

## 4.9 LAND USE AND RECREATION

### 4.9.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### *REGIONAL SETTING*

Trinity County contains no incorporated cities. The largest population centers in the County are Weaverville, Hayfork, and Lewiston, with Weaverville serving as the County seat and economic center of the County. Trinity County's total population for the year 2000 was estimated at 13,022 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001).

Over the past 10 years, the County's population has fluctuated, exhibiting a moderate population increase between 1990 and 1997 and a decrease between 1997 and 2000 (see **Table 4.9-1**). Population growth has slowed in the past decade, compared to the previous two decades. Population estimates prepared by the California Department of Finance predict a gradual increase in Trinity County to an estimated population of 15,026 by the year 2020. The population forecasts reflect an average annual growth rate of 0.84 percent between 2000 and 2010 and 0.61 percent between 2010 and 2020, or less than one percent per year. These growth rates are significantly lower than the State average. Between July 2001 and July 2002, the County's population grew by 100 people, from 13,000 to 13,100. This equates to an annual growth rate for that year of 0.77 percent, which is fairly consistent with the Department of Finance's predictions. (Trinity Journal March 5, 2003)

**TABLE 4.9-1**

HISTORICAL POPULATION AND GROWTH RATES, TRINITY COUNTY

| <b>Population</b>         | <b>1970</b> | <b>1980</b>    | <b>1990</b>    | <b>1997</b>    | <b>2000</b>      | <b>2002</b>      |
|---------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Trinity County            | 7,615       | 11,858         | 13,063         | 13,400         | 13,022           | 13,100           |
| <b>Annual Growth Rate</b> |             | <b>1970-80</b> | <b>1980-90</b> | <b>1990-97</b> | <b>1997-2000</b> | <b>2001-2002</b> |
| Trinity County            |             | 4.5%           | 1.0%           | 0.4%           | -0.93%           | 0.77%            |
|                           |             |                |                |                |                  |                  |

For the years 2000-2010, the County's greatest population growth (still low at 1.31 percent) is expected to occur in the 20- to 64-year-old age bracket. During these years, a decline in population is expected in the 0 to 19 year-old bracket. This trend is expected to change between 2010 and 2020, however, when the retired population (age 65 and over) is expected to show the greatest increase and the 20- to 64-year old population is expected to decline.

Trinity County covers an area of approximately 2.0 million acres (3,191 square miles). Approximately 72 percent of this land area is federally- or state-owned, including a large portion of the Trinity National Forest, Six Rivers National Forest, and the Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area. The remaining

28 percent of the County in private ownership is divided into industrial timber lands (15 percent) and agricultural, commercial, and residential lands (13 percent; Trinity County, 2001).

### *PROJECT SETTING*

The proposed project is located entirely within the Shasta-Trinity National Forest and the land use is exclusively devoted to forestry. The existing roadway is located within an existing Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) easement, which extends 20 meters (66 feet) each side of the existing roadway centerline.

County General Plan land use designations for the project area include Resource and Open Space. The USFS land management prescription is Roaded Recreation. There is no Trinity County zoning designation for the project site, because it is within the National Forest. Specific use of the USFS land at the immediate project site is governed by the Land and Resource Management Plan of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest (USDA 1995), rather than the Trinity County General Plan. The County General Plan governs uses of private lands in the surrounding area, including private in-holdings within the National Forest as well as in the nearby communities of Hyampom and Hayfork.

There is no agricultural land nor are there parcels under Williamson Act contract adjacent to the project. There are no parcels zoned TPZ (i.e. Timber Production Zone) adjacent to the project.

## **4.9.2 PLANNING DOCUMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

### *TRINITY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN LAND USE ELEMENT*

The following goals and objectives regarding land use, contained in the *Land Use Element* of the *Trinity County General Plan*, relate to the proposed project:

- Goal: To retain the rural character of Trinity County.
  - Objective: By assuring the wise use of the natural resources of the County.
  - Objective: By limiting dwelling density based on retention of rural character and conservation of important resources, including historic sites and structures, and wildlife.
  - Objective: By seeking information and cooperation from state and federal agencies within Trinity County.
- Goal: To encourage adequate housing and residential space to keep pace with a moderate population growth.
  - Objective: Avoid the need for increased public services
  - Objective: By keeping density, and thus demand, as low as possible in the most rural areas.

- Objective: By keeping abreast of state and federal-mandated regulations and keeping the regulating agencies abreast of rural area needs and demands.
- Objective: By exploring outside funding possibilities available to the County when new or improved services must be provided.

The following findings and policies contained in the *Land Use Element* of the *Trinity County General Plan*, relate to land use in Hyampom:

- Finding: The potential for rapid growth in Hyampom is slight due mainly to limited access.
- Finding: Hyampom as a community wants a balance between strict limitation and allowing some growth.
  - Growth: New development should be consistent with the valley's character. Due to the area's remoteness, no new growth-limiting measures are thought necessary.
  - Services: Maintain the existing low level of services
  - Resources: Encourage the use of the valley's agricultural land and the surrounding timber land for resource production.

#### *TRINITY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT*

The Trinity County General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element contains the following objective and recommendations related to recreation:

- Objective: The objective is to reserve land for recreational facilities, encourage private recreational development and other open uses in categories characteristic and beneficial to the residents of Trinity County as well as to meet the tourist needs of the immediate future and the long-range future.
  - Recommendation: Provide for the orderly development and control of a comprehensive recreation system on public lands where feasible and possible and on private lands where necessary for the development of the recreation system for Trinity County.
  - Recommendation: Recreational resources on public and private land should be protected for the future, as these resources are largely irreplaceable natural assets.
  - Recommendation: Encourage or provide recreational facilities and other open uses in central locations near all living and working areas and in areas of outstanding beauty sufficient to meet the needs of the residents of the County, as well as the visitors to be served in the County.
  - Recommendation: Recreation areas should be evaluated to assure that they have maximum flexibility and adaptability to the constantly changing recreation needs and interests.

- Recommendation: Encourage the development of a system of scenic highways by establishing scenic conservation districts or scenic highway districts along all proposed scenic highways including the requirement of special architectural, site, and landscape control along with visual control, thereby preserving the outstanding scenic quality along all the highways of Trinity County.
- Provisions should be made for riding and hiking trails on local as well as statewide programs.
- Recommendation: Retain and develop access to public areas very carefully through riding and hiking trails.
- Objective: To retain the character and natural beauty of Trinity County with the preservation of existing open space and the control of open space.
  - Recommendation: To encourage recreational facilities which will provide open space at all governmental levels.
  - Recommendation: To encourage governmental agencies to retain open space in appropriate areas of the national forest and other governmental lands.
  - Recommendation: To retain the rural atmosphere of the County through the use of open space.
  - Recommendation: To protect streambanks and lakeshores from undesirable development.
  - Recommendation: To define and establish the use of primary flood plain areas as open space.
- Objective: To reserve land for recreational facilities, encourage private recreational development and other open uses in categories characteristic and beneficial to the present and future residents of the County without damage to the ecology of the area.
  - Recommendation: To provide for the orderly development and control of a comprehensive recreational system for Trinity County.
  - Recommendation: Encourage or provide recreational facilities and other open uses in central locations near living and working areas and in areas of outstanding beauty sufficient to meet the needs of the residents of the County, as well as the visitors to be served in the County.
  - Recommendation: Recreation to serve regional and statewide residents should be encouraged on public lands in Trinity County.
  - Recommendation: Preserve areas of established natural scenic beauty as areas of active and passive enjoyment.
- Objective: The objective is to protect the natural resources which are important to Trinity County and preserve areas which are important as commercial natural resources for future generations.
  - Recommendation: Maintain forest lands in production under multiple use concept. Recreation and subdivision development of forest lands should be

carried out in an orderly manner with high standards for environmental protection.

#### *TRINITY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CIRCULATION ELEMENT*

The 2002 Circulation Element of the General Plan incorporates a series of county-wide goals for transportation and circulation purposes. The following goals, objectives, and policies from the Circulation Element are related to land use and are relevant to the proposed project:

- Goal 1: Provide for the long-range development of the county's roadway system that is consistent with adopted land use patterns, ensures the safe and efficient movement of the people and goods, minimizes impacts on the attractiveness of the community, meets environmental and circulation objectives and implements funding strategies for construction, improvement, and maintenance of existing and new roadways.
- Objective 1.1: Establish consistency and/or linkages between transportation programs and land use plans.
  - *Policy 1.1.B:* Consider the Trinity County General Plan, Regional Transportation Plan and/or Community Plans when assessing potential transportation projects.
- Objective 1.2: Determine and, as appropriate, address the probable land use impacts of transportation projects prior to approving or funding the projects.
  - *Policy 1.2.A:* Location, design and development of transportation projects shall be consistent with the adopted land use policies of the county.
  - *Policy 1.2.B:* Identify potential impacts and/or conflicts between potentially growth-inducing transportation projects and the adopted land-use policies of the county.
  - *Policy 1.2.C:* Require mitigation for transportation projects with potentially significant impacts to existing or planned land uses in the county.
- Objective 1.4: Develop road systems which are compatible with the areas they serve.
  - *Policy 1.4.A:* Motorist safety, emergency vehicle access, roadway use/purpose and climate/weather conditions are all factors that should be considered when existing roads are improved or new roads are developed.
  - *Policy 1.4.B:* Sound engineering judgment shall be used in determining road design and construction in order to reduce long term maintenance costs.
- Objective 1.13: As feasible under financial constraints, expand the transportation system to accommodate and attract new businesses and visitors.
  - *Policy 1.13.A:* Maintain existing transportation facilities in a manner that supports economic development and tourism.
- Objective 1.14: Support and promote economic development through the efficient movement of freight and tourist travel to, and through Trinity County.

- Objective 1.15: Achieve scenic roadway designation for appropriate State and County highways/roads.
- Goal 3: Maintain and upgrade the existing transportation system to prevent costly deterioration, to ensure that efficiency of the system does not decline, to maintain air quality and conserve energy, and to increase mobility and reduce travel time within Trinity County and adjacent regions.
- Objective 3.1: Use available funds for programs that ensure the most efficient use of existing facilities.
  - *Policy 3.1.A:* Give highest priority to maintenance and protection of existing facilities.
- Objective 3.4: Development of a system of high standard collector and arterial roads to reduce travel time and improve traffic safety within the county, as well as connectors with other regions.
  - *Policy 3.4.A:* Correct deficiencies in major collector and arterial roads.
  - *Policy 3.4B:* Provide for surfaced, all weather roads and streets where year-round public service is needed for education, mail, medical, fire protection, law enforcement and cultural activities.

#### *TRINITY COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN*

The *Trinity County Regional Transportation Plan* (2001) also contains the following goal and objectives relevant to land use and the proposed project:

- Goal 7.1: To coordinate this plan with adopted environmental goals and policies addressed in the Trinity County General Plan and other documents. These goals and policies include, but are not limited to air, water, timber, and land management plans.
- Objective 7.1.1: Support those social, economic, recreational, safety, and service needs of the people in Trinity County which will preserve the quality of life outlined in the County General Plan.
  - *Policy 7.1.1C:* Assign funding priority to projects which would reduce or eliminate existing environmental impacts.
- Objective 7.1.3: Minimize environmental impacts, project delays, and added costs or procedures for transportation projects through early, continued resource agency consultation and through public involvement.
  - *Policy 7.1.3A:* At a minimum, meet the legal public notification requirements of state and federal law, as applicable. Whenever feasible, utilize additional measures such as public workshops or newsletters to increase opportunities for public involvement.

*SHASTA-TRINITY NATIONAL FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN*

The proposed action area is included in Management Area 17, Hayfork Creek, and Management Area 19, Indian Valley/Rattlesnake of the Shasta-Trinity National Forests Land and Management Plan (LMP; USDA, 1995). The *Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LMP)* policies regarding land use and recreation that relate to the proposed project are as follows (USDI, 1995):

Applicable Forest Goals related to land use and recreation include the following:

- Manage the Shasta-Trinity National Forests land base and resources to provide a variety of high quality outdoor recreation experiences.
- Encourage use of the Forests by the disadvantaged, physically challenged, and minorities.
- Manage the Forests' transportation system to facilitate resource management activities, protect wildlife, meet water quality objectives, and provide recreational access.

Applicable Forest Standards and Guidelines include the following:

- Do not approve special use applications if such use can reasonably be accommodated on private land.
- Establish transportation and utility corridors as needed to accommodate existing and planned facilities. Future rights-of-way will be confined to existing corridors unless there are overriding economic or environmental concerns.
- Manage developed recreation sites according to the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes.
- Provide barrier free recreation facilities that are accessible to physically challenged individuals. Emphasize these facilities at urban interface and other developed recreation locations.
- Prepare objectives and prescriptions for managing vegetation in and around developed recreation sites.
- Manage off-highway vehicle (OHV) use according to direction specified in the OHV Management Plan. Allow mountain bike (non-motorized) use on most trails. Exceptions where use is prohibited include the Pacific Crest Trail and trails within designated Wildernesses.
- Cooperate with the State, other agencies, and user groups to identify potential OHV trails. Where compatible with management objectives, develop segments of OHV trails that support the concept of a statewide OHV trail system.
- Provide interpretive services to direct visitors to their recreation destinations, to facilitate understanding of resource management activities, and to acquaint them with unique or special features on the Forests and the function of forest ecosystems.
- Make no new allocations for recreation residential purposes.
- Complete a recreation opportunity guide for each Ranger District. Highlight special places, theme areas, and unique recreation opportunities.

- Continue to improve access to rivers, streams, and lakes for water-oriented recreation activities consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy. Continue to provide access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing areas.
- Mitigate the physical impacts of increased, dispersed recreation use. Rehabilitation efforts should respond to resource damage to soils, water, and vegetation.
- Provide Interpretive Association sales outlets for interpretive and recreation information at the Forest Supervisor's Office and at Mt. Shasta, Shasta Lake, and Weaverville District Offices.

Supplemental LMP management direction for land use and recreation within Management Area 17 includes the following:

- Emphasize recreational and scenic values along the South Fork Trinity River and Hayfork Creek Canyon Areas.

There is no supplemental LMP management direction for land use and recreation within Management Area 19.

The project area lies within the Roded Recreation Management Prescription. The following Standards and Guidelines for this prescription would apply to the proposed project:

- Roads and trails should be located, designed, constructed, and maintained so that they are compatible with Roded Natural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) activities. These activities include hiking, auto touring, wildlife viewing, OHV use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.
- Wildfire suppression tactics will favor use of low impact techniques.
- Plan, design, and implement management activities that are compatible with Roded Natural ROS guidelines.
- Manage to meet adopted Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) of retention, partial retention, or modification as indicated on the adopted VQO map. Unseen areas within any mapped VQO may be managed for modification except in recreation river corridors.
- Manage hardwoods for sustainability on a landscape basis consistent with desired future ecosystem conditions.
- Maintain an average of 10 tons of unburned dead/down material per acre on slopes less than 40 percent. Preference is to have a portion of this tonnage in large material (i.e., 4 to 6 logs over 1-foot long at the largest diameter available). Where feasible, maintain the same amount on slopes over 40 percent.

### 4.9.3 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the CEQA *Guidelines*, the CEQA Environmental Checklist, poses the following questions to be considered in determining whether the project would cause significant land use or recreation impacts:

Would the project:

- Physically divide an established community?
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?
- Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- Include recreational facilities or require the expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

### 4.9.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

#### *PERMANENT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES*

The project is rehabilitation of an existing road through National Forest Lands. While the road connects two established communities, Hayfork and Hyampom, the segment of the road to be rehabilitated by this project is outside of these established communities, on undeveloped forest land managed by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The project will not physically divide an established community. The project will not displace any existing housing, people or businesses.

As discussed in Chapter 6.0 of this EIR, the project is not expected to induce substantial population growth in either Hyampom or Hayfork. The road will not be extended into previously unserved areas.

The proposed project will not conflict with Trinity County land use plans, or with the USFS Roded Recreation management prescription. The Northwest Forest Plan could be considered similar to a Habitat Conservation Plan, but the project, as mitigated in Section 4.7, *Biological Resources* of this DEIR, will not conflict with the Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan (USDA 2001). There is no Natural Community Conservation Plan in effect in the project area. The federal DOT has an existing right-of-way agreement with the Trinity County DOT that allows maintenance and operation of Hyampom Road (i.e., within a 20 m/ 66 ft easement on either side of the centerline). Road reconstruction and/or temporary or permanent use of UFSF property outside this easement will require a Special Use Permit or easement from the USFS or a revised DOT easement. The TCDOT plans to obtain a Special Use Permit for temporary uses such as staging and mitigation areas, and a revised DOT easement for permanent road uses along the entire roadway, following completion of the CFLHD project. The project will therefore have no permanent adverse impacts on land use.

**Land Use Impact –1: The proposed project will impact the Eight Mile Trail.**

Hyampom Road is located in an area delineated as an intensive recreation area in the Trinity County Open Space and Conservation Element of the General Plan (Hahn, Wise, and Associates, 1974, pg.s 42 and 59). However, the project does not include a recreational facility component nor will it increase the use of parks or other recreational facilities. As discussed in the project description, a new walkway access will be provided to the Eight Mile Trail, and the trailhead will be relocated slightly to accommodate the road realignment. This will be a positive recreation impact since it will improve safety for hikers.

**Significance: Less Than Significant**

**Mitigation Measure: None Required**

*TEMPORARY IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES*

No temporary changes in land use patterns in Hyampom or Hayfork will occur as a result of project construction. Relatively small areas of the National Forest adjacent to Hyampom Road will be temporarily used for construction staging, under a Special Use Permit from the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

**Land Use Impact –2: Construction will temporarily interfere with access to recreation in the National Forest and cultural events in Hyampom.**

During construction, access to this area of the National Forest for recreation, and to some cultural activities in Hyampom may be more difficult. Complete closure of Hyampom Road will occur at times during two construction seasons, (late spring, summer and early fall) for up to four hours at a time. Due to laws requiring overtime pay for construction workers, construction will not generally occur on weekends and holidays. However, Saturday work may be necessary in some circumstances, such as impending construction deadlines (typically in fall) or specialized contractors from out of the area performing specific tasks such as drilling, bridge sanding and painting or concrete work. No work will be allowed on Sunday, due to noise restrictions (See Section 4.6, *Noise*).

Other Forest Service roads in the area will be available during the time when lengthy road closures on Hyampom Road will be necessary. These Forest Service roads are not winter maintained, but are usually accessible through the deer-hunting season. Most of the cultural events in Hyampom occur on weekends, when construction is not likely to occur. On weekdays, Hyampom Road will be open before 8:00 a.m., around mid-day and after 5:00 p.m. every day. Because of the alternate accesses available, and the fact that the road will be open periodically on weekdays and all day on most weekends, temporary impacts on recreation are not considered significant.

**Significance: Less Than Significant**

**Mitigation Measure: None Required**

*CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES*

**Land Use Impact –3: The proposed project, combined with other projects in the vicinity, could result in cumulative effects on land use or recreation.**

As explained in Chapter 6.0, *Growth Inducing Impacts*, The proposed project, in combination with other Hyampom Road improvement projects proposed by TCDOT and CFLHD, are not expected to result in significant growth or major changes to land use patterns or development trends in either Hyampom or Hayfork. However, the temporary effects on recreation will be extended over a period of up to six construction seasons. Road closure schedules similar to that proposed for this project will occur during construction of the other projects.

As with this project, other Forest Service roads serving the area are usually accessible through the deer-hunting season. In the winter, when the Forest Service roads are inaccessible, there will be no major earthmoving activities on Hyampom Road that would result in lengthy road closures. Davis-Bacon wage rules will apply to government contractors, discouraging contractors, TCDOT and CFLHD from authorizing work on weekends and holidays unless absolutely necessary.

Although the combined effect of the projects will be to extend the impact on recreational opportunities from two years to six years, the effect is still considered less than significant,

because of the infrequent nature of weekend work, the alternative routes available to Hyampom and recreational sites in the National Forest, and because the road will be open daily from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. and at mid-day.

Bridge replacement projects in Hayfork will have no effect on land use patterns or recreation, either permanently or temporarily.

Other projects proposed in the Hyampom Valley include resort and winery development. These projects are consistent with the general land use of the vicinity, and their effects on land use are not cumulative with this project.

**Significance: Less Than Significant**

**Mitigation Measure: None Required**