

2012 GENERAL PLAN POLICIES FOR BRIDGEPORT VALLEY

Additions in red

Comment [t1]: Comments in Margins

LAND USE ELEMENT

Issues/Opportunities/Constraints

Bridgeport Valley

1. There is a significant amount of high-quality agricultural land in the Bridgeport Valley, all of which is privately owned. There is a desire to maintain this land in agricultural uses in order to preserve the scenic qualities of the land. Much of the agricultural land may include wetlands; a wetlands delineation study has been completed for portions of the Valley. There is a need to address potential impacts to surface waters from grazing and irrigation and associated impacts to fisheries and wildlife.
2. There is local interest in preserving the small town character of Bridgeport.
3. There is an opportunity to enhance the recreational opportunities available at Bridgeport Reservoir and to protect the wetlands and associated natural resources in the surrounding area. ~~When considering recreational opportunities at the Reservoir, there is a need to designate restricted boating areas to protect critical water bird nesting and rearing areas.~~ These recreational opportunities may include fishing, hunting, kayaking, boating, sailing, and bird watching.
4. There is an opportunity to develop and market recreation opportunities in the public lands surrounding Bridgeport
- 4-5. There is an interest in protecting the groundwater resource in the Valley.
- 5-6. There is a need to expand PUD services to accommodate the local and recreational demands of the surrounding area (particularly sewage disposal), ~~but the PUD lacks the economy of scale necessary to fund many necessary infrastructure improvements and maintenance.~~
7. There is an interest in maintaining desirable water conditions in Bridgeport Reservoir, the East Walker River and its tributaries (e.g., reservoir level, in-stream flow and water quality).
8. Bridgeport has faced a steady decline of population and economic activity in recent years. Many local businesses and local services, including health care and schools, have already closed or are on the brink of closure. There is a critical need to create economic development opportunities in the town to reverse this trend.
9. There is an opportunity to create a wayfinding system in Bridgeport that draws attention to the amenities located outside the center of town.
10. Bridgeport's economy was built in part on its status as the Mono County seat, which provided ample employment opportunities and related economic activity. In recent years, many county services, departments, and related employment opportunities and economic activities have shifted to population centers in the southern part of the county. There is a strong interest to preserve Bridgeport's historic stature, as well as its historic infrastructure, for generations to come.
11. Historically, Bridgeport's primary recreation activity has been fishing. The activity is currently threatened by decreasing stocking activities and invasive species issues. Efforts toward preserving the angling experience are important, but of equal importance is the diversification of recreation opportunities.
12. U.S. 395 through Bridgeport does not reflect the small town character as well as it could. There are issues with speeding through town, which many motorists see as a passing opportunity. There is a need to slow motorists as they pass through town to increase safety as well as contribute to economic development in town.
13. There is an opportunity to increase development through implementing measures to reduce costs and time associated with permitting, as well as related development impact fees.
- 6-14. Some of Bridgeport's residential neighborhoods abut BLM and USFS lands where there is potential for wildfire. There is an opportunity to conduct fuels reduction projects in these areas that would benefit the natural resources while reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

Policies:

Bridgeport Valley

GOAL: Provide for orderly growth in the Bridgeport Valley in a manner that retains the small town character, and protects the area's scenic, recreational, agricultural, and natural resources.

Objective A

Guide future development to occur on existing private lands in Bridgeport Townsite, east of Bridgeport Reservoir, in the Evans Tract, and at Twin Lakes.

Policy 1: Carefully evaluate subdivisions outside of the existing community area. Consideration should be given to assigning large minimum parcel sizes in the Valley¹.

Action 1.1: Assign agricultural land use designation to the valley and the upland areas surrounding the valley. Minimum parcel sizes shall be determined through the land use designation process.

Policy 2: Limit future subdivisions outside the community area to large lots (1 -acre minimum). Lot sizes for subdivisions which infill the community should reflect existing lot sizes, patterns, development, neighborhood character, and the availability of community sewer and water.

Policy 3: Designate land presently in agricultural use as "Agriculture," and establish a Development Credits Program, including voluntary Transfer of Development Rights provisions, which will encourage clustering development away from irrigated land.

Action 3.1: Assign development credits to agricultural lands in the Bridgeport Valley on a per parcel bases in a manner consistent with Table 1 of the Tri-Valley Goals.

Action 3.2: Parcels created consistent with the Development Credit Program shall consist of a minimum of one acre. Parcels should be sited as follows:

- a. Adjacent to existing residential development (if feasible).
- b. A buffer may be required in consultation with adjacent agricultural landowners.
- c. Avoiding steep slopes and fault hazard areas.
- d. Avoiding wetlands and areas subject to flooding.
- e. Away from visually sensitive areas, such as ridgelines or along scenic highways.
- f. Minimizing impacts to migrating deer.
- g. Minimizing impacts to cultural resource sites.
- h. Proximate to existing access and utilities (if feasible).

¹The "community area" in the Bridgeport Planning Area includes the Bridgeport Townsite, the private lands east of Bridgeport Reservoir, the Evans Tract, Rancheria, and Twin Lakes. The "Valley" area includes the flat meadow area bounded to the east by U.S. 395 and to the west and south by the upland areas. The "Valley" area also includes the flat meadow area north of U.S. 395 and west of the reservoir.

- i. On soils of sufficient structural and sanitary waste disposal capabilities.

Policy 4: Carefully evaluate the exchange of federal lands for community expansion in order to ensure consistency with the Bridgeport Valley land use goal.

Policy 5: Discourage tract housing developments. The term "tract housing" shall be defined in the Land Development Regulations.

Policy 6: Designate a limited amount of land to provide for local industrial land use needs.

Objective B

Maintain the scenic, agricultural, and natural resource values in the Bridgeport Valley.

Policy 1: Preserve agricultural lands and wetlands.

Action 1.1: Work with appropriate agencies to manage water resources in the Valley in a manner that will protect the natural and recreational values of the water resource and associated resources (wildlife, riparian, etc.)

Policy 2: Manage the groundwater resource of the Bridgeport Valley.

Action 2.1: Consider establishing a Groundwater Management District to manage the groundwater resource.

Action 2.2: Comply with the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Program.

Action 2.3: Implement the county's groundwater transfer ordinance for any out-of basin transfers of groundwater.

Policy 3: Ensure that any transfer (by sale or lease) of surface water rights will not impact the natural resource values of the Bridgeport Valley.

Action 3.1: Monitor efforts to Save Walker Lake that may have impacts on Mono County surface water rights.

Action 3.2: As necessary, provide the Board of Supervisors and local planning committees with updates on the sale and/or lease of Mono County surface water rights and provide comments to relevant agencies.

Policy 4: Monitor community areas at risk from wildfire and work with appropriate agencies to manage that threat.

Action 4.1: Identify potential fuels reduction projects and funding opportunities for private lands in the Bridgeport Valley.

Action 4.2: Consider formation of a Fire Safe Council for Bridgeport Valley

Policy 3: Support designation of U.S. 395 as a National Forest Scenic Byway.

Objective C

Maintain, enhance and diversify the natural resource-based recreational opportunities in the Bridgeport Valley.

Policy 1: Work with appropriate agencies to manage Bridgeport Reservoir in a manner that protects the natural resources in the area and provides additional recreational opportunities.

Policy 2: Work with appropriate agencies and groups to develop and implement management plans for the local hot springs.

Action 2.1: As appropriate, assist the BLM and the Bridgeport Indian Colony in their efforts to manage recreation at the Travertine Hot Springs.

Action 2.2: Work with the USFS to develop a management plan for the Buckeye Hot Spring.

Policy 3: Work with appropriate agencies to improve dispersed recreational opportunities (picnicking, camping, sledding, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, biking, OHV, etc.) with information signs and maps, restrooms, bike lanes, etc.

Action 3.1: Develop a Bridgeport Area Trails Plan illustrating existing regional trails that is ready for publication and distribution.

Action 3.2: Develop a wayfinding system that directs travelers to recreation amenities from the town.

Action 3.3: Work with appropriate agencies to develop a Bridgeport Area Trails Plan that identifies future trail development opportunities.

Policy 4: Work with Department of Fish and Game to ensure continued stocking of fish into area lakes and streams, and continue to support local aquaculture efforts to enhance DFG stocking efforts.

Policy 5: Support the development of recreation opportunities on public and private lands.

Objective D

Preserve Bridgeport's historic significance and economic base.

Policy 1: Work with appropriate agencies to retain the historic significance of the county courthouse, encouraging continued use of the facility by the courts and the Board of Supervisors.

Policy 2: Develop plans for Main Street Revitalization in Bridgeport, including traffic calming, pedestrian safety and other enhancements to encourage exploration of the town and surrounding area.

Policy 3: Streamline permitting activity where possible to facilitate economic development in the town. This may include revisions of parking regulations, signs and event permits.