

NEVADA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA INITIAL STUDY

To: State Clearinghouse
County Counsel
NC Dept. of Public Works
NC Agricultural Commissioner*
NC Dept. Information and General Services*
All NC Fire Districts*
Sierra Planning Organization*
All NC School Districts*
All NC Chambers of Commerce*
NC LAFCo*
Washington County Water District*
North San Juan Ridge Water District*
Nevada Irrigation District*
AT&T*
All Property Owners Associations*
Donner Summit Public Utilities District*
NAVFACSW Intergovernmental Branch AM-3*
Brian Wallace*
United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria*

Board of Supervisors (All Districts)*
Planning Commissioners*
NC Environmental Health Department
NC Dept. of Public Health*
NC Office of Emergency Services
NC Fire Safe Council
City of Grass Valley
City of Nevada City
Town of Truckee
NC Transportation Commission/NCALUC
Truckee Tahoe ALUC
Special Interest Groups (on notification list) *
Truckee Donner Public Utility District*
PG&E*
Rural Quality Coalition*
General Plan Defense Fund
Federation of Neighborhoods Association*
T'Si-akim Maidu*

*Note: NOA only

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File Number(s): GP14-002; ORD14-00; EIS14-003

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Project Location: Countywide
(General Plan and Land Use and Development Code Policy Text Amendments)

Project Description:

The project proposed to update the General Plan Noise Element (Chapter 9) and Safety Element (Chapter 10) according to the 2003 OPR General Plan Guidelines and more recent updates to state planning and zoning laws. The proposed General Plan text amendments (GP14-002) include: 1) incorporating the 2010 Truckee Tahoe and 2011 Nevada County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans; 2) incorporating

structural and formatting changes; 3) incorporating minor corrections and editing to clarify information; and, 4) incorporating minor corrections and editing issues to clarify information, replace acronyms with complete terms, and correct minor grammatical and reference errors. Additional amendments are proposed that specifically apply to the Safety Element which include: 1) updating the data, information and references with more current sources; 2) incorporating additional language to recognize that severe weather events present safety hazards in Nevada County; 3) revising policies where progress has been made or changes in situation have occurred; and 4) incorporating the 2011 Local Hazards Mitigation Plan (which replaced the 2000 Multi-Jurisdiction, Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan) in accordance with AB 2140 (Qualifying for Additional California Disaster Assistance Act State Share). Also included in this project is a proposed ordinance amendment (ORD 14-001) to amend the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) Chapter III Airport Zoning ordinance to comprehensively update outdated policies by adopting specific sections of the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans by reference.

The draft language of the Noise Element update is attached to this initial study as Appendix B and the draft language of the Safety Element is attached as Appendix C. The draft language of the revised LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning ordinance is attached as Appendix D.

The proposed draft language and additional project information for this project (Noise and Safety Element Update) can be downloaded from the Nevada County website at:

<http://www.mynevadacounty.com/nc/cda/planning/Pages/Noise-and-Safety-Element-Update.aspx>

Electronic copies of this environmental study document and attachments can also be found at:

<http://www.mynevadacounty.com/nc/cda/planning/Pages/Environmental-Documents.aspx>

Project Objectives:

The primary objective of this project is to update the Noise and Safety Elements of the General Plan (hereto referred to as the “Update”) and to amend the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning ordinance (hereto referred to as the “Ordinance Amendment”) to incorporate the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans for the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airports, update information and references, and restructure and reformat the text as needed.

Proposed Amendments:

The proposed Update modifies the existing Noise Element (Chapter 9) which is found in ‘Appendix B’. Specific amendments to the Noise Element are as follows:

1. Introduction and Setting

- No changes

2. Goals, Policies and Objectives

- Reformatted to ‘Goals, Policies and Programs’ (utilizing formatting approach similar to the approaches used for the 2010 Housing and Circulation Element Updates) which included renumbering the policies and programs, removing reference notes and removing the descriptions of policies as being ‘directive’ or ‘action’.
- Reformatted and assigned table number to Table 9.1.2 *Noise Standards* (no changes made to the content contained in the table).
- Revised language of former Objective 9.4 and Policies 9.17, 9.18, 9.19 to incorporate and recognize the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans for the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airports (now Policies 9.1.20, 9.2.21, 9.1.22 and 9.1.23).

- Assigned figure number to Figure 9.1 *Airport / Land Use Noise Compatibility Criteria* (no changes made to the information contained in the table).

The proposed Update modifies the existing Safety Element (Chapter 10) which is found in ‘Appendix C’. Specific amendments to the Safety Element area as follows:

1. Introduction and Setting

- Added Severe Weather Hazards as a safety hazard in Nevada County; added “Military Airspace” to Airport Hazards; and added Public Safety Services and Facilities to list of safety and hazard issues which was already addressed in the previous Goals, Objectives and Policies Section.
- Updated document references and information within the Emergency Preparedness, Geologic Hazards / Seismic Activity, Flood Hazards, and Hazardous Materials subsections.
- Comprehensively revised the Airport Hazards subsection to reflect Military Operations Areas (MOA) and recognize the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans for the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airports.
- Updated and restructured the Fire Hazards and Protection subsection as needed with more current information and references.
- Added subsection to discuss Severe Weather Hazards.

2. Goals, Policies and Objectives

- Reformatted to ‘Goals, Policies and Programs’ (utilizing formatting approach similar to the approaches uses for the 2010 Housing and Circulation Element updates, and the 2013 Land Use Element update) which included renumbering of the policies and programs, removing reference notes and removing the descriptions of policies as being ‘directive’ or ‘action’.
- Replaced references to the 2006 Multi-Jurisdiction, Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJMHMP) with the 2012 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and other document references as needed.
- Added “and military airspace” to Goal AH-10.4 to address safety concerns regarding Military Operation Areas.
- Revised Policy and Program language to incorporate the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans; added new Policy (AH 10.4.1) and Program (AH-10.4.2) to ensure the early notification to the military of proposed development projects within the MOA located in the eastern portion of Nevada County.
- Restructured and made minor and necessary updates to the Policy and Program language that supports the Fire Hazards and Protection (FP) Goals FP-10.7 – FP-10.12.
- Formatted and numbered Table 10.1; moved original language of Objective FP-10.7.3 to Program FP-10.12.6; moved original language of Policy 10.7.3 to Program FP-10.12.30; added new language regarding the support of Firewise Communities USA® program.
- Added Goal WH-10.13, Policy 10.13.1 and Policy 10.13.2, and Program WH-10.13.1 to address safety and hazards issues associated with severe weather hazards.
- Updated List of Acronyms.

The proposed Ordinance Amendment includes a comprehensive revision of the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning Ordinance (Appendix D) which accomplishes the following tasks and completely replaces the existing ordinance:

1. Table of Contents and Article 1. Purpose

- Revise to reflect updated content for the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans.

2. Article 2. Nevada County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

- Comprehensively revised to recognize the applicability, geographic scope and the specific sections that are adopted by reference for the Nevada County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

3. Article 2. Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

- Comprehensively revise to recognize the applicability, geographic scope and the specific sections that are adopted by reference for the Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Relationship to Government Code Sections:

The following State of California Government Code Sections directly relate to the proposed Update and Ordinance Amendment:

- Section 65302(f) establishes the requirements of the purpose and contents of a noise element;
- Section 65302(g) establishes the requirements of the purpose and contents of a safety element including the recently requirement that prior to the next housing element update (on or after January 1, 2014), the safety element shall be reviewed and updated as necessary to address the risk of fire for land classified as state responsibility areas.
- Section 65302.3 that requires that each county and city affected by an airport land use compatibility plan must make its general plan and any applicable specific plan consistent with the adopted airport land use compatibility plan pursuant to Section 21675 of the Public Resources Code.
- Section 65302.5 that requires the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to review and provide recommendations to the safety element of county government general plans.

Other Permits Which May Be Necessary:

The proposed Update and Ordinance Amendment consists of text amendments to policy documents. No land use permits are necessary in order to implement these general plan amendments and ordinance amendment. The adoption of these general plan updates and/or the ordinance amendment will not result in the approval of specific development projects or result in changes to the physical environment. All future development projects and/or amendments to the Nevada County General Plan and/or the Land Use and Development Code will require that a project-specific environmental review occur prior to specific project approval.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

All of the following environmental factors have been considered. Those environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is "Less Than Significant with Mitigation" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

1. Aesthetics	2. Agriculture / Forestry Resources	3. Air Quality
4. Biological Resources	5. Cultural Resources	6. Geology / Soils
7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions	8. Hazards / Hazardous Materials	9. Hydrology / Water Quality
10. Land Use / Planning	11. Mineral Resources	12. Noise
13. Population / Housing	14. Public Services	15. Recreation
16. Transportation / Circulation	17. Utilities / Service Systems	18. Mandatory Findings of Significance

No mitigation measures are proposed for this Update project.

INITIAL STUDY AND CHECKLIST

Introduction:

This checklist is to be completed for all projects that are not exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The information, analysis and conclusions contained in the checklist are the basis for deciding whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or Negative Declaration is to be prepared. If an EIR is determined to be necessary based on the conclusions of the Initial Study, the checklist is used to focus the EIR on the effects determined to be potentially significant. This Initial Study uses the following terms to describe the level of significance of adverse impacts. These terms are defined as follows:

- **No Impact:** An impact that would result in no adverse changes to the environment.
- **Less than Significant Impact:** An impact that is potentially adverse but does not exceed the thresholds of significance as identified in the impact discussions. Less than significant impacts do not require mitigation.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation:** An environmental effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment without mitigation, but which is reduced to a level that is less than significant with mitigation identified in the Initial Study.
- **Potentially Significant Impact:** An environmental effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment; either additional information is needed regarding the extent of the impact to make the significance determination, or the impact would or could cause a substantial adverse change in the environment. A finding of a potentially significant impact would result in the determination to prepare an EIR.

Project Location:

The proposed Noise and Safety Element updates applies to all unincorporated areas of Nevada County and covers privately owned parcels in all zoning districts and General Plan designations. The Project Area is located in Nevada County in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The County is characterized by small towns and rural development that is largely integrated into the natural environment. The County spans over 974 square miles, and climbs from 300 mean feet above sea level (msl) on the western boundary to 9,143 feet msl at the highest point on the Sierra Crest before meeting the State of Nevada boundary on the County's eastern boundary.

The project area does not include city, state and federal lands. Of the County's approximate 625,000 acres, the Project Area occupies approximately 375,000 acres, or 61 percent of the total acres within the County. Various land ownerships, municipalities, and managers can be found in the County, including three incorporated cities/towns, County land, state land (predominantly the Spenceville Wildlife Management and Recreation Area, Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park, and Empire Mine State Historic Park) (approximately 23,600 acres), and federal land including US Forest Service (USFS) land (including Tahoe National Forest, which covers approximately 175,700 acres, Toiyabe National Forest land, which covers approximately 2,700 acres in the eastern area of the County, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land which is approximately 10,500 acres.)

The amendment to the Land Use and Development Code Chapter III Airport Zoning applies to those areas located within the airport influence areas that are defined by the adopted Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. The airport influence for the Nevada County Airport extends 1.7 miles from the airport's runway (Appendix D) and the Truckee Tahoe Airport extends roughly 2.7 miles from the airport runways (Appendix E).

Relationship to Other Projects:

There is no direct relationship to any other proposed project.

Relationship to Other Environmental Review Documents:

The following environmental documents are directly related to the Project:

- Notice of Determination was filed for the Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan on December 20, 2004 with the Nevada County Clerk. A Negative Determination was prepared for this project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Mitigation measures were not made a condition of approval for the project.
- A Notice of Determination was filed for the Nevada County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan on September 22, 2011 with the Nevada County Clerk. A Negative Determination was prepared for this project pursuant to the CEQA. Mitigation measures were not made a condition of this project.

1. AESTHETICS

Existing Setting:

The aesthetic character of the County is generally rural, natural, and historic. Important aesthetic resources in the County include natural and historic forms, including river gorges, creeks, mountains, hills, meadows, geologic formations, and native vegetation, which consist of grass-oak woodlands, montane, brush lands, mixed conifer forest, and eastside pine with sage. Historic forms within the County include bridges, homes, and other structures more than 50 years old. Sites and natural forms with cultural importance to, or repeated use by, Native American tribes also contribute to aesthetic significance.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in demonstrable, negative, aesthetic effects on scenic vistas or views open to the public?				✓	A
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				✓	A
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				✓	A
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				✓	A
e. Create a visually incompatible structure within a designated historic district?				✓	A, 14, 15

Impact Discussion:

(1a-e) The General Plan contains an Aesthetics Element (Chapter 18) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to aesthetic resources in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Aesthetics Element of the General Plan.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to aesthetic resources, nor will it conflict with existing zoning or result in damage to scenic resources or the degradation of the visual character or quality of a site. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are

intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required

2. AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY RESOURCES

Existing Setting:

Farmlands of local importance is scattered throughout western Nevada County with major concentrations occurring northeast and east of Nevada City, near Penn Valley, and in the south and southwest portions of the County. Countywide, there are 18,424 acres of Farmlands of Local Importance, 1,789 acres of Farmlands of Statewide Importance, 547 acres of Unique Farmlands and 435 acres of Prime Farmlands. There are no important agricultural lands mapped in eastern Nevada County.

Generally, Nevada County soils are poor for intensive agricultural use; however, some soil types could support limited intensive agricultural use, including timber production. Nevada County supports extensive commercial timber resources, the majority of which are under the jurisdiction of the Tahoe National Forest in the eastern areas of the County. County zoning allocates 162,800 acres for primary agricultural use, allowing an additional 39,000 acres for agriculture as an accessory use to residential development. Agricultural operations comprise an approximate 80,000 acres, averaging 12-13% of total lands, with an approximate 600 farms in operation in 2006; the average farm size is in approximate 137 acres. A total 5,410.19 acres are currently under Williamson Act contract, preserving those lands from development.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Department of Conservation’s Division of Land Resource Protection, to non-agricultural use?				✓	A, J, 6
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract?				✓	A, 16
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resource Code section 12220(g)), timberland zoned Timberland Production Zone (per Section L-II 2.3.C of the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code)?				✓	A, 16
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of				✓	A

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
forest land to non-forest use?					
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(2a-e) The General Plan contains a Forest Element (Chapter 15) and an Agriculture Element (Chapter 16), that establish specific Goals, Objectives and Policies related to forestry and agricultural and resources in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Forest or Agriculture Elements.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to Important Farmlands (Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmlands), nor will it conflict with existing zoning or result in conversion of agricultural, timberland or timberland uses or a Williamson Act contract. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

3. AIR QUALITY

Existing Setting:

Nevada County is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin. The overall air quality in Nevada County has improved over the past decade, largely due to vehicles becoming cleaner.

State and Federal air quality standards have been established for specific “criteria” air pollutants, including ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and particulate matter. In addition, there are State standards for visibility reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide and vinyl chloride. State standards are called California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and federal standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS are composed of health-based primary standards and welfare-based secondary standards.

Western Nevada County is Moderate Nonattainment for the 1997 ozone NAAQS, with a “Finding of Attainment” based on three years of “clean” data. The area is also Marginal Nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS and is Nonattainment for the ozone CAAQS. Most of western Nevada County’s ozone is transported to the area by wind from the Sacramento area and, to a lesser extent, the San Francisco Bay

Area. Ozone is created by the interaction of Nitrogen Oxides and Reactive Organic Gases (also known as Volatile Organic Compounds) in the presence of sunlight, especially when the temperature is high. Ozone is mainly a summertime problem, with the highest concentrations generally observed in July and August, especially in the late afternoon and evening hours.

Nevada County is also Nonattainment for the PM10 CAAQS, but Unclassified for the PM10 NAAQS. The number after “PM” refers to maximum particle size in microns. PM10 is a mixture of dust, combustion particles (smoke) and aerosols, whereas PM2.5 is mostly smoke and aerosol particles. PM2.5 sources include woodstoves and fireplaces, vehicle engines, wildfires and open burning. PM10 sources also include dust, such as from surface disturbances, road sand, vehicle tires and leaf blowers. Some pollen and mold spores are also included in PM10, but most are larger than 10 microns. All of Nevada County is Unclassifiable/Attainment for the PM2.5 NAAQS and Unclassified for the PM2.5 CAAQS.

Ultramafic rock and its altered form, serpentine rock (or serpentinite), both typically contain asbestos, a cancer-causing agent. Ultramafic rock and serpentine exist in several locations in Nevada County, mainly in the western half. Disturbance of this rock and nearby soil can result in the release of microscopic cancer-causing asbestos fibers into the air, resulting in potential health and safety hazards.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in substantial air pollutant emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?				✓	A, F
b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation?				✓	A, F
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				✓	A, F
d. Create objectionable smoke, ash, or odors?				✓	A, F
e. Generate dust?				✓	A, F
f. Exceed any potentially significant thresholds adopted in County Plans and Goals?				✓	A, F
g. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				✓	A, F

Impact Discussion:

(3a-g) The General Plan contains an Air Quality Element (Chapter 14) which establishes specific Goals, Objectives and Policies related to air quality in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Air Quality Element.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to air quality in Nevada County. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The Update does not revise, replace or attempt to supersede any existing air quality standards adopted by the County or the State of California. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Existing Setting:

Nevada County contains a wide range of plants, animals, and habitat types. With elevations ranging from 300 feet msl in the west to 9,143 feet msl in the east and precipitation amounts varying from 30 inches in the west to 60 inches near the crest of the Sierras, the County supports a true diversity of habitat types. Generally, the County can be characterized by gently rolling oak woodlands in the west that transition to coniferous forest in the middle ranges and a desert-like association on the eastern slope of the Sierras. A given type of vegetation association, with associated animal life, is referred to as a life zone. A life zone is an area with generally uniform of homogeneous characteristics located within general geographic boundaries. The life zones in Nevada County include Upper Sonoran, Transition, Canadian, Hudsonian, Arctic-Alpine and Mixed Conifer-Jeffrey Pine-Sagebrush.

Five primary wildlife habitat types in California are recognized by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW): tree dominated; shrub dominated; herbaceous dominated; aquatic; and developed. These habitats occur in continuous stretches and isolated pockets depending on the overall topography, elevation, climate and pattern of development in a particular area. Wildlife may move between various habitat types to satisfy their life requirements. Wildlife utilize riparian corridors, low lying or “saddle” areas of ridges, established trails, and other corridors for their inter-habitat movement. In addition, many species, including deer, move seasonally in response to their seasonal habitat requirements. In this context, it is possible that loss of a habitat could constitute an adverse effect (because of local or regional scarcity and ecological value of a habitat) even though the individual species of plants that make up the habitat, or animal species which use the habitat may not, in and of themselves, be endangered or rare.

Habitats throughout the County have been modified by human activity. The western portions of the County, especially the Upper Sonoran and Transition life zones, have experienced rapid residential growth in recent decades. The resultant parcelization, fencing, alteration of vegetation, introduction of domestic animals, roadways, noise, and night lighting have served to reduce the habitat values throughout the area. In the mid to high elevations, logging, mining, and development of second homes and subdivisions have also served to alter habitats. Habitat values can be reduced by both direct (construction of housing) and indirect (increased density in wide movement corridors) activities. Although the overall trend in the County is toward a decline in habitat values as identified by the DFG, there is a wide localized variation in habitats, tolerances of species, and degrees of human disturbance.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status				✓	A, 3

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?					
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				✓	A, 3
c. Result in a substantial reduction in the extent, diversity, or quality of native vegetation, including brush removal for fire prevention and flood control improvements?				✓	A, 3
d. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				✓	A, 3
e. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				✓	A, 2, 3
f. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				✓	A, 2, 8
g. Introduce any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domestic animals), which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife?				✓	A, 16

Impact Discussion:

(4a-g) The General Plan contains a Wildlife and Vegetation Element (Chapter 13) which establishes specific Goals, Objectives and Policies related to sensitive biological resources in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Wildlife and Vegetation Element.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in potential impacts to biological resources. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within in the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the Ordinance Amendment.

All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Existing Setting:

This region has been occupied by Native American people for a period of at least 1,000 to 2,000 years in duration. The local people who occupied the territory where this project site is located were known as the Hill Nisenan, or “Southern Maidu.” In 1848, gold brought immigrants into the local area. By 1852 and the advent of placer mining, the population of Nevada County was estimated at more than 21,000 people. Supporting industry including stores, transportation companies, saloons, toll roads and stage lines, foundries, lumber mills, and water companies continued the growth rate of the County.

The varied environmental zones, the geological characteristics and the geographical position of Nevada County account for an exceedingly rich and exceptionally complex cultural resource base. There are a relatively large number, and wide array, of recorded prehistoric site types in Nevada County. A number of State laws regulate the disturbance of archaeological sites and the Nevada County General Plan and Zoning Regulations establish procedures for identifying potentially sensitive sites.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines?				✓	A
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines?				✓	A
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				✓	A
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(5a-d) In accordance with Government Code §65352.3, notifications were sent to California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of protecting, and/or mitigating impacts to cultural places in creating or amending general plans. The notification of the proposed amendments to the Noise and Safety Elements were mailed to tribes listed on the NAHC consultation list on January 14, 2014. No requests for tribal consultation have been received to date, although the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria requested that any further information regarding the Update be forwarded to them when available.

The General Plan contains a Cultural Resources Element (Chapter 19) which establishes specific General Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies related to cultural resources in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Cultural Resource Element.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in ground disturbance and/or potential impacts to cultural resources. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide the development in the County and will not directly result in any ground disturbance. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in

nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

6. GEOLOGY / SOILS

Existing Setting:

The Sierra Nevada Range, a geologic block nearly 400 miles long and 80 miles wide, runs through Nevada County. This formation is represented by gentle rolling foothills on the western flank to steep mountainous terrain in the middle section of the County, and the crest of the Sierra near Donner Summit in the eastern portion of the County. Eastward from the crest, the terrain begins a downslope trend towards the Nevada state line. The substructures in the western section of the County range from metavolcanic to granitic formations, while the central section includes sedimentary, metasedimentary, and volcanic formations. The eastern sections of the County contain volcanic or granitic formations. In general, the formations are relatively seismically inactive. However, there are seismic faults in both western and eastern Nevada County.

Soil surveys conducted by U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources and Conservation Service and the Tahoe National Forest Division of the USFS have identified 55 general soil types in the County. The soil types are described by topography, slope, permeability, dwelling limitations, septic limitations, erosion hazards, and agricultural and timber capacities. In general, the County soils are variable: the soil permeability ranges from very slow to very rapid, and the erosion hazard ranges from slight to very high. The soil erosion hazard ratings of moderate to high are typically associated with slopes 15% or greater.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in exposure to or production of unstable earth conditions such as landslides, earthquakes, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards?				✓	A, C, H, 5, 9, 10, 14
b. Result in disruption, displacement, compaction, or over-covering of the soil by cuts, fills, or extensive grading?				✓	A
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				✓	A, 9, 10, 14
d. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				✓	A, C, 9

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
e. Result in any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, on or off the site?				✓	A
f. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion, which may modify the channel of a river, or stream, or the bed any bay, inlet or lake?				✓	A
g. Result in excessive grading on slopes of over 30 percent?				✓	A, J

Impact Discussion:

(6a-g) The Safety Element addresses safety hazards that are associated with geologic and seismic activity which includes: avalanches, landslides and earthquakes. Information contained in the Introduction and Setting Section has been revised and refreshed with more current data as part of the Update. The Goals, Policies and Programs Section (previously referred to as the “Goals, Objectives and Policies” section) of the Safety Element has been reformatted. However, no amendments have been made to the existing language (Goal GH-10.2, Policies GH-10.2.1-4).

The General Plan contains a Soils Element (Chapter 12) which establishes specific Goals, Objectives and Policies related to soil erosion control in Nevada County by enforcement of the grading ordinance, implementing erosion control measures for county projects, and encouraging ongoing cooperation with the local Resource Conservation District. No amendments are currently proposed for the Soils Element.

Adoption of the Update, in itself, will not upset existing geologic or soil conditions. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended guide the development in the County. Potential geologic impacts associated with the construction of new development will vary, and be assessed, on a project-by-project basis. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

All development projects will be subject to site-specific environmental review at the time that the project is proposed. At that time, a comprehensive review of potential geologic impacts will be performed to ensure that future development does not result in significant environmental impacts without sufficient mitigation. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

7. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Existing Setting:

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are those gases that trap heat in the atmosphere. GHGs are emitted by natural and industrial processes, and the accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere regulates the earth’s temperature. GHGs that are regulated by the State and/or EPA are carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF6) and nitrous oxide (NO2). CO2 emissions are largely from fossil fuel combustion. In California, approximately 43% of the CO2 emissions come from cars and trucks. Electricity generation is another important source of

CO2 emissions. Agriculture is a major source of both methane and NO2, with additional methane coming primarily from landfills. Most HFC emissions come from refrigerants, solvents, propellant agents and industrial processes, and persist in the atmosphere for longer periods of time and have greater effects at lower concentrations compared to CO2. The adverse impacts of global warming include impacts to air quality, water supply, ecosystem balance, sea level rise (flooding), fire hazards, and an increase in health related problems.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act, was adopted in September 2006 and requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This reduction will be accomplished through regulations to reduce emissions from stationary sources and from vehicles. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) is the State agency responsible for developing rules and regulations to cap and reduce GHG emissions. In addition, the Governor signed Senate Bill 97 in 2007 directing the California Office of Planning and Research to develop guidelines for the analysis and mitigation of the effects of greenhouse gas emissions and mandating that GHG impacts be evaluated in CEQA documents. CEQA Guidelines Amendments for GHG Emissions were adopted by OPR on December 30, 2009. The Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District has not adopted Thresholds of Significance for GHGs. Therefore, in order to satisfy CEQA requirements, projects should make a reasonable attempt to quantify, minimize and mitigate GHG emissions as feasible.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				✓	A
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(7a-b) At this time there is no approved CEQA threshold adopted by either the State or the County for GHG emissions and global warming. However, adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in a significant impact to greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide the development in the County. All future development proposals will be subject to site-specific greenhouse gas emissions review as deemed appropriate by the County. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally all future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, a *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

8. HAZARDS / HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Existing Setting:

The interface of the natural and manmade environments within the County creates potential safety hazards associated with wildfires, landslides, earthquakes and seiches. Other potential safety hazards include naturally occurring asbestos, past mining operations and airport operations.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				✓	A, C
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				✓	A, C
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				✓	A, C
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				✓	A, C, M
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				✓	A, 21, 22
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				✓	A
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				✓	A, H
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				✓	A, K, N, 4

Impact Discussion:

(8a-g) The Safety Element addresses the following hazards:

- Hazardous materials. The discussion contained in the Introduction and Setting Section includes additional and updated information on: stationary sources of hazardous materials, transported hazardous materials, and hazardous materials that resulted from the County’s mining legacy. References and outdated information contained in the Introduction and Setting section has been revised and refreshed with more current data as part of the Update. The Goals, Policies and Programs section of the Safety Element has been structurally reformatted. However, no

amendments have been made to the language that addresses hazardous materials at a policy level (Goal HM-10.5, Policies HM-10.5.1-4).

- Airports and military airspace safety hazards. The discussion contained in the Introduction and Setting Section provides background information and guidance regarding airport land use compatibility planning and military operation areas. References and outdated information contained in the Introduction and Setting section has been revised and refreshed with more current data as part of the Update. The Goals, Policies and Programs section of the Safety Element has been structurally reformatted. Amendments have been made to reference the adopted Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe ALUCPs and recognize military airspace which includes minor amendments to the existing language (Goal AH 10.4, Policy AH-10.4.1) and the introduction of new language (Policy AH-10.4.2 and Program AH-10.4.1). The added language recognizes the importance of coordinating with the military to ensure that new development is compatible with military air operations and that early notification of discretionary development projects within a military operations area is required by state law.
- Emergency preparedness. Background information and guidance on emergency plans and guides, the emergency notification system and evacuation planning is provided in the revised Safety Element. The Introduction and Setting Section has been revised as needed to update reference documents and replace outdated information. Similarly, some minor revisions have been made to the language of the Goals, Policies and Programs section to update reference documents (Goal EP-10.1, Policies 10.1.1-9).
- Fire hazards. References and outdated information contained in the Introduction and Setting section has been updated as needed regarding fire hazards. The discussion provides background information on wildland fires, fire-safe infrastructure, fire agencies and support organizations, and fire protection plans and programs. Language has been added (Policy FP-10.9.7) regarding the Firewise Communities USA[®] program within Nevada County. Additionally, some minor restructuring, revisions and edits have been made to the Goals, Policies and Programs (Goals FP-10.7-12, Policies FP 10.7.1-10.11.6, Programs FP-10.12.1-30).
- Severe weather hazards. As part of the Safety Element as part of the Update project, new language has been added to address potential hazards associated with wind, lightning, snow, freezing, heavy rains and blizzards. An additional subsection has been added to describe and provide information on severe weather hazards in the Introduction Setting Section. A new Goal, Policy and Program have been added to the Goals, Policies and Program section to provide guidance on minimizing injury and property damage due to severe weather hazards (Goal WH-10.13, Policy WH-10.13.2, and Program WH-10.13.1). Severe weather hazard incidents in Nevada from 1960 to 2013 have included: high wind, freezing or extreme cold, lightening, heavy rain, winter storms or snow, and one tornado. Blizzards are also identified as a severe weather hazard which commonly affects elevations above 5,000 feet mean sea level in the Sierra Nevada.

The proposed Update and Ordinance Amendment consist only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide the development in the County. Adoption of the Update or Ordinance Amendment will not directly create significant safety hazards or grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Update and Ordinance Amendment.

(8h) The County's single largest risk for human life and financial loss is fire. Wildland fires and, in particular, fires that impinge on the wildland urban interface have cost County residents the most financially and in loss of life. Accordingly, the Safety Element addresses fire hazards and protection in extensive detail. Residential developments in wildland areas and limited forestland management resources have created and will perpetuate an environment of dense fuel reserves with seasonal wildland fire risk to the County's residents and their improvements. The most effective strategy to date has been to thin fuel sources at wildland urban interfaces, educate residents, and provide a rapid response to wildland fires when they start.

The Goals, Policies and Programs of the Safety Element recognize and incorporate the combined efforts of all involved parties maintain a tapestry of vigilance, preventative efforts and rapid response to the wildland fires threat. As previously discussed, the Update involves only restructuring, revisions and edits. The language and intent of the Goals, Policies and Programs remain intact.

As part of the update of the Safety Element, the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection is required to review the Safety Element when being amended as Nevada County contains State Responsibility Areas and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. This review was completed in accordance with Government Code §65302.5 on June 19, 2014 (Appendix E). Based on the comments provided by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Nevada County General Plan Safety Element contains the essential Goal, Policy and Program language for providing greater protection and reduced cost and losses from wildfires.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not directly create significant safety hazards or expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. Furthermore, the adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

9. HYDROLOGY / WATER QUALITY

Existing Setting:

The County is located within the watersheds of Truckee River, the Yuba River and the Bear River. Combined, these rivers drain about 420 square miles. The smaller watercourses and creeks that flow into these watersheds are supplied from melting snow pack, annual rainfall, springs, and surfacing groundwater. In general, the County's water quality varies with topography and development. Water quality tends to be good in the mountainous, less developed areas, and is impacted at lower elevations or in more developed areas. Water quality is influenced by several sources, including soil erosion, sedimentation, septic systems, pesticides, and agriculture. Water resources have a multitude of uses from agricultural to domestic, as well as fish and aquatic/riparian habitat, wildlife and plant habitat, and year-round recreation. A number of historic irrigation ditch systems are located throughout the western County, owned and maintained by the Nevada Irrigation District, and on a much smaller scale, by the San Juan Ridge County Water District.

There are a number of public water purveyors within the County; the Nevada Irrigation District, and the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City primarily serve western Nevada County with the Washington

County Water District providing service to the small community of Washington. In the eastern Nevada County the Donner Summit and Truckee Donner Public Utility Districts, and the Glenshire Mutual Water Company provide domestic treated water service.

Nevada County has reported 13 flooding disasters since 1950 the most recent being in 2008. Fortunately these events have not resulted in loss of life or catastrophic property damage in Nevada County. Primarily due to the significant east to west elevation change in the western part of the county, most of the heavy storm rainfall moves quickly out of the watershed. In the eastern part of the County, higher elevation causes most precipitation to fall as snow during the first 4 months of the winter season. Flooding affecting Nevada County normally occurs when heavy rainfall combines with unseasonably warm temperatures that begin a premature melt of the snow pack. This phenomenon is most dramatically seen on the Yuba River with its steep canyon walls and the Truckee River with its smaller river channel. The Bear River because of its lower elevations and shallow riverbed tends to be impacted more by heavy rain over an extended period.

Flooding as a result of dam failure can occur as a result of manmade or natural causes. Such causes include improper sitting, structural design flaws, erosion of the face or foundation, earthquakes, massive landslides, and rapidly rising flood waters. Inundation as a result of dam failure would most likely be the result of an earthquake. However, the area of Nevada County in which these dams exist is not located within an historical seismic zone. In fact, the western half of Nevada County is within the lowest earthquake intensity zone in California.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				✓	A
b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level, which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				✓	A, C
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				✓	A
d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?				✓	A
e. Create or contribute to runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				✓	A
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				✓	A, C
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard				✓	A, 11

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?					
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?				✓	A, 11
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				✓	A, 11
j. Create inundation by mudflow?				✓	A, 10, 14

Impact Discussion:

(9a-j) The General Plan contains a Water Element (Chapter 11) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to water resources in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Water Element.

The Safety Element addresses safety hazards that are associated with flood hazards, which includes: flooding of streams and rivers, dam failures and seiches. Information contained in the Introduction and Setting Section has been revised and refreshed with more current data as part of the Update. For example, the addition of Table 10.1 which lists the primary areas of flooding in both the eastern and western portions of the County and adding detailed information on the 13 flood events reported in the County since the 1950's. The Goals, Policies and Programs Section (previously the Goals, Objectives and Policies) of the Safety Element has been structurally reformatted as part of this effort. However, no amendments are proposed to the existing language (Goal FH-10.3, Policies FH-10.3.1-4).

The Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA) provides guidance for floodplain management. FEMA manages the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides insurance to communities that participate in the program, and works with State and local agencies to adopt floodplain management policies and flood mitigation measures. Nevada County has been a participating community in the NFIP program since January 1, 1983. Nevada County's Floodplain Management Regulations are contained in the Land Use and Development Code Chapter XII of the Nevada County Code which was updated in 2009. Additionally, the Nevada County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan contains a completed assessment of flooding hazards, flood hazard mapping and recommended flood hazard mitigations. No changes are proposed for these sections of the Land Use and Development Code Chapter XII or the Nevada County LHMP.

Adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in a significant impact to hydrology, water quality, or flooding hazards. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of Updates and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

10. LAND USE / PLANNING

Existing Setting:

The project area is the 375,000 acres of privately held land in the unincorporated area of Nevada County, excluding incorporated cities, state and federal lands. Land uses in the unincorporated County range from rural and forested areas to residential-rural and suburban lands, which include a mix of residential, agricultural and commercial uses. Federal and state public lands in the County total 314 square miles of the County's 943 square miles, or approximately 33% of the County's total land area. The unincorporated County contains a variety of resources and constraints, diverse topography and sensitive environments.

Nevada County is composed of a mosaic of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and public land use patterns. While the City of Grass Valley, City of Nevada City, and Town of Truckee are focal points for the development of multiple land uses, there has also been considerable growth in the unincorporated areas of the County since the 1970s. With just under 100,000 residents, Nevada County was ranked as the 36th most populated county in California in 2012. The incorporated areas of Grass Valley, Nevada City and Truckee are home to 33% of the county's population. The remaining 67% of residents live in outlying unincorporated areas. The populace has grown from 92,053 in July 2000 to 98,764 in 2010 with a slight decline in 2012 to 97,182. Population estimates for future growth show a slow but gradual population increase of the next 20 years.

Residential and rural development is governed by the General Plan that provides an overall policy guide, and Zoning Regulations which establish specific standards, varying with each zoning district, which includes 4 residential districts, 4 rural districts, 5 commercial districts, 3 industrial districts and 5 Special Purpose Districts.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in structures and/or land uses incompatible with existing land uses?				✓	A, 15, 16
b. The induction of growth or concentration of population?				✓	A, 20
c. The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project?				✓	A, B
d. Result in the loss of open space?				✓	A, 17
e. Substantially alter the present or planned land use of an area, or conflict with a general plan designation or zoning district?				✓	A, 15, 16, 21, 22
f. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				✓	A, 15, 16, 21, 22
g. Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of				✓	A, 15, 16

an established community, including a low-income or minority community?					
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Impact Discussion:

(10a-g) The General Plan contains a Land Use Element (Chapter 1) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to land use planning and community development in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Land Use Element of the General Plan as part of this Update project.

The adoption of the Update and Ordinance Amendment will not conflict with any applicable land use plans. One of the primary component of the Update is to amend current policy documents to incorporate the Nevada County ALUCP (adopted September 2011), and the Truckee Tahoe ALUCP (adopted October 2010) to ensure land use policy consistency. Each of the ALUCP’s would be considered as land use plans that are applicable within the identified airport influence areas. In addition to being required by state law (Public Utilities Code Section 21676(b) and Government Code Section 65302.3), these amendments are being made to ensure consistency between land use policy documents and avoid potential conflict.

Adoption of the Update or Ordinance Amendment will not result in a significant impact to land use and/or planning. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

11. MINERAL RESOURCES

Existing Setting:

Mineral resources in Nevada County include gold, copper, silver, lead, zinc, chromite, and small amounts of tungsten and manganese. Industrial minerals include barite, quartz for silicon production, and small amounts of limestone, asbestos, clay and mineral paint. In addition, significant deposits of sand, gravel, and rock types suitable for construction aggregate are exposed throughout the County.

In western Nevada County, large areas classified as Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) that have existing deposits measured or indicated by actual site data (MRZ-2a), or inferred from other sources (MRZ-2b), are located in the immediate vicinity of Nevada City (lode gold, placer gold, chromite, sand and gravel) and Grass Valley (lode gold, placer gold, chromite, crushed stone); between Scott’s Flats Reservoir and Red Dog/You Bet (placer gold, sand and gravel); north of State Route 20 between Grass Valley and Lake Wildwood (placer gold, lode gold, chromite, gold, sand and gravel); and north of the South Yuba River (gold, sand and gravel, placer gold). Smaller areas are located west of Penn Valley (copper-zinc, sand and gravel, crushed stone); east of the Spenceville area (copper-zinc); north of Iron Mountain (copper-zinc); around Pine Hill (lode gold); and in various spots along the Bear River running northeast from Lake Combie (crushed stone, sand and gravel).

In central Nevada County there are three large areas classified as MRZ-2a or MRZ-2b stretching from the Nevada-Sierra County line south to the Nevada-Placer County line. The westernmost area extends from the Sleeping Beauty Mine through Washington to south of the Alpha Mine (lode gold, placer gold, sand and gravel, chromite, barite); the middle area extends from the Republic (South) Mine to the Zeibright Mine south of Lowell Hill Ridge (lode gold, placer gold, sand and gravel); and the easternmost area extends from the North Wisconsin Mine south to the Last Change Mine (lode gold). Smaller areas occur near Relief (placer gold); near Dutch Flat (placer gold, barite); and in an area extending from Graniteville south to the Gaston Ridge (placer gold, lode gold).

Eastern Nevada County has one long stretch of land classified as MRZ-2a or MRZ-2b extending along the Truckee River through the Town of Truckee east to Hirschdale (sand and gravel, crushed stone). A smaller area occurs on the northeast side of the Boca Reservoir (sand and gravel).

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓	A, 1
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				✓	A, 1

Impact Discussion:

(11a-b) The General Plan contains a Mineral Management Element (Chapter 17) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to mineral resources in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Mineral Management Element of the General Plan.

The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. Adoption of the Update, in itself, will not directly result in the loss of mineral resources. Furthermore, the adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

12. NOISE

Existing Setting:

In general, most noise in Nevada County is adjacent to major transportation routes that include Interstate 80 and State Routes 20, 49, 89, 147, and 267. Significant noise sources in the County include traffic on major roadways, railroad operations, airports, and localized noise sources such as from industrial uses. However, the overall noise environment in the County is such that most activities do not exceed the established background ambient noise levels.

The General Plan Noise Element and the Land Use and Development Code (Section L-II 4.1.7) establish noise standards for rural and residential designations within the unincorporated areas of the County. Daytime (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.) exterior noise limits are set between 55 and 75 dBA, while evening noise limits (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) are lowered to between 50 and 65 dBA. Nighttime noise standards are the lowest threshold at 40 to 55 dBA for rural designations and 45 to 60 dBA for residential designations.

The adopted Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Comprehensive Land Use Plans (ALUCPs) promote development that is compatible with the airports. Development projects within the airport influence areas are subject to the policies and standards within these ALUCPs which set forth specific noise compatibility criteria to prevent the creation of new noise-generated complaints around the two airports, and to minimize the public’s exposure to excessive aircraft-generated noise.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of the County’s adopted standards established in the General Plan and Land Use and Development Code?				✓	A, 13, 15, 21, 22
b. Expose persons to or generate excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels (e.g., blasting)?				✓	A, 13, 15, 21, 22
c. Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				✓	A, 15, 21, 22
d. Result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				✓	A, 15, 21, 22
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				✓	A, J, 21, 22
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				✓	A, J

Impact Discussion:

(12a-e) As discussed above, significant noise sources in the County are generally created adjacent to transportation routes which includes major highways, railroad routes and airports. Guidance from land use patterns in relation to transportation facilities along with mitigation measures in new development are means to ensure that future noise impacts can be minimized.

The proposed revisions to the Noise Element specifically focus on noise impacts generated from airports by referencing the adopted ALUCPs for the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airports. Both ALUCPs establish specific noise compatibility criteria for locations exposed to potentially disruptive levels of aircraft noise within the identified airport influence areas. Basic compatibility criteria are established (in Chapter 2 of both ALUCP documents) for assessing whether a land use plan, ordinance, or development proposal is considered to be a compatible use. Identified as “supporting compatibility criteria”, noise is specifically addressed in both ALUCP documents. The purpose of noise compatibility policies is to avoid

establishment of noise-sensitive land uses in portions of the airport environs that are exposed to significant level of aircraft noise.

Adopted by the State of California, Airport noise impacts are described by the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). The noise impacts are typically depicted by a set of contours, each of which represents points having the same CNEL value. Noise contour maps (Table 2 B in the Nevada County ALUCP and Figure 2B in the Truckee Tahoe ALUCP) are included as part of the ALUCP documents (Appendices F and G). The locations of CNEL contours are among the factors used to define the airport compatibility zones boundaries. Factors considered in setting the noise compatibility criteria include the following:

- Established federal and state guidelines;
- The ambient noise levels in a community;
- The extent to which noise would intrude upon and interrupt the activity associated with a particular use;
- The extent to which the activity itself generated noise;
- The extent of outdoor activity associated with a particular use; and
- The extent to which indoor uses associated with a particular land use may be made compatible with application of sound attenuation through structural design to comply with the indicated amount of exterior-to-interior noise level reduction.

The objective of the proposed language that references the adopted ALUCPs is the avoidance of future development that would result in development exposing people residing or working in the project area of an airport to excessive noise levels. Amendments to the Noise Element (Chapter 9), includes revised and/or new language relating to noise associated with airport operations (Policies 9.1.20-23) by referencing the adopted ALUCPs. Similarly, the amended LUDC Chapter III Airport language directly references the applicable parts of the ALUCP documents which apply to noise impacts from the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airports.

The proposed Update and Ordinance Amendment consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. Adoption of the Update and Ordinance Amendment will not directly impact significant noise levels or expose persons to excessive noise levels. The adoption of the proposed amendments will not grant any entitlements for development projects. All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

13. POPULATION / HOUSING

Existing Setting:

In January 2013, the State of California Department of Finance (DOF) estimated that the unincorporated area of Nevada County had a population of 65,375. Small towns and rural development that is largely integrated into the natural environment characterize the unincorporated County. Single-family residential development is the predominant housing type within the unincorporated area of the County; much of which occurs in rural areas and small communities.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				✓	A
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓	A
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(13a-c) The General Plan contains a Land Use Element and Housing Element (Chapter 8) that establish specific Goals, Policies and Programs related to land use, population and housing in Nevada County. However, no amendments to the Land Use or Housing Elements are included as part of this Update project.

The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. Adoption of the Update, in itself, will not directly impact population and/or housing. Furthermore, the adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

14. PUBLIC SERVICES

Existing Setting:

Public services within the unincorporated County are provided by the County of Nevada, state and federal agencies, and numerous special districts, including fire protection districts, school districts, park and recreation districts, and an irrigation district.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of or need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following the					

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
public services:					
1. Fire protection?				✓	A
2. Police protection?				✓	A
3. Schools?				✓	A
4. Parks?				✓	A
5. Other public services or facilities?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(14a) The General Plan contains a Public Facilities and Services Element (Chapter 3) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to public services in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Public Facilities and Services Element of the General Plan.

The Safety Element addresses the need to ensure adequate public safety services and facilities through development standards, development fees, and land use patterns. The Safety Element is part of the Update project. However, no amendments are proposed that would alter the existing language that addresses public safety services and facilities (Goal SF-10.6, Policies SF-10.6.1-6).

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to public services. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally all future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

15. RECREATION

Existing Setting:

Recreational opportunities within Nevada County are varied, ranging from public parks with intensively used recreational facilities, to vast tracts of forestlands and drainage systems, which provide a natural environment for passive recreation. Three separate Recreation and Park districts are formed within the County, including the Bear River and Western Gateway Recreation and Park Districts in western Nevada County and the Truckee Donner Recreation & Park District in eastern Nevada County.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				✓	A
b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities				✓	A

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?					
c. Conflict with established recreation uses of the area, including biking, equestrian and/or hiking trails?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(15a-c) The General Plan contains a Recreation Element (Chapter 5) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to recreational uses and facilities in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Recreation Element of the General Plan.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to recreational uses or facilities. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally, the proposed changes to the LUDC Chapter III Airport Zoning are regulatory in nature. No physical construction or any change to the existing land uses would result, either directly or indirectly, from the adoption of the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

All future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Noise and Safety Element Updates, and the LUDC Chapter III Ordinance Amendment.

Mitigation: None Required.

16. TRANSPORTATION / CIRCULATION

Existing Setting:

The Nevada County street system is composed of a combination of roadways, including the interstate highway and freeways, principal arterial roads, minor arterials roads, collector roads and local roads. Approximately 38% of the County’s 2,942-mile circulation system is publicly maintained. The remainder of the roadways are privately owned and maintained, with maintenance entities ranging from individuals and unofficial maintenance groups to recorded road maintenance associations and agreements. Travel characteristics vary widely according to the region in which it occurs.

Western Nevada County is served by State Routes 20, 49 and 174. The rolling hills, rugged terrain, and stream channels of this foothill area of the Sierra Nevada have greatly affected road and utility patterns. Existing land use patterns in the western portion of the County typically consist of more residential uses than commercial or industrial uses. The Grass Valley/Nevada City area has become the primary urban center in this portion of the County. Outside the urban areas, a combination of large residential area such as Lake of the Pines, Lake Wildwood and Alta Sierra with significant amounts of low density residential uses produces more trips than are attracted.

In Eastern Nevada County, traffic issues are related to the heavy volumes of regional traffic. This mountainous area of the Sierra Nevada offers a full range of winter and summer recreational opportunities. These recreational opportunities and the proximity of this area to Reno and the Lake

Tahoe Basin increased its popularity as a tourist destination. This land use pattern causes many trips to end within the area that originate outside the area, or are trips that pass through the area. The “Truckee Community” (including the Donner Lake area) is the major urban area for the eastern portion of the County. In addition to being a station for rail freight and passenger service, the Town of Truckee is at the crossroads of Interstate 80 and State Routes 89 and 267. Interstate 80 is a major transcontinental route and the two state routes are northern entrances to the Tahoe Basin.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				✓	A, 20
b. Result in a need for private or public road maintenance, or new roads?				✓	A
c. Result in effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?				✓	A
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., a sharp curve or dangerous intersection) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				✓	A
e. Result in a substantial impact upon existing transit systems (e.g., bus service) or alteration of present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?				✓	A, 20
f. Result in an alteration of waterborne, rail, or air traffic patterns or levels?				✓	A
g. Result in an increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians, including short-term construction and long-term operational traffic?				✓	A, 20, 21
h. Result in inadequate: Sight distance? Ingress/egress? General road capacity? Emergency access (4290 Standard)?				✓	A, B
i. Result in inconsistency with adopted policies supporting the provision of transit alternatives to automobile transportation on an equitable basis with roadway improvements, e.g. clustered development, commuter-oriented transit, bus turnouts, sidewalks, paths, and bicycle racks?				✓	A, B

Impact Discussion:

(16a-i) The General Plan contains a Circulation Element (Chapter 4) which establishes specific goals, objectives and policies related to transportation and traffic hazards in Nevada County. No amendments are currently proposed for the Circulation Element of the General Plan.

The Safety Element contains language that addresses emergency access issues, including the implementation of the regulations established by Public Resources Code §4290. As contained in the Safety Element, roads are recognized as critical infrastructure supports for suppressing wildfires. They

serve as ingress and egress routes to and from wildfires, staging areas, safety zones, coordinating locations, anchor points for fire suppression activities, and evacuation routes. Most initial incident command posts are established as roadside locations to coordinate with incoming fire equipment. However, no amendments are proposed that would alter the existing language that addresses emergency access issues as contained in the policy document.

The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to transportation or traffic hazards. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally all future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Update.

Mitigation: None Required.

17. UTILITIES / SERVICE SYSTEMS

Existing Setting:

Electricity and Gas: Nevada County is served primarily by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) for natural gas and electricity. The Truckee Donner Public Utility District also supplies electricity. Sources of electrical energy for PG&E include hydroelectric power, fossil fuel, geothermal, and nuclear fuel. Propane is a common fuel source used in Nevada County by individual homes and businesses. Electricity and gas service providers expand service on an as-needed basis.

Water: Public water purveyors including the Nevada Irrigation District (NID), Nevada City, Grass Valley, Washington County Water District, and the San Juan Ridge County Water District. The primary purveyor of treated domestic and agricultural water in western Nevada County is the NID. The Truckee-Donner Public Utility District and the Donner Summit Public Utility District serve Eastern Nevada County.

The California Urban Water Management Planning Act requires urban water suppliers to initiate planning strategies that make every effort to ensure the appropriate level of reliability in its water service sufficient to meet the needs of its various categories of customers during normal, dry, and multiple dry-water years. The Land Use and Development Code also contains standards for water wells, the treatment of surface water for domestic purposes, and water availability for the division of land (Chapter X), and requirements for emergency water supplies in new residential subdivisions and remote single-family dwellings (Chapter XVI).

Wastewater: In County areas outside the Cities' service areas, wastewater treatment is largely provided by private septic systems. Nevada County Sanitation District No. 1 provides sewage collection and treatment facilities for the wastewater needs of western Nevada County for the areas outside of Grass Valley and Nevada City and the communities of Lake Wildwood, Lake of the Pines, Kingsbury Greens, Gold Creek, Penn Valley, Mountain Lakes Estates, North San Juan, Cascade Shores, and Glenbrook. The Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency provides wastewater treatment services for the Truckee area.

The Nevada County Environmental Health Department regulates private septic systems throughout the County, while all other wastewater discharge generated by public wastewater treatment facilities of the Nevada County Sanitation District No. 1 and Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency is regulated under an

NPDES direct discharge permit. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board administers this permit. Chapter VI of the Land Use and Development Code contains policies related to sewage disposal, and Section L-II 4.2.13 contains conditions for solid and waste recycling facilities at new developments.

Solid waste: Solid waste generated in Nevada County is currently collected at McCourtney Road Transfer Station and then disposed of at the Anderson Landfill in Shasta County for solid waste generated in the western portion of the County and the Eastern Regional Landfill in Placer County for solid waste generated in the eastern portion of the County. The County’s green waste program provides curbside removal in many locations throughout Western County. County residents may also dispose of green waste at the McCourtney Road Transfer Station in Western County. All green waste is collected at the McCourtney Road Transfer Station, chipped onsite, and then transported to a biomass energy facility in the Central Valley. State law requires that any “development project” for which an application for a building permit is submitted after the effective date of this ordinance to provide an adequate storage area for collection and removal of recyclable materials. Section L-II 4.2.13 of the Land Use and Development Code contains conditions for solid and waste recycling facilities at new developments.

Would the proposed project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Result in a need for the extension of electrical power or natural gas?				✓	A
b. Require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				✓	C
c. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				✓	C, L
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				✓	C
e. Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				✓	B
f. Be served by a landfill or transfer station with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs?				✓	B
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				✓	A, B
h. Require a need for the extension of communication systems?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(17 a-h) The adoption of the Update, in itself, will not result in impacts to utilities. The proposed Update consists only of text amendments to policy documents, which are intended to guide development within the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally all future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require

site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Update.

Mitigation: None Required

18. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact	Reference Source (Appendix A)
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of major periods of California's history or prehistory?				✓	A
b. Does the project have environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of the project are considered when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects.)				✓	A
c. Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				✓	A
d. Does the project require the discussion and evaluation of a range of reasonable alternatives, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project?				✓	A

Impact Discussion:

(18 a-d) The proposed Update is strictly a policy document, intended to guide the development of land in the County. The adoption of the proposed Update will not grant any entitlements for development projects. Additionally all future development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County’s land use development objectives, will be considered a project under CEQA and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, a *no impact* would result from the adoption of the Update.

Mitigation: None Required

RECOMMENDATION OF THE PROJECT PLANNER

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

 X I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

 I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

 I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

 I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or a "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

 I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Original Signed
Kimberly Hunter, Senior Planner

7/18/14
Date

APPENDIX A – REFERENCE SOURCES

- A. Planning Department
 - B. Department of Public Works
 - C. Environmental Health Department
 - D. Nevada Irrigation District
 - E. Natural Resource Conservation Service/Resource Conservation District
 - F. Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
 - G. Caltrans
 - H. Office of Emergency Services
 - I. Department of Fish & Wildlife
 - J. Nevada County Geographic Information Systems
 - K. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire)
 - L. Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - M. Department of Toxic Substances Control
 - N. State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
1. State Division of Mines and Geology. *Mineral Classification Map*, 1990.
 2. State Department of Fish and Wildlife. *Migratory Deer Ranges*, 1988.
 3. State Department of Fish and Wildlife. *Natural Diversity Data Base Maps*, as updated.
 4. CAL FIRE. *Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map for Nevada County*, 2007. Adopted by CAL FIRE on November 7, 2007. Available at: <http://www.fire.ca.gov/wildland_zones_maps.php>.
 5. State Division of Mines and Geology. *Fault Map of California*, 1990.
 6. California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection. 2008. *Nevada County Important Farmland Data*. Available at: <http://redirect.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/fmmp/county_info_results.asp>.
 7. State Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection. *Nevada County Hardwood Rangelands*, 1993.
 8. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. *National Wetlands Inventory*, December 1995.
 9. Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2007. *Official Soil Series Descriptions (OSD) with series extent mapping capabilities*. Accessed November 3, 2010, 2008. Available at http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/manuscripts/CA619/0/nevada_a.pdf.
 10. U.S. Geological Service. *Nevada County Landslide Activity Map*, 1970, as found in the Draft Nevada County General Plan, Master Environmental Inventory, December 1991, Figure 8-3.
 11. Federal Emergency Management Agency. *Flood Insurance Rate Maps*, as updated.
 12. Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District. *Guidelines for Assessing Air Quality Impacts of Land Use Projects*, 2000.
 13. County of Nevada. *Nevada County General Plan Noise Contour Maps*, 1993.
 14. Nevada County, 1991. *Nevada County Master Environmental Inventory*. Prepared by Harland Bartholomew & Associates, Inc. (Sacramento, CA). Nevada County, CA.
 15. Nevada County. 1995. *Nevada County General Plan: Volume 1: Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Implementation Measures*. Prepared with the assistance of Harland Bartholomew & Associates, Inc. (Sacramento, CA), and as amended. Nevada County, CA.
 16. *Nevada County Zoning Regulations*, adopted July 2000, and as amended.
 17. Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Recreational Trails Master Plan, September 21, 2010.
 18. Nevada County Transportation Commission, 2010. *Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan*.
 19. Nevada County Transportation Commission, 2011. *Nevada County Pedestrian Improvement Plan*.
 20. Nevada County, 2010. *Nevada County Housing Element 2009-2014*.
 21. Nevada County Airport Land Use Commission. *Nevada County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*, 2011. Prepared by Mead & Hunt, Inc., Aviation Services (Santa Rosa, CA).
 22. Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Commission. *Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*, 2010. Prepared by Mead & Hunt, Inc., Aviation Services (Santa Rosa, CA).