

## IV. RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

#### Objective and Summary

The protection and maintenance of agricultural and forest lands for their economic, environmental, and social values are goals to the Sonoma County General Plan and the Coastal Plan. To fulfill these goals, a Resource Plan has been prepared which indicates the productive capabilities of the land for grazing and timber production. Recommendations are presented in this chapter, including zoning guidelines and compatible land uses. Other recommendations on County and State programs which affect coastal resources are also presented.

#### Coastal Act Policies

The Coastal Act policies are protective of the productive resource base, emphasizing the retention of agricultural land in production and maintenance of adequate parcel sizes for commercial timberlands.

30241. The maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production to assure the protection of the area's agricultural economy, and conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through all of the following:

- (a) By establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses.
- (b) By limiting conversions of agricultural lands around the periphery of urban areas to the lands where the viability of existing agricultural use is already severely limited by conflicts with urban use and where the conversion of the lands would complete a logical and viable neighborhood and contribute to the establishment of a stable limit to urban development.
- (c) By developing available lands not suited for agriculture prior to the conversion of agricultural lands.
- (d) By assuring that public service and facility expansions and non-agricultural development do not impair agricultural viability, either through increased assessment costs or degraded air and water quality.
- (e) By assuring that all division of prime agricultural lands, except those conversions approved pursuant to subdivision (b) of this section, and all development adjacent to prime agricultural lands shall not diminish the productivity of such prime agricultural lands.

30242. All other lands suitable for agricultural use shall not be converted to non-agricultural uses unless: (1) continued or renewed agricultural use is not feasible, or (2) such conversion would preserve prime agricultural land or concentrate development consistent with Section 30250. Any such permitted conversion shall be compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding lands.

30243. The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of non-commercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.

## Coastal Agriculture

Approximately three-fourths of the Sonoma County coastal zone is used as timberland, sheep and cattle grazing land, or dairy land. The coastal zone is equally divided between land suitable for timber production and land suitable for grazing or pasture. Grassland suitable for sheep and cattle grazing is found along the coastal terrace and lower slopes on the north coast, and throughout the coastal zone south of Jenner. Dairies occur in the Valley Ford area.

The climate and topography of western Sonoma County have largely determined the extensive type of agricultural uses found there. While the non-prime soils and lack of year-round water supply do not lend themselves to the cultivation of crops, the coastal hills are among the best lands for grazing livestock in the State. The cool, moist climate generally produces better rangeland than inland, reducing the need for supplemental feed and irrigated pasture.

## Coastal Forestry

The Sonoma County coastal zone exhibits the diversity of tree species found throughout the county. Soil, climate, relief, and human activity are the important factors which determine the growth and species distribution of trees. Redwood predominates in the coastal fog belt, with Douglas Fir and grand fir the other principal forest trees. The commercial forest is found in the coastal zone primarily north of Russian Gulch and in the Willow Creek watershed. Forests occur generally east of Highway 1, and in coastal gulches. Commercial hardwood harvesting of tan oaks is becoming more important for masonite chips, firewood, and the crafts industry. Other native, but generally non-commercial trees occurring on the coast are bishop pine, oak, madrone, bay and the southern extent of the pygmy forest in California. Rows of eucalyptus and cypress trees have been planted as a buffer against the wind, and fast growing Monterey Pines screen many homes from the view of Highway 1.

While the economic value of the timber resource is recognized, and the public's need for wood fiber, woodlands are also important as wildlife and fisheries habitat, watersheds, recreation lands, and scenic resources. Both the economic and natural values of coastal woodlands and forests are recognized in the policies and regulatory mechanisms proposed here. Logging activities, if improperly managed, can be detrimental to the forest environment, including loss of riparian habitat and soil erosion, and a resulting diminishment of all forest values. Logging practices and forest management should result in a forest resource which regenerates itself and allows for the perpetuation of related forest values. Keeping forest lands in production and preventing a further incursion of incompatible adjacent lands uses will benefit the public and the timber industry.

A rough measurement of the acreage of timberland soils (called woodland soils in the soil survey of Sonoma County) in the coastal zone is 20,500 acres. The timber soils are composed of 14,000 acres of Site IV and 6,500 acres of Site I, II, and III. The Site Index is a reference to the productivity of timberland, determined by the interaction of soil fertility and climate (See Table IV-1).

Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) must be filed with the California Department of Forestry in most instances when trees are logged. Fifteen THPs have been filed in the coastal zone since required in 1974, mostly for timber harvests of less than 100 acres. Although the number of THPs on the Sonoma Coast is not as great as in adjacent Mendocino County, the coastal timber resource is significant locally and should be maintained.

TABLE IV-1 TIMBER SITE CLASSIFICATION

Young Growth Redwood		Douglas-Fir	
Site Class	Site Index (Feet at 100 Years)	Site Class	Site Index (Feet at 100 Years)
I	180 or more	I	194 or more
II	155-179	II	164-193
III	130-154	III	134-163
IV	105-129	IV	103-133

Source: California Public Resources Code, Chapter 8, Article Two

### Current Outlook for Coastal Ranches

A mail survey was conducted in February 1980 to gather specific facts about coastal ranches, including the views of ranchers on the future of their operation. Ranches were divided into two categories-those 500 acres or more, and those less than 500 acres (See Table IV-2). All ownerships of 100 acres or more were surveyed. Many ranches on the Sonoma Coast include a combination of agricultural operations and timber operations.

TABLE IV-2 RANCH SURVEY RESPONSE

Acres	No. of Responses to Survey	No. of Parcels on Coast	Response Rate to Survey
<500	12	38	38%*
≥500	18	35	51%**
Total	30	73	41%

\*3 surveys indicated not a ranch

\*\*1 survey indicated not a ranch

This survey indicated stable ownership patterns on the Sonoma coast. Of the ranches covered by the survey, more than one-half of the ranches smaller than 500 acres and more than two-thirds of the ranches larger than 500 acres have not changed ownership in the last twenty years. Most of the ranches responding have Timber Preserve zoning or are under Williamson Act contract, with a few ranches having both types of protective zoning. Some ranches are leased to other operators, with two-thirds owner operated. Coastal ranches regularly employed about 50 to 100 workers, ranging from total family operations to five employees per ranch.

The livestock figures show diversity in the number of animals grazed. The difference can be attributed to the fact that some ranches have less grassland because part of the ranch is timberland. Two of the smaller ranches and seven of the larger ranches responding have timber. Several ranches have low intensity recreation activities (access to beach or hunting and fishing). The grazing figures for smaller ranches range from 6-21 acres per animal unit, while the larger ranches ranged from 4-9 acres per unit. The variation can be attributed to differences such as soil type, range improvement, rotation grazing practices, and breed of grazing stock.

When asked if they desire to acquire or dispose of ranch land, two-thirds of the ranchers wanted no change, with almost one-third wanting to acquire more land. Only several ranchers wanted to sell some of their holdings. Overwhelmingly, most ranchers want to continue the same activities on their land in the future.

### **Resource Plan and Procedures**

The Resource Plan, which identifies various categories of agricultural and timber potential, is a major input to the Land Use Plan. Additionally, the Resource Plan is a map that, when used with suggested management practices, serves as a guide to the productive and sound use of the coast's resources. Good management practices can increase the economic return to the land owner while helping insure that soil, water, and wildlife resources are protected.

Timber resource potential is designated as high or moderate. High is Site I, II, or III, and moderate is Site IV. These lands are designated valuable or potentially valuable for timber production. Agriculture resources are designated as croplands and grazing lands. The grazing lands are designated as high and moderate, based on the potential of each mapped unit to produce a specified amount of air-dry forage. Most undeveloped coastal agricultural soils are suitable for grazing. Some coastal soils are also suitable for cropland, and Class I-IV soils are designated croplands (see Table IV-3).

The Resource Plan also designated small areas of sensitive soils. Some sensitive soils should not be grazed because of their high erosion potential and lack of forage; wildlife habitat and watershed conservation are the best uses. Resource lands are excluded from the Resource Plan when large areas have already been committed to residential or community use. The Resource Plan is mapped at a scale of 1:24,000. The Resource Plan is the basis for the resource designations on the Land Use Plan, which shows areas as comprised of agriculture, timber, or sensitive soils, or urban areas (see Figure IV-1).

## Zoning Guidelines

Base zoning districts will be applied during the implementation phase of the Local Coastal Program in a manner that promotes the resource recommendations, consistent with the Land Use and Resource Plan and the County General Plan (see Consistency Matrix, Figure VII-40). To preserve timber and agricultural lands, the most desirable zoning districts are the Timber Production (TP), Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA), Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA), Diverse Agricultural (DA) and Resource & Rural Development (RRD) districts.

Guidelines for application of zoning districts to coastal agricultural, timber, and open space lands are summarized in this chapter (see Table IV-4) and the General Plan Agricultural Resource Element. The primary purpose of each district, applicable coastal land use category, the criteria for inclusion in the district, the minimum parcel size for the creation of new parcels, and the maximum residential density and number of dwelling units per parcel are also presented. The restrictive minimum parcel size with allowances for up to four dwellings per parcel (when permitted by General Plan, Coastal Plan, and Zoning densities) are intended to approximate and perpetuate the existing ranch character of much of the coast.

## Agricultural Preserves

Many landowners in the Sonoma coastal zone have demonstrated a commitment to agriculture by entering into Williamson Act contracts. The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (the Williamson Act) allows counties to establish agricultural preserves and thereby give tax reductions to landowners engaged in commercial agricultural operations. Under current law, lands under contract are appraised by the county assessor for their agricultural productivity rather than market value. When an agricultural preserve is formed, State law requires all lands in the preserve to be zoned to prevent land uses incompatible with agriculture within the preserve. In signing a contract with the County, the landowner agrees to retain his land in agricultural uses for at least ten years.

Figure IV-1

TABLE IV-3 CAPABILITY UNIT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Classes	Sub-Classes (The Major Problem)
Land Suited for Cultivation and Other Uses:	
CLASS I- Soils in Class I have few limitations that restrict their use.	e - Erosion
CLASS II- Soils in Class II have some limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices	w - Wetness
CLASS III- Soils in Class III have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices. (These include Sub-Classes e, w, s, c, and Units 0, 1, 2, and 3)	s - Soil Limitation
CLASS IV- Soils in Class IV have very severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require very careful management, or both.	c - Climatic Limitations
Land Generally Not Suited for Cultivation:	<b>Units</b> (The Secondary Problem)
CLASS V- Not used in Sonoma County.	0 - Course Underlying Material
CLASS VI- Soils in Class VI have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited for cultivation	1 - Erosion Hazard
CLASS VII- Soils in Class VII have very severe limitations that make them unsuited for cultivation.	2 - Drainage or Overflow
CLASS VIII- Soils and land forms in Class VIII have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plant production and restrict their use to recreation, wildlife, watershed or aesthetic purposes.	3 - Slowly Permeable Subsoil
	4 - Coarse Textures
	5 - Fine Textures
	6 - Salinity or Alkali
	7 - Stony or Rocky
	8 - Bedrock
	9 - Low Fertility

Source: Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department

TABLE IV-4 RECOMMENDED ZONING DISTRICTS

Base Zoning District	Primary Purpose of District	Applicable Coastal Land Use Category	Minimum Parcel Size for Inclusion in District*	Min. Parcel Size (to create new parcels)	Maximum Residential Density	Max. No. of Residential Units per Parcel
LIA, LEA DA, RRDWA	To implement the California Land Conservation Act of 1965	Agriculture	Agricultural parcels ± 100 ac. for dairy, sheep, beef cattle, or hay operations*	(grazing and similar extensive operations) 640 acres (dairies and similar intensive operations) 160 acres	160 acres 40 acres	4 4
Timber Preserve Zone (TP)	To implement the Forest Taxation Act of 1976	Timber	Timber parcels ± 40 ac. with Timber Site I-II soils; 80 ac. with III-IV soils; where landowner desires to be in Timber Preserve*	640 acres	160 acres	4
LIA, LEA, DA	To conserve and protect lands suitable for agricultural production which are not included in the AE District.	Agriculture	No minimum. Parcels shown as Agriculture on Land Use Plan* (dairies and similar intensive operations)	640 acres 160 acres	160 acres 40 acres	4 4
Resources and Rural Development (RRD)	To protect, preserve, and enhance natural resources, including timberlands, unique landforms and environmentally sensitive areas.	Sensitive and Hazardous Recreation-Scenic Design Timber and certain Agriculture	No minimum. Parcels designated "Sensitive and Hazardous" or "Recreation-Scenic Design" on the Bodega Bay Land Use Map; and outside of urban service boundaries, timber parcels, and agricultural parcels lying entirely within a "Conservation" or "Sanctuary-Preservation" designation on Open Space maps.*	640 acres 160 acres	(timberlands) 160 acres (other designated parcels) 160 acres	4 1

\* Consistent with minimum allowable General Plan parcel sizes.

Sonoma County has contracts in two types of agricultural preserves, Type A-I and A-II. Both are limited to operating agricultural businesses, with the possible exception of certain prime lands. No open space or other contracts for nonproductive land are available at present in Sonoma County.

**General Requirements to Form a Preserve:**

Consistency with General Plan.

One hundred acre minimum preserve size. Preserve can consist of more than one ownership to total the one hundred acres, but each ownership must individually meet contract qualifications. Board of Supervisors may reduce preserve size requirement to as small as ten acres for Type A-I preserves if conditions warrant.

No individual parcel less than ten acres. Preserve approval may be conditioned to require combination of assessor's parcels into larger units.

All lands within preserve boundaries to be zoned for agricultural or resource use.

The Type A-I agricultural preserve contract is used for intensive agricultural operations such as orchards, vineyards, irrigated pasture lands, and prime soils capable of high production. In addition to the general requirements listed below, any one of the following is required:

Prime land (Class I or II soil or 80-100 percent Storie rating).

Land capable of carrying at least one animal unit per acre.

Land planted to orchard, vineyard, or crops capable of grossing at least \$100 per acre annually.

Land returning at least \$200 gross per acre annually from unprocessed plant or animal products.

The Type A-II preserve contract is used for extensive agricultural operations such as sheep and cattle grazing, and dairies. In addition to the General Requirements, both of the following are required:

Land producing between \$2.50 and \$199.99 per acre gross annual profit from agricultural products for three of the last five years, and

A minimum of \$2,000 annual gross income total for the entire agricultural enterprise for three of the last five years.

About 18,000 acres of land within the coastal zone are under Williamson Act contract. Major areas of agricultural land not under contract include the following: some coastal terrace north of Salt Point, most of the coastal terrace south of Fort Ross to Jenner, large parcels east of Highway 1 and south of State Park land at Willow Creek and near Bodega Bay, and several large parcels along the Estero Americano. These lands are zoned Primary Agriculture (A1), Secondary Agriculture (A2), or Rural Residential (RR), zones that do not afford the same degree of protection as AE lands under contract.

State law requires that where land is shown as agriculture on a land use plan, the zoning must reflect and implement this designation. Therefore, placing land designated for preservation in the coastal plan in an agricultural preserve does not impose any significant additional restrictions on the land (the same applies to land designated "timber" and zoned to protect the timber resource).

### **Timber Preserves**

Recognizing the need for tax incentives to promote long-term management for maximum timber production, the State legislature, through AB 1258, changed the tax on standing timber from an ad valorem tax to a yield tax imposed at the time of harvest. Counties were directed to place timberland in a Timber Production zone which is in effect for ten years and renewed annually. The land is assessed at its value for growing timber.

Approximately 11,000 acres of land within the coastal zone are zoned TP. The acreage in TP is about one-half of the Site I, II, III, and IV timberland in the coastal zone. Timberlands not in TP range in size from forty-acre parcels north of Salt Point State Park to large acreages in the upper Willow Creek watershed and east of The Sea Ranch.

Rezoning timberland parcels to TP establishes ten-year use restrictions and the requirement of a forest management plan which should provide for timber harvesting within a reasonable period of time and set timber restocking standards. Sonoma County's implementing ordinance allows parcels of 40 acres or more of Site I and II soils to be zoned TP, and 80 acres or more of Site III and IV soils to be zoned TP. The annual tax paid on 40 acres of timberland in TP is about \$24.00 as opposed to \$800.00 if zoned at fair market value. Taxes on the stumpage value are paid at time of harvest.

Sonoma County's TP Ordinance sets a minimum residential density of one dwelling per 160 acres (with a maximum of four houses per parcel where allowed by the 160 acre density). This number is set by the State law on Timber Preserve zones. Parcels this size are intended to encourage timber management or sale to an owner wishing to manage the land for timber production. Creation and sale of smaller parcels, such as 40 or 80 acre parcels, after the seller has cut as much timber as possible prior to the sale, may make the parcels undesirable for sustained timber management. Smaller parcels are less viable for timber management and encourage greater residential conflicts. The larger the parcels, the better the chances for long term timber production.

### **Open Space, Sensitive, or Hazardous Lands**

The Williamson Act may be used for lands that are not in agricultural use, such as open space, sensitive, or hazardous lands. The alternatives available to Sonoma County are to use the Williamson Act or the Open Space Easement Act of 1974. Both result in the same type of property tax assessment. An advantage of the easement approach is that it can include types of open space not eligible under the Williamson Act. It is used currently by the Sonoma Land Trust. The disadvantage of easements is that subventions from the State are not available to the County for land with an easement as with the Williamson Act.

### **Compatible Land Uses**

Certain uses as listed below are generally compatible with the primary purpose of agriculture, timber, or natural resource land use designations. Some such uses may be appropriate for exclusion from coastal development permit requirements, or the County may suggest them as uses for which permits may appropriately be issued administratively without a public hearing. Public hearings will be required for other potentially compatible uses in resource areas. During the Implementation Phase, it will be determined which of these uses may be administratively issued and which uses should have a public hearing and review. Uses which normally might be handled administratively may be made subject to public hearing requirements where there are view protection, hazards, or other environmental concerns.

**Generally compatible uses that may be requested to be excluded from coastal permit requirements or dealt with under administrative permits. See Coastal Administrative Manual for further detail on what specific Coastal Permit Exclusions are possible.**

### **Resource Management Uses**

1. Livestock farming and dairies including the raising, grazing, maintaining and breeding of horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and similar livestock.
2. The outdoor growing and harvesting of shrubs, plants, flowers, vines, fruits, vegetables, hay, grain, and similar food and fiber crops, including packing and polishing of unprocessed agricultural yield.
3. The raising, feeding, maintaining, and breeding of poultry, fowl, rabbits, fur-bearing and similar animals for use of the persons residing on the property.
4. Timber harvesting and management activities, subject to an approved California Division of Forestry Timber Harvesting Plan.
5. Reclamation projects incidental to growing and harvesting of forest products, including reforestation and bank or slope stabilization, provided such activities are carried out in a manner that protects riparian and other sensitive habitat areas and deals adequately with water quality concerns.
6. Wildlife and fishing preserves and refuges.
7. Land management for watershed conservation.
8. Geotechnical studies not requiring a grading permit.
9. Controlled burns regulated by the Department of Forestry and the Air Pollution Control District.
10. The construction, improvement or expansion of accessory structures or uses appurtenant and incidental to agricultural and timber operations such as sheds, barns, and corrals, not including those listed as needing coastal permits, provided such buildings or uses are: located east of Highway 1; not within any designated scenic view shed; not located in or do not affect any designated sensitive or hazardous areas, not a designated historic site or area; and meet county zoning, erosion control and grading standards.

### **Residential Uses**

1. A single residential dwelling on a vacant, legal lot (and accessory structures or uses incidental and appurtenant to a single-family dwelling) provided it is: east of Highway 1; not within view of any designated scenic road; not located in or affecting any designated sensitive or hazardous area; not a designated historic site or area; and which meets county zoning, erosion control and grading standards.
2. Improvements to existing homes which are east of Highway 1; not within view of any designated scenic road; not located in or affecting any designated sensitive or hazardous area; not a designated historic site or area; and which meet county zoning, erosion control and grading standards.

3. Improvements to existing homes within scenic view sheds or west of Highway 1 which are less than a 25 percent expansion in size of the existing residential floor area; meet Coastal Zone design guidelines; are not located within or affecting any designated sensitive or hazardous area; are not a designated historic site or area; and which meet county zoning, grading and erosion control standards.
4. When carried on in existing residences: home, occupations and day care facilities for six or fewer children.

#### **Incidental Uses**

1. Recreational and educational day uses not requiring permanent improvements such as the following: hiking, swimming, boating, or fishing; other low intensity activities such as nature study, photography and picnicking.
2. Lot line adjustments not resulting in an increase in the number of lots or in allowable residential densities.
3. Repair and maintenance activities which do not result in an addition to or enlargement or expansion of the object of such repair or maintenance, provided that the County may identify certain extraordinary methods of repair and maintenance that involve a risk of substantial adverse environmental impact and that require a permit and thus are subject to reasonable conditions to mitigate any adverse impacts on coastal resources.
4. Installation or replacement of necessary utility connections between an existing service facility and any approved development, provided, however, that the County may identify areas or activities where it may require a permit and impose necessary reasonable conditions to mitigate any adverse impacts on coastal resources.
5. Grading, excavation or fill which does not require a grading permit under the requirements of Chapter 70 of the Uniform Building Code.
6. Signs subject to design review and conforming to Coastal Zone Design Guidelines.
7. All fences east of Highway 1 and fences west of Highway 1 not obstructing public accessways or public views to the ocean.
8. Irrigation lines.

#### **Compatible Uses Requiring a Coastal Permit**

#### **Resource Management Uses**

1. Portable saw mills for commercial or domestic use.
2. Commercial timber harvesting on parcels of three acres or less.

3. Commercial harvesting of fuel woods, or timber management, including removal of down timber, when not covered by a valid Timber Harvest Plan.
4. Water conservation dams and ponds.
5. Lumber yards, log storage decks, and the commercial sale of lumber and by-products incidental to the processing of timber.
6. Mineral resource production.
7. The raising, feeding, maintaining, and breeding of poultry, fowl, rabbits, fur bearing and similar animals for other than domestic purposes.
8. Commercial hog and pig farming.
9. Livestock feed yards, including structures for veal calf or weaner pig raising.
10. Commercial aquaculture.
11. Wholesale nurseries and greenhouses for the indoor propagation and harvesting of shrubs, plants, flowers, trees, vines, fruits, vegetables and similar crops.
12. Commercial mushroom farming.
13. One stand for the sale of agricultural products produced on the premises.

#### **Residential Uses**

1. One single family dwelling per legal, vacant resource parcel if not categorically exempt.
2. Additional single family dwellings, up to four per legal resource parcel, if allowed by the density restrictions of a "B" combining district and subject to zoning limitations.
3. Improvements to existing homes if not categorically exempt.
4. Second dwelling units, farm family units, and farm worker housing.

#### **Recreational and Educational Uses**

1. Commercial stables and riding academies.
2. Hunting clubs involving permanent improvements.
3. Commercial rifle and pistol practice ranges, skeet fields, or archery ranges.
4. Guest ranches.
5. Country inns, and bed and breakfast establishments.
6. Camping, including travel trailers, motor homes or tents.

7. Development activity at County and State Parks and beaches including recreational dams and ponds, and excluding categorically exempt uses.
8. Religious structures, uses or retreats not affecting the primary purpose of the district.
9. Resource-related and environmental schools and research facilities which do not affect the primary purpose of the district.

#### **Incidental Uses**

1. Road building or other grading, excavation, or fill requiring a grading permit pursuant to Chapter 70 of the Uniform Building Code; and which is not categorically exempt.
2. Private landing strips.
3. Public utility uses and activities associated with the erection, construction, alteration, or maintenance of gas, electrical, water, or communications facilities including transmission lines, telephone equipment buildings, substations, pumping stations, reservoirs, storage tanks and service yards.
4. Solid waste disposal sites.
5. Equipment storage yards incidental to resource management and other permitted uses, including parking, repairing, and storage of equipment.
6. Construction, improvement or expansion of accessory structures or uses incidental and appurtenant to residential, agricultural, and timber uses if not categorically exempt.
7. Utilization of existing buildings as artist studios, and art and craft centers, not including retail or wholesale sales.

#### **Exemptions to Principle Permitted Uses**

For purposes of applying Section 30603 of the Coastal Act dealing with appeals after certification of a local coastal program, the following uses shall not be considered part of the principal permitted uses in agricultural, timber, or natural resource land use designations as listed above:

1-9 under Compatible Recreational and Educational Uses.

6 and 11 under Compatible Resource Management Uses (6. Mineral Resource Production, 11. Commercial Aquaculture).

2 and 4 under Compatible Incidental Uses (2. Private Landing Strips, 4. Solid Waste Disposal Sites).

## OTHER PROGRAMS

Discussion follows about other agency programs which particularly relate to the coast's productive resources.

### Predator Control

The Agricultural Commissioner is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to perform state-mandated functions related to agriculture, including the promotion and protection of agriculture and the protection of the health and welfare of consumers. Among the regulatory responsibilities of the Commissioner is predatory animal control. A trapper is employed to protect livestock. Sheep, in particular, are very susceptible to predation by dogs and coyotes. Ranchers will shoot dogs that wander onto private land. On park land, dogs should be on a leash. While dogs are believed to be under control on the coast, some ranchers feel that the coyote threat is increasing.

### Coastal Conservancy

The State Coastal Conservancy is responsible for implementing a program of agricultural protection, area restoration, and resource enhancement in the coastal zone. The Conservancy can acquire lands, restore areas that are adversely affecting the coastal environment or are impeding orderly development, or enhance coastal areas that have suffered any loss of natural or scenic values. Actions of the Conservancy are coordinated with the Coastal Commission, with formal approval required for restoration and enhancement projects.

To prevent the intrusion of incompatible uses on agricultural lands in the coastal zone, especially in urban fringe areas, the Conservancy may acquire interests in land provided there is "no other reasonable means" of assuring the continuous use of such land for agricultural purposes (Public Resource Code 31152). The Conservancy may acquire fee title, development rights, easements, or other interests in land located in the coastal zone in order to prevent the conversion of agricultural land to other uses and to assemble agricultural lands into parcels large enough to permit continued agricultural production (Public Resource Code 31150). A Conservancy study is underway to determine the feasibility of compatible supplemental coastal ranch uses and different resource production uses to increase ranch incomes.

### 208 Program

Public Law 92-500, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, Section 208, requires that each state adopt an area wide waste treatment management plan to provide "best management practices" that reduce water pollutants from non-point sources. Non-point pollutants are sediment, heat, organic matter, chemicals, and nutrients that come from diffuse sources. Forestry and agricultural activities can produce non-point pollutants. The State Water Resources Control Board is responsible for water quality control in California, directing and reviewing the activities of regional water boards. The regional boards are responsible for the local enforcement of water quality laws and the coordination of water quality control activities. The Sonoma coast is served by the North Coast Regional Board.

Agricultural wastes that could affect the water quality of the State are regulated by the regional boards. Water quality regulations applying to surface runoff from animal confinement operations such as dairies are being developed locally. Existing water quality regulations are enforced by the regional board through aerial surveillance and on a complaint basis. New dairies, which are subject to County use permits, have waste discharge conditions established as part of the permit.

Control of grazing activities on private lands has not been addressed in the 208 Program for Sonoma County because it has not been a high enough priority to receive funding. Grazing activities are not, in

practice, scrutinized by the regional board. Grazing best management practices have been developed by the Forest Service for Forest Service lands and could provide a model for practices on private lands.

The State Board of Forestry, in accordance with an interagency agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board, directed their staff to determine whether the Board of Forestry's forest practice rules meet the definition of best management practices that is required by the federal law. The staff study has yet to be adopted by the Board of Forestry.

### **Forest Practice Act**

In 1973, the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act was established, setting up the rules for the California Department of Forestry (CDF) to follow with respect to timber harvesting. A conversion permit must be obtained from CDF to convert timberland to a non-timber use, with such approval very unlikely in the coastal zone. The CDF regulates silviculture activities that are related to a timber harvest plan. Rules are established for different geographical areas of the State. The Coast Forest District Rules apply to most of Sonoma County, with the Coastal Commission's Special Treatment Area Rules applicable to designated special treatment areas within the coastal zone. The State Board of Forestry has the authority to amend either the rules or the geographical districts to which they are applied.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Land Use**

1. Encourage compatible, resource-related uses on designated resource lands. Such uses should not conflict with resource production activities. Residential, civic, and commercial uses should be located in existing communities or commercial centers as shown on the Land Use Plan. Some low-intensity visitor serving uses may be appropriate on resource lands if they are compatible with the resource use of the land.
2. Allow up to four residential units per resource parcel, consistent with the maximum residential density, for the purpose of housing family members and employees. All housing units should be clustered in relation to the environmental features and the management conditions of the ranch.
3. Require that the land divisions on designated resource lands be permitted only for development related to the pursuit of either agriculture or forestry, as appropriate. Utilize mechanisms to assure the long-term retention of such parcels for resource use.
4. Establish resource compatibility and continued productivity as primary considerations in parcel design and development siting. Implement General Plan Policies AR-4c and AR-4d to establish Agricultural setbacks and apply the provisions of the 'Right to Farm' ordinance.

**ARC-4c:** Protect agricultural operations by establishing a buffer between the agricultural land use and the residential use at the urban fringe adjacent to an agricultural land use category. Buffers shall generally be defined as a physical separation of 100' to 200' and/or may be a topographic feature, a substantial tree stand, water course or similar feature. In some circumstances a landscaped berm may provide the buffer. The buffer shall occur on the parcel for which a permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmable land.

**ARC-4d:** Apply the provisions of the "Right to Farm" Ordinance to all lands designated within agricultural land use categories.

5. Implement minimum parcels sizes and other zoning standards, to promote the productive and wise use of resources, as shown in the zoning district recommendations, Table IV-4. Any land divisions outside of designated rural community or urban service area boundaries and not otherwise regulated by the provisions of Table IV-4 shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the useable parcels in the market area of the parcel have been developed and the created parcel would be no smaller than the average size of the surrounding parcels.
6. Place all land designated in the Coastal Plan for agricultural or timber use in an Agricultural Preserve or Timber Preserve where the landowner desires to sign a contract and the minimum requirements can be met. Where parcels do not qualify for inclusion in the Agricultural Preserve or Timber Preserve programs, or where the landowner is not interested in signing a contract, a large minimum lot size Agricultural or Resource Zoning district (consistent with Table IV-4) shall be applied. Large parcels not suited for a productive resource use and designated Sensitive and Hazardous or Recreation-Scenic Design on the Land Use Plan, or agricultural parcels falling entirely within Sanctuary-Preservation or Conservation designations on Open Space Maps should also be zoned to a large minimum lot size Agricultural or Resource Zoning district (consistent with Table IV-4).
7. Implement the following changes for entering into Agricultural Preserve (Williamson Act) contracts:

Parcel Size. The minimum parcel size eligible for a Williamson Act contract should be 100 acres for dairy, sheep, beef cattle, or oat hay operations (Type II contracts). Contracts already in existence would not be affected by a new minimum size requirement. Non-contracted contiguous parcels under the same ownership would be required to be assembled into parcels that do meet the acreage requirements. Parcels under the same ownership that are not contiguous, but are located sufficiently close to one another to be operated as one unit, may be awarded a contract provided the contract limits future residential development to only of the parcels, subject to the density limitations of the combining district. Parcels below the minimum size and under separate ownership may be eligible if the owners can show that the income of the parcel qualifies it as self-sustaining unit.

Other requirements. All other agricultural preserve requirements should stay the same, except for the coastal policy setting restrictive minimum parcel sizes and residential densities to control potential land division and residential development.

8. Utilize the Open Space Easement Act for designated Open Space and Sensitive and Hazardous lands to provide reasonable taxation
9. Incorporate the compatible uses into a revision of the resource zoning districts, specifying the uses exempt and subject to coastal permits.
10. Exempt timber harvesting from coastal permit requirements only where regulated by the Forest Practice Act and the California Department of Forestry.
11. Amend the Grading Ordinance to provide for a simple administrative procedure to control the grading of new ranch roads in conjunction with agricultural and timber management activities. Add rural ranch road standards to the Grading Ordinance. Exempt roads approved as part of a Timber Harvest Plan.
12. Enforce the amended Grading Ordinance.

#### **Resource Management**

13. Promote a high level of agricultural and forestry management practices which protect environmental values to help insure the long term use and conservation of coastal resources.
14. Allow the use of controlled burning to improve grazing land when proper permits have been obtained.
15. Recommend to the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Services, United States Department of Agriculture, that fencing of riparian vegetation for stream protection be a priority coastal practice where needed for bank stabilization in the Agricultural Conservation Program. Another priority coastal practice which should be funded is the fencing of the steep slopes along the high cliffs north of Russian Gulch and south of Fort Ross to prevent overgrazing.
16. Promote use of sensitive soils as watershed and wildlife habitat.

### **State Parks**

17. Prepare a long range resource element of each Park Unit General Plan as a basis for lease agreements.
18. Retain in agricultural production land not currently needed for public use, as compatible with the General Plan Resource Element of the park unit.
19. Grant long-term leases (five to twenty years) on State lands, providing incentives to improve the quality of range.
20. Monitor grazing and improve range management practices on State land leased for grazing in cooperation with the ranchers and the Soil Conservation Service.
21. Enforce the leash laws at coastal parks and beaches with fines for those who disregard the law. If dog predation of coastal livestock cannot be effectively controlled in some areas, designate public areas which prohibit dogs directly adjacent to vulnerable grazing lands.

### **Other Programs**

22. Continue the County predatory animal control program, using humane methods that have a reasonable assurance of affecting predators while not affecting other wildlife.
23. Promote Coastal Conservancy projects on the Sonoma coast involving the restoration of key areas where recreational, natural, or scenic values can be enhanced.
24. Encourage ranchers and dairy farmers to utilize best management practices to minimize water pollution through the 208 Program. The Soil Conservation Service has the technical expertise to assist in voluntary compliance.
25. Support amendments to the forest practice rules to meet the goals of the 208 Program.
26. Formalize the County's review of Timber Harvest Plans with submittal of written comments to the California Department of Forestry in the coastal zone.
27. Request the Board of Forestry to consider enforcing Special Treatment Area stocking and clear cutting standards on all forest lands in the Coastal Zone.