

THE COUNTY OF MARIPOSA
GENERAL PLAN



VOLUME IV
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
State Clearing House #2002071101

MARIPOSA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
P.O. Box 2039 • Mariposa, CA 95338 • 209.966.5151 www.mariposacounty.org/planning • MariposaPlanning@mariposacounty.org



Board of Supervisors

Lee Stetson, District One
Lyle Turpin, District Two
Janet Mankins-Bibby, District Three
Dianne Fritz, District Four
Robert "Bob" Pickard, District Five

Former Board of Supervisors

Patti A. Reilly, District One (1995-2002)
Doug Balmain, District Two (1993-2004)
Robert C. Stewart, District Three (1995-2002)
Garry Parker, District Four (1993-2004)

Planning Commission

Harry Hagan, District One
Norm Ross, District Two
Robert Rudzik, District Three
Skip Skyrud, District Four
Paul De Santis, District Five

Former Planning Commission

Gary W. Colliver, District One (1997-2003)
Denise Ludington, District One (2003-2006)
Don Pucilowski, District Two (1997-2001)
Lyle E. Turpin, District Two (2002-2004)
Leroy Radanovich, District Four (1996-2005)
Susan Taber Crain, District Five (2001-2005)

Elected Officials

Robert Lowrimore, Assessor/Recorder
Christopher Ebie, Auditor
Bob Brown, District Attorney
James H. Allen, Sheriff/Coroner/Public Administrator
Wayne R. Parrish, Superior Court Judge
F. Dana Walton, Superior County Judge
Marjorie Wass, Treasurer/Tax Collector/Clerk



Appointed Officials

Richard Benson, County Administrative Officer
Kathleen Boze, Agricultural Commissioner
John Davis, Building Department Director
Gail Neal, Chief Probation Officer
Debra A. Walton, Child Support Services
Mary Williams, Community Services Director
Thomas P. Guarino, County Counsel
Karen Robb, Farm Advisor
Blaine E. Shultz, Jr., Fire Chief/Emergency Planning Coordinator
Cheryle J. Rutherford-Kelley, Human Services Director
Jaqueline M. Meriam, County Librarian
Kris Schenk, Planning Director
Charles Mosher, M.D., Public Health Officer
Dana Hertfelder, Public Works Director
Rick Peresan, Technical Services Director

Planning Department Staff

Sarah Williams, Deputy Planning Director
Megan Tennermann, Associate Planner
Wes McCullough, Assistant Planner
Todd Lewis, Technician/Cartographer
Sharon Haley, Planning Technician
Shari Allen, Office Technician
Carol Suggs, Secretary

Consultant

**HAUGE BRUECK
ASSOCIATES**

in association with
Mogavero Notestine Associates
Agajanian and Associates
Bollard & Brennan



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1-1
1.1	PURPOSE.....	1-1
1.2	SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT MODIFICATIONS	1-3
1.3	EIR ORGANIZATION.....	1-4
1.4	CERTIFICATION AND PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS	1-6
1.5	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.....	1-7
1.6	EIR RECIRCULATION DISCUSSION	1-8
2	SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.....	2-1
2.1	GENERAL PLAN OVERVIEW	2-1
2.1.1	<i>Adopted Area Plan Environmental Documentation</i>	<i>2-1</i>
2.1.1.1	<i>Mariposa Town Planning Area Specific Plan</i>	<i>2-1</i>
2.1.1.2	<i>Coulterville Town Planning Area Specific Plan.....</i>	<i>2-2</i>
2.1.1.3	<i>Fish Camp Town Planning Area Specific Plan</i>	<i>2-2</i>
2.1.1.4	<i>Wawona Town Planning Area Specific Plan.....</i>	<i>2-2</i>
2.2	MARIPOSA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN BUILD-OUT	2-2
2.3	AREAS OF CONTROVERSY	2-7
2.4	SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES	2-8
2.5	SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES	2-85
2.5.1	<i>Significant Unavoidable Impacts.....</i>	<i>2-85</i>
2.5.2	<i>Significant Impacts</i>	<i>2-88</i>
2.5.3	<i>Impacts Not Found to be Significant</i>	<i>2-89</i>
2.6	SUMMARY OF IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVES	2-104
3	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	3-1
3.1	LOCATION AND PHYSICAL SETTING.....	3-1
3.2	PROJECT BACKGROUND	3-2
3.3	PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	3-2
3.4	PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS	3-3
3.5	INTENDED USES OF THE EIR	3-3
4	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES	4-1
4.1	LAND USE	4-2
4.1.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting).....</i>	<i>4-2</i>
4.1.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	<i>4-2</i>
4.1.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures.....</i>	<i>4-3</i>
4.1.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation.....</i>	<i>4-4</i>
4.2	POPULATION AND HOUSING.....	4-8
4.2.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting).....</i>	<i>4-8</i>
4.2.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	<i>4-9</i>
4.2.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures.....</i>	<i>4-9</i>
4.2.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation.....</i>	<i>4-10</i>
4.3	TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION	4-12
4.3.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting).....</i>	<i>4-13</i>
4.3.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	<i>4-13</i>
4.3.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures.....</i>	<i>4-14</i>
4.3.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation.....</i>	<i>4-15</i>
4.4	PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES	4-18
4.4.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting).....</i>	<i>4-18</i>

**COUNTY OF MARIPOSA GENERAL PLAN – VOLUME IV
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

4.4.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-18
4.4.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-19
4.4.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-20
4.5	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	4-25
4.5.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-25
4.5.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-26
4.5.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-28
4.5.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-28
4.6	GEOLOGY AND SEISMICITY	4-33
4.6.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-33
4.6.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-33
4.6.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-35
4.6.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-36
4.7	HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY	4-38
4.7.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-39
4.7.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-39
4.7.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-40
4.7.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-41
4.8	AIR QUALITY	4-45
4.8.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-46
4.8.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-46
4.8.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-47
4.8.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-48
4.9	HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES	4-51
4.9.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-52
4.9.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-52
4.9.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-53
4.9.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-53
4.10	NOISE	4-55
4.10.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-55
4.10.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-55
4.10.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-56
4.10.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-57
4.11	PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY	4-58
4.11.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-58
4.11.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-58
4.11.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-61
4.11.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-61
4.12	VISUAL RESOURCES	4-66
4.12.1	<i>Affected Environment (Setting)</i>	4-66
4.12.2	<i>Evaluation Criteria with Points of Significance</i>	4-66
4.12.3	<i>General Plan Policies and Implementation measures</i>	4-68
4.12.4	<i>Environmental Consequences (Impacts) and Recommended Mitigation</i>	4-69
5	CEQA CONSIDERATIONS	5-1
5.1	UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS	5-1
5.2	IRREVERSIBLE IMPACTS	5-1
5.3	SHORT-TERM USES VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY	5-1
5.4	GROWTH INDUCEMENT	5-2
5.5	CUMULATIVE IMPACTS	5-2
5.6	PLAN ALTERNATIVES	5-3
5.6.1	<i>Description of Alternatives</i>	5-3
5.6.2	<i>Alternatives Impact Summary</i>	5-55
5.6.3	<i>Environmentally Superior Alternative</i>	5-56

5.6.4	<i>Alternatives Considered and Rejected</i>	5-56
6	RESPONSES TO COMMENTS	6-1
6.1	LIST OF COMMENTS RECEIVED	6-1
6.2	COMMENTS AND RESPONSES	6-2
	<i>Comment Letter 1 - Board of Supervisors Public Hearing, November 1, 2005</i>	6-3
	<i>Comment Letter 2 - California Regional Water Quality Control Board-Central Valley, October 26, 2005</i>	6-7
	<i>Comment Letter 3 - California Department of Conservation, October 31, 2005</i>	6-9
	<i>Comment Letter 4 - California Department of Transportation, October 31, 2005</i>	6-10
	<i>Comment Letter 5 - Stevens Planning Group (on behalf of Eugene and Dolores Fortner Trust), October 31, 2005</i>	6-11
	<i>Comment Letter 6 - Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Government (B. Boykin), November 1, 2005</i>	6-12
	<i>Comment Letter 7 - Tolley Gorham, November 3, 2005</i>	6-13
	<i>Comment Letter 8 - Tolley Gorham, November 7, 2005</i>	6-14
	<i>Comment Letter 9 - Jim and J.J. Gillispie, November 7, 2005</i>	6-15
	<i>Comment Letter 10 - Stan and Sue Rudd, November 8, 2005</i>	6-16
	<i>Comment Letter 11 - Daniel and Janet Rogers, November 11, 2005</i>	6-17
	<i>Comment Letter 12 - Steve and Gayle Saunders, November 11, 2005</i>	6-18
	<i>Comment Letter 13 - Ralph and Leona Burnside, November 12, 2005</i>	6-19
	<i>Comment Letter 14 - James T. and Rita C. Kidd, November 13, 2005</i>	6-20
	<i>Comment Letter 15 - Richard L. Uebner, November 14, 2005</i>	6-32
	<i>Comment Letter 16 - Anita Starchman Bryant, November 14, 2005</i>	6-35
	<i>Comment Letter 17 - Stevens Planning Group (Michael D. Stevens), November 14, 2005</i>	6-37
	<i>Comment Letter 18 - Debra and Paul Salonen, November 14, 2005</i>	6-39
	<i>Comment Letter 19 - Yosemite Area Audubon (“Draft), November 14, 2005</i>	6-42
	<i>Comment Letter 20 - Mariposa Public Utility District, November 14, 2005</i>	6-43
	<i>Comment Letter 21 - B.A. Brown for Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Growth (MERG), November 15, 2005</i>	6-45
	<i>Comment Letter 22 - Thomas Infusino and Laurie Oberholtzer for Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Growth (MERG), November 15, 2005</i>	6-48
	<i>Letter 23 - Ron and Linda Dinnel, November 15, 2005</i>	6-83
	<i>Comment Letter 24 - County of Stanislaus, December 1, 2005</i>	6-84
	<i>Comment Letter 25 - Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center, December 2, 2005</i>	6-85
	<i>Comment Letter 26 - County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors, December 13, 2005</i>	6-90
	<i>Comment Letter 27 - Yosemite Area Audubon, December 21, 2005</i>	6-91
	<i>Comment Letter 28 - Mariposa Public Utility District, December 22, 2005</i>	6-105
	<i>Comment Letter 29 - Morrison Foerster, on behalf of Redington Ranch, LLC, December 27, 2005</i>	6-107
	<i>Comment Letter 30 - Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, December 27, 2005</i>	6-109
	<i>Comment Letter 31 - Jim and J.J. Gillispie, January 11, 2006</i>	6-110
	<i>Comment Letter 32 - Upper Merced River Watershed Council, not dated</i>	6-113
	<i>Comment Letter 33 – Planning Commission Hearing, October 14, 2005</i>	6-115
7	COMMENT LETTERS	7-1
	<i>Letter 1 - Board of Supervisors Public Hearing, November 1, 2005</i>	7-1
	<i>Letter 2 - California Regional Water Quality Control Board-Central Valley, October 26, 2005</i>	7-12
	<i>Letter 3 - California Department of Conservation, October 31, 2005</i>	7-14
	<i>Letter 4 - California Department of Transportation, October 31, 2005</i>	7-18
	<i>Letter 5 - Stevens Planning Group (on behalf of Eugene and Dolores Fortner Trust), October 31, 2005</i>	7-21
	<i>Letter 6 - Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Government (B. Boykin), November 1, 2005</i>	7-24
	<i>Letter 7 - Tolley Gorham, November 3, 2005</i>	7-25

**COUNTY OF MARIPOSA GENERAL PLAN – VOLUME IV
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

<i>Letter 8 - Tolley Gorham, November 7, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-27</i>
<i>Letter 9 - Jim and J.J. Gillispie, November 7, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-29</i>
<i>Letter 10 - Stan and Sue Rudd, November 8, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-30</i>
<i>Letter 11 - Daniel & Janet Rogers, November 11, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-31</i>
<i>Letter 12 - Steve and Gayle Saunders, November 11, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-32</i>
<i>Letter 13 - Ralph and Leona Burnside, November 12, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-33</i>
<i>Letter 14 - James T. and Rita C. Kidd, November 13, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-34</i>
<i>Letter 15 - Richard L. Uebner, November 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-39</i>
<i>Letter 16 - Anita Starchman Bryant, November 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-41</i>
<i>Letter 17 - Stevens Planning Group (Michael D. Stevens), November 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-44</i>
<i>Letter 18 - Debra and Paul Salonen, November 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-49</i>
<i>Letter 19 - Yosemite Area Audubon (“Draft”), November 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-53</i>
<i>Letter 20 - Mariposa Public Utility District, November 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-68</i>
<i>Letter 21 - B.A. Brown for Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Growth (MERC), November 15, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-70</i>
<i>Letter 22 - Thomas Infusino and Laurie Oberholtzer for Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Growth (MERC), November 15, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-72</i>
<i>Letter 23 - Ron and Linda Dinnel, November 15, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-106</i>
<i>Letter 24 - County of Stanislaus, December 1, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-107</i>
<i>Letter 25 - Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center, December 2, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-108</i>
<i>Letter 26 - County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors, December 13, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-113</i>
<i>Letter 27 - Yosemite Area Audubon, December 21, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-122</i>
<i>Letter 28 - Mariposa Public Utility District, December 22, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-142</i>
<i>Letter 29 - Morrison Foerster, on behalf of Redington Ranch, LLC, December 27, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-144</i>
<i>Letter 30 - Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, December 27, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-150</i>
<i>Letter 31 - Jim and J.J. Gillispie, January 11, 2006.....</i>	<i>7-152</i>
<i>Letter 32 - Upper Merced River Watershed Council, not dated.....</i>	<i>7-156</i>
<i>Letter 33 - Planning Commission Public Hearing, October 14, 2005.....</i>	<i>7-158</i>
8 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM.....	8-1
8.1 MMP ORGANIZATION.....	8-2
8.2 COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS (REGULATORY COMPLIANCE).....	8-3
8.3 GENERAL PLAN ADMINISTRATION MEASURES.....	8-4
8.4 LAND USE MEASURES.....	8-8
8.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEASURES.....	8-19
8.6 ARTS AND CULTURE MEASURES.....	8-23
8.7 CIRCULATION, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES MEASURES.....	8-25
8.8 AGRICULTURE MEASURES.....	8-34
8.9 CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE MEASURES.....	8-43
8.10 LOCAL RECREATION MEASURES.....	8-57
8.11 REGIONAL TOURISM MEASURES.....	8-61
8.12 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES MEASURES.....	8-64
8.13 NOISE MEASURES.....	8-70
8.14 SAFETY MEASURES.....	8-74
9 REFERENCES AND LIST OF PREPARERS.....	9-1
9.1 REFERENCES.....	9-1
9.2 LIST OF PREPARERS.....	9-2

TABLES

TABLE 2-1 RESIDENTIAL LAND EVALUATION 2-3
TABLE 2-2 FEASIBLE BUILDING DENSITY PERCENTAGES..... 2-4
TABLE 2-3 RESIDENTIAL BUILDABLE VACANT LAND 2-6
TABLE 2-4 SUMMARY OF BUILD-OUT MARIPOSA COUNTY 2005 GENERAL PLAN 2-7
TABLE 2-5 GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVES..... 2-10

FIGURES

FIGURE 3-1 MARIPOSA COUNTY LOCATION MAP 3-1