

4.14 VISUAL RESOURCES/LIGHT AND GLARE

This section of the EIR describes the existing visual resources of Napa County, summarizes the landscape characteristics of the area, and discusses the impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan Update.

4.14.1 EXISTING SETTING

Napa County is in the northern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area, set within the California Coastal Range, the mountains of which surround the area to the east, north and west and run through the County. Napa County's southern boundary is San Pablo Bay, a segment of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary located west of the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers.

San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose and the most urbanized areas of the Bay Area are to the southwest of Napa County. Sonoma County and its Pacific Ocean coastline lay further to the west, and beyond the Vaca Mountains and the Blue and Rocky Ridges to the east is the northern half of California's Great Central Valley. To the north of Napa, in Lake County and beyond, northern California becomes progressively more rural, urbanized areas occur less frequently, and natural areas and public lands are more plentiful.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Mountainous and sometimes rugged ridgelines frame the eastern and western boundaries of the County, also providing visually distinct valley regions within the area; some are as densely forested with evergreen trees as to look like north coast redwood groves, while others are almost stark in comparison, dominated only by mature oak trees set amid shrub and grasslands. Water is often a prominent feature in the landscape. The marsh lands in the southern part of the County are fed by the Napa River and tidal fluctuations of San Pablo Bay, which in turn drains a number of other rivers, streams and creeks originating in the area's high lands. Residences are scattered about the County, but urbanized areas tend to be concentrated in the cities of the County and in relatively few locations, surrounded by agricultural uses, mainly vineyards.



SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Viewsheds

Within the Napa Valley, viewsheds of the highest visibility are mostly concentrated in the mountains foothills to the east and west of the valley floor, in the area between Zinfandel Road and Oakville Cross Road. This area encompasses Bald Mountain, Mount St. Helena (identified in the County Viewshed Ordinance as a "unique geologic feature"), the foothills of Sugarloaf Ridge, and the areas surrounding Bear Canyon and Sulphur Canyon on the western side of the valley. On the eastern side of the valley, the area includes the hills above Silverado Trail, south of its intersection with SR 128 (see **Figure 4.14-1**).

Other areas of relatively high visibility in and around the Napa Valley floor include:

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- The southern slope of Rattlesnake Ridge, generally above the eastern side of the valley floor, between Calistoga and St. Helena.
- The hills to the east of Yountville and the City of Napa, north of SR 121. These viewsheds are also above Silverado Trail and include Castle Peak and the areas around Soda Canyon Road.
- The areas surrounding Redwood Road and Dry Creek just west of the valley floor.
- The general area encompassing Cup and Saucer Hill, east of the City of Napa, in between SR 121 and Coombsville Road.



Dry Creek Rd, north of Oakville Grade

Very few areas east of the Eastern Mountains contain any viewsheds visible to more than 10 percent of the county-designated scenic roadways. Exceptions to this are the slopes along the eastern edge of Lake Berryessa and viewsheds in Pope Valley and Wooden Valley.

Scenic Corridors



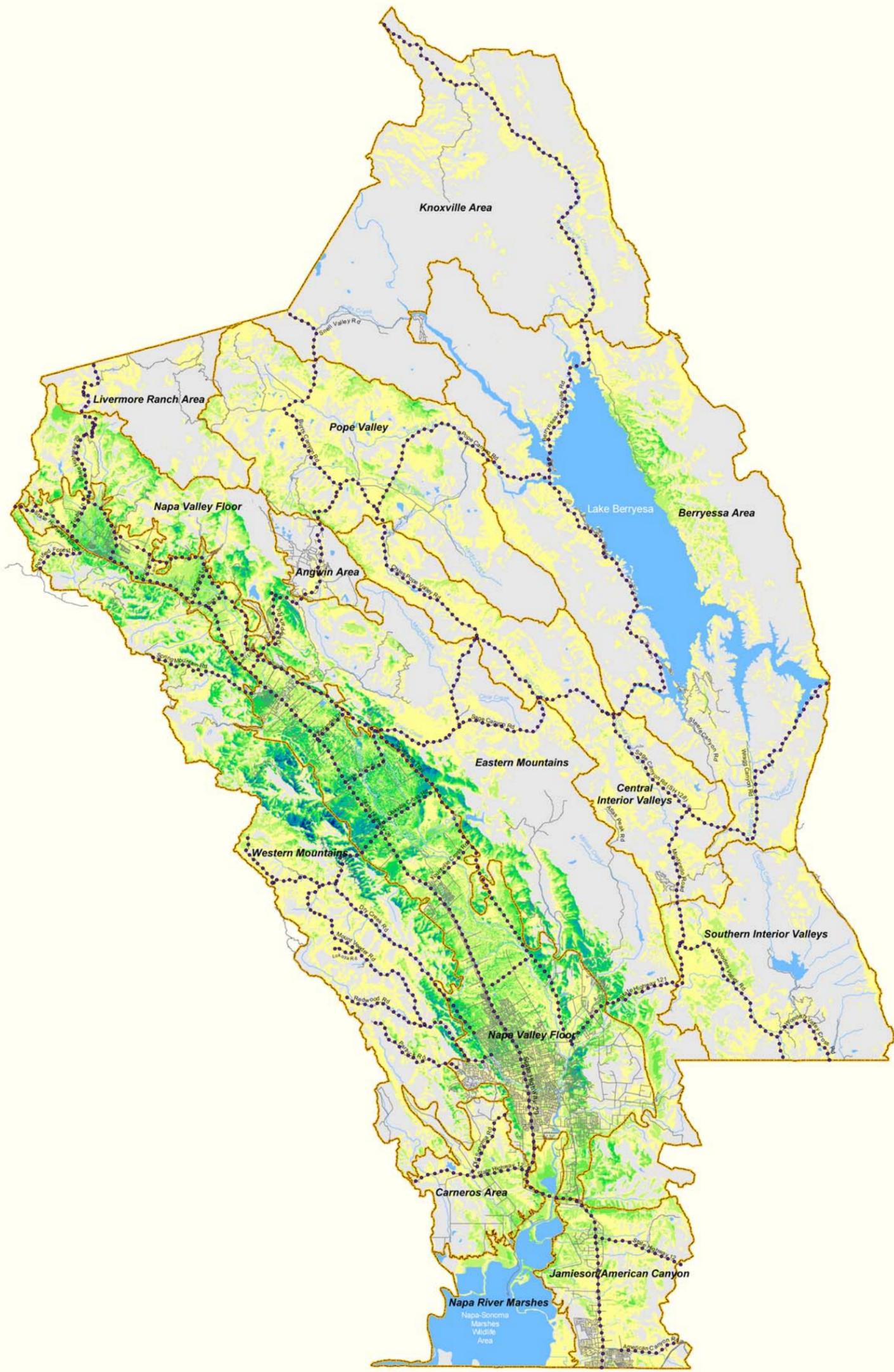
Chilles and Pope Valley Rd.

In Napa County, many highways traverse areas of natural scenic beauty and recreational interest. These State highway routes and County roads pass through the vineyards in the Napa Valley, twist and turn through several steep and forested hills and provide access to numerous wineries, historical landmarks, state parks and Lake Berryessa (see **Figure 4.14-2**). There are currently approximately 280 miles of County designated scenic roadways within Napa County. The majority of these scenic corridors are located in the Napa Valley, with the next largest group located on the western side of the County.

Ridgelines

Major ridgelines are prominent on a countywide level, generally above 2000 feet in elevation and form the entirety of Napa County's eastern boundary (see **Figure 4.14-3**). Blue Ridge and Rocky Ridge are the major ridgelines shaping the eastern edge of the county. The majority of the western boundary is also a major ridgeline, from the northern tip of the Napa Valley floor to near SR 12/121 in Carneros. It includes Diamond Mountain, Bald Mountain and Mount Veeder.

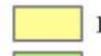




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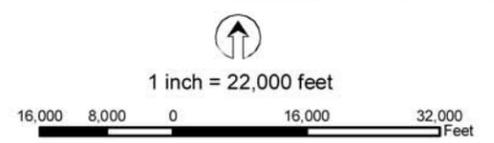
-  Evaluation Areas
-  Major Roads
-  Streams
-  Viewpoints

Viewing as Percent of Maximum Viewed Points

 0 %	 40 - 50%
 1 - 10%	 50 - 60%
 10 - 20%	 60 - 70%
 20 - 30%	 70 - 80%
 30 - 40%	 80 - 100%

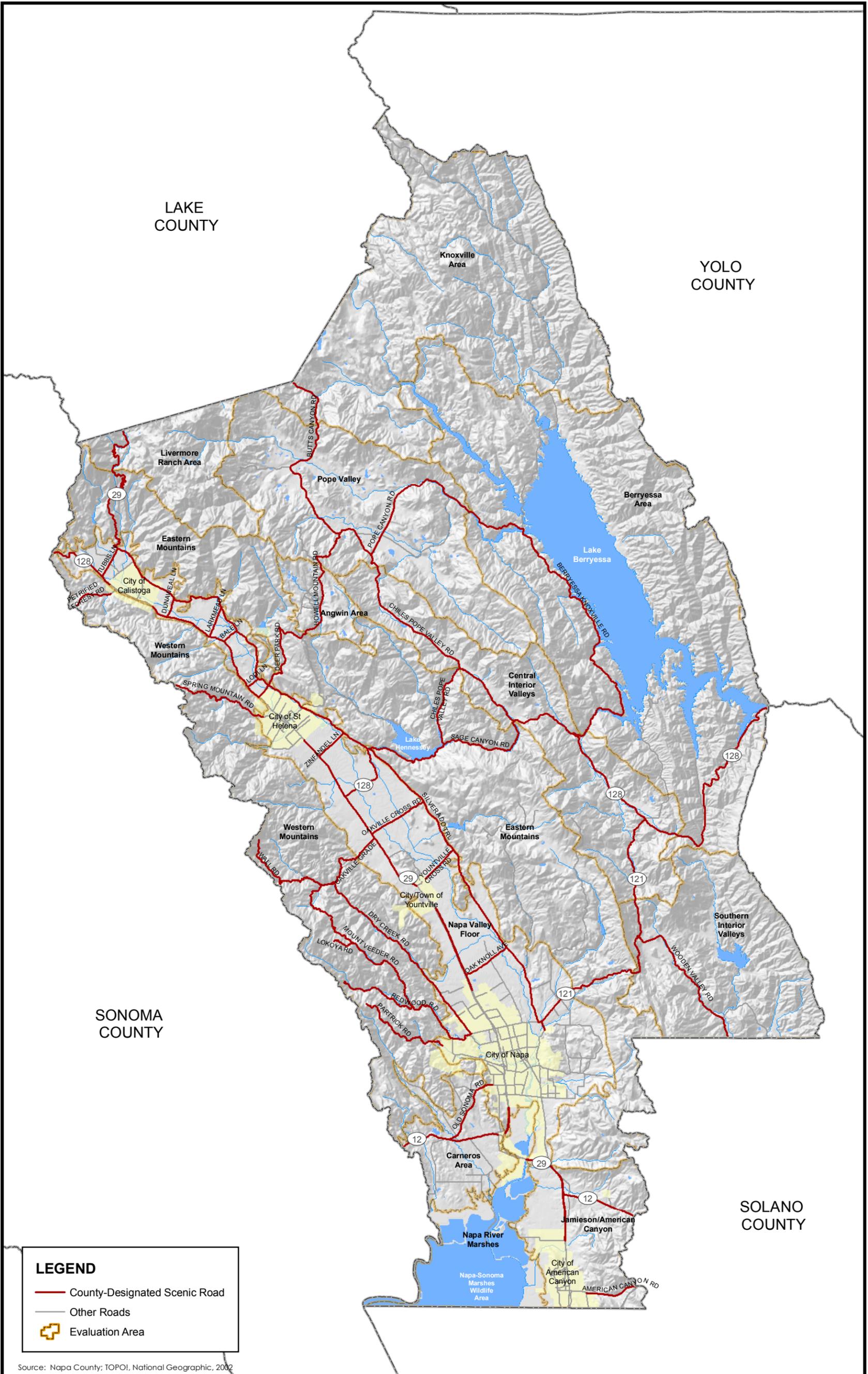
Viewshed

Napa County



Horizontal Datum: NAD 83,
 CA State Plane Coordinates, Zone II, feet
 Source: Napa County, 2003; EDAW, 2003;
 California Energy Commission

**FIGURE 4.14-1
 VIEWSHEDS**



Source: Napa County; TOPOI, National Geographic, 2002



FIGURE 4.14-2
SCENIC CORRIDORS





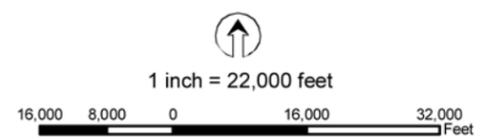
LEGEND

-  Evaluation Areas
-  Major Roads
-  Streams

- Ridgelines**
-  Major

Ridgelines

Napa County



1 inch = 22,000 feet
 Horizontal Datum: NAD 83,
 CA State Plane Coordinates, Zone II, feet
 Source: Napa County, 2003; EDAW, 2003;
 California Energy Commission

Source: Jones & Stokes, EDAW

**FIGURE 4.14-3
 RIDGELINES**



View of Blue Ridge & Rocky Ridge from Lake Berryessa

Major ridgelines comprise a substantial portion of the eastern mountains. In the southern extent, the ridgeline extends north from the area surrounding Mount George, to a fork that includes both Atlas Peak and Red Mountain. In the northern extent the ridgeline extends from Howell Mountain, near Angwin, to the slopes of Mount St. Helena located within Napa County. Cedar Roughs also comprise a major ridgeline west of Lake Berryessa, providing form to the entire Lake Berryessa evaluation area, as well as Pope Valley and Central Interior Valleys to the west. The remaining major ridgelines

identified within Napa County exist in the Livermore Ranch Area (including The Calistoga Palisades, Sugarloaf Mountain and Table Mountain) and Knoxville Area (including most of Adams Ridge).

4.14.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

FEDERAL

Federal policies and regulations, most notably the Highway Beautification Act of 1965, apply only to federal-aid highways (namely those that are part of the National Highway System or part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways). Napa County contains only one federal-aid highway – Interstate 80 – an approximate one-mile segment of which passes through the southeastern corner of the County. Because the presence of federal highways in Napa County is minimal, and because the scope of the federal Highway Beautification Act is limited to the protection of rural and scenic areas of the federal-aid highway system from “billboard blight,” this chapter shall focus on state and County policies and regulations as they apply to scenic roadways and viewshed protection in Napa County.

STATE

State Scenic Highway Program

In 1963, the California legislature created the Scenic Highway Program to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to state highways. The state regulations and guidance governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq. A highway may be designated scenic depending on how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler’s enjoyment of the view.

Napa County contains no officially designated state scenic highways. However, segments of SR 29, SR 121 and SR 221 are eligible for scenic highway designation. The status of a scenic highway changes from “eligible” to “officially designated” when the local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for scenic highway approval, and receives notification from Caltrans that the highway has been designated as a scenic highway (Napa County, BDR 2005).

State Route segments within Napa County identified as eligible for official scenic highway designation are the following:

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- **State Route 29** - From the intersection with SR 37 near Vallejo to the intersection with SR 221 near the City of Napa and from Trancas Street in the City of Napa to the Lake County border.
- **State Route 121** - From the intersection with SR 221, near the Napa State Hospital, to near Trancas Street in the City of Napa.
- **State Route 221** - From the intersection with Soscol Road to the intersection with SR 121 in the City of Napa (the entire duration of SR 221).

Nighttime Sky-Title 24 Outdoor Lighting Standards

The California Legislature passed a bill in 2001 requiring the California Energy Commission (CEC) to adopt energy efficiency standards for outdoor lighting for both the public and private sector. In November 2003, the CEC adopted changes to the Title 24, parts 1 and 6, Building Energy Efficiency Standards. These standards became effective on October 1, 2005, and included changes to the requirements for outdoor lighting for residential and nonresidential development. The new standards will likely improve the quality of outdoor lighting and help to reduce the impacts of light pollution, light trespass, and glare. The standards regulate lighting characteristics such as, maximum power and brightness, shielding, and sensor controls to turn lighting on and off. Different lighting standards are set by classifying areas by lighting zone. The classification is based on population figures of the 2000 Census. Areas can be designated as LZ1 (dark), LZ2 (rural), or LZ3 (urban). Lighting requirements for dark and rural areas are stricter in order to protect the areas from new sources of light pollution and light trespass. The majority of Napa County is designated as LZ2.

LOCAL

Napa County Viewshed Protection Combination District (County Code 18.101)

The Viewshed Protection Combination District classification is intended to identify those properties along major County roads and highways that are visually prominent, are located in identified scenic corridors, or are located in areas of existing significant geologic, topographic and other natural features. Future development activities within the district should be designed and sited so as to preserve and, where possible, enhance existing short, medium and long-range views of existing significant geologic, topographic and other natural features. The purpose of establishing this district is to ensure that future construction minimizes impacts on area roadways and adheres to recognized principles of design, site planning and is of a high quality design that will enhance the market attractiveness of the entire airport industrial specific plan area. (Ord. 1195 Section 1 (part), 2002; Ord. 1161 Section 1 (part), 1999) (Napa County 2005)

All uses allowed without a use permit in the underlying principal zoning district with which Viewshed Protection Combination District is combined shall be allowed in all Viewshed Protection Combination Districts without a use permit. (Ord. 1195 § 1 (part), 2002; Ord. 1161 § 1 (part), 1999). All uses allowed with a use permit in the principal underlying zoning district with which the Viewshed Protection Combination District is combined may be permitted in all Viewshed Protection Combination Districts upon grant of a use permit provided the commission or zoning administrator makes the findings required by section 18.124.070 and section 18.101.040. (Ord. 1195 Section 1 (part), 2002; Ord. 1161 Section 1 (part), 1999) (Napa County, BDR 2005).

Napa County Viewshed Protection Program (County Code 18.106)

The Viewshed Protection Ordinance was passed by the Board of Supervisors in December 2001 and amended in 2003 and 2006. Its intent is to preserve the unique scenic quality of Napa County. More specifically, the regulations were adopted to "protect the public health, safety, and community welfare and to otherwise protect the scenic quality of the County both for visitors to the County as well as for its residents by ensuring that future improvements are compatible with existing land forms, particularly County ridgelines and that views of the County's many unique geologic features and the existing landscape fabric of the County's hillside areas are protected and preserved" (Napa County Code 18.106.010).

In short, the ordinance sets forth hillside development standards to minimize the impact of man-made structures and grading on views of existing landscapes and open spaces as seen from designated public roads within the County. These regulations are consistent with the goals and policies of the current Napa County General Plan and are considered "too lax" by some who believe they should outright prohibit visible construction on hillsides, and "too stringent" by others who consider them an unnecessary constraint.

4.14.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

An aesthetic or visual resources impact is considered significant if implementation of the General Plan would result in any of the following (based on State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G):

- 1) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- 2) Substantially affect scenic resources or scenic views, including trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway, designated County Scenic Roadway, Scenic River Corridor, roadway eligible for listing as a scenic roadway/highway or other public vantage point or scenic vista locally known for its scenic qualities;
- 3) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the county; or
- 4) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views within the County.

Napa County, in general, and the Napa Valley specifically is known for its scenic beauty. Within the unincorporated areas, its skylines, ridgetops and hillsides are largely undeveloped which helps create this beauty to the benefit of local residents and visitors alike. A "substantial" alteration is characterized by a negative "sense of loss" of character or unique resources or a change that is an obvious and disharmonious modification of the overall scene, to the extent that the change clearly dominates the view.

METHODOLOGY

The visual resource analysis is based on field review of the County; review of topographic conditions; review of data contained in the BDR; and an assessment of the Napa County General Plan Update alternatives.

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PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Degradation of the Quality of Visual Character Associated With Designated Scenic Resources Within the County

Impact 4.14.1 Land uses and development under the proposed General Plan Update could result in potential alterations to designated scenic resources within the County and could alter or degrade existing views or visual quality of the County. (Significant and Mitigable – All Alternatives)

Development projected under the proposed General Plan Update has the potential to result in significant impacts to designated scenic resources (ridgelines, etc.) identified in the current General Plan as well as in the Napa County Viewshed Program. Impacts could include placement of structures or other improvements, grading, and roadway placement on ridgelines and along County designated scenic roadways that are out of character with the landscape characteristics of the view. However, the Napa County Viewshed Protection Program provides substantial protection of ridgelines and limits potential alterations of views from designated roadways such that existing landscape characteristics would be substantially retained (County Code Sections 18.106.40 and 18.106.50).

Potential impacts specific to each of the three alternatives are further described below:

Alternative A

Under Alternative A, existing land use patterns would remain and agricultural lands would be preserved. New residences could be constructed on legal parcels (up to one per parcel plus a second unit), new wineries could be constructed on parcels greater than 10 acres, and new vineyards could be developed in areas that are not steeply sloped (generally in areas less than 30% slope). Areas designated for commercial or industrial use could be developed with those uses. While this would primarily consist of areas already containing such uses [e.g., Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan area], it could also mean the eventual conversion of the Hess Vineyard along Highway 29 north of American Canyon from agricultural to industrial use. Conversion of grazing lands and naturally vegetated lands to vineyards and other agricultural uses would continue under Alternative A. Grazing lands, naturally vegetated areas, and vineyard lands all contribute to the visual character and scenic resources within the County, and therefore the change from one vegetative assemblage to another would not be considered significant. All other development activity (e.g. wineries, residences) would be subject to the applicable provisions Viewshed Protection Ordinance that are intended to protect the visual landscape characteristics of ridgelines and views from designated scenic corridors. While the Viewshed Protection Ordinance does not include an outright prohibition on hillside development and does not apply to every road and view in the County, its provisions require new structures to be substantially screened from designated scenic roads, and as a result, potential development would not result in a significant impact to scenic resources and this impact would be considered **significant and mitigable** with implementation of the mitigation measures identified below.

Alternative B

Alternative B would be similar to Alternative A, except that it would increase the amount of land designated for agricultural use by re-designating the 241.11 acre Hess Vineyard from “Industrial” to “Agriculture, Watershed & Open Space” on the General Plan land use map, precluding transition of this area from agricultural use to commercial/industrial use. Alternative B would also re-configure land use designations within the so called “urban bubble” of Angwin, and permit

transition of several industrial sites south of the City of Napa to other, more attractive uses. Conversion of naturally vegetated lands to vineyard lands and potentially other agricultural uses would continue under this alternative similar to Alternative A. Alternative B would also include roadway improvements (associated with the proposed General Plan Update Circulation Element), extension of recycled water to Coombsville and Carneros, as well as policy provisions for trails and public open space (proposed Recreation and Open Space Element in the General Plan Update) that could potentially impact ridgelines. All development activity would be subject to the applicable provisions Viewshed Protection Ordinance that are intended to protect the visual landscape characteristics of ridgelines and views from designated scenic corridors. This impact is **significant and mitigable** with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified below.

Alternative C

Visual changes under Alternative C would be essentially the same as Alternative B, except the mix of uses on currently industrial sites south of the City of Napa would be somewhat different, and changes to the land use map could allow some changes immediately outside Agwin's "urban bubble" and at the Pope Valley junction. Also, a new RUL for the City of American Canyon would be adopted, potentially allowing annexations by the City and residential development along the proposed Flosden/Newell extension. The proposed RUL roughly follows the 15% contour line, which is the principal area of concern under the Viewshed Protection Ordinance [Section 18.106.030], however several parcels would include land above this contour line. By setting a geographic limit on American Canyon's eastward expansion, this RUL would be a growth-control measure, but it would also facilitate extension of Flosden/Newell Road to Green Island Road and development along the new corridor. Alternative C would also include roadway improvements (associated with the proposed General Plan Update Circulation Element), extension of recycled water to Coombsville and Carneros, as well as policy provisions for trails and public open space (proposed Recreation and Open Space Element in the General Plan Update) that could potentially impact ridgelines. All development activity within the unincorporated County would be subject to the applicable provisions Viewshed Protection Ordinance that are intended to protect the visual landscape characteristics of ridgelines and views from designated scenic corridors. This impact is **significant and mitigable** with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified below.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would apply to All Alternatives:

- MM 4.14.1a** The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that requires continued implementation of Napa County Viewshed Protection Program (Chapter 18.106 of the County Code) and will apply the protective provisions of this Program on all public projects, including any trail improvements that would affect ridgelines subject to the Program.
- MM 4.14.1b** The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that requires retention of trees along public roadways on forested lands proposed for conversion to vineyard or non-agricultural activity in order to retain the existing landscape characteristics of the site (as viewed from public roadways) and screen the proposed development.
- MM 4.14.1c** The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that, to the maximum extent allowed by law, new telecommunication facilities and transmission lines shall not be located within view of any County designated scenic

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roadway unless they are sited and designed so as to blend with the existing landscape characteristics of the area.

The following mitigation measures would apply to Alternatives B and C:

MM 4.14.1d The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that requires new roadway construction or expansion to retain the current landscape characteristics of County designated scenic roadways. This will include retention of existing trees to the maximum extent feasible and required revegetation and recontouring of disturbed areas to match the existing landscape characteristics of areas along roadway improvements.

MM 4.14.1e The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that requires development projects on County owned sites within the City of Napa to be designed to be visually compatible with their surroundings in terms of use, scale, and materials.

The following mitigation measure would apply to Alternative C:

MM 4.14.1f Prior to annexation of any land to the City of American Canyon with slopes of greater than 15%, The County and the City shall agree that such lands remain as dedicated public open space.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would ensure that County designated scenic ridgelines and roadways retain their existing visual character, and that views and the visual character of the County are not substantially affected. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to **less than significant** for all Alternatives.

Daytime Glare and Nighttime Lighting

Impact 4.14.2 New development under the proposed General Plan Update would create new sources of daytime glare, and could change nighttime lighting and illumination levels in the County. (Significant and Mitigable – All Alternatives)

Implementation of the General Plan Update may introduce new sources of daytime glare and may change nighttime lighting and illumination levels. Lighting nuisances typically are categorized by the following:

- 1) Glare – Intense light that shines directly, or is reflected from a surface into a person's eyes;
- 2) "Skyglow"/Nighttime Illumination – Artificial lighting from urbanized sources that alters the rural landscape in sufficient quantity to cause lighting of the nighttime sky and reduction of visibility of stars and other astronomical features; and
- 3) "Spillover" Lighting – Artificial lighting that spills over onto adjacent properties, which could interrupt sleeping patterns or cause other nuisances to neighboring residents.

The main sources of daytime glare in the County are from sunlight reflecting from structures with reflective surfaces such as windows. The subsequent development under the proposed General Plan Update would include residential, commercial, industrial, vineyard and other agricultural uses containing structures and other potential sources of glare. Building materials (i.e., reflective glass and polished surfaces) are the most substantial sources of glare. The amount of glare

depends on the intensity and direction of sunlight, which is more acute at sunrise and sunset because the angle of the sun is lower during these times.

A source of glare during the nighttime hours is artificial light. The sources of new and increased nighttime lighting and illumination include, but are not limited to, new residential development, lighting from nonresidential uses, lights associated with vehicular travel (i.e., car headlights), street lighting, parking lot lights, and security related lighting for nonresidential uses. Increased nighttime lighting and illumination could result in adverse effects to adjacent land uses through the "spilling over" of light into these areas and "sky glow" conditions, described above.

Impacts specific to each of the three alternatives is further described below:

Alternative A

This alternative would retain the existing land use designations under the current General Plan Land Use Map as well as the policy guidance set forth under the existing General Plan. Between the year 2005 and 2030, it is projected that there would be an additional 2,235 dwelling units and 16,014,000 square feet of non-residential uses as well as associated supporting structures and buildings associated with the projected 10,000 and 12,500 acres of new vineyard development and other agricultural activities in the unincorporated portion of the County. This development could result in significant glare and lighting impacts described above. This impact would be **significant and mitigable** with the implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Alternative B

This alternative would generally retain the existing land use designations under the current General Plan Land Use Map, similar to Alternative A. However, this alternative would provide for additional growth within currently General Plan designated areas for rural and urban development (such as within the unincorporated community of Angwin) and re-use of the Pacific Coast/Boca site and Napa Pipe site. Between the year 2005 and 2030, it is projected that there would be an additional 3,885 dwelling units and 14,636,000 square feet of non-residential uses in the unincorporated portion of the County (as noted above, vineyard and other agricultural development would be the same as Alternative A). In addition to the proposed land use map, Alternative B would include roadway improvements (associated with the proposed General Plan Update Circulation Element) that could generate street lighting and car headlights. This development could result in significant glare and lighting impacts described above. This impact would be **significant and mitigable** with the implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Alternative C

Between the year 2005 and 2030, it is projected that there would be an additional 7,635 dwelling units and 12,990,000 square feet of non-residential uses in the unincorporated portion of the County under this alternative. Alternative C would involve some additional land use changes beyond Alternative B that would allow for additional development/redevelopment (e.g., redesignation of Napa Pipe and Pacific Coast/Boca sites, potential expansion of the rural and urban uses in Angwin and establishment of a new RUL for the City of American Canyon). It should be noted that increases in nighttime lighting and glare associated with the RUL are expected to complement existing sources of light and glare from City and not substantially alter current conditions in this portion of the County. However, this Alternative would have similar roadway improvements and associated lighting impacts as Alternative B. This development

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could result in significant glare and lighting impacts described above. This impact would be **significant and mitigable** with the implementation of mitigation measures identified below.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would apply to all three alternatives:

- MM 4.14.2a** As part of planned roadway improvements identified under the Circulation Element, the County shall include a General Plan policy that requires the installation of landscaping with major roadway improvements (e.g., widening of Highway 12 in Jamieson Canyon) in areas identified where vehicle headlights would generate glare on existing residences.
- MM 4.14.2b** The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that street lighting on County roadways shall be limited to the minimum amount needed for public safety and shall be designed to focus light where it is needed (e.g., intersections). Street lights shall consist of fixtures that are designed to block illumination of adjoining properties and prohibit light rays emitted from the fixture at angles above the horizontal plane.
- MM 4.14.2c** The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that requires the design of buildings visible from County designated scenic roadways that avoid the use of reflective building materials that could cause glare.
- MM 4.14.2d** The County shall provide a policy in the General Plan that nighttime lighting associated with new development shall be designed to limit upward and sideways spillover of light. Standards shall be as specified in the most recent update of the "Nonresidential Compliance Manual for California's 2005 Energy Efficiency Standards" or the "Residential Compliance Manual for California's 2005 Energy Efficiency Standards" published by the state.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would ensure that subsequent development under the General Plan Update would include design features to avoid and minimize nighttime lighting and daytime glare impacts. Thus, implementation of mitigation measures MM 4.14.3a through d would mitigate this impact to **less than significant** for all alternatives.

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