



RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE



Napa County is blessed with an extensive landscape of open spaces. These open spaces are integral to the quality of life and economic vitality of Napa County and its residents.

This Element of the General Plan defines what is meant by “open space” and focuses primarily on the recreational uses of open space. Other uses of open space are discussed in greater detail in the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Element, the Conservation Element, the Community Character Element, and the Safety Element.

USES OF OPEN SPACE

The term “open space” as used in Napa County does not denote a single land use, nor is it a designation for empty, unused, or not-yet-developed places. Rather, open space is best understood as lands that support an array of activities and amenities, both measurable and intangible, which both derive from and directly depend on the land’s sustainable natural resources.



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Recreation is one of the appropriate and desirable uses of open space. Other open space benefits include the preservation of natural resources, the managed production of resources including forestlands, rangelands, and agricultural lands, the recharge of groundwater supplies, and protection of public health and safety. This Element primarily focuses on the recreational uses of open space. More information on other uses and benefits of open space can be found in other Elements of this General Plan, as outlined below.

- Open space facilitates a healthy agricultural economy which complements and supports growth focused on urban areas. These open space benefits are addressed primarily in the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Element, which designates lands for a variety of uses and contains policies and actions to preserve agricultural lands.
- Large, connected open space areas allow for a range of natural communities that offer habitat necessary to sustain wildlife and plant biodiversity. These open space benefits are addressed primarily in the Conservation Element, which contains policies and actions intended to conserve open space lands that contain important natural resources.
- Open spaces supporting healthy plant communities are essential to the quality and adequate supply of surface and ground waters needed by native plants and animals, by agriculture, and by people. These open space benefits are addressed primarily in the Conservation Element, which contains policies and actions intended to conserve watershed health.
- Open space areas often contain significant archaeological, cultural, and historic sites, and provide opportunities for research, interpretation and education. These open space benefits are addressed primarily in the Community Character Element, in which policies are provided to ensure the protection of these resources.
- Open space provides the visual backdrop that defines the sense of place for Napa County residents and visitors alike. This open space benefit is addressed primarily in the Community Character Element, where policies related to the County's aesthetic resources can be found.



Recreation

Napa County defines recreation as, “Any activity undertaken voluntarily and without compensation, which renews one’s health and spirits.” Several major types of recreation take place in the county:

- **Urban recreation** includes recreation which takes place in highly improved parks and recreational facilities, including but not limited to sports fields, courts, climbing structures, running tracks, paved walking paths and bicycle lanes in incorporated areas, and swimming pools.
- **Nature-based recreation** includes recreation which takes place in and around, and is significantly focused on, the natural environment, including but not limited to walking, hiking, equestrian and mountain bicycle riding, camping in tents, recreational vehicles, and rustic cabins, wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, picnicking, swimming in lakes and rivers, and paddling.
- **Commercial recreation** includes any recreational activity provided by a for-profit business or corporation, excluding recreational activities provided under contract or concession agreement with a public agency.
- **Motorized recreation** includes any recreational activity that involves use of a motor or engine.

Recreational Facilities

Recreational facilities include a wide range of buildings, facilities, and infrastructure which support recreation. These include parking areas, access roads, trails, picnic tables, restroom and shower facilities, information kiosks, interpretive and environmental education centers, rustic cabins, visitor service and caretaker facilities, and associated utilities.

Open Space

Open space includes lands which are primarily either undeveloped or developed only with improvements which are necessary or ancillary to the preservation, stewardship, and appreciation of natural, cultural, and archaeological resources, to the protection of water quality and quantity, to the raising of food and fiber, and to the provision of recreation.

Dedicated open space includes those publicly-owned open space lands which are perpetually dedicated for open space purposes, as well as those private open space lands which are dedicated to open space purposes through easement or comparable dedication or restriction whose beneficiary is either a public agency or a qualified non-profit land conservation organization.

Parks

Parks are dedicated open space areas available to the public for recreation. The following are commonly used definitions for various types of parks:

Neighborhood parks are small, usually five acres or less in size, within easy walking distance of their primary users, primarily providing urban recreational opportunities, often with a special focus on young children and families.

Community parks are typically 10 to 40 acres in size, serving multiple neighborhoods, primarily providing urban recreational opportunities with a special focus on team sports and larger group gatherings.

Regional parks are usually 50 acres or larger, serving local residents as well as visitors from more distant communities. Regional parks include significant natural features and are primarily focused on providing nature-based recreation.

Preserves

Preserves are dedicated open space areas whose primary purpose is the preservation of native plants and wildlife, significant landscape features, and natural resources.



A central assumption of this Element is that the benefits of open space are interrelated and interdependent, and that particular open space lands simultaneously can, and often do, provide multiple benefits. Some open space uses have the potential to impede or conflict with other open space uses. However, careful planning can eliminate or minimize these incompatibilities. Moreover, the long-term sustainability of any one of the benefits of open space depends on successfully protecting and maintaining the other benefits.

RECREATIONAL NEEDS AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

In 1970, half of the county's population lived in unincorporated areas. Since then, growth in the incorporated jurisdictions has resulted in a dramatic shift in the city/county split; by 2005, nearly 80 percent of the County's residents lived in incorporated jurisdictions, a trend which is expected to continue throughout the time span covered by this General Plan. An increasingly urbanized populace is a direct result of county and city policies designed to protect the natural resources and agricultural economy of Napa County by focusing growth inside and adjacent to the county's incorporated communities.

The County's growing urban population has increased demand for opportunities to recreate in and enjoy the natural open spaces that surround the urbanized areas. Generally, however, over the past several decades, outdoor recreational opportunities in Napa County have not increased and in some instances have actually become more limited. For example, the City of Napa's Milliken Reservoir watershed was formerly open to school groups through a cooperative agreement between the City of Napa, the Napa Valley Unified School District, and the Napa Junior College District, and included a day and overnight camping area. The watershed was closed after the passage of Proposition 13 due to insufficient funding. The Boy Scouts of America used to operate a campground at the north end of Lake Berryessa; it closed due to uncertainties over future lease arrangements combined with the need for building code upgrades.

Perhaps the biggest changes have occurred on private lands. Informal arrangements between property owners allowing shared recreational uses were once common, but have become rarer as new homes have been built in rural areas, as more of the population has become urbanized, and as property owner concerns about liability have increased.

One measure of the demand for outdoor recreation is to look at typical participation rates and usage patterns for various recreational activities.

By far the most popular recreational activities are walking for fitness and fun, walking pets, sightseeing, and wildlife viewing, as shown below.

**TABLE ROS-A:
AVERAGE ANNUAL DAYS OF PARTICIPATION IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES
BY CALIFORNIANS (2003)**

Recreational Activity	Days per Year	Rank
Walking for fitness and fun	94.4	1
Walking a pet	34.8	2
Driving for pleasure, sightseeing, driving through natural scenery	31.3	3
Wildlife viewing, bird watching, viewing natural scenery	25.3	4
Jogging and fitness running	23.1	5
Bicycling on paved surfaces	19.6	6
Pool swimming	18.5	7
Casual, unstructured play on open turf areas	17.8	8
Trail hiking	16.6	9
Beach activities (including sunbathing, surf play)	14.0	10
Using play equipment, tot lots	13.0	11
Picnicking in developed areas	9.0	12
Softball and baseball	8.6	13
Soccer, football, or rugby	7.8	14
Outdoor cultural events (festivals, fairs, concerts, historical reenactments, outdoor theater)	7.2	15
Visiting historic or cultural sites, museums	7.1	16
Other activities	6.5	17
Basketball	6.2	18
Visiting outdoor nature museums, zoos, or arboretums	6.0	19
Fishing - freshwater	5.8	20
Camping in developed sites with facilities such as toilets and tables	5.6	21
Golf	5.5	22
Swimming in freshwater lakes, rivers and/or streams	5.2	23
Bicycling on unpaved surfaces and trails, mountain biking	5.1	24
Swimming in saltwater, snorkeling, scuba diving	4.5	25
Motor boating	4.1	26
Horseback riding, horse shows and events	3.9	27



Recreational Activity	Days per Year	Rank
Volleyball	3.6	28
Tennis	3.6	29
In-line skating	3.5	30
Gathering mushrooms, berries, or other natural products	3.2	31
Skateboarding	3.2	32
Camping in trailer or RV sites with hookups	3.0	33
Camping in a primitive site without facilities	2.8	34
Target shooting (including pistol and skeet)	2.6	35
Off-road vehicle use - motorcycles, ATVs, dune buggies	2.5	36
Wakeboarding	2.4	37
Backpack camping	2.3	38
Fishing - saltwater (including abalone, clams, crabs, etc.)	2.2	39
Off-road vehicle use - four-wheel drive	2.2	40
Surfing	2.1	41
Paddle sports (kayaking, rowing, canoeing, and rafting)	1.9	42
Hunting (large and small game)	1.9	43
Using personal watercraft	1.7	44
Water skiing	1.6	45
Sail boating	1.2	46
Downhill (Alpine) skiing	1.2	47
Archery (hunting and target shooting)	1.1	48
Winter sports (non-mechanized - sledding, snow play, ice skating)	1.0	49
Rock climbing/bouldering	0.8	50
Snowboarding	0.7	51
Windsurfing	0.5	52
Cross-country skiing	0.5	53
Orienteering/geocaching	0.5	54
Snowmobiling	0.25	55

Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation, "Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002: An Element of the Outdoor Recreation Plan," December 2003, p. 30.

Non-Hispanic whites are more likely to prefer undeveloped natural areas than are people of Hispanic descent, who are more likely to prefer to recreate in developed settings.

**TABLE ROS-B:
RECREATIONAL PREFERENCES BY HISPANICS AND NON-HISPANICS IN CALIFORNIA (2003)**

Type of Outdoor Recreation Area Preferred	Hispanics	Non-Hispanic
Highly developed parks and recreation areas	29.9%	18.8%
Developed nature-oriented parks and recreation areas	40.3%	34.9%
Natural and undeveloped areas	16.4%	31.8%
Historical or cultural buildings, sites, or areas	9.0%	8.4%
Private, not public, outdoor recreation areas and facilities	4.5%	6.1%

Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation, “Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002: An Element of the Outdoor Recreation Plan,” December 2003, p. 57.

Two thirds of the trips by Californians to recreation areas require 10 minutes or less travel time each way, while only 16 percent of these trips were over 20 minutes in length. (Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation, “Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Plan,” December 2003) This pattern underscores the importance of having significant regional park and trail opportunities within a 10-15 minute distance of where people live.

Current participation rates are the result of both user *preferences*—what types of recreation people would like to take part in—and *opportunity*—the types of recreation available to them.

The state of California’s “Outdoor Recreation Plan” (2003) includes a methodology for estimating “latent demand,” (recreation needs that are not met by existing facilities) to help identify where public agencies should focus their efforts in terms of providing new recreational opportunities. As shown in Table ROS-C, latent demand can vary considerably from current recreational patterns. The greatest unmet demands statewide are for camping in developed campgrounds, trail hiking, walking for fitness and fun, and wildlife viewing.

**TABLE ROS-C:
LATENT DEMAND AND PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES (2003)
WHAT CALIFORNIANS WOULD HAVE DONE MORE OF, IF OPPORTUNITIES HAD BEEN
AVAILABLE TO THEM**

Recreation Activity	Latent Demand Index	Public Support Index	Combined Needs Index	Combined Index Rank	Participation Rank
Camping in developed sites with facilities such as toilets, tables	921	1375	2296	1	12
Trail walking	796	1078	1874	2	9
Walking for fitness and fun	522	786	1308	3	1



Recreation Activity	Latent Demand Index	Public Support Index	Combined Needs Index	Combined Index Rank	Participation Rank
Wildlife viewing, bird watching, viewing natural scenery	490	613	1102	4	8
Bicycling on paved surfaces	464	516	980	5	14
Picnicking in developed areas	396	576	972	6	7
Visiting outdoor nature museums, zoos, and arboretums	409	533	942	7	6
Visiting historic or cultural sites, museums	362	540	902	8	3
Fishing - freshwater	442	381	823	9	19
Attending outdoor cultural events (festivals, fairs, concerts, historical reenactments, outdoor theater)	440	379	818	10	4
Beach activities (including sunbathing), surf play	293	492	785	11	5
Camping at a primitive site without facilities	357	381	738	12	21
Horseback riding, horse shows and events	433	272	705	13	32
Camping in trailer or RV sites with hookups	229	411	640	14	30
Driving for pleasure, sightseeing, driving through natural scenery	297	336	632	15	2
Pool swimming	318	296	614	16	11
Backpack camping	288	244	532	17	29
Swimming in freshwater lakes, rivers and/or streams	269	220	489	18	13
Bicycling on unpaved surfaces and trails, mountain biking	252	236	488	19	24
Using play equipment, tot lots	117	358	474	20	16
Paddle sports (kayaking, rowing, canoeing, and rafting)	342	116	457	21	27
Using open turf areas (casual and unstructured activities/games)	166	260	426	22	10
Walking a pet	187	207	394	23	15
Target shooting (including pistol and skeet)	200	142	342	24	39



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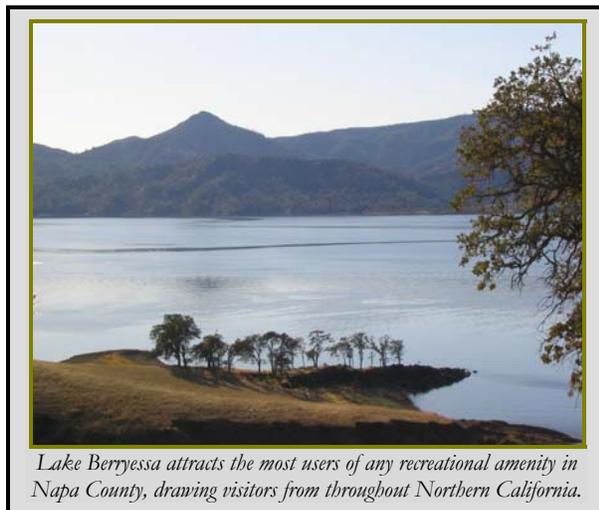
Recreation Activity	Latent Demand Index	Public Support Index	Combined Needs Index	Combined Index Rank	Participation Rank
Soccer, football, or rugby	121	219	340	25	25
Swimming in saltwater, snorkeling, scuba diving	192	129	321	26	17
Jogging and fitness running	128	180	308	27	18
Off-road vehicle use (motorcycles, ATVs, dune buggies)	149	137	286	28	38
Basketball	128	131	258	29	23
Tennis	133	118	251	30	33
Rock climbing/bouldering	176	70	246	31	40
Softball and baseball	84	161	245	32	22
Golf	161	78	240	33	26
Hunting (large and small game)	113	108	221	34	49
Gathering mushrooms, berries, or other natural products	182	36	218	35	37
Skateboarding	49	150	200	36	48
Fishing - saltwater (including catching abalone, clams, crabs)	116	82	198	37	35
Motor boating	119	78	198	38	20
Off-road vehicle use (four-wheel drive)	94	79	173	39	31
Winter sports (non-mechanized sledding, snow play, ice skating)	103	56	160	40	28
Archery (hunting and target shooting)	125	34	159	41	52
Volleyball	94	64	158	42	36
Downhill (Alpine) skiing	115	42	157	43	34
Snowmobiling	128	16	144	44	54
Sail boating	93	47	140	45	46
Surfing	96	44	140	46	44
Other activities	75	61	136	47	42
Cross-country skiing	100	34	134	48	51
Using personal watercraft	90	41	131	49	41
Snowboarding	67	46	113	50	47



Recreation Activity	Latent Demand Index	Public Support Index	Combined Needs Index	Combined Index Rank	Participation Rank
In-line skating	76	34	110	51	43
Water skiing	59	29	88	52	45
Windsurfing	55	18	74	53	55
Wakeboarding	47	22	69	54	50
Orienteering/geocaching	40	4	44	55	53

Source: California Department of Parks and Recreation, "Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002: An Element of the Outdoor Recreation Plan," December 2003, pp. 38-39.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND CHARACTERISTICS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION



Lake Berryessa attracts the most users of any recreational amenity in Napa County, drawing visitors from throughout Northern California.

Non-urban recreational opportunities in Napa County are provided by both the public and private sectors, but overall are limited in supply. On the public side, due to the lack of county-level institutional and financial capacity to provide recreation, the recreational opportunities which do exist are mostly provided by the federal and state governments. Yet while the federal and state governments together have extensive public land holdings in Napa County, their ability to provide recreation opportunities has also been constrained, due to other responsibilities and limited funding. On the private side, the high cost of land and other factors such as liability make provision of outdoor recreation economically marginal at best except for a few specialized markets.

In terms of user numbers, the biggest recreation provider by far is the Bureau of Reclamation; more than a million people a year visit Lake Berryessa. The Bureau provides two public day use areas for picnicking, fishing, and hiking, as well as one public boat launch. Tent and RV camping, houseboat and other boat rentals, trailer parks and related rentals, and retail activities have been for many years provided through seven long-term concession contracts. The nature and scope of these concession-provided facilities and services is currently undergoing major changes, with an increased emphasis on short-term overnight accommodations, in part in response to strong demand for overnight accommodations in natural settings. Unlike most recreational uses, campgrounds and houseboat, park model, and cabin rentals have the potential to generate sufficient user fee revenues to cover both capital and operating expenses and modest profits, when they are provided by the private sector through concession contracts.

Other improved campgrounds with associated nature-based recreation are provided at Bothe-Napa State Park by California State Parks and at Skyline Park by a non-profit association. Both campgrounds operate at or near capacity on weekends during the peak season. As with facilities at Lake Berryessa, overnight visitors generate the bulk of the operating revenues of these parks. Boating, both motorized and non-motorized, is another popular activity. However, boating access in Napa County is limited; the primary locations are Lake Berryessa which provides all types of boating, Lake Hennessey operated by the City of Napa which allows

non-motorized and small motor boating with no body-water contact permitted, and the lower stretches of the Napa River which are popular for fishing boats, motorized boats, and canoes and kayaks. While the actual rental of boats is sufficiently profitable to support private rental businesses and can be a profit center for a multipurpose private recreational facility, public boat launches are free or low-cost and require public subsidies for operations and maintenance.

There is also strong demand, but limited supply, for a variety of day use activities, including picnicking, hiking, and mountain biking. However, other than associated parking or park entrance fees at some locations, the public is not accustomed to paying to engage in these activities, and a lack of public funding for operations and maintenance has limited the availability of facilities for these activities.

Equestrian activities are also popular, but again available opportunities are limited. There are a few privately operated stables, but few public trails, and the high cost of land and liability concerns limit the availability of private trail riding opportunities.

Hunting and target shooting are overall declining in popularity, but retain a core group of active participants. Both activities are allowed on Bureau of Land Management holdings and on some private lands, and hunting is allowed on State Fish and Game holdings. However, the public agencies have very limited staffing to supervise these activities, with the result that resource stewardship and issues such as trespass and user conflicts have proven to be increasingly difficult to address. Opportunities for hunting on private lands have also decreased as open space lands have converted to uses with higher economic value.

A few specialized activities, such as archery, disc golf, and paintball have relatively small but active participant bases. While these activities can be operationally self-supporting, they do not appear to generate sufficient revenues to cover high land costs, and so depend on the availability of public land (such as at Skyline Park), occupy sites as an interim use prior to other development, or provide supplemental income for landowners who own land for other reasons.

In general, therefore, while there is a strong demand for outdoor recreational opportunities, the ability to maintain and expand facilities and services in Napa County will require a flexible blend of techniques, including (a) partnerships between public agencies which own open space lands and private and non-profit entities able to manage public access using fee revenues and volunteer community resources, (b) providing multi-use facilities where management and operating costs can be spread across a diverse mix of recreational activities, and (c) public financing for popular activities for which user fees are impractical or undesirable.

FORMATION OF NAPA COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

In recognition of enduring public support in Napa County for protecting open space, as well as increasing demand for outdoor recreation combined with limited opportunities for the public to directly experience the natural environment, the Napa County Board of Supervisors in 2003 appointed a 16-member advisory committee to research and develop recommendations for addressing these related concerns. Based on the recommendation of this advisory committee, the Board of Supervisors proposed formation of the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District utilizing the institutional structure authorized by Section 5500 et seq. of the California Public Resources Code. Key features of the District structure include a countywide jurisdiction and a directly-elected five-member governing board. Establishment of the District was approved by the voters in November 2006. No dedicated funding source for the District was proposed at the time of formation, with funding expected to come from a combination of sources, including grants, gifts, partnership arrangements, revenues generated by activities, and possible future voter-approved measures.



OPEN SPACE OWNERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Nearly 90 percent of Napa County is “open space” of some type (see the definitions of various open space types on page 216 of this Element). About 450,000 acres of a total of approximately 507,000 acres in the county fall into this category. About three-fourths of these open space lands are privately owned. Private open space lands are used for farming (approximately 50,000 acres) and grazing (approximately 54,000 acres), with the remainder relatively natural watershed lands that accommodate a variety of low-intensity uses including rural residences, hunting, fishing, and other privately-sponsored recreational activities. Approximately 14,400 acres of these private lands have their open space values permanently protected through conservation easements.

Almost one-quarter (24%) of the land in the county is dedicated open space owned in fee title by public agencies or land conservation non-profit organizations. To put this figure in context, the nine-county San Francisco Bay Region in 2005 as a whole also had 24 percent of its total area in dedicated open space, according to a data compiled by the Bay Area Open Space Council. Marin County had the greatest percentage of dedicated open space (58%), while Solano and Sonoma Counties had the least (13%).

The federal government is by far the largest public property owner in Napa County with nearly 63,000 acres of land and water under its control (see Table ROS-D). The federal Bureau of Land Management manages most of this land. The federal Bureau of Reclamation manages the remainder, in and around Lake Berryessa.

The State of California is the second largest owner of open space lands. The state agency with the most acreage is the Department of Fish and Game, which manages wetlands near the mouth of the Napa River and oak woodlands, grasslands, and chaparral north of Lake Berryessa. The California Department of Parks and Recreation is also a major landowner, operating Robert Louis Stevenson State Park and Bothe-Napa State Park. Other state agencies include the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Regents of the University of California, and the Department of Mental Health.

Other major property owners include the cities of Napa and Vallejo, both of which own and operate domestic water supply reservoirs in the County, and the City of American Canyon, which includes Newell Ranch among its holdings. With the exception of Lake Hennessey, which is partly open to the public, these City holdings are as of 2007 not currently open for general public use.

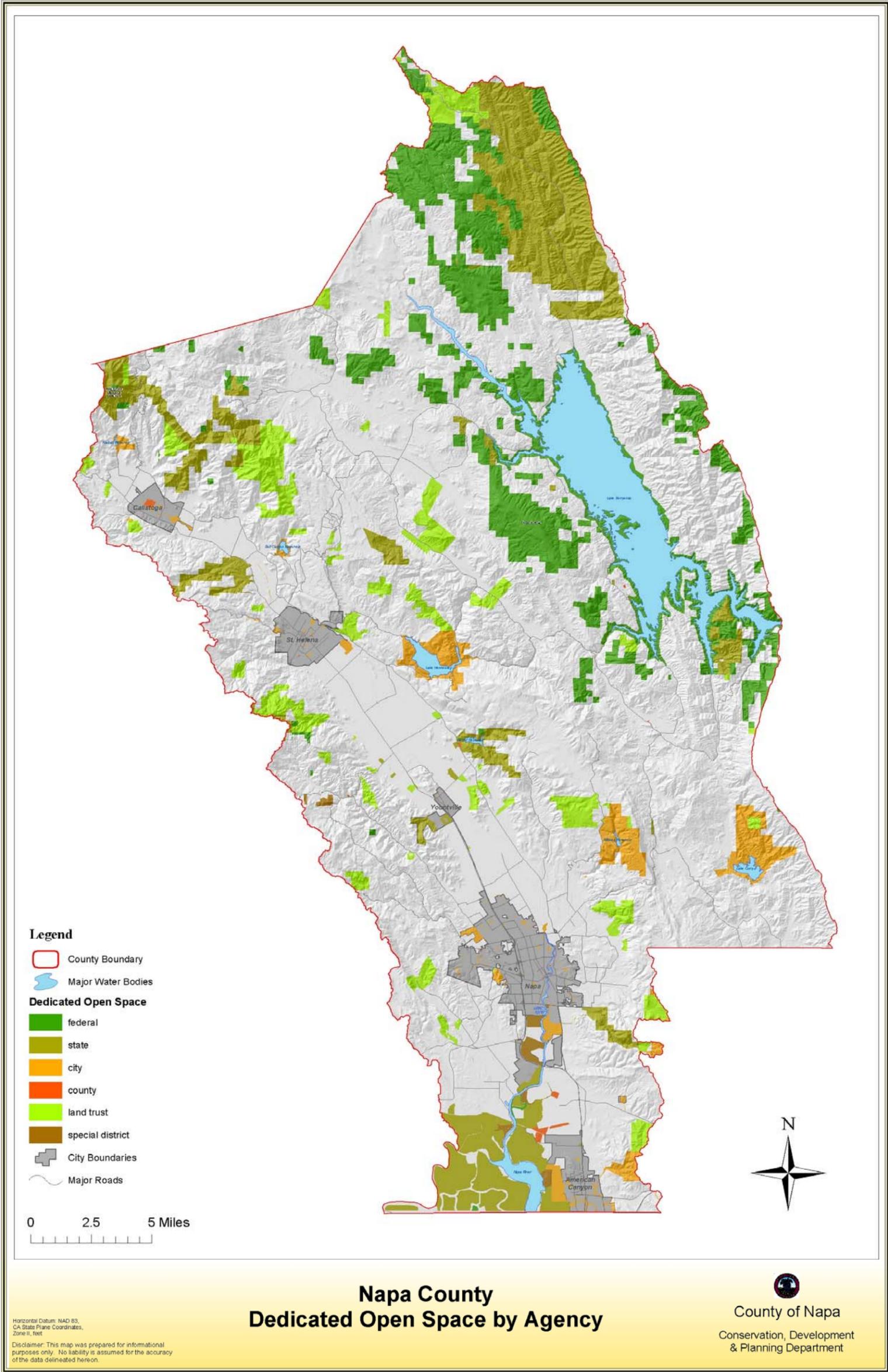


**TABLE ROS-D:
DEDICATED OPEN SPACE (2006)**

Agency	Acres
USA	62,781
State of California	42,393
County of Napa	356
City of Napa	5,778
City of American Canyon	1,358
City of St. Helena	435
City of Calistoga	400
Town of Yountville	9
City of Vallejo	3,256
Napa Flood Control District	624
Napa Community College District	185
Napa Sanitation District	116
Spanish Flat Water District	7
Land Trust of Napa County Preserves	5,885
Quail Ridge Wilderness Conservancy	37
Private Lands Protected Through Conservation Easements	14,398
Total	138,017 acres

Source: County of Napa Department of Conservation, Development and Planning

FIGURE ROS-1: DEDICATED OPEN SPACE BY AGENCY

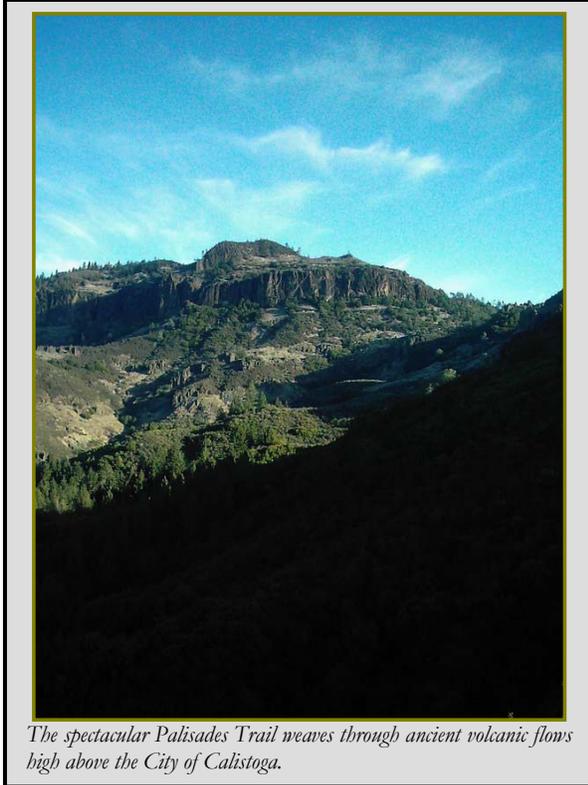




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LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE



The spectacular Palisades Trail weaves through ancient volcanic flows high above the City of Calistoga.

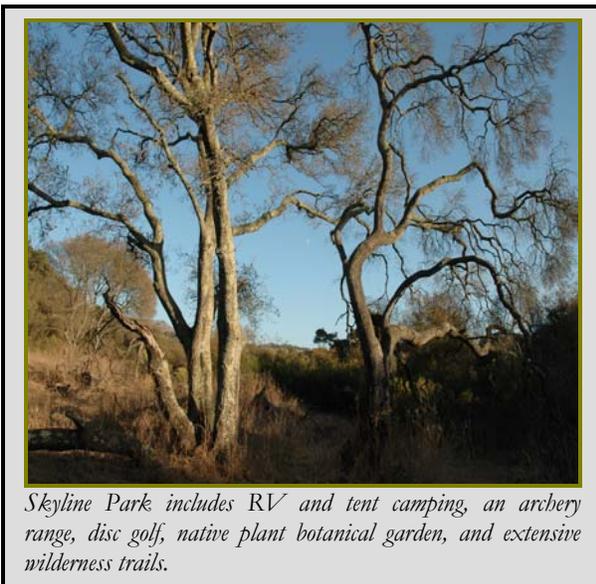
Open space owned by public agencies or land conservation organizations offers the greatest potential for public recreation, since there is no need for land acquisition funding and less potential for adverse impacts on agriculture and other desirable land uses.

Publicly-owned open space is primarily concentrated in the eastern portion of the county. Most of these lands are legally open to the public for recreational purposes, and although they are a considerable distance from where most Napa County residents reside, could offer a wide range of all-day and overnight recreational benefits.

However, in practical terms the potential benefit of these public lands for recreation for the most part has been only minimally realized. There is little or no signage or public information indicating which lands are open to the public or the recreational opportunities which are available.

With only a few exceptions, there are no maps, staging areas, designated trails, picnic and camping facilities, interpretive programs, or ranger support. Some of the lands are “landlocked,” with no public access other

than across privately owned lands, which are usually off-limits to the public. Other areas, such as the extensive Cedar Roughs area owned by the Bureau of Land Management, are densely covered with vegetation and lack trails that could allow the public convenient access.



Skyline Park includes RV and tent camping, an archery range, disc golf, native plant botanical garden, and extensive wilderness trails.

Existing accessible open spaces with outdoor recreational opportunities within the Napa Valley watershed are far more limited in scope. The largest area of accessible public open space is south of the City of Napa in the Napa-Sonoma marshes and Napa River floodplain. These lands are primarily managed by the California Department of Fish and Game for habitat purposes. The primary recreational uses are hunting and fishing. Very little information, signage, official trails, or visitor service are provided. Current users are mostly boaters, hunters, and fishermen.

The second most significant collection of accessible open spaces is the land owned and operated by California State Parks at the north end of the Napa Valley. Both Napa State Park and the nearby Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park offer camping, trails, and interpretive programs, while the Robert Louis

Stevenson State Park offers trails to the top of Mount St. Helena and along a portion of the Palisades above Calistoga.

Skyline Park, an 850-acre open space area owned by the state, leased by the County, and operated by a non-profit organization, is the most significant locally provided regional park in the county. It offers a diverse mix of recreational opportunities, including RV and tent camping, numerous hiking, equestrian and mountain biking trails, an archery range, a disc (Frisbee) golf course, horse arena, and a native plant garden.

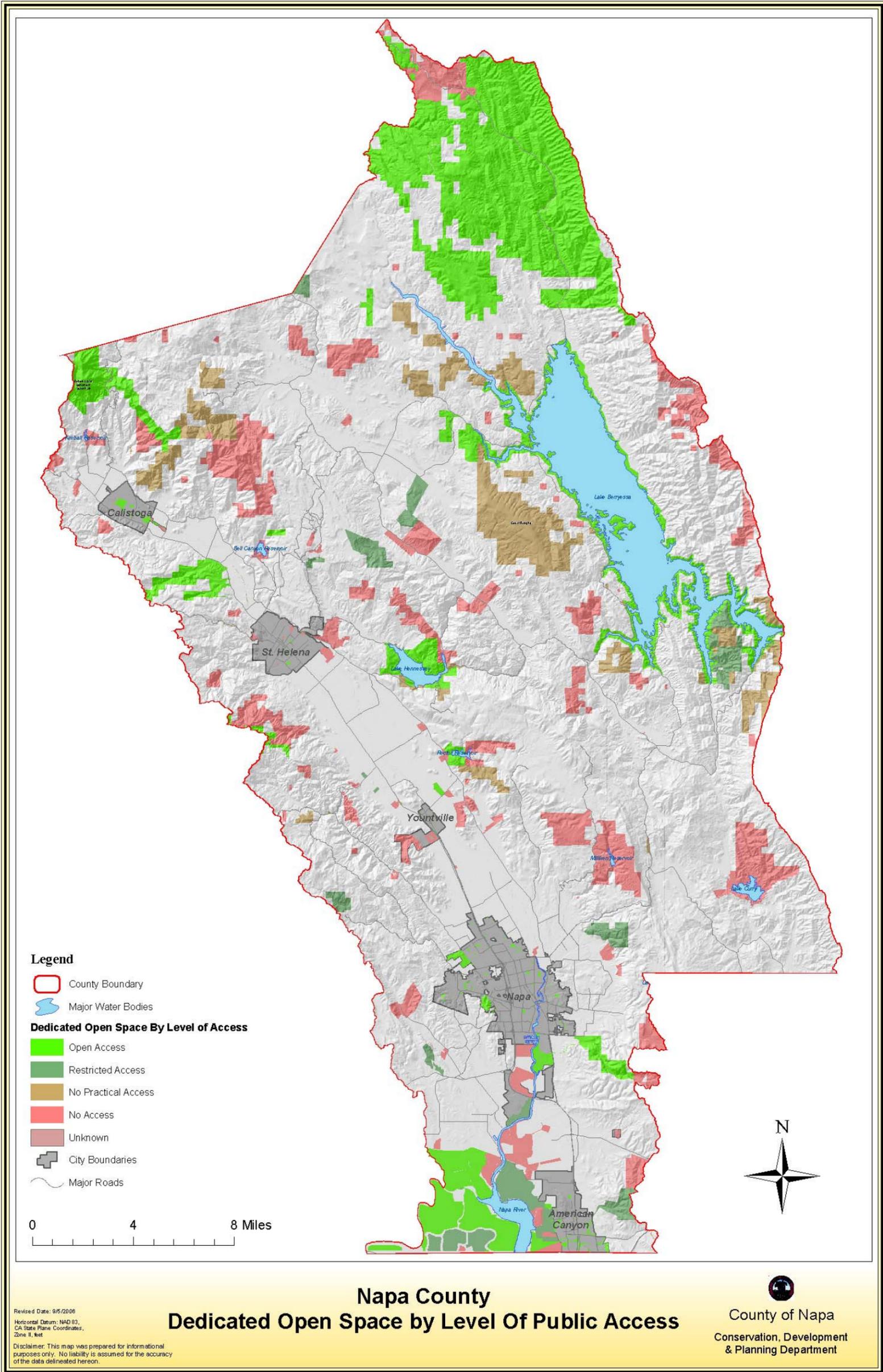
Lake Hennessey, a City of Napa reservoir, allows limited boating and fishing and offers a walking trail along a section of the shoreline on the north side of the lake, although most of the watershed is currently closed to the public. Finally, the 843-acre Las Posadas State Forest east of Angwin, while not generally open for public recreation, does allow some limited access for organized groups.

The disparity between where most Napa County residents live and where accessible public open space is located is illustrated in Figure ROS-3 and documented in Table ROS-E. While most people are willing to travel longer distances when considering all-day or overnight recreational activities, most outdoor recreation is for shorter periods of time. The combination of busy lifestyles, a desire for exercise incorporated into daily routines, lack of transportation, and other factors translate into strong demand for parks within a short distance of where people live and work.

Unfortunately, of the more than 120,000 acres of dedicated open space in Napa County owned by public agencies and land conservation organizations, less than 6 percent of that open space is located within a 10-minute driving time of the county's four cities and one town, and less than 14 percent is within a 15-minute driving time. The percentages are even lower when only those dedicated open space lands which are open to the public are considered: less than 2 percent is within a 10-minute driving distance, and less than 5 percent is within a 15-minute driving distance.

Fortunately, there are significant opportunities to increase the amount of accessible open space within close proximity of the 80 percent of the population that lives within urban areas. There are nearly 11,000 acres of open space owned by public agencies and land conservation organizations within a 15-minute drive of the county's four cities and one town. While some of these lands are not appropriate for public access due to environmental, operational, or public safety constraints, a goal of at least doubling the acreage of open space within a 15-minute drive of incorporated areas that is accessible to the public appears to be very feasible.

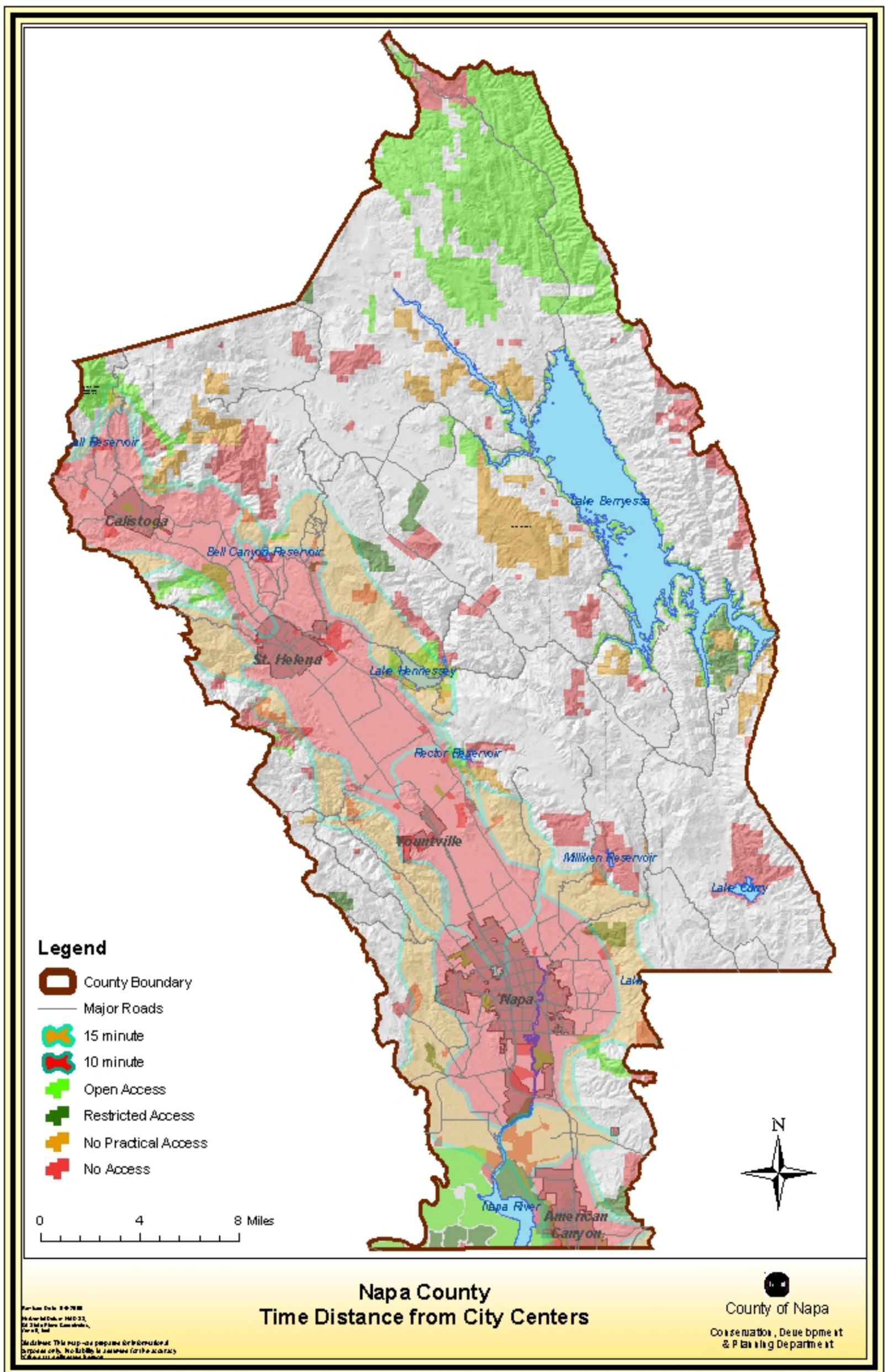
FIGURE ROS-2: DEDICATED OPEN SPACE BY LEVEL OF PUBLIC ACCESS





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FIGURE ROS-3: TIME DISTANCE FROM CITY CENTERS





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**TABLE ROS-E:
PROXIMITY TO CITIES OF DEDICATED OPEN SPACE**

City/Town Travel Time	Area (acres)	Dedicated Open Space (acres)					
	Total (acres)	Total (acres)	Fee Title (acres)	Open Public Access (acres)	No Practical Access (acres)	Restricted Access (acres)	No Access (acres)
<i>American Canyon</i>							
10 min	7,631	661	661	279	1	268	113
15 min	22,378	2,425	2,425	310	9	838	1,268
<i>Calistoga</i>							
10 min	20,482	1,604	1,163	801	87	0	716
15 min	37,999	2,674	2,172	1,316	276	0	1,082
<i>Napa</i>							
10 min	34,284	2,040	1,782	963	25	304	748
15 min	72,162	5,588	3,649	1,302	38	1,251	2,997
<i>St. Helena</i>							
10 min	29,197	1,695	956	438	28	125	1,104
15 min	66,609	7,165	4,594	3,086	430	231	3,418
<i>Yountville</i>							
10 min	26,865	1,301	756	214	25	40	1,022
15 min	51,090	3,346	2,179	1,379	317	40	1,610
<i>Combined City/Town</i>							
10 min	98,287	6,762	6,554	2,348	148	703	3,563
15 min	175,541	16,450	15,456	5,456	679	2,305	8,009

Notes: "Open public access" means the public is allowed access with minimal health and safety restrictions. "No practical access" means the public is officially allowed access, but practical considerations like lack of trails, parking areas, and information makes use unlikely. "Restricted access" means the public is only allowed access under limited conditions such as docent-led tours. "No access" means the public is officially excluded or there is no legal way to access the area without trespassing on private land.

Source: County of Napa Department of Conservation, Development and Planning



RECREATIONAL TRAILS

Recreational trails are a key part of the infrastructure by which the public accesses and enjoys the outdoors. Napa County currently has 67 miles of completed, maintained, and publicly accessible non-motorized trails (excluding striped bicycle lanes); of these, about 45 miles are unpaved trails providing true wilderness and semi-wilderness experiences. The actual accessibility provided by these trails is less than the numbers suggest, since most of these trail miles are concentrated in a few parks, where there are numerous parallel trails in close proximity to each other.

There are also 25 miles of off-highway vehicle dirt roads and trails open to the public. These roads and trails are located in the Knoxville Recreation Area owned and operated by the federal Bureau of Land Management.

Another nearly 200 miles of non-motorized trails within Napa County and its incorporated areas have been proposed or are under active consideration by one or more of the public agencies and trail planning organizations active in the county. These include incomplete segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail, former roads now closed to the public such as the Oat Hill Mine Road and the upper portion of the Aetna Springs Road, and other potential new trails, all on existing public lands.

Finally, there are approximately 100 miles of linear corridors that, if developed with trails, would link together existing public lands. These connecting corridors are important to creating an integrated network of open spaces providing a high-quality system of outdoor recreational opportunities. At the same time, however, these connecting corridors present the greatest challenge to implement, since they often traverse private property and thus require a public agency to acquire either land or trail easements or licenses from willing property owners without the use of pressure or coercion.

Figure ROS-4 shows a countywide network of existing, proposed, and potential trails. This map only includes off-street paths and trails, including Class I bicycle paths, but does not include on-street lanes or sidewalks designated for bicycles and/or pedestrians (Class II and Class III paths). Figure ROS-5 shows the Napa County section of the San Francisco Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail regional trail systems. The proposed Bay Trail alignment on the east side of the Napa River is currently undergoing re-evaluation. The official alignment follows Highway 29, but alternative alignments are under consideration, one using planned future roads and one staying close to the Napa River using various river and marsh levees. All of these alignments are shown in the figure, since it is not clear which alignment or alignments will ultimately be selected. The proposed alignment for the Bay Area Ridge Trail is also under evaluation. The alignment on the west side of the Napa Valley is shown on the map only for the purpose of indicating the County's goal of



Trail Types

For planning purposes, the County classifies trails as follows (as shown in Figure ROS-4):

Existing Trail: In place and in use

Existing Trail (not open to public): Physically in place and intended for public use but currently not generally open for public use

Incomplete Trail: Partially constructed and open to public use, but whose utility is compromised due to missing important trail segments or elements

Proposed Trail: Specific route planned or proposed by a public agency or recognized trail planning organization

Potential Trail Corridor: General corridor where a trail linkage would be useful, but a specific route is not identified

OHV Trail: Unpaved road or trail intended for use by off-road motor vehicles



a Ridge Trail connection to Sonoma County, but not any particular alignment. In fact, at the request of local partners, the Ridge Trail Council is considering a possible realignment of the Ridge Trail to extend north to Mount St. Helena following the hills to the east of the Napa Valley along a route similar to the Napa Crest Trail proposed by the County's 1976 Park and Recreation Plan.

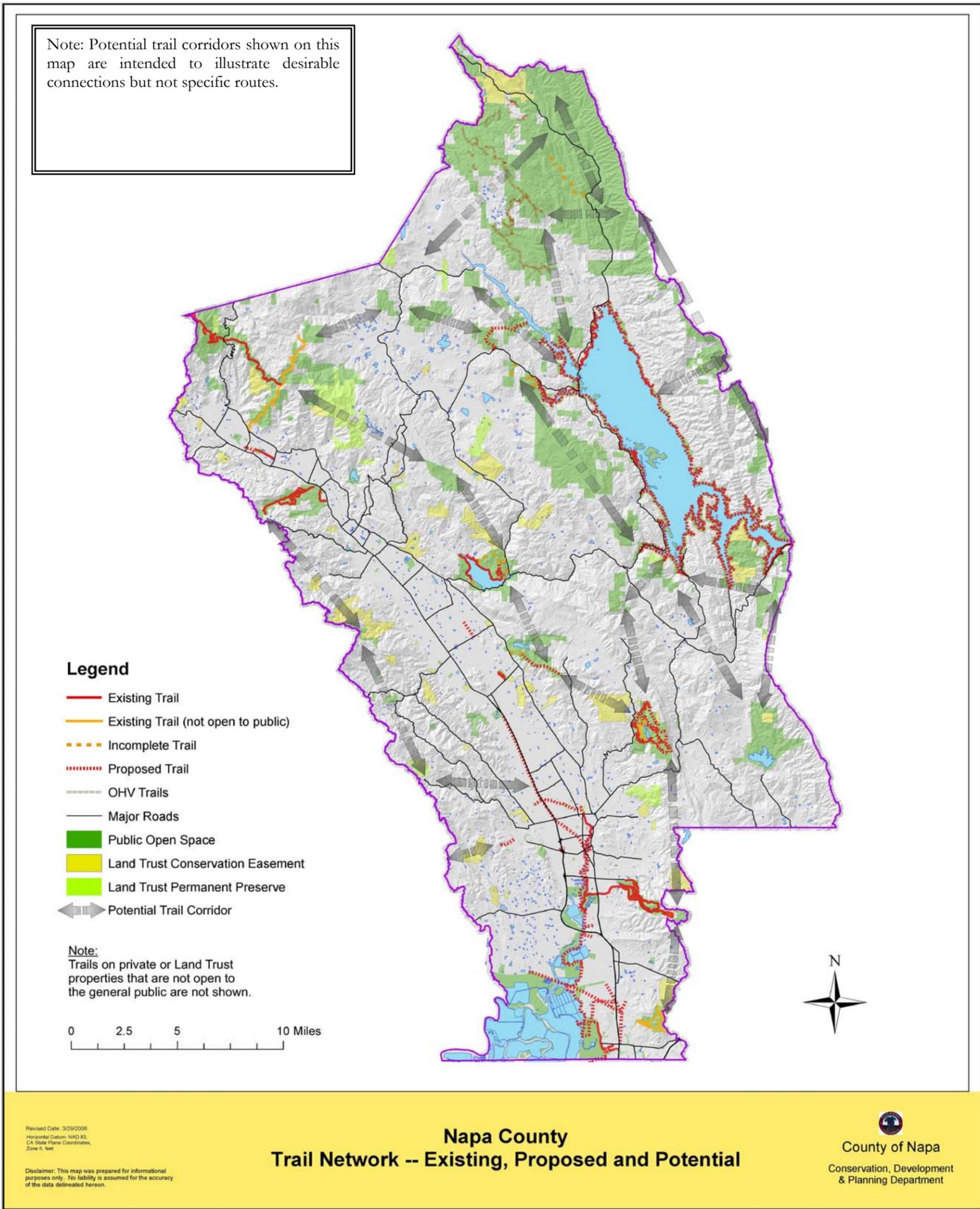
A third regional "trail" which affects Napa County is the Bay Area Water Trail. In September 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger signed California Assembly Bill 1296 which established the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail. This legislation directs the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) to lead a collaborative, public planning process to define policies, criteria, and guidelines for appropriate location, design, operation, and maintenance for a water trail and appropriate support facilities serving non-motorized small boats such as kayaks. The California Coastal Conservancy and the Association of Bay Area Governments Bay Trail Project are partners with BCDC in planning, designing, and funding the trail. This water trail plan must identify sensitive wildlife areas where access should be managed or prohibited; and describe an organizational structure and procedures for water trail management and operation that advances navigational safety, protects wildlife, and fosters environmental stewardship.

Because the ultimate alignments of all three regional trails are currently the subject of active discussion and planning, no specific alignments are designated in this General Plan. Instead, the County intends to work closely with the sponsoring agencies and other interested parties to determine appropriate alignments.



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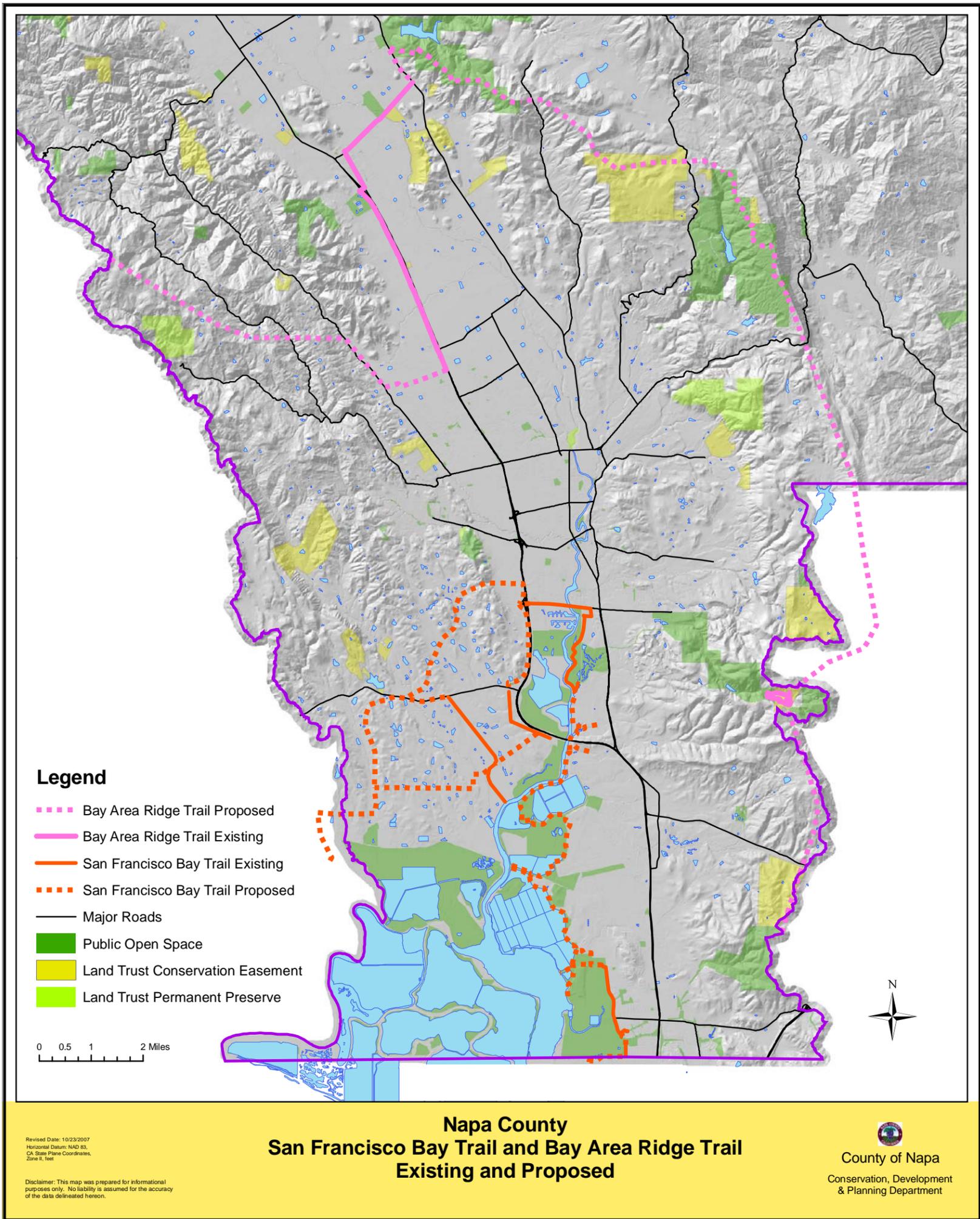
FIGURE ROS-4: TRAIL NETWORK—EXISTING, PROPOSED, AND POTENTIAL





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FIGURE ROS-5: SAN FRANCISCO BAY TRAIL AND BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL EXISTING AND PROPOSED ROUTES





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RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE GOALS, POLICIES, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

Goal ROS-1: To ensure an extensive landscape of open spaces in which recreation, the protection of natural, cultural, and archaeological resources, agricultural production, and private property are mutually supportive and complementary.

Note to the Reader: See the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Element for policies regarding agricultural preservation. Also see policies in the Conservation, Community Character, and Safety Elements.

Policy ROS-1: The County encourages the acquisition, location, design, management, and operation of recreational open space and facilities, in ways that protect natural resources, enhance natural habitats, conserve agricultural lands, maintain agricultural productivity, and respect private property. The County shall coordinate with and support the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District in implementing this policy.

Policy ROS-2: The regulatory review process and criteria for recreational facilities and activities should be tailored to reflect the intensity, location, and potential impact of the type of recreation proposed.

Policy ROS-3: Recreational facilities and improvements on open space lands should be the minimum necessary to achieve recreation objectives and be limited in density, intensity, need for public services, impacts on the natural environment, growth inducement, and impacts on neighboring properties.

Uses on open space lands shall respect the character of the surrounding area, require a minimum of public support services (such as paved roads, emergency services, or law enforcement); contain a minimum of paved surfaces, structures, natural landform alteration or other introduced or constructed features inconsistent with the environment; require minimal water usage, wildlife habitat removal and usage of herbicides and pesticides; be coordinated with neighbors in terms of integrated pest management procedures; and shall not contribute to the likelihood that additional non-agricultural uses of agricultural land will be proposed to support or be accessory to the continued existence of the recreational use.

Policy ROS-4: The public's right to access and enjoy publicly owned open space lands in a responsible manner should be supported where appropriate and consistent with other Recreation and Open Space Element policies and adopted resource management plans.

Policy ROS-5: Financial and other incentives should be used to encourage dedication in easement or fee title of significant fish and wildlife habitats and other open space resources to public agencies and non-profit land conservation organizations.

Policy ROS-6: The acceptance of mitigation funds and dedications of easements or property for the purpose of resource protection should be linked to and consistent with clearly articulated programmatic goals.

Policy ROS-7: Federal, state, and regional funding for providing sustainable, long-term stewardship of open space resources and habitats should be utilized where possible to supplement local funding.

Policy ROS-8: Minimize potential negative impacts of proposed open space improvements and uses through appropriate design and by requiring mitigation for any remaining significant impacts.

Policy ROS-9: The County shall not use the power of eminent domain to acquire land or easements for parks, trails, and other recreational open space facilities or activities.

Action Item ROS-1.1: In cooperation with other public agencies, and in particular with the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, maintain a comprehensive inventory of public lands, including their existing and potential resource and recreational values.

Action Item ROS-1.2: Modify the Zoning Ordinance as necessary to reflect the policies included in this Element and provide the appropriate level of review of proposed improvements and activities.

Policy ROS-10: *Policy ROS-10 is shown on the next page.*

Goal ROS-2: To create and maintain a high-quality system of parks, trails, and recreational, interpretive, and environmental education facilities.

Policy ROS-11: Increase by 2030 the amount of dedicated open space available, improved, and managed for nature-based recreation by the general public by improving access to existing public lands and by selective public acquisition from willing landowners of fee title ownership, easements, and/or license agreements over high priority open space lands.

Policy ROS-12: By 2030, increase the number and length of non-motorized, off-street trails available for walkers, joggers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

Action Item ROS-2.1: In partnership with the Napa County Regional Parks and Open Space District, establish numeric objectives for increased off-street trails and acreage of dedicated open space accessible to the public.

Policy ROS-12.5: Prior to abandoning public rights of way, consider their potential suitability for recreational use. (See also Policy CIR-25).

Policy ROS-13: The County should work in close partnership with the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District and support sufficient, long-term funding for the District to address mutual goals and policies.



Hikers in Skyline Park

Policy ROS-10: Trails

To ensure compatibility with agriculture and private property, the following approaches and criteria will guide the location and design of trails:

- Utilize a range of solutions tailored to individual circumstances;
- Locate trails to take advantage of natural and visual barriers and buffers to discourage trespass onto private property and maintain the privacy of private property owners and their residences;
- Educate trail users through signage and printed materials on the “what” and “why” of good behavior as it relates to natural resources, agriculture, and private property, including ethics such as “leave no trace” and respect for others;
- As appropriate, combine trails with fire breaks and design trails to facilitate access for control of wildfires;
- Provide notice generally, as well as specifically, to property owners adjacent to proposed trails prior to their being constructed and/or opened to the public, and seek to address concerns in a spirit of cooperation;
- Minimize the spread of exotic invasive weeds, pathogens, and other pests through public education, eradication programs, installation of shoe and tire cleaning equipment where needed, requirements for weed-free horse feed, and similar techniques;
- Utilize temporary and seasonal trail closures, and type and intensity of use restrictions as appropriate during periods of high wildfire risk and to protect sensitive species and habitats and avoid conflict with agricultural operations.

Policy ROS-14: The priority of the County, working in cooperation with the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, shall generally be to provide parks outside of the cities and town that are focused on nature-based recreation, recognizing that the County's cities and town generally provide neighborhood and community parks and urban recreation.

Policy ROS-15: The County, in coordination with and generally by working through the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, shall plan for and reserve land for recreational facilities and encourage non-commercial recreational development, including both parks and a comprehensive system of trails, in a manner and to the extent consistent with agricultural, water quality, and natural resource protection goals and the Trails Policy contained in this Element (Policy ROS-10). The following recreational opportunities are the County of Napa's priorities (not necessarily in the order shown), which shall be addressed in greater detail in a park and recreation master plan to be prepared by the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District:

- Complete the San Francisco Bay Trail through Napa County, including both bicycle lanes and paths and, where possible, recreational alignments in close proximity to the Bay, the Napa River, and associated wetlands, including a recreational alignment between the cities of American Canyon and Napa adjacent to existing and planned tidal wetlands west of the Napa County Airport.
- Provide for direct and convenient recreational access to and along the Napa River in the vicinity of the City of American Canyon.
- Support the provision of boating access to the Napa River, along with related facilities including docks, ramps, restrooms, and picnic and overnight stay areas, as part of a regional Bay Area Water Trail.
- Support investigation of the feasibility of establishing a regional park at the site of the former American Canyon Landfill in cooperation with the Napa-Vallejo Waste Management Authority.
- Support efforts by the City of American Canyon and the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District to provide public access to the Newell Preserve and an off-street trail system linking the Newell Preserve and the Napa River.
- Provide increased points of public access to the Napa River for nature-based recreation.
- Implement sections of the proposed Bay Area Ridge Trail, with the ultimate objective of a continuous regional trail.
- Implement sections of a Napa Valley Crest Trail that provides scenic overlooks and recreational opportunities among the ridge lands surrounding the Napa Valley, with the ultimate objective of a continuous trail that serves as one spine of an integrated trail network.
- Complete the Lake Berryessa Trail.
- Assure the permanent protection of Skyline Wilderness Park as a public park and nature-based recreation area through all appropriate means including but not limited to acquisition, state legislation, and local zoning requirements.



- Provide more opportunities for walking, riding, bird watching, and environmental education in the publicly owned marshes in the southern area of the county.
- Investigate the feasibility of a non-motorized trail, and implement sections as opportunities arise, connecting the communities of the Napa Valley.
- Repair, restore, and operate the Oat Hill Mine Road as a non-motorized public recreational trail.
- Focus on improving public access to and recreational facilities on existing public lands, such as watershed lands owned by water districts, and state and federal lands located primarily in the eastern parts of the county.
- Connect scattered, landlocked, and discontinuous public lands through selective acquisitions from and/or land exchanges with willing landowners to provide habitat corridors, facilitate a connected system of trails, and improve the effective use and stewardship of existing public lands.
- Support the improvement and operation of Lake Berryessa as a year-round recreation area providing a balanced and hospitable environment for nature-based recreation and motorized boating.
- Coordinate with the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area (BRBNA) Partnership in identifying and implementing a system of recreational trails within Napa County and connecting to adjacent counties.
- Incorporate additional priorities that may be identified in a new park and recreation master plan to be developed by the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District with the support of the County, as called for in Action Item ROS-2.1.

Policy ROS-16: Recreational uses on lands designated for agriculture should be encouraged only where those uses will not deplete or degrade natural resources on which nearby or on-site agriculture depends, and will not adversely affect the commencement, intensification, or continuation of local agricultural activity.

Policy ROS-17: A consistently high level of cleanliness, usefulness, and safety at public parks and trails within County jurisdiction should be maintained.

Policy ROS-18: Financial and other incentives that support the provision of parks and recreational trails through the voluntary donation of important open space lands, trail easements, or license agreements to appropriate public agencies and/or non-profit land conservation organizations should be encouraged.

Policy ROS-19: Federal, state, regional, and local programs that provide grants for protecting, improving, and maintaining significant open spaces should be supported and utilized where feasible.

Policy ROS-20: Partnerships with other public agencies, non-profit organizations, and the private sector should be used where feasible to enhance recreational opportunities and appropriate nature-based recreation, including but not limited to:

- The Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District to manage public access and steward resources on open space lands owned by the County as well as other public agencies and to acquire additional open space lands for outdoor recreation and resource protection.
- The California Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Fish and Game, and State Lands Commission.
- The cities of Napa County in providing enhanced nature-based recreational opportunities on City-owned watershed and open space lands.
- Napa County schools in providing outdoor environmental education to students.
- The Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Land Management to ensure effective, well-managed, and appropriate use of federal lands for public recreation and resource conservation. Encourage the transfer to local control those federal holdings with important recreational and resource values which the federal government is not able to effectively manage and is not interested in retaining in federal ownership.
- The Napa County Transportation Planning Agency to implement the Napa County Bike Plan and other bike and trail plans, with the goal of establishing a comprehensive and seamless network of non-motorized paths and trails connecting population centers to each other and to outdoor recreation opportunities.
- The Land Trust of Napa County and other land conservation organizations that own or hold easements on open space lands appropriate for public use.
- Outdoor recreation and visitor-serving businesses interested in supporting and expanding nature-based recreation opportunities or in directly providing recreational services through contracts or concession agreements on public lands.

Policy ROS-21: Support the sale of existing public open space lands and/or land exchanges with private property owners, provided the sale or exchange of such lands will result in a net improvement in public recreational opportunities, enhanced protection and stewardship of natural resources and habitats, and more efficient and effective land management.

Action Item ROS-2.2: Support the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District in developing, and updating at appropriate intervals, a new park and recreation master plan that identifies priorities, implementation strategies, and funding needs.

Action Item ROS-2.3: Support sufficient and stable funding for the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District.

Action Item ROS-2.4: Investigate and, where feasible, transfer the ownership and/or operation of existing County park facilities to the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District.

Action Item ROS-2.5: Support the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District in obtaining state, federal, and foundation grants, using methods such as preparing and



adopting local plans and policies which may be required by various grant programs, and providing required local matching funds.

Goal ROS-3: To make recreational, cultural, interpretive, and environmental education opportunities available to all county residents.

Objective ROS-1: By 2030, ensure that the majority of Napa County residents live within proximity of parks offering a variety of nature-based recreation opportunities by increasing the acreage of publicly accessible open space within a 15-minute or less driving time of each of the county's four cities and one town.

Policy ROS-22: Nature-based recreational opportunities should be provided near each population center and in more remote parts of the county. Urban recreation opportunities should be considered for the more developed, non-agricultural areas of the unincorporated county.

Policy ROS-23: A system of scenic roads, bicycle routes, and hiking trails should connect existing cities, town and other local population centers to outdoor recreation and open space resources and facilities.

Policy ROS-24: A range of recreation opportunities should be provided to serve the diverse recreational interests of children, adults, seniors, families, people with disabilities, and individuals.

- a) Where possible, recreational opportunities, and particularly those which are youth-oriented, should be provided within walking or bicycle distance, or accessible by public transit, of population centers.
- b) New multifamily housing projects shall be required to provide recreational facilities and/or participate in the funding of planned facilities (e.g. parkland dedication fees) when a nexus exists.

Policy ROS-25: There should be a mix of no-cost, low-cost, and user fee-based recreational opportunities on public lands so that people of all income levels are able to enjoy outdoor recreation.

Policy ROS-26: The use of volunteers and community-based organizations should be encouraged to maintain, restore, and enhance open space resources and habitats.

Policy ROS-27: Linkages between city-provided recreational facilities and programs and nature-based recreational facilities and programs in unincorporated areas should be encouraged.

Policy ROS-28: Opportunities for the public to visit, learn about, and enjoy significant and representative historical, archaeological, and cultural resources should be provided. The County shall coordinate with and support the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District in making recreational, cultural, interpretive, and environmental education opportunities available to all county residents.



- Policy ROS-29: Scientific study and environmental education programs at public parks and preserves should be encouraged, and the development and funding of a comprehensive program of environmental research and education for students should be coordinated with the education community.
- Policy ROS-30: Other than at Lake Berryessa, recreational facilities should be designed and scaled to serve the needs of county residents, recognizing that facilities that serve local residents will also serve visitors, that visitors can help pay for the construction and operation of recreational facilities beneficial to residents, and that the provision of additional nature-based recreational opportunities is an important tool for achieving economic development goals while also reducing potential adverse impacts of tourism. In the case of Lake Berryessa, recreational facilities are understood to serve a broad regional market, but should nonetheless be designed to also serve the desire of Napa County residents for water- and nature-based recreation.
- Policy ROS-31: A clear, attractive, and comprehensive roadside signage system, together with other forms of public information, should be designed, installed, and distributed to facilitate the public's use and enjoyment of parks and historical, archaeological, and cultural resources.