

GRASSLANDS PARK MASTER PLAN

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Section I:

Master Plan

I-1 Introduction

Grasslands Regional Park is a 323-acre park located 3.5 miles south of Davis along Mace Blvd, between County Roads 35 and 36. South Fork Putah Creek is located one mile north of the park, and the wildlife areas within the Yolo bypass are approximately 3 miles east of the park. The Davis – Dixon Bikeway and urbanized Solano County areas are approximately three miles southwest of the park. Tremont Road in Solano County provides a western connection to I-80 and terminates at the Park entrance.

Grasslands Park was originally part of McClellan Air Force Base (AFB)'s Davis Global Communications site, and was deeded to the County for park and recreation uses in 1972. The adjacent 315-acre half section is still owned by the federal government, with future plans to be annexed to the County, when the park will ultimately contain approximately 640 acres. Over the years, The Park's regional location has made it an attractive gathering point for specialty recreation uses including archery, model aircraft soaring and horseshoe pitching. In addition to active recreation uses at the site, the park is also used by dog owners, wildlife watchers, and research professionals, who are studying the significant natural resources on the site and adjacent AFB lands. This includes rare and endangered plant and wildlife species that inhabit the grassland and vernal pool habitat.

Beginning in 1991, portions of the site were planted by volunteers with stands of valley oaks, as part of a resources management action. A 65-acre area was recently set aside for establishment of a burrowing owl preserve. Funding was also provided for an off leash dog park and picnic areas. The burrowing owl preserve was established as part of a long-term lease and conservation agreement with the City of Davis. The park is bordered on three sides by county roads, which provide perimeter access to most of the park. Agricultural lands neighbor it, with a farm worker housing development recently constructed south of the park.

A. *Park History*

Grasslands Park was acquired from the federal government in 1972. In the transfer deed, the property was designated as a "park or recreation area, for use by the general public". Improvements over the years occurred as the result of informal arrangements by interested groups or clubs, and include buildings, tree planting, irrigation system, caretaker, picnic facilities, parking areas, etc. In 1991, the Board of Supervisors formally approved planting valley oaks at the site (generally in the southwest corner) by a volunteer group. This work was approved in part to maintain County compliance with the terms of the agreement with the Federal Government for the land deed requiring development and use as a park.

Formal lease agreements with several groups also occurred. The County currently has formal agreements with three entities for use of the park: Yolo County Bowmen Archery Club (including sublease to the Yolo County Horseshoe Pitching Club), Sacramento Valley Soaring Society, and City of Davis Burrowing Owl Preserve.

B. *Applicable Plans and Policies*

Yolo County General Plan. The Yolo County General Plan was adopted in 1983, and the County has commenced an update to be completed next year. The Open Space and Recreation Element, adopted in 2002, sets forth general goals, objectives and programs for parklands. Some of the applicable policies include:

RECO 2. Establishment by a variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities along Lower Cache Creek, the Sacramento River, Lower Putah Creek, and within the Yolo Bypass for use by the public.

RECO 3. Provision of adequate and diversified recreational opportunities and facilities to meet the demands of an expanding population.

RECP 1. Open space and wildlife conservation areas shall be combined with parks and trails where appropriate.

RECP 2. Parks shall be developed and utilized to buffer wildlife areas from development that would impact wildlife habitat.

RECP 10. The County shall work with willing landowners to create a continuous corridor of natural open space along Lower Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, the Sacramento River, and within the Yolo Bypass with provision for limited access at specific locations to recreational and educational uses from a County road or highway. The County shall also consider establishing bicycle access to select areas.

RECP 11. Only those uses that are river- or creek-dependent, such as fishing, canoeing, boating, and nature observation shall be directly located on Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River. More active uses, including parking, restrooms, and picnic areas shall be located in areas away from sensitive habitat.

RECP 12. Recreational uses shall be clustered at locations along Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River, in order to minimize habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County. All access, whether by road or by trail, shall be through an entry point, which can be controlled.

RECP 15. The County shall endeavor to coordinate the activities of all County, federal, and State agencies and of private operators to manage recreational activities so that such activities do not interfere with agricultural operations, infringe on private property, or harm existing wildlife and vegetative habitat.

RECP 16. To lower long term public costs and enhance public security, wherever practicable the County shall partner with private businesses to individually and collectively supervise and manage adjacent and nearby public facilities (for instance, local parks, creek and river access, overlooks, piers, picnic areas, and parking areas).

RECP 22. The County shall work with interested groups to complete construction of a bicycle trail system. Ensure that bicycle access is an integral part of future recreational facility design and facility operations.

RECI 10. Develop necessary infrastructure for park users (e.g. restrooms, pump-out facilities, trash containers, oily waste facilities, and other facilities to meet the needs of boaters). Include opportunities for concessions where practicable. Enhance security and public safety at County parks.

Yolo County Parks Master Plan. A master plan is being prepared for Yolo County parks, open space areas, and other properties. This countywide master plan will provide guidance for management, uses, and future development at County park properties – individually and system-wide. It is anticipated that common signage and design guidelines, visitor use rules, and recommendations for structuring short term use permits and long-term leases will be included in the County-wide Master Plan. These will guide any future design and incorporated implementation projects at Grasslands.

Grasslands Park Interim Management Plan. In December 2003, an Interim Management Plan for Grasslands Park was approved. This plan was developed, in part, to address the need for management of non-native, invasive species (NIS) at the Park, especially methods for control of star thistle, and other weeds, which have become an increasingly serious problem at Grasslands. The interim plan also set aside a 35-acre portion of the park for an oak tree preserve and dog park; a family picnic area; the 65 acre burrowing owl preserve; and a natural area entrance. In March 2004, the Natural Resources Component of this Plan was approved, which set forth the methodology for a prescribed pilot or test burn at the site. The burn occurred in spring 2004.

City of Davis. The Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan adopted by the Davis City Council in 2002, sets forth goals, policies and practices for management of open space lands within the Davis Planning area. Of special interest and applicability to Grasslands is the South Fork Preserve, a 110-acre site on Mace Blvd., one mile north of the Park.

In the Davis General Plan, adopted in 2001, the Preserve is designated for limited public access:

Maintain the City-owned South Fork Preserve site as natural habitat and compatible agriculture with public access limited to certain portions of the site so as to minimize impacts to sensitive areas.

In the City of Davis General Plan, the north levee of South Fork Putah Creek is designated as a Bicycle Connector Trail. The Plan states:

Policy MOB 7.3 *Develop a system of trails at the periphery of the city and within the city for recreational use and to allow walkers and bicyclists to reach open space and natural areas.*

Standards

- a. *The creation of an urban periphery loop trail is a low priority. However, the City recognizes that some portions of such a trail already exist, and should take advantage of opportunities for further acquisition and construction as they present themselves.*
- b. *Trails should be developed in roadway rights-of-way wherever possible to minimize conflicts with surrounding rural landowners, but should be separated from the roadway itself by a planting strip.*
- c. *Tree planting between roads and roadside trails is encouraged, but should not interfere with roadway visibility.*

Actions

- d. *Develop destination-oriented trails.*
- e. *Work with the counties, other cities and the general public to minimize conflicts with land uses such as agriculture and wildlife habitat when developing a trails network.*

The preserve is not open for public access, but a staging area is currently under construction. Policies established in this plan with regard to restoration and public access include:

Restoration

- *Restore degraded or deteriorating areas where appropriate and as funding allows.*
- *Use native plant species occurring within the bioregion (lower Sacramento Valley) for restoration projects.*
- *Protect and enhance habitat for special status plant and animal species where appropriate.*
- *Discourage the spread of invasive non-native species whenever control is feasible.*
- *Utilize integrated pest management (IPM) practices in all open space management plans and actions, while prioritizing non-chemical means for management.*
- *Protect and enhance surface and ground water quality through open space management practices.*

Public Access

- *Allow public access only where it is consistent with the resource protection goals for a site.*
- *Where public access is appropriate, minimize evidence of human use and impacts through site design, use regulations, and visitor education.*
- *Coordinate with local landowners and farmers to minimize the occurrence of trespass and related impacts on private lands.*

C. *Project Purpose*

Preparation of the Grasslands Park Master Plan is an outgrowth of the Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan, adopted in 2002. In addition, there is a need for coordinated management of weeds at the site, to protect sensitive species, and continued demand for new recreation and habitat improvement projects, and restructuring of agreements associated with the expiration of leases regulating current uses at the site. This plan is intended to provide a coordinated and comprehensive approach to management, recreational uses, habitat protection and enhancement, and unified design recommendations that reflect the site and surrounding uses, and reflect the County-wide Master Plan (currently under development - 2005).

I-2 Design Vision

The Master Plan is based on the ideal of offering a variety of recreational opportunities, recognizing the existing specialized recreation activities at the park, as well as maximizing opportunities for the general public use of the park. The Plan supports the existing recreation and habitat uses including:

- archery
- model airplane gliding
- wildlife viewing
- habitat restoration/oak woodland management
- off-leash dog walking and exercise
- horseshoe pitching
- native grass restoration

The Plan also includes provisions for improved general public use of the park, including:

- common public entry
- picnic areas
- trails
- group use area
- restroom improvements
- fencing to define safe use areas
- environmental education opportunities
- interpretive elements
- environmental restoration

The park will continue to be managed for general public use, as well as for the existing park leaseholders. Public access to leased areas will continue to occur, as specified in individual leaseholder agreements. Normal hours of operation are from dawn to dusk, and this practice should continue, with monitoring and enforcement of gate closure by the Park Host. Evening or special events should be allowed subject to special permits to be issued by the County.

A. *Connections to Future Open Space Areas*

Grasslands Park is centrally located within a region filled with unique open space and wildlife habitat areas. It is envisioned that the northerly areas could be utilized for staging and trail connections to Putah Creek and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Refuge lands. Completion of a bicycle trail corridor along Mace Blvd will be an important link for non-motorized park users. **(Figure 1: Regional Trail Connections).**



Figure 1: Regional Trail Connections

B. Environmental Protection and Habitat Restoration

Grasslands County Park is in an area that was historically vegetated by herbaceous annual and perennial plants native to California. Natural habitats included upland areas perhaps with scattered valley oak and vernal pools and seasonal wetlands. Extensive areas within Grasslands Park have been invaded by non-native, annual herbaceous plants, as a result of prior land disturbance and the aggressiveness of invasive weeds. The thick clay and often-alkaline soils on portions of the site (especially the eastern portion) limit the natural occurrence of native shrubs and trees. However, successful planting of non-native trees, including eucalyptus as well as native trees such as valley oak, has been accomplished. Although most of the valley oaks were planted as acorns and have not been irrigated, some of the rows of planted oaks near the archery range have received limited irrigation. Specifically, the archery range is surrounded by non-native eucalyptus trees, which provide a windbreak, and other non-native trees and tall shrubs, which have been planted into separate areas within the archery range to create additional windbreaks.

An effort to better manage Grasslands Park as a resource of mixed native and non-native vegetation and improve habitat quality for native wildlife will require a long-term phased substitution of the non-native trees and shrubs with native and compatible non-native species. Although native trees and shrubs likely had limited distribution on the site, the need for wind breaks and vegetated buffer areas for the archery range will require management such as irrigation to maintain the plants. The goal of maintaining a year round windbreak precludes the use of deciduous native trees and shrubs. Many native trees that form a distinct trunk do not provide a good windbreak. Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) is the primary somewhat arid adapted shrub that can grow on difficult sites. This native shrub can grow to over 20 feet in height and forms broad, dense foliage that would provide a good windbreak. Toyon develops berries that are a food source for native birds. Toyon could be planted in relatively high densities with 10 to 20 foot spacing if needed. The Toyon could be planted among the existing native valley oaks that occur in some areas of the archery range, creating a more complex habitat. Planting of Toyon and other compatible trees and shrubs will be conducted in association with a multi-year phased removal of the non-natives in order to preserve the windbreak that currently exists in the archery range.

Because the archery/horseshoe area is already diversely landscaped, it is not proposed that this area be converted strictly to a native tree and shrub landscape area. There are too many non-native trees in this area to accomplish this in a reasonable time period, and the majority of the planted trees do provide valuable windbreak, shade, and some habitat value. Therefore the goal will be long term replacement, combined with a supervised planting program to achieve a mix of native and adaptable and compatible non-native trees. Trees that become a hazard (diseased or dead, wind breakage, leaning etc.) will be removed and replaced with trees and shrubs from an approved plant palette (Table 1). Objectionable trees and shrubs should be removed from the park and no plants from this list (see Table 2: Objectionable or Undesirable Trees/Shrubs) used in the future. Native grasses and forbs for use in grassland and vernal pool restoration are provided in Table 3.

The remaining areas of Grasslands Park will need to be managed for three additional purposes: 1) an extensive area on the western half of the property that will be managed for native herbaceous plants and the associated vernal pool wetlands, 2) irrigated and mowed area for the Soaring Society, and 3) experimental valley oak and native bunchgrass planting within the confines of the dog park. The native grassland and vernal pool area will require continued and

TABLE 1
PLANT PALETTE FOR LANDSCAPED AREAS
(Areas A-I)

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Trees	
Arroyo willow	<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>
Goodding's willow	<i>Salix gooddingii</i>
Oregon ash	<i>Fraxinus oregona</i>
White alder	<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>
California buttonwillow	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> var. <i>californicus</i>
Valley oak	<i>Quercus lobata</i>
Fremont cottonwood	<i>Populus fremontii</i> ssp. <i>F.</i>
Black walnut	<i>Juglans hindsii</i>
Box elder	<i>Acer negundo</i> ssp. <i>Californicum</i>
California bay	<i>Umbellularia californica</i>
California buckeye	<i>Aesculus californica</i>
Madrone	<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>
Silk tassel	<i>Garrya elliptica</i>
Tan oak	<i>Lithocarpus densiflorus</i>
Redwood	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>
Western sycamore	<i>Platanus racemosa</i>
Blue oak	<i>Quercus douglasii</i>
Interior live oak	<i>Quercus wislizenii</i>
Fruitless mulberry	<i>Morus alba</i> 'Fan-San', 'Kingan', 'Stribling'
Shrubs	
Coffeeberry	<i>Rhamnus californica</i>
California rose	<i>Rosa californica</i>
Common monkeyflower	<i>Mimulus guttatus</i>
Elderberry	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>
Toyon	<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>
California grape	<i>Vitis Californicus</i>

California blackberry	<i>Rubus ursinus</i>
Coyote brush	<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> ssp. <i>Consanguinea</i>
Dwarf coyote brush	<i>Baccharis pilularis</i> "Twin Peaks"
Dwarf ceanothus	<i>Ceanothus griseus</i> "Yankee Point"
Blue wild lilac	<i>Ceanothus thrysiflorus</i> "Concha"
Sticky monkey flower	<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>
Western redbud	<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>
California fuchsia	<i>Zauschneria</i> sp.
Holly leaf cherry	<i>Prunus illicifolia</i>
Carolina cherry laurel	<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>
Dwarf coffee berry	<i>Rhamnus californica</i> "Eve Case"
Mountain mahogany	<i>Cercocarpus betuloides</i>
Penstemon	<i>Penstemon</i> sp.
Flannel bush	<i>Fremontodendron mexicana</i>
Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>
Pacific wax myrtle	<i>Myrica californica</i>
Perennials and Herbaceous plants	
Miniature lupine	<i>Lupinus bicolor</i>
Dwarf lupine	<i>Lupinus nanus</i>
Arroyo lupine	<i>Lupinus succulentus</i>
California poppy	<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>
Blue-eyed grass	<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>

**TABLE 2:
OBJECTIONABLE OR UNDESIRABLE TREES AND SHRUBS**

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Acacia	<i>Acacia</i> sp.
Algerian ivy	<i>Hedera canariensis</i>
Bamboo	<i>Sasa, Bambusa, Arundinaria, Phyllostachys</i> , sp.
Bermuda buttercup	<i>Oxalis pescaprae</i>
Bermuda grass	<i>Cynodon dactylan</i>
Broom—French, Scotch	<i>Cytisus</i> , sp. Incl. <i>C. monspessulanus</i> , <i>C. scoparius</i>
Castor bean	<i>Ricinus communis</i>
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster</i> , sp.
Eastern cordgrass	<i>Spartina alternaflora</i>
English daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
English ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , sp.
Fig tree	<i>Ficus</i> , sp.
Fountain grass	<i>Pennisetum villosum</i>
German ivy	<i>Senecio mikanioides</i>
Giant reed grass	<i>Arundo donax</i>
Ice plant (all forms)	various incl. <i>Carpobrotus</i> , <i>drosanthenu</i>
Kudzu	<i>Vinus obnoxious</i>
Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
Lomardy and hybrid poplar*	<i>Populus</i> , sp.
Mattress vine	<i>Muehlenbeckia complexa</i>
Pampas grass	<i>Cortederia jubata</i>
Periwinkle (all forms)	<i>Vinca</i> , sp. Including <i>V. major</i> & <i>V. minor</i>
Pyracantha	<i>Pyracantha</i> , sp.
Pine	<i>Pinus</i> sp.
Tamarisk (Salt cedar)	<i>Tamarix</i> sp.
Tree of heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>
Tree tobacco	<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>
Weeping willow	<i>Salix babylonica</i>

on-going management to eradicate non-native weeds including star thistle, goat grass, medusahead grass, and wild oat, as well as other invasive species. A combination of controlled burning; mowing, and eradication with herbicides to control local infestations will be employed to eradicate the weeds. A mix of native herbaceous plants including several tarweeds (*Hemizonia* sp) that grow on site as well as some restoration of upland and alkali wetland transition zone plants including saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) and salt marsh heather (*Frankenia grandiflora*) that occur on the neighboring Davis Communications site will also be considered for restoration.

A 60-acre area in the northeast corner of the property has been set aside for a Western burrowing owl preserve. This area will require management of the vegetation to maintain a relatively low vegetation height preferred by the burrowing owls for foraging. The potential creation of artificial burrows in this area as part of the City of Davis Burrowing Owl Management Plan will require specific vegetation management methods that will not disturb the owls, particularly during the breeding season. The breeding season is principally from February through the end of August, but can extend beyond that period. The locations of created or natural burrows will ultimately determine the timing and methods for vegetation management, but mowing and carefully controlled grazing will likely be the primary methods. Management of the experimental valley oak and native bunchgrass planting will be the responsibility of the Sierra Club as leaseholder for the dog park and oak planting groups and may eventually include natural recruitment of planted oaks to create clusters in a more random, natural pattern. Thinning to focus on removal of less healthy specimens and to create a less even-aged, even-height canopy should also be considered. Management should be coordinated and consistent with other management activities in the park.

Sensitive habitats including the vernal pools and burrowing owl preserve will require protection from activities that disturb and degrade those areas. Active restoration of those habitats will be required for several years to remove the non-native weeds and restore native vegetation. Management and protection of those areas will continue in perpetuity. It is a benefit to the public and the resource, that opportunity to observe the sensitive habitats and learn about the restoration and management effort occur. A self-guided trail system will be developed within Grasslands Park that will allow visitors to see these areas and educational signs placed at key locations. Some portions of trails may be closed seasonally, such as during the burrowing owl breeding period if the owls have developed a burrow near the trail. Similarly, trails near the vernal pools may be closed in particularly wet years when the vernal pools fill with water that may extend into the uplands.

Grasslands is home to numerous unique and sensitive wildlife species, therefore, it is critical that existing and new uses be compatible with the wildlife habitat. This includes:

- Locating active human uses away from identified sensitive areas
- Providing opportunities to view wildlife species without disrupting habitat
- Seasonal closures or docent-led tours in especially sensitive habitat areas
- Providing educational and interpretive opportunities so that visitors and student groups are informed about wildlife needs and value
- Implementing habitat restoration activities to restore degraded areas and provide habitat for the diverse species native to the area
- Conducting pro-active and adaptive habitat management to reduce the presence of invasive plants, and to encourage practices that will increase populations of native plant materials, and reduce long-term maintenance needs

Consideration should also be given to providing an ongoing biological monitor/site superintendent to evaluate and direct wildlife enhancement activities at the park. This could be a contract position, oversight by a nonprofit entity, or part of the Park Host/site superintendent

responsibilities. It could include oversight of management and maintenance activities to reduce invasive species; design of specific restoration and enhancement projects; and working with the leaseholders within the park to ensure that ongoing activities are consistent with park-wide habitat enhancement goals, as well as developing specific projects to be completed by project leaseholders.

C. Park Entry/Trail/Road Design

In keeping with the rural character of the park, it is anticipated that park roads will remain unpaved. However, soil sealant should be utilized during road installation to reduce dust. The Plan minimizes new road construction, with a single entry road designed to serve multiple areas, and informal unpaved trails to serve non-motorized uses.

Figure 2: Existing gravel road surface



Figure 3: Earth trail with soil sealant



D. Built Elements and Site Furnishings

Site furnishings such as shade shelters, picnic facilities, signs, fencing, and other built elements should be constructed of common materials and utilize a consistent design theme. In keeping with the rural character of the park, an emphasis on rustic materials, including natural wood, recycled materials, straw bale or rammed earth construction, matte galvanized sheeting and logs should be utilized. Improvements within each lease area should conform to these guidelines, in order to unify the park and aid recognition of common use areas. Private club facilities should be phased out over time, and replaced with a community meeting room that can be utilized by all leaseholders as well as the general public. This facility should incorporate permanent restroom facilities that are ADA compliant and meet County Environmental Health Requirements.



Figure 4: The existing restroom/kitchen structure is not code compliant and should eventually be replaced with a community facility.



Figure 5: Cargo containers and private storage should be replaced/relocated to a common corporation yard.

Architectural elements should include a neutral color palette, rustic architectural design, and relate to the surrounding agricultural character. New construction should avoid temporary structures such as cargo containers and prefabricated storage sheds. All new facilities, within each lease area, should be approved by County park staff, building officials, and the Parks, Recreations, and Wildlife Advisory Committee, prior to installation.

Equipment and materials for maintenance and management of the park and lease areas should generally be in a centralized location. A corporation yard, with a designated space and access availability for each leaseholder and the county should be provided. The area adjacent to the existing archery range hay barn should be expanded and improved to provide separated space for materials and equipment storage. A portion of the existing parking area should be made available for material transport/loading. Separate equipment and material storage in each lease area should be discouraged.



Figure 6: Rustic architectural design elements—straw bale, barn siding, galvanized sheeting & wood detailing/trim accents



E. Signage and Educational/Interpretive Opportunities

Interpretive facilities should be developed including a trailhead kiosk, as well as self-guided trails that provide signage and displays to inform users of the park's resources. The self-guided trails will provide an opportunity for school groups and general users to enjoy the park's wildlife without intruding into the most sensitive park areas. The trailhead facility can be a stand-alone kiosk, or can be incorporated into a community facility to provide meeting space as well as permanent educational displays. These facilities should be located in the central portion of the park, where the most active use is anticipated.



Figure 7: Typical trailhead shade structure

Figure 8: Trailhead structure made from recycled wood, with lockable interpretive display



Figure 9: Typical interpretive display structures



F. Fencing and Security

The Master Plan calls for a single public entry to facilitate site security and to provide a means for fee collection. The County does not currently collect a fee, but may in the future. The main entry will be gated, and will be controlled as part of the Park Host's duties. Existing perimeter gates for emergency service and special event access will be maintained. At the current time, no separate access is anticipated for the McClellan site, except the existing service access. As an alternative, recognized members of leaseholder groups could be provided gate keys to access the archery practice range off of Mace Blvd. This may provide incentive to pay membership fees and reduce traffic along the new interior park access road.

Grasslands Park should have a minimum of fencing, to avoid dividing the site, and to encourage visitors to view and explore park areas. However, fencing and/or buffers need to be provided to direct visitors away from potentially unsafe areas, including the buffer area around the archery range, and the dog park (to avoid unleashed dogs disturbing adjacent habitat areas). The perimeter fencing around the park will remain, to provide security and preclude unauthorized access. Fencing is required around the Burrowing owl preserve, dog park, and archery area.

In keeping with the rural setting and open character of the park, the use of screening fencing, chain link or other commercial fencing should be minimized or avoided. Fencing around the dog park should be non-climb or heavy wire fencing, of a design to keep dogs limited to that area and consistent with the agricultural theme of the park and surrounding area. It will be a priority to install this (ag. theme) fencing, so that other areas of the park can remain fence-free.



To define trails and parking boundaries, logs surplus to the site can be utilized, in addition to other low barriers or buffers to preclude vehicular access. Removable bollards should be utilized at the entry to permanent trail areas.



Figure 10: Fence Styles

Around the archery buffer and burrowing owl preserve, a post and cable fence or 4 or 5 wire barbless farm fencing should be provided (in addition to directional signage) to direct visitors to the archery range entrance. This open style fencing should be used where possible to allow wildlife movement.



5-Strand Barbless Wire and T Post (Archery Range)



Double fence: post and cable with field fencing & buffer



Single post and cable fence



Double post and cable fence



Low wood rail fence

Fencing to separate use areas within the central park area (to separate the archery range from other public picnic areas) should be designed to fit in with the surrounding area, rather than as a barrier. Landscape planters, bollards, or low wood fencing should be considered to reduce visual impact.



Removable bollards

I-3 Master Plan Components

Site Master Plan

Plate 1 presents the Grasslands Site Master Plan, including entry roads, use and lease areas, restoration and protection areas, and buildings and improvements. Each use area is discussed in the following section.

A. Park Entry

The park entry will be relocated to the south end of the archery range, between the range and the dog park area. The use of a single primary entry will help control access to the park, facilitate monitoring and supervision of park users, simplify night closure, as well as provide an opportunity for park visitors to become familiar with each park area.

The existing entry to the archery range will be closed, with access to club members for maintenance and special events entry. The existing gate to the dog park may also be utilized for maintenance and special events, but the main entry will be the primary entrance to the dog area.

At the park entry, a kiosk/station for supervised entry, or a self-pay station should be installed for fee collection, overall park maps, and general park information.



Figure 11: Typical entry kiosks



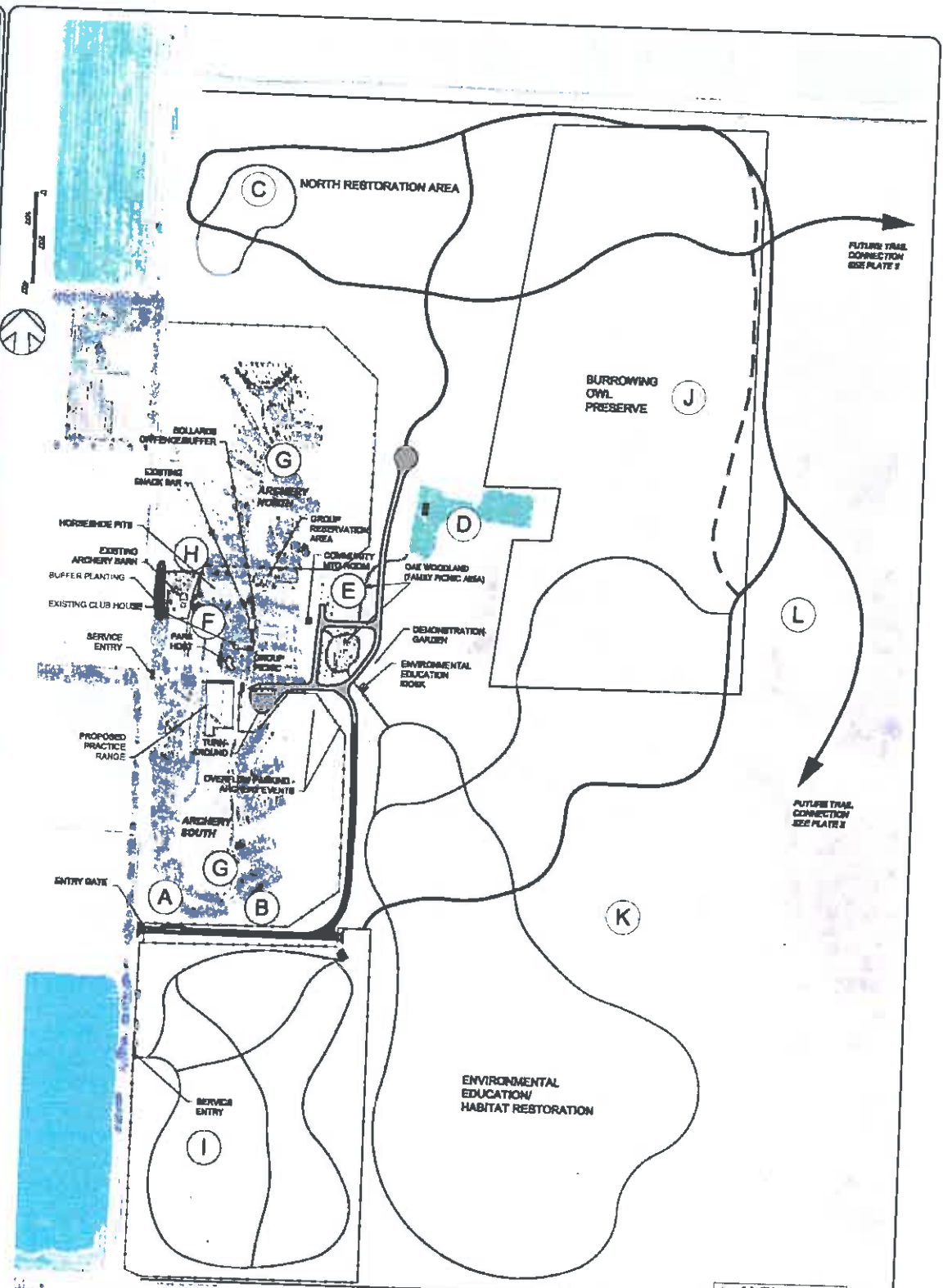


Project No.	1000000000
Sheet No.	1
Date	10/1/2008
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Author	JL
Checker	JL
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Checker	JL
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**GRASSLANDS PARK
 MASTER PLAN**

PLATE 1



AirPhotoUSA

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|------------|
| A. Park Entry | Primary Access Road | | (20' WIDE) |
| B. Vehicular & Pedestrian Access Trails | Primary Trail | | (10' WIDE) |
| C. North Restoration Area | Secondary Path | | (8' WIDE) |
| D. Soaring Society Lease Area | Fence | | |
| E. Park Hub | Shade Structure | | |
| F. Park Host | Community Meeting Room | | |
| G. Archery Range | Gate | | |
| H. Corporation Yard | Gravel Parking Lot | | |
| I. Dog Park/Oak Woodland | Interim Trail Connection | | |
| J. Burrowing Owl Preserve | | | |
| K. Environmental Education/Habitat Restoration Area | | | |
| L. Natural Resource Preserve | | | |

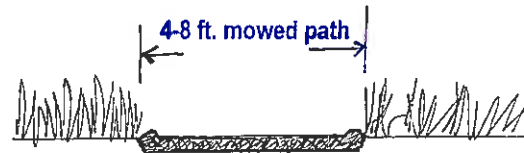
B. Vehicular and Pedestrian Access Trails

The park is intended to remain a rural, rustic open space area, with an emphasis on passive recreation activities in addition to the specialized recreational opportunities already provided. The entry road will provide the primary access to the site, and each park area will have a trailhead/turnout to facilitate emergency vehicle access. Parking will be provided at each trailhead area, as well as directional, safety and informational signs. Each trailhead will be linked with a network of pedestrian paths separate from the roadway.

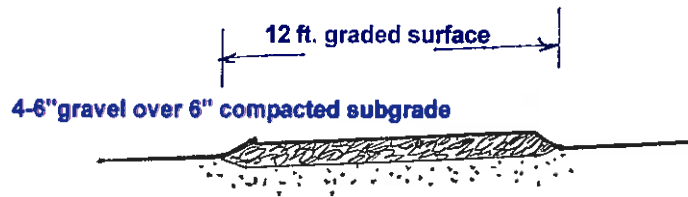
The entry road should be gravel and/or treated with a soil sealant or stabilizer to reduce dust. This will be the primary road system, and should be sufficient for two lanes of traffic (approximately 20 feet). Turnouts should be provided at the terminus of the road (at the archery range and dog park) that are sufficient for emergency vehicles. A secondary roadway system to serve the north park area, Soaring Society, and to provide emergency access to the natural preserve areas can be 10-12 feet wide, and will remain unpaved. This secondary road will serve as the primary trail loop. Other informal trails may be created as mowed paths or graded trails, depending on the management and maintenance needs within the park area. A permanent, self-guided pedestrian path should be provided from the park hub to guide visitors through the natural preserve. This path should be graded and treated with soil sealant to provide an interpretive loop, as well as encourage visitors to stay on the marked trail.



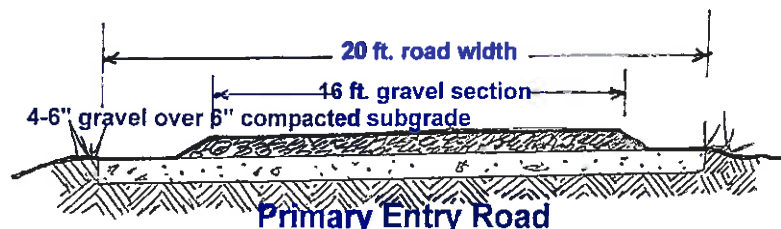
Figure 12: Suggested trail hierarchy and signage



Pedestrian Path



Secondary Road - Emergency Access



Primary Entry Road

C. *North Restoration Area*

The area north of the archery range and Soaring Society lease area will be maintained and managed for habitat enhancement. In the future, planted trees and existing trails should be considered for use as a picnic area, and to serve as the staging area for trail connections to the South Fork Putah Creek Preserve, levee trail system and adjacent bicycle/pedestrian routes. In this area, a loop emergency access road will provide access from the park access road terminus at the Soaring Society parking area, and will provide pedestrian access to the existing tree planting areas.

Informal trails will be located in this area, as well as opportunities for native grass establishment and riparian swale enhancement. Plantings of oaks and other native species in the swale should be considered.



Figure 13: North restoration area and enhancement swale

D. Soaring Society Lease Area

In the Soaring Society lease area, the shade structure, picnic facilities, ADA restroom and other public facilities required as part of the 1999 lease should be completed. Mowing and management of buffer areas should be improved, and storage of materials and private goods should be minimized. Temporary maintenance equipment and cargo containers should be relocated to the park corporation yard, and any permanent equipment/storage structures should be consistent with the park's design guidelines.

A small storage shed would be allowed in the leaseholder area for daily use items, used in model plane launching, but maintenance equipment, such as mowers, should be kept in the new Corporation Yard. The design for the onsite storage building should be subject to the review and approval of the Yolo County Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee, and should be consistent with architectural guidelines. A small structure, with perhaps one half of it below grade and with the roofline below eye level, is preferred. Cargo containers and temporary structures or metal sheds should not be considered acceptable. Plantings should conform to the plant palette, minimizing the use of ornamentals and increasing native plant materials that will increase habitat diversity.

Visitors to the soaring area should be directed to the shade structure and picnic area, where safety rules and interpretive signs should be located. The existing sign should be replaced by a sign at the turnoff to the lease area, and the design should be consistent with other signage within the park. Logs and other materials currently stored at the site should be utilized as buffers to define safety areas of the soaring area and to direct visitors to appropriate viewing areas. Directional signage as well as safety rules and interpretive materials should be provided to guide park visitors who are otherwise unfamiliar with this activity. In addition, Soaring Society members should be encouraged to participate in park-wide cleanup activities, visitor outreach and education projects, maintenance and habitat enhancement projects for the Park.

Since this area provides the only large irrigated turf area at the park, consideration should be given to allowing other compatible activities to use the lease area by designating certain times/dates for exclusive use by the Soaring Society in order to increase general use, or rules governing use by non-Soaring Society members established and posted.

Grants of up to \$5,000.00 are available from the Academy of Model Aeronautics (which the Soaring Society is associated with). Consideration should be given to improvement projects that will improve the lease area for both society members as well as the general public. This includes:



Figure 14: Soaring Society Log Buffer

- Drinking fountain
- Improved restrooms
- Waste receptacles
- Native buffer plantings, consistent with park plant palette
- Parking area improvements to reduce dust
- Safety buffer at north and south end of field
- Provide log buffer to define "safety trail" to burrowing owl reserve east of lease area

E. Park Hub

This area of the park will become the primary area for general visitors to the park. This area incorporates the developed portion of the park, as well as the existing planted oak woodland, and the archery practice range, which is proposed to be moved. This area is served by existing utilities, including electricity, potable water, restrooms and septic system. Existing recreational improvements include turf horseshoe courts, a clubhouse, signs, drinking fountain, well, propane tank, and club picnic and snack bar facilities.



Figure 15: Oak Woodland picnic area

Access to this area will be from the new entry road, and the focus will be on natural area picnicking and informal trails within the existing oak woodland area, as well as group picnicking, education and informational exhibits, and low-key recreational amenities such as sand volleyball and bocce ball at the former archery practice range. Shade structures, picnic tables, and other amenities will be located in this area.

In this area, the existing debris piles and equipment should be relocated to the designated corporation yard, with brush chipped for use as a groundcover within the oak woodland area. Lower tree branches within the oak woodland should be trimmed to form a shaded canopy.

Fencing around the archery buffer will terminate in this area, and bollards or aesthetically pleasing fencing will be provided to delineate the entry to the archery range. Fencing or buffers should focus on informing and delineating use areas, rather than precluding access. Informational signs, a safe trail map, and safety rules should be posted in this area to inform visitors of safe public viewing areas. **Figure 17A** illustrates potential uses and circulation within this area, as well as potential fencing styles.

Long-term projects in this area include replacement of the snack bar and restroom facility with a code compliant structure, relocation of the propane tank, and selected replacement of landscape plantings with native species. The restroom replacement could be combined with a community meeting room or environmental interpretive center in this area.



Figure 16: Horseshoe area



Figure 17: Practice range

F Park Host



The Park Host currently is located within the archery range lease area. The Park Host currently functions as part of the lease obligations of the archery range, and the host acts as a security guard for the park, as well as maintaining the grounds adjacent to the host area and horseshoe pitching area. Maintenance of the remainder of the archery range is done by volunteers associated with the Yolo Bowmen.

Figure 18: Park Host (behind fence)

As part of a long-term plan, the Park Host function should be expanded or revisited so that the position oversees maintenance and management functions for the entire site. The host should continue responsibility for morning gate openings, maintenance of any self-pay, and stations, and nightly park closure. In addition to daily fee collection and site security, this position would also interact with other leaseholders and ensure that the grounds are managed in accordance with the long-term programs for maintenance and management. It is possible that this position would be held by two people, or that a county maintenance worker could be assigned this position with oversight by a biological monitor or non-profit entity.

The existing location of the Park Host is suitable since it provides a presence within the central, developed portion of the park as well as proximity to the archery range. In this area, accommodations include a mobile home, fenced yard, storage of trailers and equipment, and a prefabricated building, which serves as a clubhouse for the Horseshoe Pitching Club. The fenced yard is landscaped with turf and weeping willow trees. As a long-range objective, storage of trailers and equipment outside the host area should be minimized, and landscaping/fencing considered that will provide visual access to the central park area. New structures should be designed in keeping with other community facilities.

Figure 19: Horseshoe pitching clubhouse, well, and equipment storage



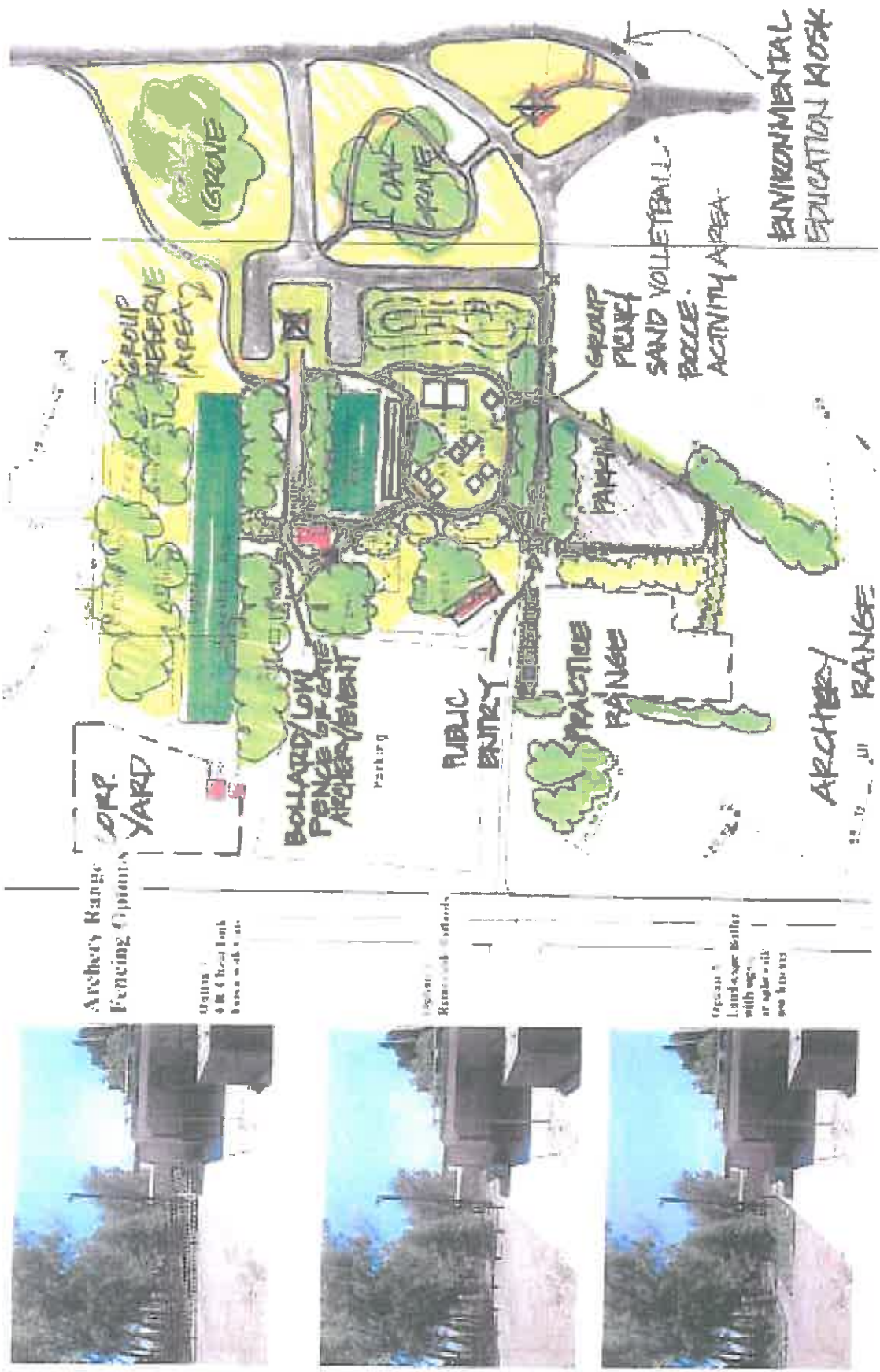


Figure 17A - Park Hub: Uses, Circulation and Fencing Options

G. Archery Range

Changes to the archery range lease area are proposed to improve safety concerns, better define use areas, create controlled access points to the range, and provide a long term program for archery improvements, structural compliance, and habitat improvement and enhancement efforts to integrate the maintenance and management of the area into the habitat goals for the park.

The Master Plan includes:

- Relocating the public entry to the south side of the Archery Range, with parking in the existing southeast lot
- Relocating the archery practice range to the south parking lot area
- Fencing around the perimeter of the archery buffer area, to focus access and entry to select areas
- Closure of the existing entry road, except for maintenance/service and access by club members, and for special events
- Redirecting two targets away from public areas
- Designation of a corporation yard for equipment and supplies
- Providing bollards, landscaping or other fencing to define use areas in the park hub



Figure 20: Typical target with backstop and berm



Figure 21: Practice range relocation area

Visitors to the archery range should be directed to a new shade structure at the entry to the practice range, which will provide information and mapping to indicate safe trails and visitor guidelines.

At this entry, and in the entry through the park hub, safety rules and interpretive signs should be located. Existing signs should be replaced, and the design should be consistent with other signage within the park.

Miscellaneous wood, equipment and materials currently stored at various locations within the site should be relocated to the corporation yard. Directional signage as well as safety rules and interpretive materials should be provided to guide park visitors who are otherwise unfamiliar with this activity. In addition, archery range members should be encouraged to participate in park-wide cleanup activities, visitor outreach and education projects, maintenance and habitat enhancement projects for the Park. Specific projects for habitat improvement within the lease area include planting native grass within the buffer areas, wildlife habitat improvement (bird boxes, artificial burrows, and other directed enhancement activities), and long-term replacement planting with native and compatible species (see plant palette).



Figure 22: Provide long-term program to replace invasive exotic species with native plants

Future plans for construction of an indoor range should incorporate public restrooms. Design of the structure should be in keeping with the architectural elements of the rest of the park, with rustic design elements that compliment the rural setting and relate to other public structures on the site.



Figure 24: Provide fencing and common signage to identify buffer areas. No new trees or obstacles should be located in buffer areas, except as part of a habitat enhancement program.

H. Corporation Yard

Storage of mowers, maintenance equipment, miscellaneous supplies, work vehicles, fencing, surplus poles, and planting tools is a necessary function of a large park. In the past, this storage has not been contained within one area. By designating a corporation yard within the park, each leaseholder can have a designated area for storage of equipment and supplies. The area should be sufficiently sized to serve the equipment and storage needs of the park maintenance staff and leaseholders, but storage of personal items should be avoided. This area should be screened and fenced to preclude unauthorized access. Consideration should be given to utilizing a portion of the existing parking area for loading and staging of equipment and materials.



Figure 25: Maintenance equipment and vehicles should be stored within a secure corporation yard. Brush and recyclable materials should be chipped and placed in public areas to provide a groundcover surface and minimize weed intrusion.

1 Dog Park/Oak Woodland

Entry to the off-leash dog park will be via the common entry road. The existing gate to Mace Blvd. will remain for emergency access and maintenance only. At the entry to the dog park, a shade structure/informational kiosk should be provided with safety rules, a trail map, water, and information regarding the tree planting and native grass establishment at the site. The road should have a turnout area sufficient for emergency vehicles, and a double gate should be considered to ensure that dogs are off-leash only within specified areas.

This access point should also provide information regarding the vernal pools and other sensitive resources east of this area, with a self-guided pedestrian trail to link this area with the Park Hub.

Habitat management, enhancement activities and planting should conform to the overall management plan for the site. The current oak restoration program will continue. As a long-term goal, existing oaks should be managed to an appropriate density for the site, natural recruitment will allow establishment of a natural pattern. Supplemental irrigation should be provided only on a temporary basis to sustain new plantings, and any new plantings should be selected that are relatively self-sustaining and conform to the Park's recommended plant palette. Within this area, oak management and planting will continue using the plant palette in Section I-1. Groups that want to continue tree planting in other suitable areas (archery range, north restoration area, park hub) should continue these activities and coordinate with park leaseholders.



Figure 26: Post informational signs that explain park rules



J. *Burrowing Owl Preserve*

Within the Davis Burrowing Owl Preserve, the use of fencing should be minimized if it does not adversely affect owl habitat. A graded path to provide emergency access to this area should be created, with appropriate interpretive exhibits. The trails and paths that are established should provide links to future trails and access roads on the McClellan site. Fencing in this area should be designed to provide minimal visual intrusion, and should not preclude wildlife movement.

Lands located between the Soaring Society lease area and the Burrowing owl preserve, as well as suitable land north and south of the lease area should be considered for incorporation into the preserve area as part of a County mitigation bank. Areas within the McClellan re-use area should also be considered for incorporation into a potential mitigation bank, to provide a continuing source of funds for park habitat maintenance and management.



Figure 27: Provide gates and signs as needed to control pets

K. Environmental Education/Habitat Restoration Area

The County's portion of vernal pool lands and other sensitive resource areas should be managed for protection of existing sensitive species, enhancement to increase species diversity, and to provide opportunities to inform and educate visitors about these resources. Areas that contain threatened and endangered species are regulated by state and federal agencies for habitat protection, and access to these areas must be consistent with regulatory protocols. Where appropriate, limited access for public viewing and education should be provided. Boardwalks or low fencing should be considered for particularly sensitive areas that offer a unique viewing opportunity.



Figure 28: Vernal pool wildflowers

Figure 29: Typical boardwalk to separate user from sensitive area

In this area, a self-guided trail should be provided that provides a perspective on the history, environmental resources, and restoration opportunities. Where possible, the trail should provide a link to the Natural Resource Preserve (McClellan site) and the Davis Burrowing Owl Preserve, so that visitors can explore an integrated management approach to the park's resources, and to provide an established emergency access trail and discourage the establishment of social trails through sensitive resource areas.



Figure 30: Vernal pool system bisects county park and McClellan site



L. Natural Resource Preserve

The Natural Resource Preserve contains the McClellan reuse lands, which are home to several endangered species, as well as significant remnant infrastructure. Therefore, the Plan calls for limited access to this area, such as seasonal viewings, or docent-led tours. Trails on existing access roads should be provided for seasonal visitor use.

As a long-term goal, existing infrastructure should be removed, rehabilitated, or removed, including buildings, *vaults*, utilities, etc. Portions of the existing road system, where appropriate, should be rehabilitated for use as part of the emergency access/trail system. In the northern portion of the site, a loop trail system should be considered if developed in conjunction with an ongoing restoration and enhancement program. The northern portion of the site should also be considered for enhancement programs associated with mitigation banking and expansion of burrowing owl habitat.

Interpretive signs should be provided that explain the cultural and historical significance of this site as a communications center during the cold war. If feasible, consideration should be given to rehabilitation/restoring the communication building (or a portion of it) for interpretive value or reuse. However, current estimates indicate that it is not cost effective to remove hazardous materials and provide ADA access at this time.

Plate 2 illustrates the existing road system and potential access trails within the McClellan area. Actual trail locations will be determined in consultation with the site biologist and agency representatives to assure that impacts to sensitive wildlife species are avoided.



Figure 31:
Existing
infrastructure
that is no longer
used should be
removed. Area
south and west of
the weather
station should be
considered for
mitigation bank .

I- 4. Implementation

A. *Park Improvements*

Funding for the dog park, burrowing owl preserve, and development of picnic areas is available as part of the funding for the City of Davis burrowing owl mitigation. General park cleanup and fence installation can be accomplished by non-profit organizations, such as the California Conservation Corps. Additional sources of funding are available through grants and funding allocations for parks and recreation. Since implementation of the plan is expected to take place over time, it is expected that individual projects will be designed and built by the County and leaseholders over a 10- to 20-year period.

Priority projects for implementation include:

- Ongoing habitat inventory, assessment and enhancement projects.
- Cleanup and tree trimming within central park area.
- Removal and relocation of equipment and materials to a centralized corporation yard.
- Installation of fencing to enclose the dog park.
- Relocation of the entry road, and implementation of a fee collection system.
- Park directional signage.
- Closure of the archery range entrance.
- Relocation of the archery practice range.
- Fencing/buffer and signage at archery area.
- Buffer and signage at the Soaring Society lease area.
- Installation of picnic facilities and shade structures.
- Implementation of self guided environmental trail.
- Ongoing oak woodland management

Long-term projects include:

- Removal of structures that are not code compliant.
- Removal/rehabilitation of infrastructure at McClellan reuse area (should be completed prior to transfer to County)
- Environmental center/community meeting room/restroom facility.
- Tree, shrub and groundcover replacement with native species

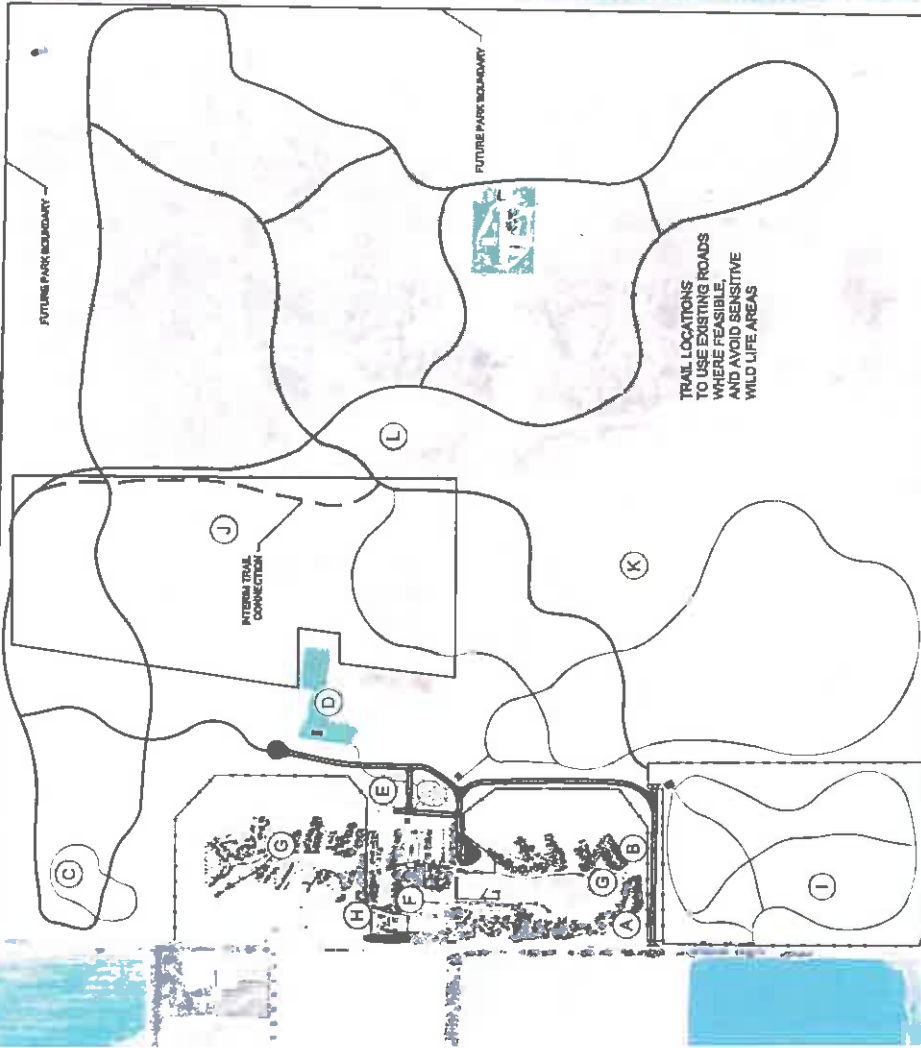
B. *Habitat Management and Monitoring and Adaptive Management*

The habitat management section of the Master Plan recognizes seven primary management areas within Grasslands Park with the adjacent McClellan-Davis Communications site as a separate management area. The seven management areas (**Plate 3**) areas follow:

- Soaring Society Lease Area
- Archery Range and Corporation Yard



7
 0 50 100 300
 SCALE 1" = 300'



LEGEND

A. Park Entry	(8" wide)	Primary Access Road
B. Vehicular & Pedestrian Access Trails	(4" wide)	Primary Trail
C. North Restoration Area	(6" wide)	Secondary Trail
D. Soaring Society Lease Area	-----	Fence
E. Park Hub	▨	Shade Structure
F. Park Host	⊠	Community Meeting Room
G. Archery Range	▩	Gala
H. Corporation Yard	▧	Gravel Parking Lot
I. Dog Park/Oak Woodland	▨	Interim Trail Connection
J. Burrowing Owl Preserve	▨	
K. Environmental Education/Habitat Restoration Area	▨	
L. Natural Resource Preserve	▨	

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**YOLD COUNTY PLANNING & PUBLIC WORKS DEPT
 PARKS & RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

QUESTA
 Environmental & Water Resources

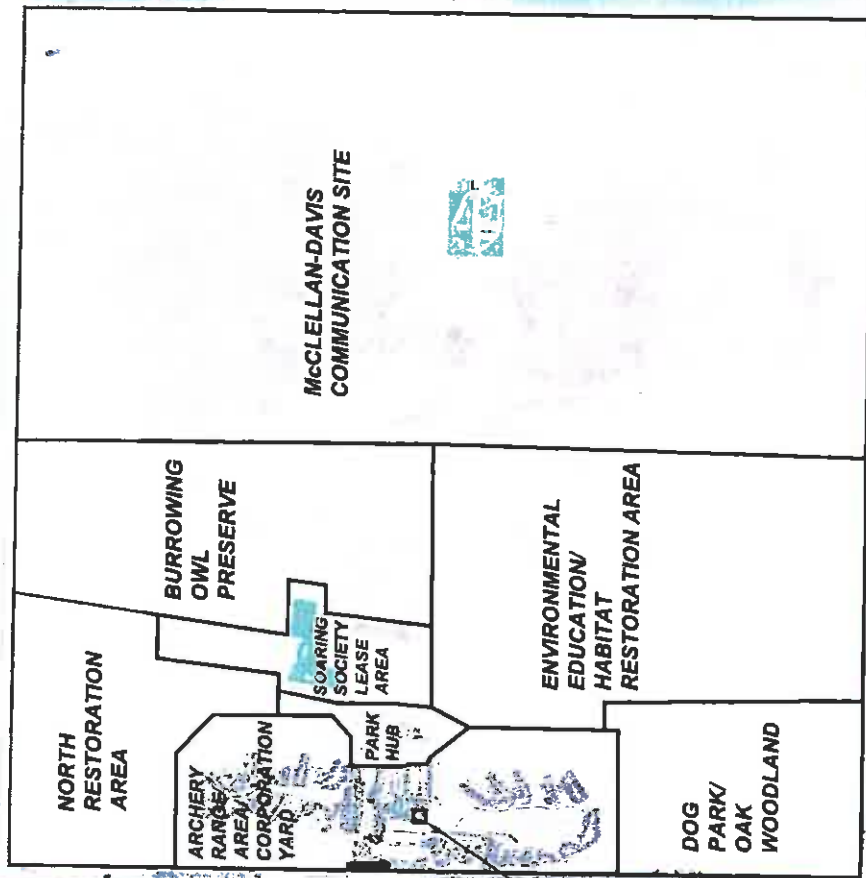
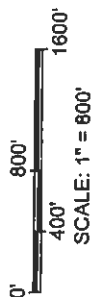
ESA
 Environmental Science Associates

**GRASSLANDS PARK
 TRAIL SYSTEM**

PLATE 2

Client	YCPD
Project	CHL
Drawn	JP
Check	BT

Date: 11/19/2014
 Scale: 1" = 300'
 Sheet: 11 of 12



PARK HOST

Date:	11/29/2004
Drawn:	C.H.H.
App'd:	S.T.
Dwg No:	2-0023 GRASSLANDS_TRAILS-QH1.dwg

QUESTA
Environmental & Water Resources
1225 Redwood Drive, Redwood City, CA 94061

GRASSLAND PARK MANAGEMENT AREAS
YOLO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

PLATE **3**

- Park Hub
- Park Host
- Dog Park/Oak Woodland
- Burrowing Owl Preserve (Owl Preserve)
- Environmental Education/Habitat Restoration Area and Northern Restoration Area (Restoration Area)

Management Goals

Implementation of management actions should be done to meet overall goals for Grasslands Park and goals for each management area. The success of the Master Plan should be based on achieving overall goals for Grasslands Park and cumulatively achieving the goals for each management area. Management actions should be monitored to evaluate whether or not the goals are being met. Yolo County and the Yolo County Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Committee should evaluate the monitoring information to determine whether the success of the Master Plan as determined by and evaluation of how well overall and management area goals are being met. Decisions to modify management actions should be made based on the evaluations through adaptive management.

The first five management areas have principle goals of meeting specific recreation activities for visitors to Grasslands Park. The Owl Preserve and Restoration areas have primary goals to protect important biological resources. Activities that help each management area achieve their primary goals require very different actions and it is important that those actions are not in conflict with one another. Recreation management areas should be managed by the primary user groups such as the Bowmen for the Archery Range. The Owl Preserve will be jointly managed with Yolo County and the City of Davis. The Restoration Areas and ultimately the McClellan-Davis areas will be managed by Yolo County.

Recreation Area Management

This section addresses management associated with the recreation areas and other high visitor use areas. These areas should have management goals and specific objectives that should identify how each management area should meet their recreation and public use purposes. The development of those goals and objectives should occur through the lease agreement with each group that will be responsible for implementing management actions that should meet those goals. In addition, the recreation management areas should practice management activities that should be consistent with and promote management goals of other areas at Grasslands Park. To ensure that consistency occurs the following goals also must be met:

- **Weed Management Goal-** All recreation management areas should implement weed management actions which should reduce and when possible eradicate non-native plants that are invasive weeds (particularly medusahead grass, goat grass, perennial pepperweed, yellow star thistle).
- **Native Tree, Shrub and Herb Goal-** All recreation areas should only plant Grasslands Park approved trees, shrubs and herbs identified in the planting palette, or approved as part of a habitat enhancement program.

- **Fire and Hazard Management-** all areas must have their fire fuels (flammable vegetation) managed to reduce the risk of fire damage within the Park. This will involve the timely clearing and/or mowing of fire breaks around tree areas and infrastructure, as well as removing hazardous, diseased, wind-thrown, or damaged trees. Fire fuels and hazardous tree management shall be coordinated with management for weed management and for the eventual re-establishment of desirable native trees, shrubs, and native grasses and forbs.

Soaring Society Area Lease Area. This area should be managed to meet the conditions required to maintain the flight and landing areas. This should include periodic mowing and irrigating the turf area. Weed management should occur in this management area, and a fire fuels management buffer area established around the perimeter of the area.

Archery Range Lease Area. This area should be managed to meet the conditions for safe archery and horseshoe recreation including the maintenance of windbreaks, firebreaks, and buffer safety areas created by vegetation. Buffer areas and landscaped areas should be maintained free of weeds or grasses that increase fire fuel load. Through the lease agreement, a phased removal of eucalyptus trees and other less desirable non-native trees and hazardous trees should be conducted in association with replacement with native trees and shrubs identified on the planting palette. Through the lease agreement and in coordination with the Yolo County Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee the lessee should developed a phased planting and tree removal plan that may encompass a 30 year period of time or more. Weed management should occur in this management area, with a fire break established around the perimeter of the area.

Park Hub Area. This area should be configured and managed for visitor use including pruning existing oak tree branches to create shaded areas for visitors, development of a non-paved trail system, and planting with trees and shrubs from the planting palette. Weed management should occur in this management area. Tree trimmings should be chipped and spread as part of the weed management program in this area. A fire fuels management program should be integrated with those for the Dog Park, Archery Area, Soaring Society Lease Areas, and Owl Preserve.

Park Host Area. This area should be managed to assist long-term integration with the park including phasing out non-native trees and shrubs to native species identified on the planting palette. Weed management should occur in this management area.

Dog Park/Oak Woodland Lease Area. This area has been actively managed through volunteers that have planted native trees (valley oaks) and native bunchgrasses. In addition, the volunteers have actively reduced the non-native weedy plants through their planting efforts and through annual mowing. Intensive weed management and fire fuels management should occur in this management area.

Habitat Area Management

This section of the Master Plan focuses on the management of the Owl Preserve, Restoration Area and the McClellan-Davis site. Specific goals and management actions are identified to direct actions that should ensure the primary goal of biological resource

protection in those areas are met. There are actions that will need to be taken in other management areas to also ensure the protection of biological resources goal is met.

Habitat Area Management Goals

- *Burrowing Owl Preserve Goal* – manage the area to meet mitigation requirements developed by the City of Davis and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game to provide habitat for Western burrowing owl and a buffer zone that may become burrowing owl habitat.
- *Environmental Education/Habitat Restoration Area Goal* – manage the area to increase habitat quality in the vernal pool wetlands and surrounding upland grasslands while providing opportunities for visitors and education programs to learn about the sensitive resources that are present and how to manage them. This area, including the southern and northern restoration areas, should be managed to enhance native habitats. Herbaceous vegetation is the dominant cover with native valley oaks having been planted through volunteer efforts on the western side of the southern restoration area. Management to reduce the non-native weeds should include to the extent feasible protection of the existing healthy valley oaks. This should be integrated with fire fuels management. Future studies should be conducted to determine whether native trees should be considered for planting in the northern restoration area, and whether valley oaks that have been significantly damaged or are doing very poorly in other portions of the main Environmental Education/Habitat Management Area could be removed or thinned to make mowing and management easier, and to create a more natural random appearance.
- *McClellan-Davis Site Goal* – Manage the conservation areas including vernal pools and associated upland grasslands identified by the US Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure protection of the endangered and rare species and enhance habitat quality when necessary. Provide linkages with the Grasslands Park Habitat Restoration Area to allow selective doцент lead access through the upland areas of the western part of the vernal pool habitat. Areas outside the conservation zones should be managed to increase habitat quality including providing additional wildlife habitat for Western burrowing owls and northern harriers. Consider the need for fire fuels management in this area.

The McClellan-Davis site will be acquired from the U.S. Air Force by the County of Yolo. In preparation for the land acquisition, Yolo County received a CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) grant that includes gathering ecological information on several CALFED priority species for Recovery actions and milestones, develop methods to eradicate non-native invasive plants on the property and develop an overall Management and Conservation Plan for the site. As of November 2004, baseline studies on the vernal pools and uplands have been completed and experiments to eradicate non-native plants are underway. A draft management and conservation plan and an associated monitoring and adaptive management plan have been developed. Final plans should be produced once the results of the non-native eradicate experiments are completed in August, 2005.

- Vernal Pool Management Goal- Protect and enhance the vernal pool ecosystems including specific management that should ensure the long-term preservation and recovery of the rare and endangered plants and wildlife associated with the vernal pools
- Upland Habitat Management Goal- Restore through management actions native plant habitats that function as important wildlife dispersal, foraging and breeding areas.

Meeting the goals of these habitat management areas should require management actions specific to these areas as well as some actions that should be applied to the other management areas.

Management Actions

Non-Native Invasive Plant Eradication- Non-native plants have been a major cause of decreased habitat quality at the Park. The main weedy plants include yellow star thistle, goat grass, medusahead grass, swamp grass, and perennial pepperweed. Additional species are present and will require evaluation to identify action measures. Tools to eradicate non-native weedy plants include manual hand removal, mowing, controlled burning, selective use of herbicides, and selective grazing. All recreation areas will need to manage for the non-native weeds specified above. In the Recreation areas mowing and hand removal are recommended annually.

The Owl Preserve can include a combination of controlled burning, grazing and mowing for weed control and vegetation height management. The Restoration area, including the southern and northern areas, should include controlled burning associated with perimeter buffer pre-burn mowing of 20 to 30 feet wide, mowing around the vernal pools, mowing in areas to protect signs and walkways.

Near vernal pools, herbicides should only be used as an emergency measure to control outbreaks of particular weedy species. Selective herbicides should primarily be used in the uplands at least 100 feet away from the edges of known rare plant locations. Herbicide use near or in vernal pools should follow specific guidance from the McClellan-Davis site vernal pool management plan.

Grazing may be used in upland areas outside the vernal pool conservation areas. If non-native plants such as medusahead grass occur in vernal pools, grazing may be implemented as a management tool. Grazing should only be implemented in the Restoration area where the vernal pools occur following field experiments that demonstrate it is an effective method of weed eradication while not negatively impacting the natural vernal pool ecology. The types of grazing animals, seasonal timing and stocking levels have yet to be determined.

Restoration and Vegetation Management – To increase the habitat quality of Grasslands Park it is desirable to manage the vegetation to increase native plant species. Specific recreation management areas such as the Archery Range require windbreaks and buffer zones with relatively dense, tall evergreen shrubs and trees. In those areas some landscape shrubs and trees may be used in combination with native species (see planting palette). Trees specifically known to be detrimental to wildlife, such as eucalyptus, should not be planted and existing eucalyptus replaced with other species,

through time. Selection of any landscape or other non-native species in the Park should require approval of the Yolo County Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Committee and County staff.

Seeding of annual or perennial herbaceous plants should be conducted using species known to occur in the soil and habitat conditions natural to the park and using seed that has been collected primarily from the nearest seed source to the park. Hybrid, cultivars and non-native annual and perennial herbs should not be planted in the Park. Vegetation management for the Owl Preserve should follow the prescriptions and standard established in the Final Burrowing Owl Mitigation Plan. The Restoration area and McClellan-Davis site should have specific restoration plans developed that will identify areas within them for restoration plots, particular native annual and perennial herbaceous plants to be used and methods of restoration. Irrigation of plants should be restricted to the Archery Range, trees associated with the picnic area and the Soaring Society area.

Infrastructure – Trails and fencing should be created to meet the goals of various management areas. Fencing should be established and managed for the purpose of protecting sensitive habitats and associated plants and wildlife. The fencing should be consistent with the natural and rural setting of the park. The dog park should establish a perimeter fence to limit dogs from entering other areas. Similarly, a perimeter fence should surround the Owl Preserve as required by the Burrowing Owl Mitigation Plan. The fencing should consist of a 3-foot tall fence with 8-inch grids, with one to two strands of straight wire along the top of fence. Vegetation can and should be planted along the fence such as native grasses to help obscure the fence.

Pathways and boardwalks to provide access to various parts of the park should be constructed to limit impacts to existing upland habitats. Boardwalks can be created and located 25 feet or more from the vernal pools and placed outside all known rare plant locations. Emergency access roads and primary trails should be located outside these areas, and locations of trails should be determined in consultation with restoration biologists and field-staked to minimize potential disturbance. Boardwalk designs should avoid use of CCA treated wood and utilize composite materials such as recycled plastic lumber or helical earth anchors to prevent toxic chemicals from entering the soil or vernal pools. Seasonal closure of trails should be required in areas where the trail is within 100 feet of nesting burrowing owls, northern harriers, any other raptors or migratory water birds such as ducks and geese.

Establishing Specific Goals- Each management area should develop a set of specific management objectives that are consistent with the general goals of the Master Plan and with the management objectives of other management areas. These specific management objectives should be identified within the lease agreements for the Archery, Soaring and Dog Park areas. The lease agreement should also identify a process for those management areas to coordinate with the County staff and have future management actions and planting plans approved by the Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee. Management actions should be identified to demonstrate how the specific goals should be met, what methods should be used and the seasonal timing of management actions. Planting should comply with the plant palette and guidelines contained in the Master Plan and specific habitat enhancement objectives.

Monitoring

Monitoring of all management areas by Yolo County should occur annually to ensure each management area is meeting primary and specific goals and implementing all management actions following the guidance set forth in this document and other documents providing specific management guidance and actions. The Owl Preserve should be monitored by the City of Davis in coordination with Yolo County to ensure the vegetation requirements are being met and mitigation goals are being met. Monitoring of the Restoration Area and the McClellan-Davis site are currently ongoing as part of controlled burning and non-native plant eradication experiments. Additional monitoring should be identified in the CALFED McClellan-Davis site Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan. The CALFED McClellan-Davis site management and monitoring documents will be attached to the Grasslands Park Master Plan at technical appendices once they are finalized in 2005.

Adaptive Management

The Grasslands Park Master Plan identifies a broad range of general and specific activities that will change the landscape of the park from its current condition. The overall goal should be to improve the park for recreational opportunities, increase visitor awareness of the parks cultural and natural heritage and resource values, and protect and enhance those resources through management. The proposed changes have yet to be fully realized and the success of management actions should require implementation followed by monitoring to determine whether or not the management goals are being met. Therefore, management recommendations may need to be re-evaluated based on the results of monitoring data. The McClellan-Davis site will have a specific adaptive management plan to lay out a decision-making process for evaluating monitoring data and determining what actions, if any, should be taken if management recommendations are not meeting its goals. The specific objectives that will need to be developed for each management area in Grassland Park should require quantifiable measures on which monitoring can determine whether they are succeeding or not. Specific objectives should be identified in lease agreements for individual management areas, in the Burrowing owl mitigation plan, and in the McClellan-Davis site Final Management and Conservation Plan.

Implementation of the management actions identified in this plan should be monitored annually unless higher or lower frequencies are justified in specific cases. All the monitoring data should be provided to the Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Advisory Committee and Yolo County for a 5-year period. Adaptive management would be implemented after a review of the 5-year data and a determination of any needed changes to management actions taken at that time. It is recognized that specific adaptive management actions may occur in less than 5 years when emergency circumstances occur such as a wild fire or a particularly rapid non-native plant infestation.

C. *Annual Leaseholders Meeting*

All of the Grasslands Park leaseholders should be invited to attend an annual public meeting on the park convened by Yolo County Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee. The meeting will provide the opportunity for:

- The leaseholders to summarize the previous year's activities, any problems and concerns, and recommended management actions.
- The leaseholders to propose any changes or improvements to their areas that should receive staff and Advisory Committee comments, guidance, and approval.
- The leaseholder groups to interact.
- The public to ask questions of or provide input to the leaseholders and Advisory Committee.
- Members of the Advisory Committee to ask questions of the leaseholders and provide additional comments and guidance.

Section II:

Appendix

Appendix A:

Existing Conditions

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Note: This section was originally prepared in August 2004. It refers to a proposed new park entry to the north side of the Archery Range. As a result of public input and upon the recommendation of the Parks and Wildlife Advisory Committee, the park entry was moved to the south of the Archery Range in the Master Plan.

A-1 Park Stakeholders and Use Areas

There are currently three formal agreements for recreation and habitat protection within the park. This includes the Yolo County Bowmen Archer Club, with a sublease to the Yolo County Horseshoe Pitching Club; the Sacramento Valley Soaring Society, a model airplane club; and the City of Davis Burrowing Owl Preserve. In addition, there are volunteer groups, dog owners, researchers, and landowners with specific interests at the Park.

A. *Yolo County Bowmen Archery Club*

The Yolo County Bowmen Archery Club has held a lease at Grasslands Park since 1979. Under the leadership of the late Elmer Wilson (for which a portion of the park is informally named), many of the buildings, recreation areas, target areas and horseshoe courts were constructed. Over the years, the use has continued through a 5-year renewable lease agreement. The current lease expires December 31, 2004. The lease agreement encompasses 40 acres plus a buffer, and utilizes approximately 58 acres of the park, including the target area, central horseshoe court area and buildings, and 100 yard buffer on the north, south and east side of the range. When the current lease was prepared in 1999, the County cited the benefits of a full-time caretaker, improvements available to the public, and maintenance by the club as benefits. At that time, the Archery Club wanted a longer lease in order to construct a permanent indoor range at the site. Current club members have also expressed a desire to enter into a longer-term lease in order to continue their commitment at the park and make additional improvements, including the indoor range and archery clubhouse.

The Archery Club has approximately 80 members, of which approximately 57% are Yolo County residents. The club hosts one major fundraising event per year. As required by the lease, the facilities are open to the public, and there is an "honor system" fee for use.

The Archery Range has 28 targets at varying distances, 14 each in a loop north and south of the entry road [*Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*]. All lanes in the north portion face out, and the central area is used for overflow parking when the club has events. The south loop has half the targets facing west and half face east. The central portion of this area is used as a buffer for the westerly targets. The range is inspected yearly by the National Field Archery Association, a non-profit corporation dedicated to the practice of archery. The NFAA provides liability insurance for the club. The standard NFAA field round has distances that vary from 20 feet to 240 feet. In addition to the target range, facilities within the lease area include two gravel parking areas, signs, landscaping, native tree planting, archery lanes, well connections, irrigation system, restrooms, snack bar, club house, practice target range, caretaker's residence and garden, and numerous storage sheds, outbuildings and work areas.

Trees within the archery range are mostly non-native eucalyptus, poplar and other species. Oak trees have been planted east of the practice range and west of the range. The planted trees within the range provide the park's primary tree and shade canopy.

Yolo County Horseshoe Pitching. Within the Archery Club lease area, the Yolo County Horseshoe Club has maintained an informal use agreement since 1984. They are listed as a potential sublease within the County lease agreement, which expires December 31, 2004.

The club currently has approximately 25 members, and hosts events six times a year, with some overnight use for events. The club provides the Park's caretaker, and maintenance for the area. Within the horseshoe area, there is a snack bar (shared with Yolo Bowmen), restrooms, 40 courts, and outbuildings.

Summary of Lease Obligations and Status:

The Yolo Bowmen have indicated that the Horseshoe Club's use of this portion of the park is informal, without a written sublease. They have indicated that it is unknown if this informal agreement will be maintained in the future.

Public benefit provided by past improvements, caretaker presence on site, community benefits from continued stewardship and amenities of the park provided by the clubs. Maintained facilities available to the public: a parking lot, restrooms, picnic area, drinking fountain, weed abatement, conservation stewardship of wildlife areas, and invitations for outdoor recreation by lessee, and caretaker.

- Rent: \$1.00
- Club must provide recreational services for members and guests and nearby park site users in a safe manner and at a minimum of risk to members, guests, other users, and the County.
- Allowable uses limited to archery, horseshoe pitching, picnicking, supervised youth group camping, habitat nursery, caretaker's residence, and clubhouse.
- Facilities to be available to public.
- Pay for utilities, including portion of well.
- Maintain premises in same condition as beginning of lease.
- Do not permit or cause waste or nuisance on property.
- Maintain premises, including weed management, rodent prevention, **and** insect infestations.
- Make diligent effort to prevent infestations that might damage crops or animals after lease expires.
- Hold County harmless for activities.
- Comply with federal quitclaim deed.
- Comply with law.
- Sublease to Horseshoe Club is acceptable; other assignment must be approved by County.
- All improvements belong to County, and must be surrendered at termination of lease, or removed and returned to original condition at lessee's expense.
- No alterations/additions without County's approval.

Existing Conditions :

- Park caretaker is associated with Horseshoe Club, provides site monitoring and maintenance of central horseshoe area and buildings, and mows and maintains horseshoe area
- Club members state the range is open for use 24/7.

- Mow strip around edge of targets is provided, but other areas of buffer and range are not frequently mowed or well maintained. This could be a fire hazard especially in the buffer area.
- Several storage sheds/waste piles have accumulated, including small quantities of industrial solvents and chemicals in storage units, equipment storage, debris piles and an abandoned vehicle.
- Site is occasionally used for overnight camping by event participants, not expressly allowed by lease.
- Area is not kept weed-free.
- Public use is sometimes discouraged.
- Bowmen have indicated the feeling that most of the site improvements, including buildings, trees, and shade, belong to them (since they made the improvements), and not generally to the public for uncontrolled usage.
- The actual range area may be larger than the terms of the lease.
- Public usage of the range, safety concerns, and ownership improvements made by the Club and their availability for public use are issues that have consistently emerged.
- Unrestricted range hours may not be consistent with County park use policies.
- The current practice of not generally encouraging public use by occasionally questioning park users about their presence, and informing them about range danger is not ideal, since Archery Club members are not always present on site to provide information or monitor use.
- The caretaker patrols the entire park, but maintenance is largely limited to horseshoe area.
- The current lease agreement does not specifically discuss potential issues including:
 - Educational or outreach programs to increase public use and awareness of safety issues
 - Overnight use of facilities
 - Revenues for seasonal events/County cost recovery
 - Code compliance of existing and planned facilities
 - Exclusive use areas within public facilities, such as an indoor range, clubhouse or meeting room.
 - Specific lease area improvements, such as fencing, a "safety trail", or other facilities
 - Work with other leaseholders/park groups in cooperative activities

B. Sacramento Valley Soaring Society

The Sacramento Valley Soaring Society has leased a portion of the Park since 1992. Like the Archery Club, the current lease expires December 31, 2004. It is a 100-member club, with a 15-acre leased area in the central portion of the park. The area currently used by the Society is approximately 29 acres. Facilities maintained by the club include irrigated turf, sheds, one portable ADA restroom, a shade shelter, and picnic tables (under construction as of 11/04), which are open to public use. The restroom, shade structure and picnic tables were required as part of the current lease.

Summary of Lease Obligations and Status

- Community benefit by stewardship and amenities of the park site provided by the Society.
- Maintained facilities to be made available to the public after construction: a shade shelter; a parking lot; ADA restroom; picnic area; weed abatement; conservation stewardship of wildlife areas and invitations for outdoor recreation by lessee.
- Rent: \$1.00
- Make improvements to the site that will be available to the public.
- Maintain the area assigned to them free of weeds, and create a fire control area.
- Provide insurance covering the County.
- Work with other groups in cooperative activities.
- Utilize the existing well.
- Within one year (2000):
 - Connect to well, provide irrigation system
 - Plant grass in launch/landing area
 - Provide ADA-designed portable restroom
 - Install 4 picnic tables with barbecue pits
- Within three years (2002):
 - Construct 20' x 40' shade structure, building code compliant
 - Install parking area
 - Provide electrical connection
 - Maintain all improvements in safe condition.
- All improvements shall be available to public when area not actively used by Society.

Existing Conditions

- Area is open to public for viewing
- Area is maintained and regularly mowed
- Status of insurance is not known
- Irrigation and turf have been installed
- Portable restroom has been provided
- Parking area is available
- Shade shelter (currently under construction)
- Picnic tables (currently under construction)
- Barbecues (currently under construction)
- Cooperative projects with other leaseholders
- Cargo containers have been placed within area for member storage
- There is no indication of working with other leaseholders on joint projects for park improvement
- The area used by the Soaring Society may exceed the lease area.
- The lack of picnic and barbecue facilities at the site has minimized potential conflicts between public users and Soaring Society members. It is unknown if future problems will occur when these facilities are provided, and picnic area users might want to utilize the turf areas for informal play activities.
- Placement of multiple cargo containers for storage, and log pile at south end of lease area may not be aesthetically pleasing within the park use area.

- Educational or outreach programs to increase public use and awareness of safety issues
- Overnight use of facilities
- Revenues for seasonal events/County cost recovery

C. *City of Davis Burrowing Owl Reserve*

The City of Davis entered into an agreement in February 2004 to permanently establish a 63-acre Burrowing Owl reserve within Grasslands Park, to mitigate for potential impacts associated with the development of Mace Ranch within Davis. The agreement established a Conservation Easement in perpetuity, and included a CDFG approved Burrowing Owl Management Agreement. The site is a precisely defined area immediately east of the Soaring Society area. As part of the agreement, there is funding provided for the management for burrowing owls, and the agreement also provides funding for a 35-acre dog park, picnic area, access to natural areas, and parking areas.

Summary of Lease Obligations and Status

- Master agreement will continue to allow for both active, urban, passive habitat enhancement uses and strives to balance potentially competing uses while promoting habitat and vernal pool protection.
- Potential for mitigation bank for burrowing owl habitat for future uses.
- 33 acre conservation easement in perpetuity
- Additional habitat property for long-term maintenance of burrowing owl habitat
- City of Davis to manage mitigation property, other entity might manage additional habitat property.
- Additional habitat property can be used for mitigation bank
- Davis funding management implementation.
- Funds established for implementation
- Management Plan has not been implemented yet.

D. *Dog Park/Tree Planting*

Native oak tree planting and maintenance has been an ongoing volunteer project since 1991. The primary planting area has been in the 35-acre portion designated for a dog park. The tree planting area in the southwest corner of the park was planted in rows that are 15 to 35 feet on center with rows approximately 60 feet apart. There are approximately 1,150 trees at this location. Use of a portion of the site for off-leash dogs was formalized in the Burrowing Owl Agreement, with funds committed for fencing and a parking area. Trial plots of native grasses have also been planted in this area. Other tree planting areas include the area east of the archery practice range (within the buffer area), west of the range, and two groves of trees in the northwest corner.

Summary of Lease Obligations and Status

The lease area of 35 acres was set-aside in the Davis Master Agreement. The agreement specifies chain link fencing for the perimeter of the dog park, entrance gates, a ten-vehicle parking lot, and water access.

E. Northwest Area

This area was identified as a picnic area and access point to the natural areas of the park in the Interim Management Plan, and funding was established as part of the Burrowing Owl Agreement. This area includes two small (± 1 acre) tree-planting areas, a remnant swale, and grassland area. A portion of this area was burned this spring as part of the interim management plan. As specified within the Davis Master Agreement, this area will include a culvert crossing of the swale, a twenty-vehicle parking lot, post and cable fencing, and a portable restroom.

F. Habitat & Grassland Management Areas

Since 1998, volunteers have planted approximately 15 acres of native grasses at the site. Located in the southwest corner, the plots range from one to eight acres, and include blue wild rye, Yolo slender wheat grass, and purple needle grass. Volunteers from the U.C. Davis herbarium have also inventoried species at the site, and have coordinated volunteer workdays to remove star thistle. The Interim Management Plan was developed in 2003-04 as a compromise approach for management of non-native invasive species (NIS), in consultation with park stakeholders. A controlled burn occurred in late spring in the area east of the dog park/oak planting, adjacent to sensitive species areas, as well as in the northwest corner. Smaller burn plots, spot application of herbicide, native grassland restoration with volunteer efforts and other approaches have been considered to improve habitat conditions. Other efforts within the grasslands include mapping of rare and endangered species associated with vernal pools.

G. McClellan AFB/Davis Global Communications Site

This 315-acre site is part of McClellan AFB, also known as the Davis Global Communications Site. Disposition of the site is part of McClellan AFB Re-use planning. The site is part of an ongoing inventory and management plan for endangered species being conducted separately for the County by project study team member Environmental Science Associates. There are 14 sensitive species identified, including federally protected species (Table 1). Existing buildings may have hazardous materials (hazmat) issues, including lead paint and asbestos, and are not in compliance with County building codes. These issues make it infeasible for rehabilitation. Remnant facilities on the site include roads, poles, footings and paved areas. The transfer date is not set and no public access is currently allowed. An NOAA weather station located in the northeast corner is separately accessed via a gate on Road 35.

A-2 Biological Resources

Existing biological resources are the result of the natural conditions determined by local and regional climate, soils, topography, hydrology and native plant species that formulate habitats used by wildlife. As is the case for most natural systems located near urban areas, or previously farmed lands, a significant level of human caused factors also has contributed to the ecological makeup of the site, including planting of landscape trees and shrubs, habitat disturbance for recreation, transportation, previous agriculture, suppression of natural processes such as fire, and military base facilities and operations on the Davis Communications site. Further, non-native plants have taken advantage of the human-caused disturbances and their ability to displace native plant species has resulted in extensive areas of exotic weeds including annual grasses and thistles. The Grasslands Park area specifically has vegetation that includes non-native trees and shrubs and areas of disturbance that create conditions limiting to native plant species and reducing the amount of natural habitat used by wildlife. The Davis Communications site has experienced less recent development but has some facility structures and remnants from the radio towers that disturbed some upland grassland habitats areas and modified some water drainage patterns.

The Grasslands Park and Davis Communications site are significant remnants of a historically more extensive area on the Yolo Basin Rim where native perennial grasslands, shallow swales with alkali vegetation and vernal pools with highly specialized, endemic plants and invertebrates occur. The Davis site and to a lesser extent the Grasslands Park have vernal pools that support some of the rarest plants and rare invertebrates in California. Solano grass, Colusa grass, alkali milk-vetch, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp are some of the rarest species that occur in these vernal pools. Only the Jepson Prairie Preserve in Solano County has similar vernal pool habitats with some of these endangered and threatened species. In addition, the uplands provide important foraging habitat for raptors including the rare, migratory Swainson's hawk, which seasonally nests in the trees primarily along the South Fork of Putah Creek. Northern harriers and Western burrowing owls also are rare species that are residents to the two sites. Several nests of Northern harriers are observed each year in the taller annual grassland areas that successfully produce up to five fledglings. The Western burrowing owls prefer shorter grass and take advantage of ground squirrel burrows for hiding and nesting. Fortunately, the mowed grass area associated with the existing soaring area is adjacent to sites used by ground squirrels and has become an area in Grasslands Park where burrowing owls occur. Several areas on the Davis Communications Site are occupied by burrowing owls.

Yolo County has been implementing studies and activities to better manage Grasslands Park and the Davis Communication site with a goal of protecting and restoring a significant portion of these areas to a more natural habitat type and with the goal of ensuring the protection and hopefully recovery of some of the threatened and endangered plants and wildlife. Controlled burning and specific use of herbicides has been initiated to manage the extensive areas of non-native invasive plants and allow native species to recover. In coordination with the City of Davis, a proposed burrowing owl preserve that will include a mitigation area with constructed artificial burrows will potentially increase the area and number of burrowing owls at Grasslands Park. Studies and management activities on the Davis Communications site have been implemented

to eradicate non-native plants from the vernal pools and adjacent uplands with the goal of increasing habitat quality for the rare species that occupy those areas.

A-3 Issues, Management Needs, and Opportunities

Grasslands Park has evolved since its establishment into a collection of mostly separate specialized use areas that lack a unified landscape presence. In addition to significant, unique natural resources, there are distinct recreational use areas that divide the park. Although the park is centrally located within the region, and recreational users travel significant distances to utilize the specialized recreation activities, the park does not currently provide typical opportunities such as picnicking, water activities or play equipment in a traditional urban park setting. Despite its regional context, the park also remains isolated from other significant open space parks and wildlife areas such as Putah Creek and the Yolo Bypass. **Plate 4** presents a summary of the major resources, including Existing Conditions and Environmental Constraints.

A. *Biological Issues and New Constraints*

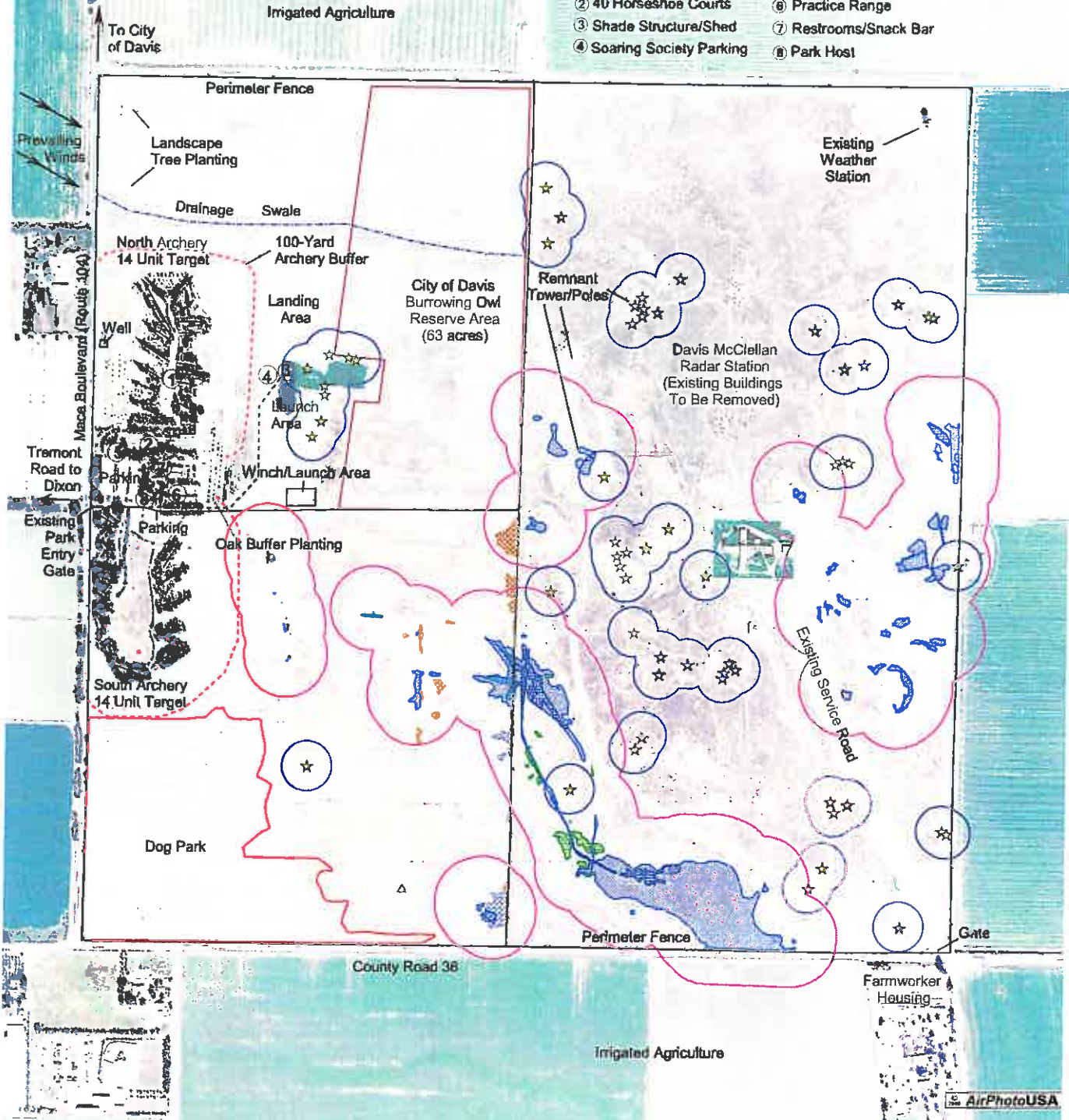
Key issues include ensuring the localized vernal pool habitats on the Grasslands Park and Davis Communication Site are protected and managed to preserve and enhance these rare and sensitive habitats; the upland areas are managed to eradicate non-native plants and restore the upland habitats and improve native wildlife foraging and breeding. As surrounding land is lost to development, species such as Swainson's hawks, Northern harriers, and Western burrowing owls will be dependent on grassland areas such as Grasslands Park and the Davis McClellan Site for their regional survival.

Constraints to ensuring management of the Grassland Park and Davis Site resources are directly associated with human activities on these sites. The type of activity, proximity of recreation and access to sensitive areas and the seasonal timing of those activities are key constraints to protecting the resources. Activities that disturb the habitat and alter the behavior of the wildlife are undesirable. Vernal pool habitats are most sensitive in the wet season and when the vernal pools are ponded. Spring and summer are breeding periods for Northern harrier, which nest on the ground in tall grasses and forbs, and for Western burrowing owls that use ground squirrel burrows for nesting. Maintaining a buffer zone between breeding areas seasonally and recognizing management areas where recreation will be restricted will ensure the continued success of these species.

B. *Use Areas and Conflicts*

Each lease area has evolved over time, with varying improvements and facilities constructed independently, depending on the available materials, time commitment and labor efforts of a largely volunteer group. There has been no consistent park-like architectural style or theme in buildings, architecture, signage, or in landscape plantings. Therefore, each area has a mix of landscaped areas, built elements, fencing types, signage, storage areas, maintenance areas, etc. This has resulted in the park appearing to be comprised of several special use areas that appear to the public to be semi-private, special-use areas, rather than a uniformly managed park. Each of these more or less separate use areas are described in the following section:

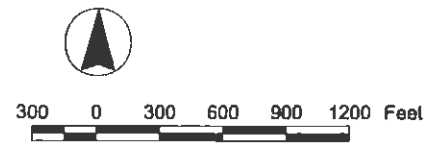
- ① Overflow Parking
- ② 40 Horseshoe Courts
- ③ Shade Structure/Shed
- ④ Soaring Society Parking
- ⑤ Archery Barn
- ⑥ Practice Range
- ⑦ Restrooms/Snack Bar
- ⑧ Park Host



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LEGEND

- ▲ Park Entrances
- Fence
- Arrow Trajectories
- ▭ Archery Buffer
- ▭ Drainage Swale
- ▲ Mallard - ESA (2004)
- ▲ Burrowing Owl - RMI (1997) & ESA (2004)
- ▲ Allard Milk-Vetch
- ▲ Pools w/Neco & Tumu
- ▲ Vernal Pool
- ▲ Valley Oak / Native Grassland
- ▲ 150-ft Avian Buffer
- ▲ 250-ft Vernal Pool Buffer
- ▲ Burrowing Owl Reserve Boundary
- Potential Wetlands
- Potential Seasonal Wetlands
- Potential Vernal Pools
- Potential Vernal Swales



Project Name:
Yolo Grasslands
Project No:
240023
Path:
P:2004\240023_Yolo_Grasslands
Date:
11 Oct 2004

QUESTA ENGINEERING CORP.
P.O. Box 70334 1720 Skyland Court Blvd. Pleasanton, CA 94567

ESA Environmental Science Associates

Existing Conditions And
Environmental Constraints

Grasslands Park Master Plan

Yolo County Planning & Public Works Dept.
Parks & Resources Management Division

Plate
4

Park Entry/Archery Range

[Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee]

Constraints:

- Entry is overgrown, and some areas are not kept mowed/maintained
- "Safe" pedestrian route through archery target areas is not well delineated or signed
- Non-archery range users are considered trespassers
- Off leash dogs intrude into area
- Entry road is slightly offset from Tremont Road, not directly across road
- User areas are undefined, driveways and directional signage is missing
- Too many old signs are confusing
- Feeling of intrusion into private space
- Haphazard storage of debris, equipment and materials throughout area
- Horseshoe courts, snack bar and other areas are not easily accessible to public
- Some buildings/improvements may not strictly meet current code requirements
- Heterogeneous mixed non-native landscaping contrasts with undeveloped portions of site
- Practice range is too close to entry road
- Practice range users must use entry road as walking path
- Some portions of range conflict with buffer area (practice range, roads, parking areas)

Opportunities:

- Mature trees and landscaping provide shade and shelter
- Area at south end of range is used for storage, possible re-use
- Sufficient area to rearrange or relocate targets and still meet NFAA guidelines
- Center areas of range might be used more efficiently
- Restrooms are located in this center area
- Utilities, including electricity, domestic water and irrigation supply are also located here
- Caretaker provides security and maintenance for this area, and visual surveillance of entry
- Dedicated club members willing to make improvements

Archery Buffer Area

Constraints:

- Buffer area is not well defined or fenced
- Archery area use rules and way finding is not provided
- Signs to discourage trespass are not effective
- Storage/use occurs within buffer
- Visitors can intrude on range at many locations
- Archery users violate buffer area in some locations
- Honor system of policing

- Tree planting, storage, debris obscures separation area
- Northeast buffer sometimes conflicts with Soaring area events (parking)
- Unleashed dogs use area

Opportunities:

- Planted oaks east of practice range provide some shade opportunities
- Southernmost target area is used for storage, possible re-use
- Buffer area provides opportunity for native plant restoration and habitat improvements

Soaring Society

Constraints:

- Winch/launch area is at south end
- Visitor parking and off-leash animals may disturb winch lines and owl burrows
- Some visitors think irrigated turf is suitable for active sports practice
- Large events can potentially intrude into archery buffer
- Materials are stored haphazardly in several areas, including log pile near entry road
[*Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*]
- Irrigated turf stands out from native dry grasses
- Storage building consists of metal storage containers
- Potential hazard in adjacent areas from falling debris

Opportunities:

- ADA portable restroom is primary facility for park
- Central location and visual access provides stopping point for visitors
- Irrigation has been extended to this area
- Mowed conditions/turf area is favored by burrowing owls

City of Davis Burrowing Owl Reserve

Constraints:

- Management program not yet implemented
- Location could preclude pedestrian loop trail if access is prohibited

Opportunities:

- Separation from active use area
- Enhancement and restoration opportunities
- Proximity to other habitat areas for integrated management and interpretive elements

Dog Park/Tree Planting Area

Constraints:

- Row planting of trees is not “natural” and may be at a density not naturally sustainable
- Some trees are not growing well in poor or alkaline soil areas
- Lack of shade and defined use area
- Needs trailhead, parking area, fencing and signage

Opportunities:

- Trees will eventually provide shade for users
- Thinning/management could be employed to create groves/grasslands
- Proximity to southern archery area could be better defined/use area defined

North Area Picnic and Access

Constraints:

- Lack of access to area
- Swale separates area from rest of park
- Tree plantings do not provide effective shade

Opportunities:

- Closest area to South Fork Putah Creek, regional proximity to other resource areas
- Could provide staging area and connection to bike trail/link
- Planted trees will eventually provide shade and shelter
- Swale could be enhanced to capture seasonal flows, provide opportunity for oak plantings

Habitat and Grassland Management Areas

Constraints:

- People and animals in sensitive habitat areas
- Unleashed animals
- Use areas are undefined
- Remnant fencing does not necessarily reflect current needs

Opportunities:

- Management and restoration opportunities for many unique wildlife species
- Environmental education and interpretation
- Ongoing, working restoration projects
- Potential for restoration/education grants
- Committed working group
- Unique natural resources

McClellan AFB/Davis Global Communications Site

Constraints:

- Existing infrastructure unsuitable for public use

- Remnant footings, roads, fencing, poles etc. could be hazardous
- Hazardous waste issues
- Conflicts between unrestricted use and threatened and endangered species has been documented in scientific studies

Opportunities:

- Unique, rare, threatened and endangered habitat areas
- Opportunity for research, enhancement and protection
- Environmental education and interpretation
- Unique natural resources
- Potential establishment of mitigation bank

A-4 Design Issues

Future improvements in the park will benefit from the implementation of a common plant palette, fencing design, signage and site furnishings guidelines, as well as improved circulation and definition of use areas.

The most developed portion of the Park is the Archery Range and Horseshoe area. Although the public is entitled to use this area as part of the current lease agreement, there is a general feeling that they are not invited into this area, the way the course has been laid out and signed (or lack of signs). Safety has been identified as a primary issue of concern, with archery range users generally considered safety oriented, responsible and knowledgeable, and the general public considered a risk because of their lack of knowledge of archery safety rules. The Bowmen would like their lease area to be fenced off, with limited access to the range, and a more exclusive access to use of certain facilities, such as a clubhouse and future indoor range.

National Field Archery Range Guidelines

NFAA guidelines for a 28-target range call for a minimum of 20 acres, with the following layout recommendations:

- A minimum of 25 yards behind the target is recommended, if an earthen backstop is not used (range provides earthen backstops, and 100-yard buffer)
- 25-50 feet between lanes (range provides up to 100 feet between lanes)
- Central area within loop (if targets are facing out) is suitable for practice range, clubhouse and parking lot. Currently, the practice range is located next to the entry road, and within the buffer for one of the targets [*Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*].
- A minimum of 15 acres is needed, with approximately one acre per target desirable.
- The existing range, including 100-yard buffer, is almost 60 acres, although the lease area is defined as 40 acres.
- For practice range, alignment should be towards the north (current range is east-west)
- For practice range, a minimum buffer of 15 yards should be provided along the side boundaries (no buffer is provided, this is the park entry road) [*Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*]

General Design Guidelines

The Master Plan will include general guidelines for the entire park, which should be implemented regardless of the land use and layout that is adopted. This includes:

- Fencing and gate design to compliment rural park character, not chain link

- Signage design to provide improved recognition and identification of park amenities, both directional signage and interpretive signage
- Trail, road and path design recommendations to reflect the rural park character
- Design recommendations for park structures, such as storage sheds, restroom facilities, shade shelters, benches, picnic tables and other park amenities, so that future improvements are coordinated and provide a unified visual element.
- A pamphlet, park map, entry kiosk, and/or other information should be provided at the park entry/ies to guide park users to desired use areas and advise of safety/avoidance areas.

Land Use Options

For preliminary discussion, two different park design concepts have been developed. The first option, ***Separated Use Areas, Limited Public Access***, would continue with separate, distinct use areas within the park. With this option, either separate or multiple entrances could be provided, and separate agreements would continue for management and operation within the lease areas. This would necessitate additional fencing to define and limit access to each use area.

The second option, ***Integrated Park Uses, Optimize Public Access***, would provide better definition of the use areas, but is an attempt to integrate public use into the park, and provide a more unified park design. In this option, a single park entry would be provided, and additional fencing would be provided to define the archery range and buffer area. The practice range would be relocated to within the archery range fenced area, within an existing parking area, with a single, controlled access point to the range from the central entry road. Some relocation of individual targets might be needed, depending on the fencing location. In this option, the horseshoe area, existing picnic and restroom area, and practice range area, as well as oak groves in the center portion of the park would be opened up to provide better public access to these areas (no buffer is needed for the horseshoe area).

These different options are intended to provide a beginning for master plan design. It is anticipated that the preferred design will be a combination of the elements presented, based on direction from staff; the Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Advisory Committee; and the County Board of Supervisors; leaseholders; interested groups and the public.

A. *Separated Use Areas—Limited Public Access*

- Redirect main entry to north side of park, or provide a separate entrance for each use area [**Note:** *Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*]
- Separate entry/parking for each use area
- Fencing and buffers to separate uses
- Provide additional no-access area at north and south sides of soaring area
- Gated through-access in center
- Pedestrian trail loops in each use area
- Storage/maintenance in each use area

- Possible need for multiple caretaker/park host areas to monitor each area
- Leaseholders would be responsible for maintenance and management of individual use area

B. Integrated Park Uses—Optimize Public Access

- Relocate park entrance to north side of archery range, for singular, controlled access [*Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*].
- Access to each use area would be from main entry road.
- Redirect access to restrooms, picnic area and other facilities within horseshoe area from central entry road, rather than from within archery range.
- Central area to incorporate horseshoe, picnic and oak grove, for active public use, with fencing to separate archery range from this area.
- Archery road to provide service entry to range/caretaker.
- Relocate or redirect archery lanes as needed to minimize conflicts.
- Provide fencing to separate active range area from remainder of site.
- Possible trailhead/picnic/parking for dog area at south end of range.
- Provide access and staging area in north restoration area.
- Enhance swale
- Centralized maintenance/storage area, and caretaker to monitor entire site access.

C. Habitat Area Management

- McClellan property would remain undeveloped, for docent-led tours only.
- County habitat area within existing park could include self-guided trails.
- Interpretive kiosk/shade shelter at Nature Area trailhead.
- Seasonal closure/management actions.
- Existing fencing locations would remain, at least on an interim basis.
- Provide seasonal or docent led tours of Davis Burrowing Owl Reserve
- Explore fencing options that are not obtrusive, such as log barrier, since dog park will be separately fenced.

A-5 Community Input

In addition to meeting individually with park leaseholders and other interested individuals, a public workshop was held in Davis on Wednesday July 28, 2004 to receive input on park planning issues. A presentation on the management issues, resource utilization needs, and ideas for inclusion in the Draft master Plan was also presented to the Yolo County Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee at a public meeting held on August 9, 2004. The issues and ideas, along with draft Park Master Plan drawings were also posted on the Yolo County web site. At the workshop, comments received from the public generally came from groups with special interests at the park. Input received has been used to create the Park Master Plan, including conceptual designs that accommodate desired park uses most appropriate for this location (see **Appendix C**). Multiple comments came from the same people, so do not necessarily reflect a consensus of the meeting participants. Written comments were also submitted at the meeting or received by letter or email. For ease of review, the comments have been grouped according to the identified area of interest:

Wildlife and Habitat Areas

- Is there potential for a mitigation bank on the McClellan/Davis property site? The County could sell credits for development and formalize it with the USFWS.
- What environmental document will be required for this plan?
- The site is designated critical habitat for 2 invertebrate species, also for Solano and Colusa grass.
- Will the biological assessment include discussion of appropriate areas suitable to planting oaks, and where more oaks could be planted?
- Generally, the site becomes more saline and alkaline going from west to east, so the further east, the less suitable for oak planting.
- The east side has had three fires—these could have affected oak survival.
- The park is popular with birders. The trees are important to some of the migrant birds, especially in the southern area. A Tennessee warbler was spotted there, which is unique.
- Oaks should be preserved without burning, and re-establish more native grasses.
- A mix of oaks, grassland and vernal pools will make a beautiful natural park.
- Keep picnic/active areas away from wildlife areas.
- Avoid too much fencing, especially chain-link.

Burrowing Owls

- Would like to have access to the Burrowing owl reserve for trails and viewing, even if it is subject to seasonal closure or led by docents.
- What is the possibility of a different kind of barrier, like logs or low cable, to allow viewing without a fence?
- There currently is human traffic around the burrowing owls in the Soaring Society lease area, and they don't seem to be significantly affected.
- It is critical to protect burrowing owl area.
- What will happen to the burrowing owls on the McClellan site? How will they be managed?

- People should not have free access to owl areas. Trails around the area and docent tours are okay.

Archery Range/Yolo Bowmen

- Yolo Bowmen would not support public access to central horseshoe/facility area (Option B).
- Relocating the practice range into the southern loop would be a problem.
- Bowmen consider the practice range (next to entry road) "safe" [**Note:** *Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*].
- Bowmen consider current archery range "safe", if people are instructed how to use.
- Bowmen and horseshoe people have spent own money on facilities, and the public should build their own facilities, not use theirs.
- Some of the target orientations are not shown correctly on the map.
- Redirecting the outer/southern loop to shoot in (towards west), is safety issue; would cause them to shoot on other archers (South archery loop, west side, currently shoots towards archers on east side)
- Central horseshoe/facility area layout is bad idea at south end—this area has an 80-yard target.
- Removing the south target would be a safety issue.
- People who are not club members use the range.
- Would like a fence around the perimeter of the range to keep out people and dogs.
- Central area could be vandalized if people are allowed in.
- Danger signs currently advise people to keep out, but people don't obey them.
- Horseshoe area is safety issue if people are allowed there.
- Each group should supply its own shade, such as a shade shelter. The Bowmen planted 7600 trees, and don't want to give up the trees to other park users.
- Are there impacts to burrowing owls from raptor use of trees?
- Public using the archery range is a problem with insurance. Solano Bowmen lost their range because of insurance.
- The archery range has 100-500 users, and would like a longer lease to put in a private, indoor range and clubhouse.
- Bowmen acknowledge need for a "safe" trail within the range area.
- Parents with young children and off-leash pets intrude into the archery range, which is hazardous. The general public should be restricted from the range.
- The archery range is dangerous in a public park, especially if you encourage more use.
- What about children in the park?

Dog Park

- Would like to have multiple entries to dog area.
- The dog park will be fenced separately from the rest of the park. Maybe this will reduce the need for fencing elsewhere, if the dogs are contained.
- The dog park entry should be separate, off Mace Blvd. at existing entry gate.
- The dog park would be maintained by the Friends of Canines group, as part of the lease agreement.
- Improvements would likely be trash container, water (not drinking fountain), possibly portable restroom, shade shelter, and/or tables.
- Picnic tables are not needed in the dog park.

- Preserve as much oak tree planting as possible in southern part of park. Valley oaks are disappearing. Volunteers can maintain the oaks and native grass areas.

Soaring Society

- A trailhead for the nature area/environmental education, if provided, should be located further east or west, and not anywhere near the end of the launch area.
- There is potential for debris and battery packs falling from the model airplanes, and activity areas should not be located near the soaring area north or south ends (provide a buffer like at the archery range).
- Falling debris could harm people or put a hole in a car.
- The soaring area infringes on the burrowing owl area. Enhance the area with artificial burrows to provide more habitat.
- Are there impacts to burrowing owls from overflights of model airplanes? How is this mitigated?

General Comments

- Would like to see the entry moved to the north area of park (not separate access at dog park). The area is not safe at night, and in the future more people will be using the area [*Note: Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee*]. An on-site caretaker is important. (from a resident of this area).
- Can the leases be extended on an interim basis if the issues related to this plan are not resolved by the December 31, 2004 expiration?
- Five-year lease agreements are anticipated, with negotiation based on needs; the dog park and tree management area would be on the same timeline for efficiency in review.
- Will the plan take into account population changes, growth and use changes in Yolo County and on a regional basis when determining uses over time?
- The plan should take into account multi-year implementation and use over time
- Over time, with growth, development and increased use to see wildlife areas, there will be increased traffic, and need for a safety buffer.
- Fencing at the site should reflect rural character of the area, and use of chain link is not desirable.
- For aesthetic reasons, fencing should be provided in one north/south line along the edge of the archery range and dog park, and have pedestrian openings at regular intervals along the way.
- Other fencing types should be explored such as farm-style, log and cable, or even a low barrier such as logs to keep people out of habitat areas.
- A Park Host/Caretaker would be provided at the park, regardless of lease obligations. On a countywide basis, park hosts have been successfully used to manage rural park areas.
- What types of input do you want? What types of recreational uses should be provided?
- Providing facilities for different recreation uses is good.
- Single entry access is okay, but multiple access is acceptable too.
- Consider improving the existing entryway with better signage, and provide a t-intersection to direct access north to Soaring Society, or south to dog park.
- Stay true to more natural uses, like the burrowing owl area—do not increase active uses on site.

- There are plenty of sports fields in cities.
- The park will have more users with weed management—there will be more visitors in natural area if it is mowed or trails provided.
- One of the highest priorities should be habitat restoration.
- Off-leash dogs are not compatible with wildlife. If they are permitted at all they should be restricted to the northwest corner of the facility, north of the existing pump.
- There should be a policy to prohibit planting exotic plant species. New plantings introduced into the park should be selected from a carefully developed list of natives.
- The model for open space at the park could/should be taken from the South Putah Creek Preserve.
- The Air Force transmitter facility should be dismantled and buried.
- East side of the park (McClellan side) should be returned to savannah characterized by native grasses and Valley oaks (soil types permitting).
- County should commit resources to management and restoration, or consider turning it over to a land steward.
- Rare plants within the park should be acknowledged, since they are legally protected and the plan must provide for their protection.
- The park should be more rustic and natural, with no more active areas.

In addition to leaseholder and community input, the Park Planning team met with representatives of the National Field Archery Association on August 17, 2004 to review potential archery facility safety issues and the practicality and feasibility of re-locating the existing practice range and re-orientating certain target areas to improve safety and accommodate a revised Master Plan.

Parks, Resources and Wildlife Advisory Committee Meeting

Preliminary design issues were presented at the meeting of August 9, 2004. The consensus of the Advisory Committee was to centralize access to the park, and resolve perceived safety issues. Committee members expressed an interest in unifying the park, and providing for fee collection. As a follow-up, meetings were held with NFAA and the Yolo Bowmen to clarify project issues. The issues discussed are contained in the appendix.

A-6 Preliminary Design Ideas

Future improvements in the park will benefit from the implementation of a common plant palette, fencing design, signage and site furnishings guidelines, as well as improved circulation and definition of use areas.

Separated Use Areas

- Redirect main entry to north side of park [**Note:** Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee]
- Separate entry/parking for each use area
- Fencing and buffers to separate uses
- Gated through-access in center
- Pedestrian trail loops in each use area
- Storage/maintenance in each use area

Park Central

- Relocate park entrance to north side of archery range [**Note:** Entry road moved to south of Archery Range as a result of public input and guidance from Advisory Committee]
- Access to each use area is from main entry road
- Central area to incorporate horseshoe, picnic and oak grove, for active public use
- Archery road to provide service entry to range/caretaker
- Redirect archery lanes as needed to minimize conflicts
- Provide fencing
- Provide trailhead/picnic/parking for dog area at south end of range
- Provide access and staging area in north restoration area
- Enhance swale
- Consolidate to create centralized maintenance/storage area

Habitat Areas

- McClellan property would remain undeveloped, for docent-led tours only
- County habitat area within existing park could include self-guided trails
- Interpretive kiosk/shade shelter at Nature Area trailhead
- Seasonal closure/management actions
- Existing fencing would remain

Use of Existing Buildings

- Retrofit clubhouse, snack bar and restrooms to make code compliant. Secure private club items (trophies, records) in locking trophy cases, cabinets, etc.

- Establish a system for use of existing facilities by recognized responsible groups. Would require use agreement and use fee and posting a refundable fee for damage and clean-up.

Appendix B

Grasslands Park Field Meeting
May 25, 2004

1. Soaring Society—Peter Dannenfelser
916-442-1121
peterdaia@sbcglobal.net

General Information:

- Society is part of AMA, Academy of Model Aeronautics
- Club has 100 members
- All electric powered, gliders
- Winches are used to pull glides, use foot pedal
- Launch at 300 feet, range is over entire park area (as far as sight distance)
- 15 max. planes at one time, glide in thermal areas
- If plane crashes in unmowed area, people drive on outside roads to get near, or walk through field (no cars drive through fields)
- Winch lines need separation or fencing to preclude dogs from running through
- Conflict occurs at south end of field where dog users park, winch lines are located
- Field used mostly on weekends, but can be used anytime
- Organized contests 2nd Saturday each month (30-40 people, 9-1)
- Once a year, western states contest draws 100-120 people, which is coordinated with horseshoe club, use parking and barbecue from that area, bring in extra toilets
- Fundraising is about \$3-4K per year, to go for upkeep and improvements
- Improvements include irrigated turf, portable toilet, storage containers, and shade structure (under construction)
- Use County well for water
- Do not have litter receptacle, take what litter is present (self-policing)
- Provides opportunity for kids and family activity
- Club draws from big area, Bay area to Reno
- Concrete footings are present throughout site from antenna field

Conflicts:

- Need buffer or fence to keep dogs out of winch lines on south side

Wish List:

- Drinking fountain or potable water
- Restroom (although existing is sufficient for needs)
- Meeting room

2. Horseshoe Pitching Club
Bob Kinchelo (also Camp Host)
30479 County Road 104 Dixon, CA 95620
707-678-0841

General Information:

- Archery Club began in 1979, Horseshoes in 1981
- Elmer Wilson (deceased) founder and charter member
- Bob was also charter member and has been involved since club was formed
- Moved on site in 1993
- Prior to on-site residence, trespass and loitering were significant problems
- Bob patrols area, informs people about park
- Horseshoe events are held 6 times a year, approx. 100 people
- Event participants camp in parking area (in rigs) for the event
- Park was listed in AAA Campground Book (maybe still is) and occasionally someone comes to camp.
- During May and June, black gnats are bad and no events are held
- This area has domestic well, but irrigation is taken from County well (25 HP pump)
- Domestic well supplies house, snack bar and restrooms
- Archery club uses some buildings and barn near entrance
- Horseshoe clubs are about 100 miles apart, require 40 courts for a World Tournament
- This club has 40 courts, however, the trend is to have large events indoors nowadays
- There are 24 clubs in Northern California
- No one uses the area during the week
- The Club now has 20 members, from a high of 65
- Club planted many trees, including redwood, cypress, cottonwood, olive
- County disks edge for firebreak, Bob maintains horseshoe area
- Not a real problem with people 4-wheel driving in area, he calls sheriff
- Fields are too soft when wet, people get stuck
- Litter receptacles and dumpster provided

Conflicts:

- No real conflicts, when public comes into horseshoe area, he might inquire what they are looking for, but are welcome to use the area (bathrooms are kept open and maintained by him)
- Would not oppose public picnic area somewhere in vicinity, but might conflict with proposed archery building
- Public can use picnic area and bathrooms now, but little use

Wish List:

- Would welcome more use by public of horseshoe area, encourage more members in club
- Access road in current location is best for surveillance and policing of park
- If separate park entries are built, will be difficult to police

3. Yolo Bowmen Archery Club
Phil Miller President phillydogs2@yahoo.com
Mike McCalister, Publicist, mike.mccalister@airgas.com

General Information:

- Archery Club has 78 members, about 100 shooters
- Current size of facility is all they can manage, do not want to expand (although current facility has 24 targets and championship course has 42)
- They hold one event a year, in March, that can accommodate 225-400 people
- Average weekend use is 20-50 per weekend, year round
- Work with Soaring Society and have overflow parking behind practice range for this event
- Additional parking is available in center of north target area, since all targets face out
- 14 targets north area (all face out), 14 in south area (some face in, some face out, so center area is dangerous/no activity)
- Sometimes people walk in with dogs, looking for shade or walking, don't obey signs
- Practice Range is used by 4H, youth programs, provides safety education
- Their lease extends 100 yards beyond ends of berms, used for buffer safety area, and they have put up signs
- NFAA facility, meaning that safety inspections have been met
- Host Wednesday night league, range is open to use 24/7
- Visitors can use facilities if they pay, honor system, planning to put in an envelope pay station
- Currently, Horseshoe Club sublease is informal, not sure if will renew/continue
- Horseshoes is dying sport, archery is growing sport
- If they had clubhouse, not sure would allow other users (such as Soaring Society, unless maybe paid a fee)
- Not sure would want County-owned facility that is shared (building, restrooms, storage, etc)
- Insurance is problematic if facilities are open to the public
- Wanted to install tree stands as part of course, but insurance wouldn't allow
- Practice range location doesn't conflict with access road, since users are instructed not to shoot when a car is there, but the area is not signed for this

Conflicts:

- People tend to come in to the site for shade, some have stated that it is public park and not agreed to leave the area
- Public use of improvements might be an insurance/liability problem (clubhouse, indoor range)
- Have spent time and money over the years for improvements and planting trees to provide shade, now public wants to use
- Has lived with current conditions, and could live with current situation if necessary

Wish List:

- Would like a 20 year lease, so members can commit to improvements such as indoor range and clubhouse
- Indoor range building would be approximately 50 x 100 feet
- Clubhouse for members
- Would like to increase to two events per year (as fundraiser)
- Would like to fence off the range to prohibit people and dogs from entering target area

- Hog wire fencing to keep dogs out would be okay
- Ideal if County would provide fence
- Would like to instruct people how to visit the area safely
- Would provide a "safety trail" that allows visitors through area on a safe route, but this should not connect with any other trails throughout park
- Would like park access moved to another location (like north side of park) so that parking and access for archery can be controlled
- Do not want uncontrolled access to lease area
- More signs to inform park users about boundaries

Appendix C

Comments from Public Workshop 7/28/04, and Written Comments Received

At the workshop, verbal comments from the public generally came from groups with special interests at the park. Written comments were also submitted at the meeting or received by letter or email. At the meeting, multiple comments came from the same people, so do not necessarily reflect a consensus of the meeting participants. For ease of review, the comments have been grouped according to the identified area of interest:

Wildlife and Habitat Areas

- Is there potential for a mitigation bank on the McClellan/Davis property site? The County could sell credits for development and formalize it with the USFWS.
- What environmental document will be required for this plan?
- The site is designated critical habitat for 2 invertebrate species, also for Solano and Colusa grass.
- Will the biological assessment include discussion of appropriate areas suitable to planting oaks, and where more oaks could be planted?
- Generally, the site becomes more saline and alkaline going from west to east, so the further east, the less suitable for oak planting.
- The east side has had three fires—these could have affected oak survival.
- The park is popular with birders. The trees are important to some of the migrant birds, especially in the southern area. A Tennessee warbler was spotted there, which is unique.
- Oaks should be preserved without burning, and re-establish more native grasses.
- A mix of oaks, grassland and vernal pools will make a beautiful natural park.
- Keep picnic/active areas away from wildlife areas.

Burrowing Owls

- Would like to have access to the Burrowing owl reserve for trails and viewing, even if it is subject to seasonal closure or led by docents.
- What is the possibility of a different kind of barrier, like logs or low cable, to allow viewing without a fence?
- There currently is human traffic around the burrowing owls in the Soaring Society lease area, and they don't seem to be affected.
- It is critical to protect burrowing owl area.
- What will happen to the burrowing owls on the McClellan site? How will they be managed?
- People should not have free access to owl areas. Trails around the area and docent tours are okay.

Archery Range/Yolo Bowmen

- Yolo Bowmen would not support public access to central horseshoe/facility area (Option B).
- Relocating the practice range into the southern loop would be a problem.
- Bowmen and horseshoe people have spent own money on facilities, and the public is not entitled to use them.
- Central horseshoe/facility area layout is bad at south end—this area has an 80-yard target.
- Removing the target would be a safety issue (?)
- People use the range who are not club members.
- Would like a fence around the perimeter of the range to keep out people and dogs.
- Central area could be vandalized if people are allowed in.
- Danger signs currently advise people to keep out.
- Center club is safety issue if people are allowed there.
- Each group should supply its own shade, such as a shade shelter. The Bowmen planted 7600 trees, and don't want to give up the trees to other park users.
- Are there impacts to burrowing owls from raptor use of trees?
- Public using the archery range is a problem with insurance.
- The archery range has 100-500 users, and would like a longer lease to put in a private, indoor range and clubhouse.
- Parents with young children and off-leash pets intrude into the archery range, which is hazardous. The general public should be restricted from the range.
- The archery range is dangerous in a public park, especially if you encourage more use.
- What about children in the park?

Dog Park

- Would like to have multiple entries to dog area.
- The dog park will be fenced separately from the rest of the park. Maybe this will reduce the need for fencing elsewhere, if the dogs are contained.
- The dog park entry should be separate.
- The dog park would be maintained by the Friends of Canines group, as part of the lease agreement.
- Improvements would likely be trash container, water (not drinking fountain), possibly portable restroom, shade shelter, and/or tables.
- Picnic tables are not needed in the dog park.
- Preserve as much oak tree planting as possible in southern part of park. Valley oaks are disappearing. Volunteers can maintain the oaks and native grass areas.

Soaring Society

- A trailhead for the nature area/environmental education, if provided, should be located further east or west, and not anywhere near the end of the launch area.
- There is potential for debris and battery packs falling from the model airplanes and activity areas should not be located near the soaring society north or south ends (provide a buffer like at the archery range).
- Falling debris could harm people or put a hole in a car.
- The soaring area infringes on the burrowing owl area. Enhance the area with artificial burrows to provide more habitat.
- Are there impacts to burrowing owls from overflights of model airplanes? How is this mitigated?

General Comments

- Would like to see the entry moved to the north area of park (not separate access at dog park). The area is not safe at night, and in the future more people will be using the area. An on-site caretaker is important. (from a resident of this area).
- Can the leases be extended on an interim basis if the issues related to this plan are not resolved by the December 31, 2004 expiration?
- Five-year lease agreements are anticipated, with negotiation based on needs; the dog park and tree management area would be on the same timeline for efficiency in review.
- Will the plan take into account population changes, growth and use changes in Yolo County and on a regional basis when determining uses over time?
- The plan should take into account multi-year implementation and use over time
- Over time, with growth, development and increased use to see wildlife areas, there will be increased traffic, and need for a safety buffer.
- Fencing at the site should reflect rural character of the area, and use of chain link is not desirable.
- For aesthetic reasons, fencing should be provided in one north/south line along the edge of the archery range and dog park, and have pedestrian openings at regular intervals along the way.
- Other fencing types should be explored such as farm-style, log and cable, or even a low barrier such as logs to keep people out of habitat areas.
- A Park Host/Caretaker would be provided at the park, regardless of lease obligations. On a countywide basis, park hosts have been successfully used to manage rural park areas.
- What types of input do you want? What types of recreational uses should be provided?
- Providing facilities for different recreation uses is good.
- Single entry access is okay, but multiple access is acceptable too.
- Consider improving the existing entryway with better signage, and provide a t-intersection to direct access north to Soaring Society, or south to dog park.

- Stay true to more natural uses, like the burrowing owl area—do not increase active uses on site.
- The park will have more users with weed management—there will be more visitors in natural area if it is mowed or trails provided.
- One of the highest priorities should be habitat restoration.
- Off-leash dogs are not compatible with wildlife. If they are permitted at all they should be restricted to the northwest corner of the facility, north of the existing pump.
- There should be a policy to prohibit planting exotic plant species. New plantings introduced into the park should be selected from a carefully developed list of natives.
- The model for open space at the park could/should be taken from the South Putah Creek Preserve.
- The Air Force transmitter facility should be dismantled and buried.
- East side of the park (McClellan side) should be returned to savannah characterized by native grasses and Valley oaks (soil types permitting).
- County should commit resources to management and restoration, or consider turning it over to a land steward.
- Rare plants within the park should be acknowledged, since they are legally protected and the plan must provide for their protection.
- The park should be more rustic and natural, with no more active areas.

Appendix D

August 17, 2004 Meeting with Tom Daley, National Field Archery Association, and August 24, 2004 Meeting with Yolo Bowmen

Jeff Peters of Questa, and Brett Williams of Yolo County met with Tom Daley of NFAA to discuss safety issues and layout of the archery range. The group discussed the following items:

- Safety of the existing practice range, and proximity to park entry road (note, one target has been relocated to provide 45 ft. separation from road)
- Potential locations for relocating the practice range:
 - Immediately north of the entry road, in the existing parking area
 - Within the center loop of the north target area
 - South of the Park Host, within the parking area and central buffer of the south target area.
- Fencing/layout for dog park trailhead in south area, effect on 80 yard target
- Feasibility of realigning targets to reduce safety hazards

Results:

- The existing practice range is too close to the public entry area, and should be relocated or altered.
- The preferable location for relocating the practice range is the south parking area/central buffer area.
- Reorienting targets is not a problem.
- The trailhead for the dog park could be aligned to avoid the 80-yard target, and incorporate some shade, but this would be modest, without affecting that target.

August 24, 2004 Meeting

This meeting was attended by representatives from Questa, Yolo County, Yolo Bowmen, and the Horseshoe Club. Jeff Peters reviewed the issues discussed with the NFAA representative, and the group visited the areas to discuss possible planning elements such as fencing locations, target realignment, future indoor range plans, and target and practice range realignment. Issues included:

- Location of fencing to define use areas and where gates should be located
- Feasibility of moving practice range, and need for possible shade structure for the entry area
- Need for area cleanup
- Uses of existing buildings, public access to buildings, code compliance, and long-term replacement/removal of structures not to code
- Feasibility of realigning certain targets to improve safety in public areas
- Consolidation of storage into one area, including moving cargo container from central area
- Coordinated management of buffer areas for habitat value and weed control

- Need for secure fencing if south area is used for trailhead, closure of dog area during archery events, or relocating the trailhead away from the targets
- Possibility of using CCC or Yolo Youth Corps to chip branches and assist with overall cleanup effort.
- Signs, architecture and fencing need to be common to all the park areas, to provide a unified appearance.

Input received will be used to create the park master plan, including conceptual designs that accommodate desired park uses most appropriate for this location. Comments have also been submitted by email to the final master plan team leader, Jeff Peters, jpeters@questaec.com.

Four comments have been received by email. Issues of concern include:
One of the highest priorities should be habitat restoration.

Off-leash dogs are not compatible with wildlife. If they are permitted at all they should be restricted to the northwest corner of the facility, north of the existing pump.

There should be a policy to prohibit planting exotic plant species. New plantings introduced into the park should be selected from a carefully developed list of natives.

The model for open space at the park could/should be taken from the South Putah Creek Preserve.

The Air Force transmitter facility should be dismantled and buried.

East side of the park (McClellan side) should be returned to savannah characterized by native grasses and Valley oaks (soil types permitting).

County should commit resources to management and restoration, or consider turning it over to a land steward.

Rare plants within the park should be acknowledged, since they are legally protected and the plan must provide for their protection.

Parents with young children and off-leash pets intrude into the archery range, which is hazardous. The general public should be directed to other areas.

