Hold The Lines

SOS Cranes

Introduction

- Save Our Sandhill Cranes (SOS Cranes) is a non-profit organization which is dedicated to maintaining open space habitat and the conservation of the California Central Valley's Sandhill crane populations through education, outreach, and community activism.

Our Reference Points

- Sacramento - today vs. 30 years ago
  - Increased sprawl, traffic, conversion of agriculture.
    - Over 2,300 acres per year of farmland converted to sprawl
      [1998 –2000 Land Use Survey for Sacramento County]
- Sacramento – today vs. 100 years ago
  - Nearly 85% of the Central Valley marshlands have been lost to development.[1]
    - Impact on Pacific Flyway.
  - Only 25,000 of the estimated 500,000 acres of riparian habitat that was here in 1850 still remains.[1]
    - Swainson's Hawk populations have declined at least 90%.

[1] Sacramento County General Plan, Conservation Element, Section V

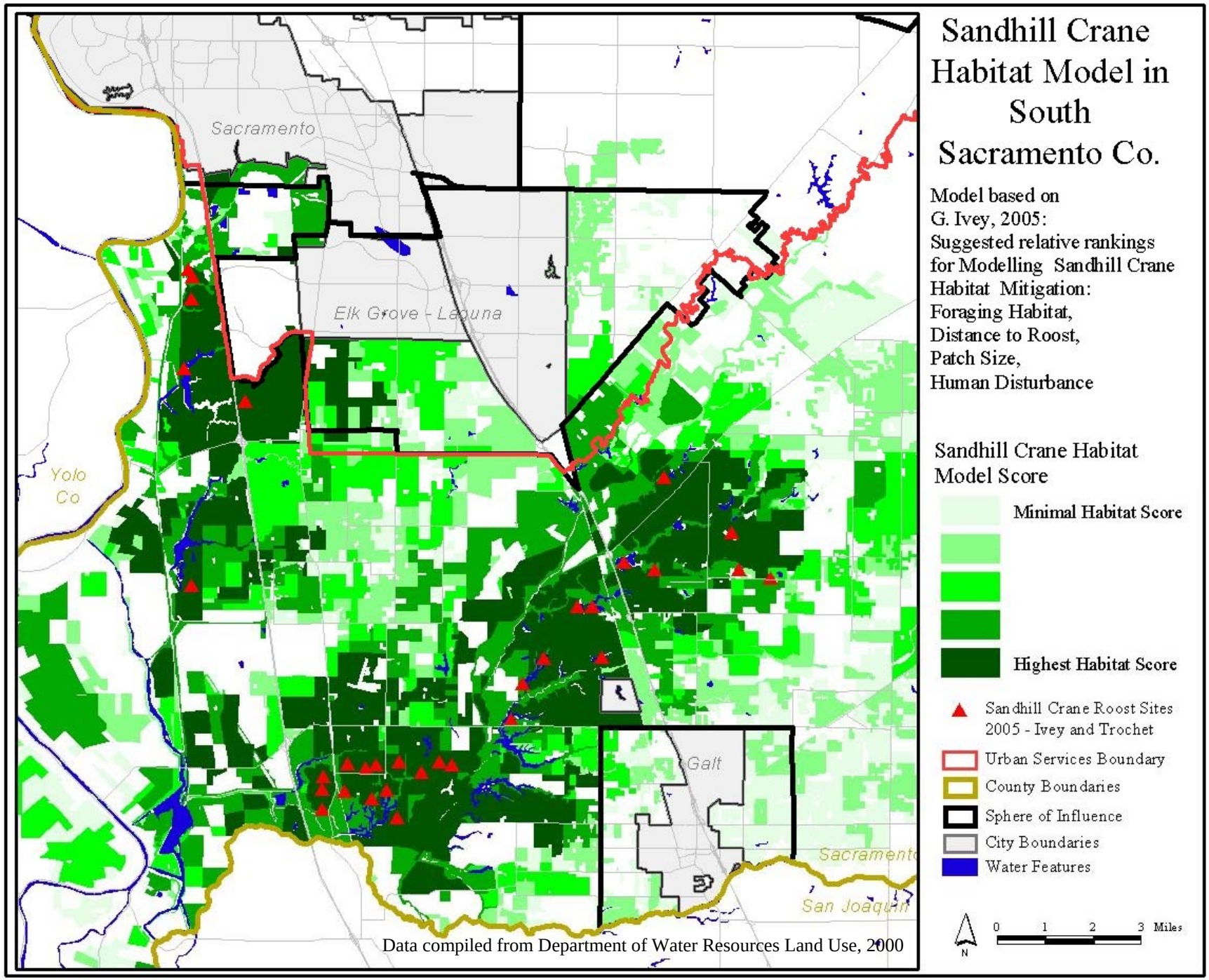
Our Vision

- Hold the USB, SOI and other growth limit lines – no loss in habitat into perpetuity.
- Require a minimum mitigation of 1:1 for any development within existing growth boundaries.
- No loss in valuable agricultural lands that are compatible with preserving wildlife.
- Focus development on adapting to higher density models.
  - Reduce the cost of infrastructure.
  - Maintain habitat and open space for cranes and other species of concern.

Why Hold the Line on Growth?

- Because Sacramento County is expanding at an unsustainable rate –
  - Roads and highways are becoming impassable.
  - Habitat is shrinking and existing wildlife is becoming squeezed into areas too small to support their survival into perpetuity.
  - Ramifications of continuing the existing growth development model are unconscionable.

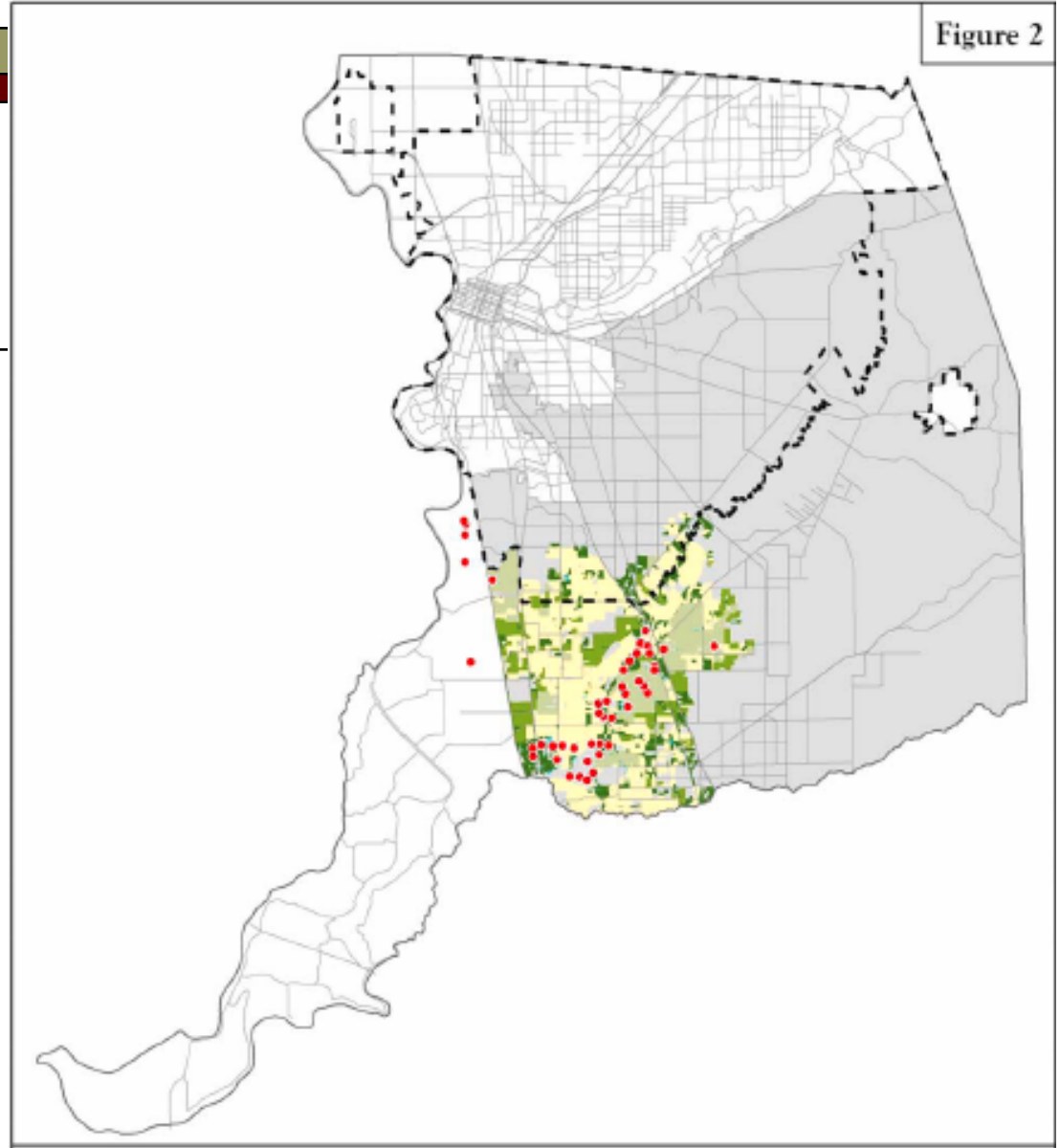
***Moreover - because we have a <u>duty</u> and a <u>responsibility</u> to insure the survival of other species*.**

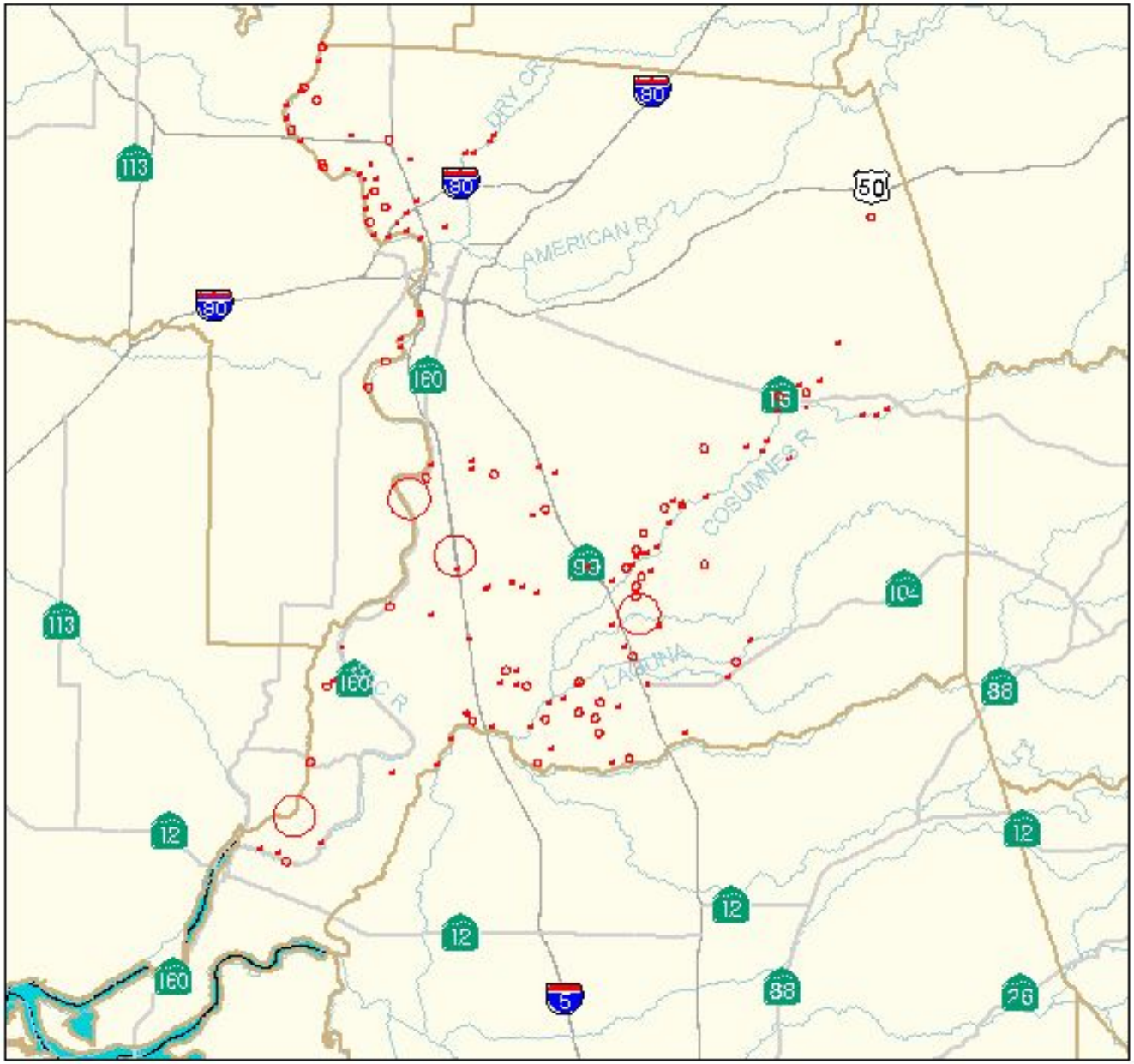

Sandhill Crane Habitat Model in South Sacramento Co.
Model based on G. Ivey, 2005: Suggested relative rankings for Modelling Sandhill Crane Habitat Mitigation: Foraging Habitat, Distance to Roost, Patch Size, Human Disturbance
Sandhill Crane Habitat Model Score
Minimal Habitat Score
Highest Habitat Score
Sandhill Crane Roost Sites 2005 - Ivey and Trochet
Urban Services Boundary
County Boundaries
Sphere of Influence
City Boundaries
Water Features
0 1 2 3 Miles
N
Sacramento
Elk Grove - Laguna
Yolo Co
Galt
San Joaquin
Data compiled from Department of Water Resources Land Use, 2000

Distribution of Greater Sandhill Cranes

Sacramento County

Greater Sandhill Cranes need open space for survival





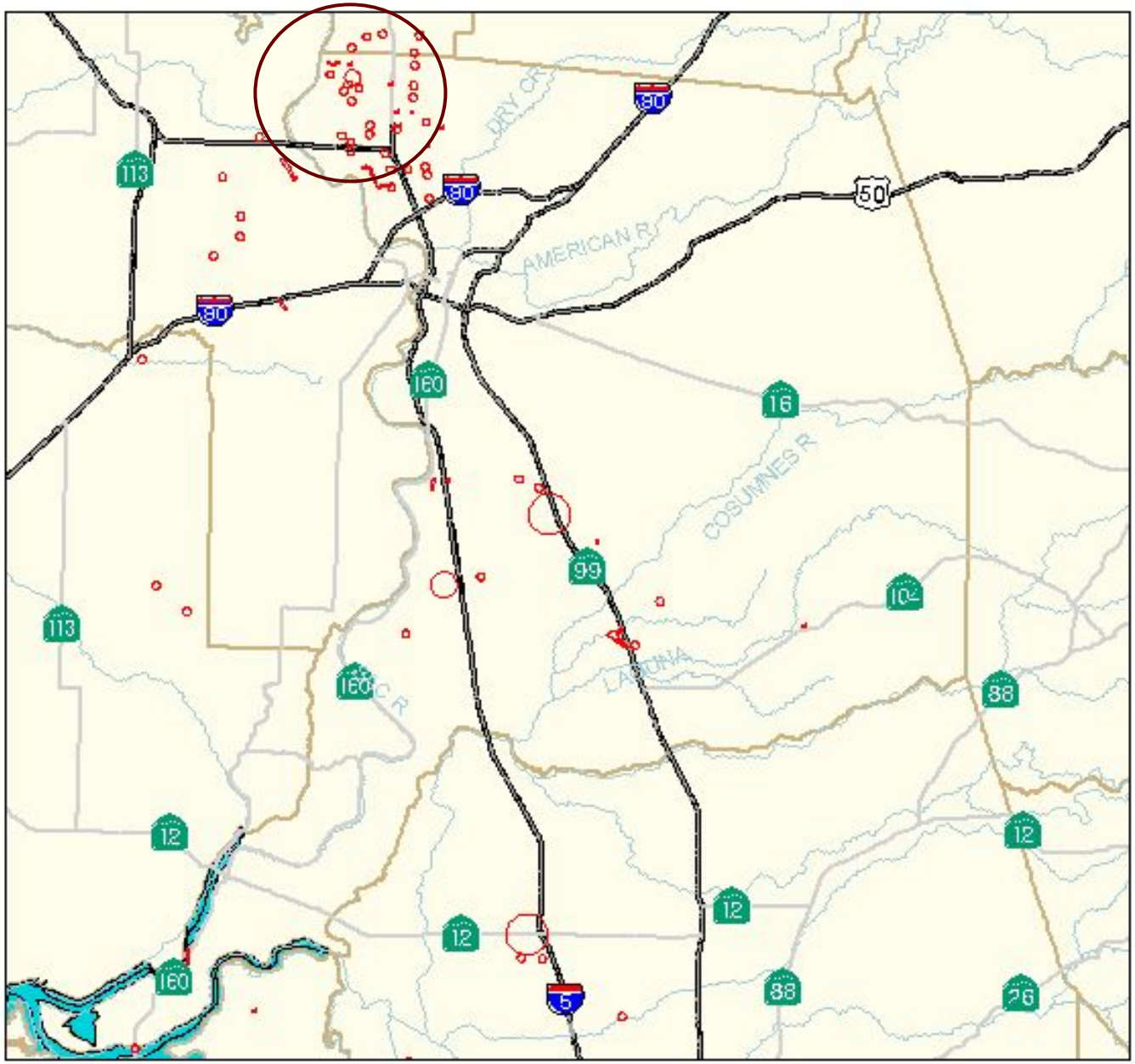
Swainson's Hawk Occurrences in Sacramento Co

This map shows 170 occurrences in Sacramento County.

1994 survey estimates 800 nesting pairs in California.

Historical populations for California could have been in excess of 17,000 nesting pairs. (www.dfg.ca.gov/hcpb)

California Natural Diversity Database



Giant Garter Snake Distribution in Sacramento County

This map shows 49 of the 170 element occurrences of Giant Garter Snake in Sacramento County, as identified in the DFG Natural Diversity Data Base.

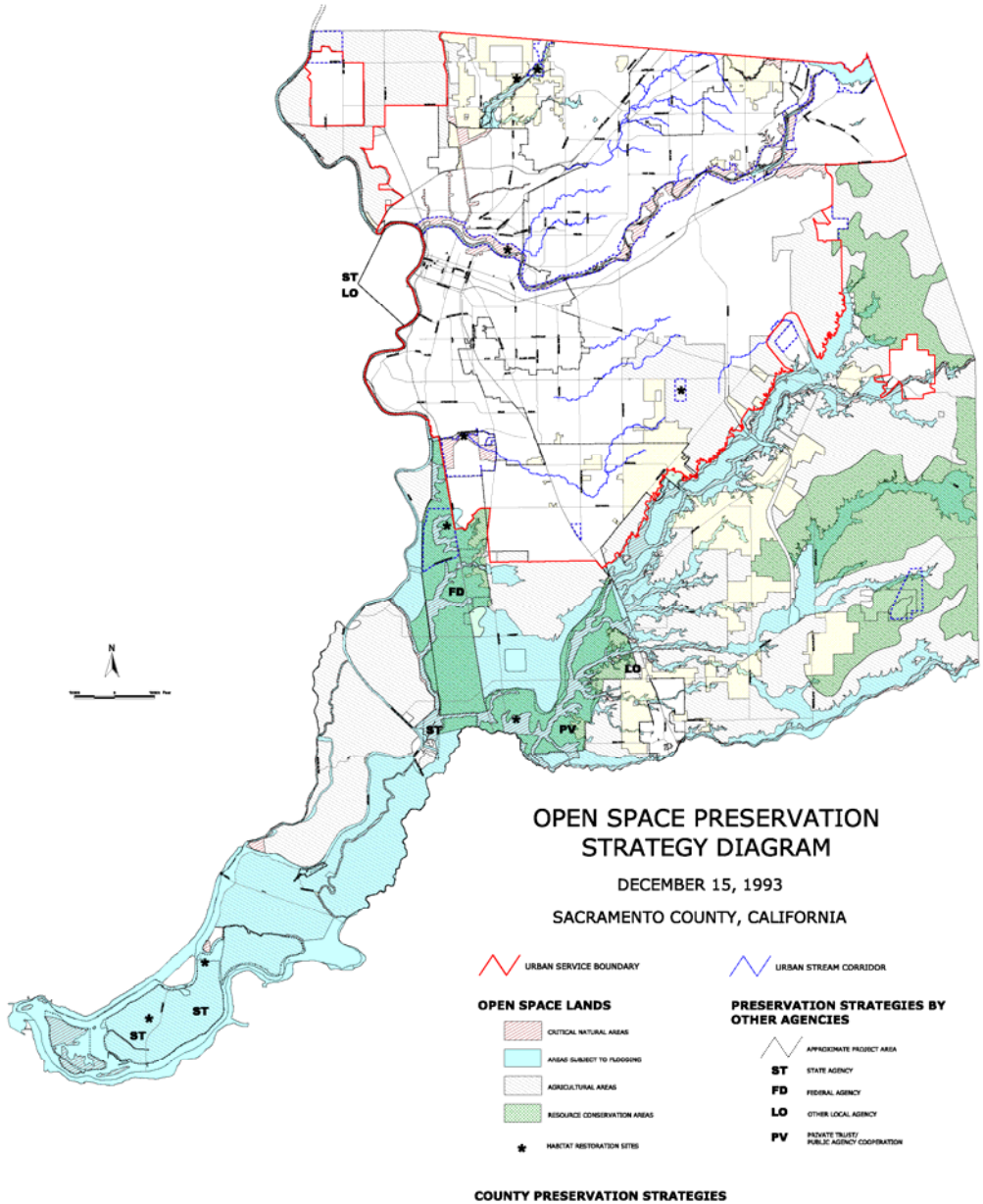
0 5 10 Miles

California Natural Diversity Database

Growth Limits

Incrementally moving the lines and expanding into new green field areas will not reduce the pressure for more growth –it will only change the outcome by reducing or eliminating the biodiversity in our valley.

We need to change our current course. We *can* ensure the survival of our remaining valley wildlife and still prosper as a community.



1993 Sacramento County General Plan

Benefits of Holding Growth Boundaries

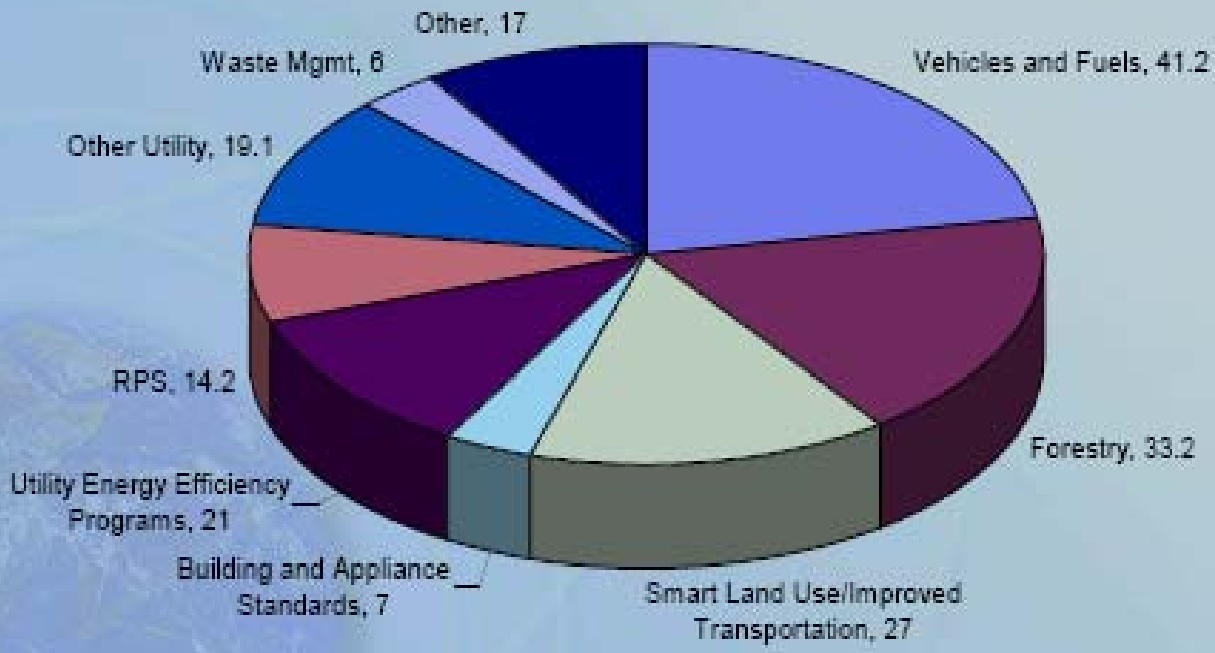
- Besides preserving wildlife and open space for future generations, there are a number of other benefits to curtailing development outside of existing urban growth limits. These include:
  - Pushing development in the County toward a smart growth model – building up, not out.
  - Economic benefits and quality of life improvements for existing residents.

"…unchecked sprawl has shifted from an engine of California's growth to a force that threatens to inhibit growth and degrade the quality of life." *(Bank of America, 1995 p.1)*

Transportation

- Creating population density nodes to support mass transit and light rail improvements.
- Reduce transportation distances.
- Reduce congestion with mass transit and access to local stores and businesses.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle access through mixed use development.
- Improvement in air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Sources of Potential Reductions (Million Metric Tons CO2 Equivalent)



Source: March 2006 Climate Action Team Report

Reduction in CO_2 Emissions

- Reduced transportation time will reduce production of greenhouse gases.
- Retaining agricultural land within the County allows for locally grown foods with less fuel required for delivery to market.
- Wild and agricultural lands provide a large scale, highly efficient carbon sink.
- The evaporative cooling of agricultural fields and natural flood plains reduces temperatures - offsetting increases due to greenhouse gases (Sloan et al 2005).
- Urban development has been demonstrated to increase ambient temperature because of its decreased reflection qualities relative to natural lands (Sloan et al, 2005).

Agriculture

- Row crops provide critical feeding habitat for Greater Sandhill cranes and other listed species such as Giant Garter snake.
- Provides a more diverse economic base for our region -generating over $275 million in Sacramento county not including associated activities and services.
- Provides local production of food we need for survival as well as food for the wild animals we share this land with.

Agriculture

- Allows the valley to participate significantly in the emerging sustainable agricultural revolution.
  - Bond-funded easements could be the initial investment to fund startups.
- Urban surveys indicate an express desire in agritourism, 57% positive response (Jolly & Reynolds, 2005).

Flood Prevention

- Prevents loss of life and damage from future disasters by not placing buildings in harms way.
- Allows future access for flood control enhancements, catchments, and structures such as set back levees.

Economic Benefits

- Increases the value of developed properties within existing growth boundaries -
  - Increased demand for infill construction projects (building up).
  - Growth demand would be amortized over a known and reduced area (the San Francisco effect).
  - Open space areas surrounding the cities will have a positive financial effect. (Nichols, Compton, 2005; Environment Canada, 2000)

"Greenspace does have a significant affect on home values. This, coupled with the other more general beneficial economic affects of natural areas, helps make a convincing argument for maintaining existing greenways, developing new ones, and incorporating them into urban planning." *(Environment Canada, 2000)*

More Economic Benefits

- Decreasing costs for:
  - Transportation
  - Infrastructure
  - Health care
  - Community services (police, libraries, etc.)
- Taller, more expensive infill projects will generate increased property tax revenue per acre of developed land while capturing more sales tax revenue due to increased density and its resulting local retail opportunities.

Conclusion

- *We have a duty and a responsibility to ensure the survival of other species*.

And, the realization of this duty and responsibility will only have positive effects on the existing residents of our valley.

Presenters and Sources

- SOS Cranes Presenters:
  - Mike Savino, President
  - Tara Hansen, Board Member
  - Sean Wirth, Treasurer
  - Tina Suarez-Murias, Board Member
- Sources
  - Sacramento County General Plan, maps and historical references.
  - 1998-2000 Land Use Survey for Sacramento County.
  - California Natural Diversity Database.
  - Department of Water Resources Land Use, 2000.
  - Sloan et al, 2006: Modeling the Effects of Land Use Changes on California's Climate. Climate Change Conference 2006, California Energy Commission.
  - Environment Canada – Ontario Region, 2000: Community Green Spaces Are Worth Money: An Economic Argument for Parks, Natural Areas, Greenways
  - Bank of America,1995: Beyond Sprawl: New Patterns of Growth to Fit the New California. Bank of America, San Francisco, CA.
  - Nicholls, Sarah and Crompton, John L., 2005: The Impact of Greenways on Property Values: Evidence from Austin, Texas. Journal of Leisure Research, vol.37, No.3, pp.321-341
  - Air Resources Board, Climate Action Team Report, March 2006.