, Apple Hill is a popular destination with numerous farms, orchards and wineries, which hosts events and maintains an organization to attract visitors. The almond festival in Esparto could be an incubator for a similar type of organization in Yolo.

An example of how this can be done is being undertaken in Sonoma County, where food product businesses have begun to band together to “brand” their products with the slogan “Sonoma Select” as a means to identify a unified theme of high quality and broad product group identification. The logo is being placed on packaging, local menus and in stores. Early indications of this program are that it is boosting local sales.

Tourists frequent places with available linked activities around a core destination/attraction. That is, during a trip they eat, shop, refuel, are entertained and stay overnight. All of these opportunities need to be present within a reasonable distance.

Potential enterprises for agricultural and nature tourism in Yolo County are presented in the Open Space and Recreation Element Background Report.

Summary of Recommendations for Fiscal and Employment Impacts of Open Space Preservation and Enhanced Tourism

Recreation and tourism opportunities in Yolo County are not well known. This is only partially a function of limited facilities, such as motels. Much awareness will be generated through cooperative marketing, which allows counties, communities and businesses to leverage their limited marketing dollars into larger campaigns. Preliminary conclusions indicate that Yolo County:

- Should encourage more lodging and campsites to develop within established communities in unincorporated Yolo County. Currently, there are three campgrounds with 147 sites and 57 motels/hotels in Yolo County, with most centered in Davis, Woodland and West Sacramento and three located in unincorporated areas.
- Should develop a countywide tourism marketing campaign targeted to visitor segments in Sacramento and the Bay Area. Cities, chambers of commerce, local businesses and the county should all participate.
- The County should take actions to help local businesses expand and develop new business, including more flexible signage requirements, road and drainage improvements.

- Facilitate events showcasing Yolo County's products, such as wine, produce, and arts and crafts.

One of the simplest ways to promote Yolo County and its attractions would be through a brochure, available at local visitor-serving establishments, showcasing recreational opportunities and cultural attractions. Sponsored by local businesses, with a foldout map highlighting activities and locations, Yolo County could promote things that are generally unknown in the county. Locations of hiking trails, rafting, wine tasting, museums, seasonal events, etc. could all be highlighted to give a general overview of what is available in Yolo County.

Another consideration would be to include business links on the County web site, along with a reproduction of the brochure with more information made available about attractions and recreational opportunities in the county.

Finally, a countywide commission or organization to promote Yolo County should be organized. This group would be able to make recommendations for how to best promote business and organize events. It would also facilitate networking among existing groups, including chambers of commerce, the Economic Development Council and county businesses, establishing a cross-section of compatible business interests (e.g., wineries hosting art showings by local artists).

Yolo County has the potential to develop its visitor-serving market. The most pressing need is making attractions known, and secondly, supplying facilities for users. The rural charm of Yolo County can only be enhanced by many of these recommendations, since it is generally not feasible that any large-scale tourist attractions will be developed. This is also due to the fact that most of the attractions and recreational opportunities available in the county are low impact and specialized. Also, many of the pursuits are distributed throughout the county. By implementing the above recommendations, Yolo County will be able to tap into the market potential that currently exists without the need to create a market for itself.

The Open Space and Recreation Element includes, as a goal, to encourage by various means, including marketing, the potential for growth in visitor spending. Creation of a tourism marketing program for Yolo County focused on recreational opportunities is one of the Element's objectives, along with creation of a Yolo County identity and provision of a fully developed visitor-serving business base in the County, all of which is aimed at improvement of the County tax base and the local economy. The Element also calls for the County to support downtown revitalization in unincorporated communities as an integral component of increased visitor spending. The Element provides for the County to support and promote a variety of programs and facilities to increase visitor attraction and spending in Yolo County.