

OBJECTIVE 7.1.2: EROSION/SEDIMENTATION

Minimize soil erosion and sedimentation.

Policy 7.1.2.1 Development or disturbance shall be prohibited on slopes exceeding 30 percent unless necessary for access. The County may consider and allow development or disturbance on slopes 30 percent and greater when:

- Reasonable use of the property would otherwise be denied.
- The project is necessary for the repair of existing infrastructure to avoid and mitigate hazards to the public, as determined by a California registered civil engineer or a registered engineering geologist.
- The project is necessary for the repair of existing infrastructure to avoid and mitigate hazards to the public, as determined by a California-registered civil engineer or an engineering geologist.
- Replacement or repair of existing structures would occur in substantially the same footprint.
- The use is a horticultural or grazing use that utilizes “best management practices (BMPs)” recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

Access corridors on slopes 30 percent and greater shall have a site specific review of soil type, vegetation, drainage contour, and site placement to encourage proper site selection and mitigation. Septic systems may only be located on slopes under 30 percent. Roads needed to complete circulation/access and for emergency access may be constructed on such cross slopes if all other standards are met.

Policy 7.1.2.7

The County shall require agricultural grading activities that convert one acre or more of undisturbed vegetation to agricultural cropland to obtain an agricultural permit through the Agricultural Commissioner's office which may require approval of the Agricultural Commission. All erosion control measures included in the agricultural permit would be implemented. All agricultural practices, including fuel reduction and fire protection, that do not change the natural contour of the land and that use "best management practices" as recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors shall be exempt from this policy.

Policy 7.3.3.4

The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to provide buffers and special setbacks for the protection of riparian areas and wetlands. The County shall encourage the incorporation of protected areas into conservation easements or natural resource protection areas.

Exceptions to riparian and wetland buffer and setback requirements shall be provided to permit necessary road and bridge repair and construction, trail construction, and other recreational access structures such as docks and piers, or where such buffers deny reasonable use of the property, but only when appropriate mitigation measures and Best Management Practices are incorporated into the project. Exceptions shall also be provided for horticultural and grazing activities on agriculturally zoned lands that utilize "best management practices (BMPs)" as recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

Until standards for buffers and special setbacks are established in the Zoning Ordinance, the County shall apply a minimum setback of 100 feet from all perennial streams, rivers, lakes, and 50 feet from intermittent streams and wetlands. These interim standards may be modified in a particular instance if more detailed information relating to slope, soil stability, vegetation, habitat, or other site- or project-specific conditions supplied as part of the review for a specific project demonstrates that a different setback is necessary or would be sufficient to protect the particular riparian area at issue.

For projects where the County allows an exception to wetland and riparian buffers, development in or immediately adjacent to such features shall be planned so that impacts on the resources are minimized. If avoidance and minimization are not feasible, the County shall make findings, based on documentation provided by the project proponent, that avoidance and minimization are infeasible.

Policy 7.4.2.2

Where critical wildlife areas and migration corridors are identified during review of projects, the County shall protect the resources from degradation by requiring all portions of the project site that contain or influence said areas to be retained as non-disturbed natural areas through mandatory clustered development on suitable portions of the project site or other means such as density transfers if clustering cannot be achieved. The setback distance for designated or protected migration corridors shall be determined as part of the project's environmental analysis. The intent and emphasis of the Open Space land use designation and of the non-disturbance policy is to ensure continued viability of contiguous or interdependent habitat areas and the preservation of all movement corridors between related habitats. The intent of mandatory clustering is to provide a mechanism for natural resource protection while allowing appropriate development of private property. Horticultural and grazing projects on agriculturally designated lands are exempt from the restrictions placed on disturbance of natural areas when utilizing "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors when not subject to Policy 7.1.2.7.