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Chapter 4
Agricultural Resources

~~Public Review~~Revised Draft – ~~February~~ Summer 2026

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AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

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Introduction

For over 20,000 years, local tribes, including the Lake Pomo, Lake Miwok, Wappo, and Hill Patwin peoples have actively stewarded, managed, and cultivated native plants and animals in Lake County for food, medicine, and materials, employing practices that support soil fertility, water and biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem health.

Tribal traditional plant and animal resources included acorns, wild grapes, pine nuts, medicinal herbs, and fish, primarily the Chi (Or Clear Lake hitch, *Lavinia exilicauda chi),* which were carefully harvested and stored to sustain communities year-round. Today, tribal members continue to engage in sustainable land management, habitat restoration, and traditional ecological practices that complement modern agriculture and promote biodiversity, water quality, and resilient landscapes.

Agriculture continues to be a vital part of Lake County's history, economy, and quality of life. From the wild grapes, acorns, elderberries, pine nuts, and Chi underpinning the ancestral diets of Lake County's Indigenous tribes, to the walnuts and pears enjoyed at farmers' markets and celebrated at local festivals today, cultivating and tending the land is a core part of Lake County's identity. Farming in Lake County is also a critical economic asset connected to California's agricultural market, which leads the nation in agricultural production at $60 billion as of 2023, according to the 2023-2024 California Agricultural Statistics Review. Lake County's total agricultural production in 2024 is valued at nearly $102 million, according to the County's 2024 Crop and Livestock Report.

General Plan 2050 recognizes and seeks to preserve the central role agriculture has always played in the physical, economic, and cultural character of Lake County. This Agricultural Resources Element supports the continued preservation of agricultural lands, ongoing viability of local agriculture, growth of the agricultural tourism industry, and needs of farmworkers in Lake County.

Background

Lake County features high-quality volcanic soils that, together with the temperate Mediterranean climate, support a variety of crops, including fruits, nuts, nursery, pasture, and vegetable crops. Other agricultural goods, such as cattle, livestock, and timber, are also produced in the county.

Agriculture is a deeply ingrained part of community culture throughout the county and has contributed to the agricultural history of the greater United States. Two of the most common agricultural crops found in grocery stores across the country today, the Bartlett pear and the Blue Lake variety of green bean, initially came from Lake County. The Bartlett pear was originally cultivated in eighteenth-century England under a different name but was first cultivated on a commercial scale as the Bartlett pear in Lake County. Blue

Lake green beans derive their name from the Blue Lakes in northern Lake County, where they were first cultivated in the 1880s. The Poe walnut, a rare variety with mild tannins, originated in Scotts Valley near Poe Mountain. It was introduced by Felix Gillet in the 1870s and is known for its early bearing and flavorful nut meat. The Poe walnut is considered one of the premier in-the-shell walnuts of its time and is still grown in Lake County today. Fruit and green bean crops also contributed to a robust food processing industry in Lake County, including canning and dried fruit. Today, wine grapes are the largest crop by value produced in the county, constituting nearly $75 million, or roughly 74 percent, of the countywide total agricultural production value for 2024.

Lake County is, and has long been, an agricultural community. Farms, orchards, vineyards, and ranches are not a backdrop to county life—they are its foundation. Agriculture shapes ~~our~~the landscape, sustains ~~our~~the economy, and defines the rural character that makes this region distinctive. The evidence is visible throughout the county: tilled fields and cover crops in bloom, farmers tending crops along rural roads, and tractor-trailers carrying harvests to packing sheds, wineries, and markets. Property owners throughout the county share in both the benefits and the responsibilities that come with living in an active agricultural region.

Working farms and ranches operate year-round, day and night, according to the demands of weather, season, and crop. Property owners near agricultural land should expect and accept as normal the full range of farming and ranching operations, including the spraying of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides by ground equipment or aircraft; frost protection measures such as wind machines~~,~~ and operating in nighttime and early morning hours; harvesting and hauling at any hour during peak season; heavy equipment and tractor-trailer traffic on county roads; irrigation, pumping, and water management activities; grazing livestock on open pasture and range land; and the dust, noise, odors, smoke, and lighting that are inseparable from active agricultural operations. These are not occasional inconveniences—they are the recurring, ongoing conditions of agricultural life in Lake County.

California law and Lake County policy are unambiguous: lawfully conducted agricultural operations are not a nuisance. Farmers and ranchers have the right to spray, harvest, haul, irrigate, graze, and operate equipment without being subjected to complaints from neighboring property owners who are unfamiliar with, or unaccepting of, the realities of working farms and ranches. Operations that follow traditional agricultural practices and comply with applicable law cannot be forced to cease or curtail activities because residential or non-agricultural development has moved nearby. Those who choose to own or occupy property adjacent to farmland accept that these activities are normal and expected in an agricultural community, and that the conditions arising from them are an inherent part of rural life in Lake County.

It is the declared policy of Lake County to protect and promote agricultural operations as a priority land use. The ~~c~~County will not allow the expansion of non-agricultural uses to erode the rights of established farm operations. Farmers must be able to invest in and maintain their operations with confidence that the county stands behind their right to farm.

~~Recognizing the importance of preserving farmland and agricultural production, the State has enacted several laws that protect farmland and farming activities. These include Rright-to-Ffarm laws designed to protect farmers and ranchers from nuisance lawsuits brought by new adjacent residents in existing agricultural areas (CA Civ Code § 3482.5) and the Williamson Act, which allows owners of agricultural or open space land to pay reduced property taxes in exchange for committing the land to agricultural or open space use for at least 10 years. Lake County has also established local right-to-farm protections in County Code, Chapter 3 (Agriculture).~~

Mapped Farmland in the County

As of 2025, the General Plan designates 52,260 acres of county land for Agriculture. Agriculture-designated land includes, but is not limited to, some land identified as suited for agriculture and/or under contract for conservation following the Williamson Act (land suited for agriculture and Williamson Act Lands are described below). Agriculture-designated lands are depicted in **Figure AR-1**.

Figure AR-2 shows the distribution of lands suited for agriculture according to the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) administered by the California Department of Conservation.

FMMP identifies five classes of land suited for agriculture: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, Unique Farmland, and Grazing Land. In total, FMMP maps over 286,000 acres of land suited for agriculture and grazing in Lake County. As shown in Figure AR-2, the majority of the FMMP land in Lake County is classified as Grazing Land, which is distributed throughout the county. Prime Farmland is primarily concentrated around the communities of Kelseyville and Upper Lake, and to a lesser extent in areas west of Clearlake Oaks and in the southern parts of the county around Middletown and Hidden Valley. Areas classified as Farmland of Local Importance are scattered throughout the county, with concentrations in the areas around Upper Lake, Nice, Witter Springs, Bachelor Valley, and Middletown, as well as between Paradise Valley and Clearlake Oaks and between Lakeport and Soda Bay. Unique Farmland is primarily around Kelseyville, Seigler Springs, and Lower Lake; west of Clearlake Oaks; and along the county's southern border. And Farmland of Statewide Importance is most heavily concentrated in the west near Finley and Kelseyville, and to a lesser extent along Clear Lake, north of North Lakeport.

FMMP Farmland Classes

Prime Farmland: Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features to sustain long-term agricultural production based on soil quality and hydrological features.

Farmland of Statewide Importance: Similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture.

Farmland of Local Importance: Land of importance to the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county's board of supervisors and local advisory committee.

Unique Farmland: Farmland of lesser-quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops.

Grazing Land: Vegetation suited for the grazing of livestock.

Figure AR-1 Agriculture-Designated Lands

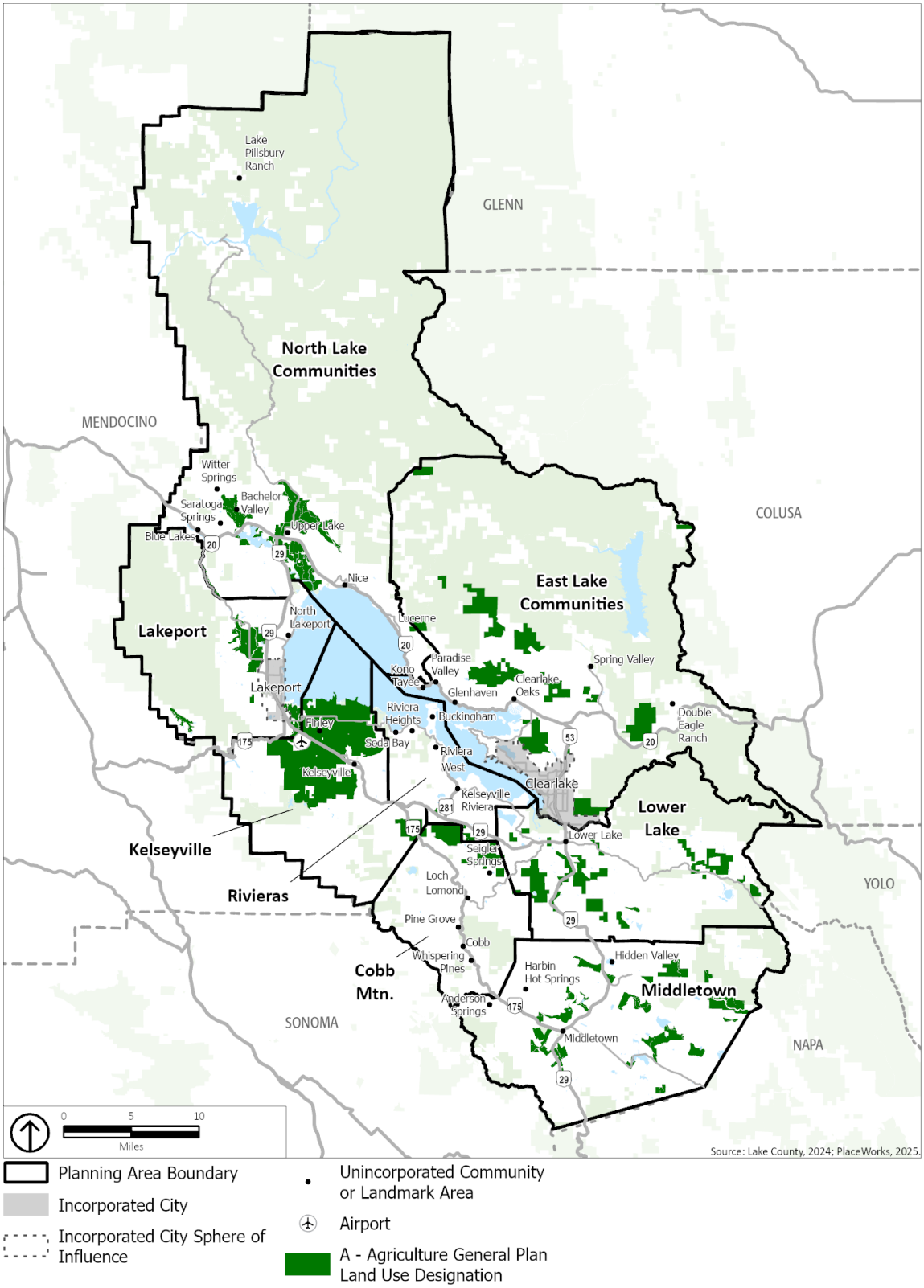
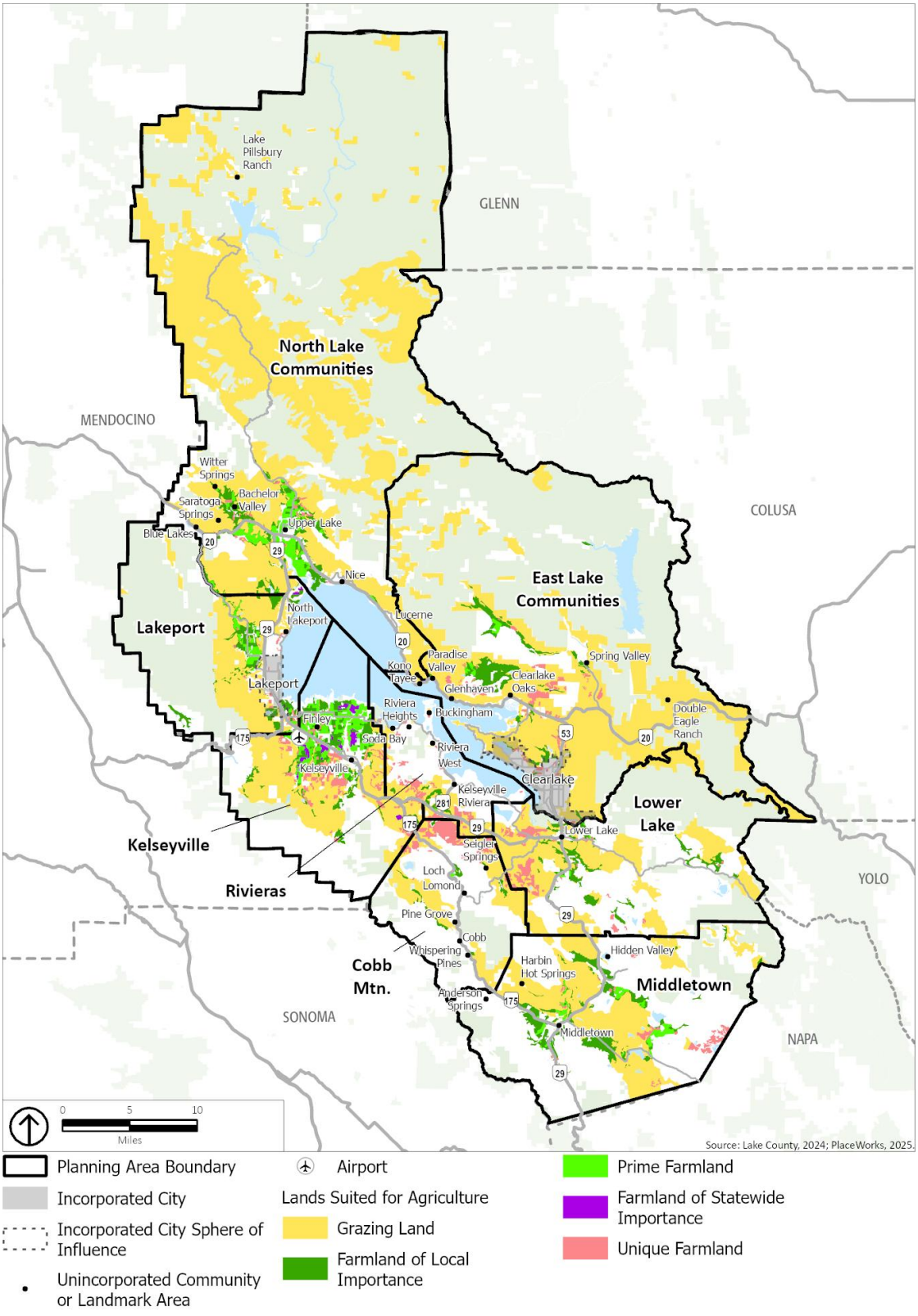


Figure AR-2 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Lands



The California Land Conservation Act, better known as the Williamson Act, works to conserve agricultural and open space land through restrictive use contracts administered by counties and cities under State regulations. Private landowners voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural and compatible open space uses under minimum 10-year rolling term contracts, with counties and cities also acting voluntarily. In return, the property tax on a Williamson Act parcel is assessed at a rate consistent with its actual use, rather than potential market value. A standard Williamson Act contract has a minimum term of 10 years, while Farmland Security Zone contracts have a minimum term of 20 years in exchange for greater property tax discounts. Since the term automatically renews on each anniversary date of the contract, the actual term can be indefinite. In 2012, the County stopped accepting new Williamson Act contracts due to the cessation of subvention funds at the State level. County staff perform periodic audits of parcels with active Williamson Act contracts to verify ongoing commercial agriculture activity.

Tribes in Lake County have long-standing cultural, ecological, and subsistence connections to the land now enrolled in Williamson Act contracts. Traditional stewardship practices by tribes emphasized soil health, water conservation, and the maintenance of native plant communities. Recognizing tribal contributions to land management can support conservation objectives while protecting cultural resources, ensuring that land-use policies respect both agricultural production and tribal heritage. Where appropriate, collaboration with tribes can enhance conservation efforts, integrate Tribal~~aditional~~ Ecological Knowledge, and identify culturally sensitive areas that benefit from continued agricultural or open space protection. **Figure AR-3** shows all Williamson Act lands in the county.

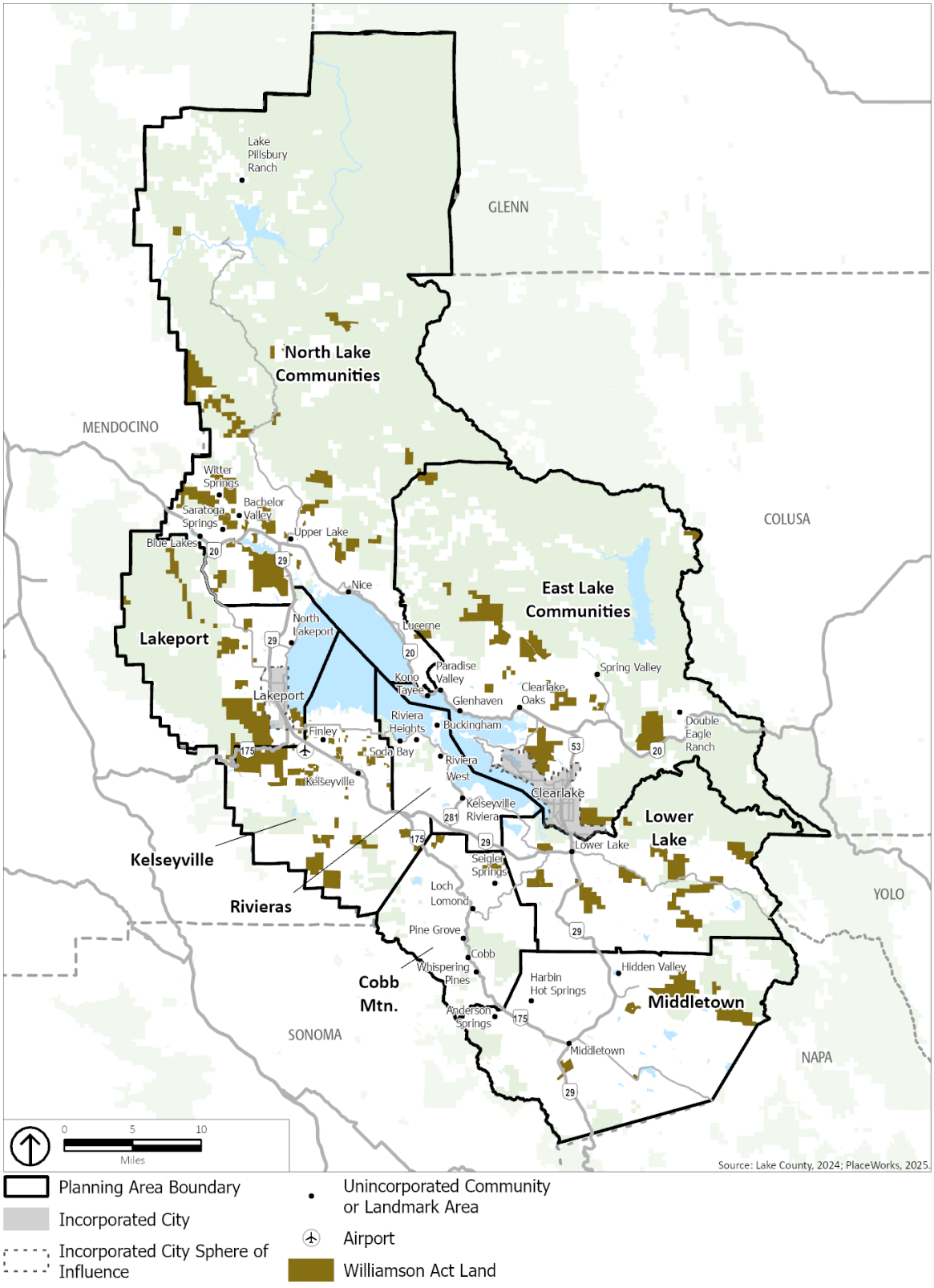
Lake County Crops

Pear orchards are an important Lake County crop.

The most land-intensive crops in the county are grapes and pears. The 2024 Lake County Crop and Livestock Report shows wine grapes as the leading agricultural commodity in Lake County, earning $75 million in 2024, down by 35 percent from $114.6 million in 2023. Pears are ranked second in production value at $12.9 million in 2024, down by 35 percent from $19.7 million in 2023. Overall, fruits and nuts accounted for a majority of the county's gross production value, earning $90.3 million in 2024, a decrease of 33 percent from the 2023 production value. As of 2023, Lake County was ranked 35th out of the 58 California counties in total agricultural production, but second in pear production. The total estimated gross value of agricultural production in Lake County was approximately $102 million in 2024.

Cannabis is an expanding~~emerging~~ crop in the area, following the 2016 passage of Proposition 64~~213~~ legalizing the recreational use of marijuana in California. As of 2024, the ~~e~~County had approved approximately 417.95 acres of commercial cannabis canopy area, including indoor, mixed-light, and outdoor cultivation, according to the Community Development Department.

Figure AR-3 Williamson Act Lands



Agricultural Tourism

As noted in the Planning Area Economic Development Elements and evident in wine- and produce-growing regions throughout California, agriculture and viticulture significantly drive California's economy and create economic ripple effects by nurturing supportive tourism uses like festivals, farmers markets, farm-to-table restaurants, and tasting rooms.

The future of Lake County's agricultural economy is supported by local agriculturalists introducing innovative approaches to farming and looking for creative ways to reintroduce farming culture and recapture earnings. Festivals, farmer's markets, and local produce offered at grocery stores and restaurants promote and enhance Lake County's agricultural tradition and identity. Agricultural tourism is a strong and growing sub-sector of California's tourism economy. Agricultural tourism can include short-term accommodations like bed-and-breakfasts, product tastings, restaurants or tap rooms, event spaces, and spa services for visitors to enjoy while observing, learning about, or even participating in a working farm. These opportunities promote Lake County's agricultural identity and draw visitors from all over California and beyond.

Agricultural tourism is a combination of agriculture and tourism that can involve visits to working farms and ranches to observe and learn about farming practices and purchase locally grown products, as well as more elaborate activities such as farm stays, farm-to-table meals enjoyed in the crops, and other activities.

Timber Resources

Forestlands and timber resources dominate the mountain landscape around Lake County communities.

There are 22,100 acres of Timberland Production Zones (TPZ) in Lake County in the Mendocino National Forest (Mendocino Forest) and Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest (Boggs Forest). In both forests, tribal communities in Lake County have long-standing cultural, spiritual, and subsistence connections.

The Mendocino Forest in the North Coastal Mountain Range spans 913,305 acres across Lake, Colusa, Glen, Mendocino, Tehama, and Trinity Counties with approximately 305,095 acres (33 percent) within Lake County, occupying 36 percent of the county, all within the North Lake Communities and East Lake Communities Planning Areas. Across all of Mendocino Forest, only 61,000 acres are capable, available, and suitable for regulated timber management due to concerns with uses such as recreation, visual resources, and wildlife habitat. There are three major forest types on these 61,000 acres: mixed conifer, conifer-hardwood, and red fir. Timber sales from the Mendocino Forest are further declining due to concerns for the spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*). In addition to timber, Mendocino Forest also has the potential to provide wood biomass for energy generation from three general

sources: woody residues for timber harvests and precommercial thinning, harvest of hardwoods and non-commercial conifers, and woody brush species (mainly chaparral).

The 3,493-acre Boggs Forest is in the Cobb Mountain Planning Area in southern Lake County. CAL FIRE acquired the forest in 1940 to support their forest management research, demonstration, and education activities. The entirety of Boggs Forest is zoned by Lake County as TPZ. Prior to the 2015 Valley Fire, nearly all the forest land was well-stocked with predominately ponderosa pine, ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir, and Douglas-fir. There is no current inventory estimate of timber resources in Boggs Forest due to the ongoing salvage operations from the Valley Fire. Prior to the fire, CAL FIRE offered public and private commercial interests the opportunity to purchase minor forest products, subject to specific rules and constraints. However, the salvage timber sales put out to bid in the aftermath of the Valley Fire fell through as bidders became concerned about the viability of the product. Biomass has been considered as an option for the woody material left after the initial salvage logging entries. However, the closest biomass facility is in Anderson, approximately 145 miles from Boggs Forest. Due to the low value of the product and the long trucking distance from the forest to the energy plant, this option is uneconomical. As of 2025, the County has begun issuing permits for biomass energy facilities and anticipates additional growth in this field as a means to both manage forest wood fuels and produce energy.

Collaborative planning with tribes is essential to ensure that forest management, including timber harvest and biomass energy development, protects cultural heritage, maintains ecosystem health, and supports tribal access for traditional uses. Timber harvesting, salvage logging, and biomass removal can disturb sacred sites, traditional gathering areas, and habitat for culturally significant plants and wildlife. Tribes are concerned that current timber management practices may not fully account for these cultural resources, ecological knowledge, and the long-term stewardship of forest ecosystems.

According to the 2024 County Crop Report, timber sales grossed only $231 in 2024, down from $1,556 in 2023, reflecting the ongoing decline due to supply and habitat conservation concerns. Prior to the Valley Fire, timber production grossed $397,690 in 2014; it spiked in 2019 to $1,606,810 due to forest clearing but has sharply declined since.

Challenges and Opportunities

Climate Hazards

Local agriculture faces several challenges, including a variety of climate-related hazards. These hazards threaten crop viability, livestock health, soil quality, farmworker health, and overall farm productivity. Climate-related hazards are addressed in more detail in the County's 2025 Climate Vulnerability Analysis (**Appendix D**) and the Health and Safety Element. The following are hazards with a recognized impact on agriculture in Lake County.

Wildfires and Smoke

More frequent and prolonged wildfires resulting from climate change damage farmland, destroy infrastructure, and reduce air quality, threatening the health and lives of humans, livestock, and crops. While wildfire is anticipated to be an ongoing risk, the County can enhance its existing advanced warning systems and work to streamline evacuation to ensure safety of livestock and agricultural workers during wildfire events. For example, there is interest in expanding messaging through the Ag Pass program, which allows commercial agricultural producers to continue essential operations during restricted access orders and emergencies, and there is work to be done to grow the capacity of and activate ~~the Lake Evacuation and Animal Protection (LEAP) group, which assists with animal evacuations and animal housing during emergency events~~animal evacuation services. Agricultural activities like ~~L~~livestock grazing can also provide benefits in terms of reducing wildfire fuel vegetation. Additional information and policies related to wildfire hazards and risk mitigation are included in the Health and Safety Element.

Many parts of Lake County are at risk of wildfires.

Drought and Access to Water Resources

Drought exacerbates existing challenges of water resource access for agriculture. The agricultural industry is particularly interested in expanded aquifer development, ongoing implementation of irrigation efficiency and water conservation policies, and provisions for groundwater basin protections to facilitate sustainable water management. Water supply and conservation are addressed in the Water Resources Element~~,~~ and resilience to drought is addressed in the Health and Safety Element.

Flooding and Soil Erosion

Extreme rainfall events have led to flash floods, particularly in Scotts Valley, Mount St. Helena, Putah Creek, and Cache Creek. Flooding causes debris flow, pollution of water resources, and soil erosion. The Health and Safety Element addresses flood hazards and mitigation strategies in more detail; however, the agriculture industry can support mitigating the risk and impact of flood hazards through the use of cover crops that can reduce flood risk and improve soil structure. Flooding is addressed along with other hazards in the Health and Safety Element.

Agricultural Pests and Diseases

As described in the Climate Vulnerability Analysis (**Appendix D**), agriculture and forestry pests and diseases pose a significant threat to the county's crop and timberland production. For example, from 2019 to 2022, tree mortality increased from 3,000 to 590,000. Warmer temperatures and changing precipitation patterns will create more favorable conditions for agricultural and forestry pests and diseases. Agricultural pests and diseases are addressed in the Health and Safety Element.

Farmworker Health and Productivity

Extreme heat and prolonged exposure to wildfire smoke present significant health risks for farmworkers in the county. Heatwaves reduce work hours and productivity while increasing the risk of heat-related illnesses. Farmworkers also face limited housing options and overcrowded living conditions that affect their health and livelihood. Community members support streamlining farmworker housing approval processes and improving evacuation systems to prioritize farmworkers' safety.

In addition to the policies and actions in this element, strategies to streamline emergency evacuation and increase access to affordable housing are detailed in the Health and Safety and Housing Elements, and in the planning area-specific Land Use Elements.

~~Wine~~ Industry Uncertainties

Globally, demand for wine is in a multiyear decline that is not anticipated to rebound quickly. Wine supplies have exceeded demand in recent years, which impacts pricing, and while this paradigm is not uncommon, the cause of the current imbalance is unprecedented so the future of the industry is uncertain. In past years of excess supply, the cause was often attributed to short-term over production and/or economic recession yielding decreased consumption. In contrast, the current decline is linked to potentially long-term demographic shifts—aging baby boomers are consuming less wine and younger generations are not replacing the boomers' demand. This could impact Lake County's wine grape industry, which constituted roughly 74 percent of the county's total agricultural output by dollar value in 2024. Policies and actions in this element aim to strengthen the county's agricultural industry by supporting a wide variety of crops in addition to wine grapes, as well as by strengthening industries and programs that support the wine grape industry and the county's broader agricultural identity with a focus on support for agritourism and other ag-related activities. Similarly, the Economic Development Elements for each planning area also include policies and actions aimed at supporting the agriculture industry.

Agricultural tourism helps to boost the success of Lake County's agricultural industry.

Legacy crops like pears and walnuts also face challenges like limited processing and packing infrastructure. In 2026, only one processing and packing facility remains in Lake County.

Other Priorities

In addition to efforts to preserve existing farmland, expanding and diversifying the agricultural industry and promoting sustainable farming practices can help fortify the industry against changing conditions in the natural and economic environments. Members of Lake County's agricultural industry support the County taking an active role in promoting crop diversification, increased agricultural tourism, and sustainable farming.

Goals, Policies, and Actions

~~Agricultural Resources~~

~~Goal AR-2~~Goal AR-1 Agricultural lands that are protected from conversion to nonagricultural uses.

Policies

~~AR-2.1~~AR-1.1

Preserve and protect productive agricultural lands from conversion to urban uses, especially land designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland by the California Department of Conservation and land containing Classes I to IV agricultural soils for agricultural production.

~~AR-2.2~~AR-1.2

Preserve large, contiguous areas of the county for agricultural production. Discourage applications for projects that would lead to fragmentation of agricultural areas.

~~AR-2.3~~AR-1.3

Continue to maintain minimum parcel sizes for Agriculture-designated lands that are large enough to sustain viable agricultural activities given slope and other conditions.

~~AR-2.4~~AR-1.4

Encourage the consolidation of substandard-sized agricultural parcels to make economically viable farm units.

~~AR-2.5~~AR-1.5

Prohibit lot splits on Agriculture-designated properties that don't meet the minimum lot size requirement of the zoning district.

~~AR-2.6~~AR-1.6

On lands designated Agriculture, only allow the following as secondary or accessory uses to a primary agricultural use: single-family residences, farmworker housing, agricultural tourism-related uses, and agricultural support uses.

~~AR-2.7~~AR-1.7

Limit extension of services, ~~-~~such as sewer and water lines and roadways, into areas preserved for agriculture, except where necessary to support agricultural operations. Where necessary, locate services in public rights-of-way to prevent interference with agricultural operations and provide ease of access for operation and maintenance. Design service capacity and infrastructure to prevent conversion of agricultural lands into urban or suburban uses.

~~AR-2.8~~AR-1.8

Collaborate with the Cities of Clearlake and Lakeport and the ~~Lake County~~ Local Agency Formation Commission to avoid expansion of city spheres of influence into areas designated Agriculture in this General Plan.

~~AR-2.9~~AR-1.9

Consider redesignation of Agriculture-designated lands adjacent to community growth boundaries (CGBs) to urban designations only when substantial infill development has occurred within the CGB resulting in a minimum of 85 percent of ~~vacant and underutilized~~ parcels within the CGB being developed ~~at their allowed densities within the CGB~~. For the purpose of this policy, a parcel is considered developed if its assessed improvement value is at least 20 percent of its assessed land value.~~Underutilized parcels are those developed to a specified fraction of allowed maximum development capacity (in residential units or commercial square feet) or total land value (in dollars). Typically parcels are considered underutilized when developed to one third or less of the total capacity or value of the parcel.~~

~~AR-2.10~~AR-1.10

Collaborate with Tribal governments to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands that support traditional gathering, ceremonial, and culturally significant plant resources. Encourage integration of tribal land stewardship practices into agricultural land preservation strategies.

Actions

~~AR-2.a~~AR-1.a

Consider options for policies and procedures for the use of agricultural and conservation easements to preserve agricultural land.

~~AR-2.b~~AR-1.b

Collaborate with Tribal governments to identify areas of cultural and traditional significance on agricultural lands and pursue funding to provide incentives for conservation easements or other incentive programs to ensure agricultural productivity and protection of Tribal Cultural Resources.

~~Goal AR-3~~Goal AR-2 Reduced conflicts between agricultural and nonagricultural uses.

Policies

~~AR-3.1~~AR-2.1

Continue ongoing notification processes to landowners regarding the Right-to-Farm Ordinance.

~~AR-3.2~~AR-2.2

When resolving conflicts between agricultural uses and urban uses, prioritize maintaining the viability of the agricultural uses.

AR-2.3

Ensure new regulations, including those restricting noise, do not negatively impact existing agricultural operations.

~~AR-3.3~~AR-2.4

Continue to review agriculturally intensive uses (e.g., cattle and hog feed yards and large wineries) through a conditional use permit process to ensure the site is appropriate for the proposed use and to attach conditions needed to make the use compatible with surrounding land uses.

Actions

~~AR-3.a~~AR-2.a

Compile and provide information to the local real estate industry to increase public awareness of the right-to-farm provisions in the county.

~~AR-3.b~~AR-2.b

Coordinate with other agencies and organizations to provide technical assistance to farmers on how to minimize or eliminate unnecessary noise impacts from agricultural operations.

~~AR-1.1.~~

~~Ensure new regulations, including those restricting noise, do not negatively impact existing agricultural operations.~~

~~AR-3.d~~AR-2.c

Update the Zoning Ordinance to include a buffer requirement between existing agricultural uses and proposed residential development to protect the agricultural uses from incompatible use conflicts. Buffers must be located on the development site and not remove productive farmland from agricultural use.

~~AR-3.e~~

~~As data becomes available, update regulations and protections, including buffering and operational mitigations, that reduce the impacts of cannabis cultivation on communities and the environment, including impacts to groundwater supply, watershed health, vehicular traffic, and odor.~~

~~AR-3.g~~AR-2.d * [1]

Amend Article 27, Uses Generally Permitted, of the Zoning Ordinance to recognize that agricultural activities produce odors and adjust setbacks in zoning districts that have a higher housing density greater than or equal to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres~~establish a performance standard for the odor response program component of the commercial cannabis cultivation Property Management Plan~~.

~~AR-3.h~~AR-2.e

Continue enforcement of unpermitted and illegal cannabis cultivation operations.

~~Goal AR-4~~Goal AR-3 A diverse, healthy, and competitive agricultural industry.

Policies

~~AR-4.1~~AR-3.1

Continue to support a variety of agricultural activities on Agriculture-designated land, with an emphasis on diversified, climate-resilient, regenerative agriculture and food crops to support local food production.

~~AR-4.2~~AR-3.2

Collaborate with the Lake County Department of Agriculture, University of California (UC) Cooperative Extension, Lake County Resource Conservation District, Farm Bureau, California Women in Agriculture, and industry organizations in the county to promote and expand agricultural opportunities in Lake County.

AR-3.3

Support and participate in ongoing public education programs, such as those conducted by the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, and industry organizations, to help the public better understand the importance of the agricultural industry to Lake County and its residents.

AR-3.4

Explore and support opportunities for cannabis farmers to access technical assistance programs, ~~as~~while cannabis crops are precluded from accessing certain programs other farmers rely on for support.

~~AR-4.3~~AR-3.5

Encourage agricultural agencies and marketing cooperatives to research global and domestic markets for high-value crops that can be grown in Lake County.

[1] General Plan policies and actions marked with an asterisk (*) denote policies and actions that work to mitigate effects of cumulative development expected during the life of the General Plan, identified in the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

~~AR-4.4~~AR-3.6

Support efforts to identify and share information about new crops suited for Lake County's changing climate as potential options for sustainably diversifying the county's agricultural industry.

~~AR-4.5~~AR-3.7

Collaborate with Tribal governments to promote the cultivation, restoration, and marketing of traditional tribal food and plant species that support local food production, cultural revitalization, ecological health, ~~and~~ local agricultural diversity, and tribal food sovereignty.

AR-3.8

Encourage and support activities to ensure local food security and tribal food sovereignty, including encouraging onsite farming programs, such as farm-to-school programs and community gardens, and locally grown food distribution.

AR-3.9

Encourage cannabis operators to report their production data to the annual Crop and Livestock Report to support timely data collection and analysis.

~~AR-4.6~~AR-3.10

Encourage the development of agricultural support industries and services in the county, including agricultural tourism industries.

~~AR-4.7~~AR-3.11

Allow agricultural processing facilities as secondary or accessory uses on land with primary agricultural uses, provided the use meets the following criteria:

a. The use provides a needed service to the surrounding agricultural area that cannot be provided more efficiently in urban areas or that requires a non-urban location because of unusual site needs or operational characteristics;
b. The operational or physical characteristics of the use do not have a detrimental impact on water resources or the use or management of surrounding properties within at least a one-quarter mile radius; and
c. The activity supports agricultural operations, production, or processing in the county.

~~AR-4.8~~AR-3.12

Allow agricultural tourism-related uses as secondary uses on lands zoned for Agricultural uses, including Agricultural (A), Agricultural Preserve (APZ), Rural Lands (RL), Rural Residential (RR), and Timber Preserve (TPZ) Districts~~Agriculture-designated lands~~, provided the use meets the following criteria:

- Any marketing uses are limited to those that promote agricultural production in Lake County;
- The use is compatible with existing agricultural uses in the area and does not adversely impact operations;
- The use maintains an agriculturally oriented theme;

- The use is subordinate to agricultural production and does not occur at a scale that creates destination resorts, commercial centers, or development patterns that displace agriculture;
- The use does not require the extension of urban services, such as sewer and/or water service; and
- The use does not support or offer off-road vehicles for recreational purposes.

~~AR-4.9~~AR-3.13

Investigate and support diversification of agriculture related development, where compatible with existing uses.

~~AR-4.10~~AR-3.14

In coordination with agricultural interests and local restaurants and businesses, promote the sale and use of agricultural products grown and/or processed in Lake County.

~~AR-4.11~~AR-3.15

Support marketing programs designed to promote Lake County agricultural products and agricultural tourism venues to external markets.

~~AR-4.12~~AR-3.16

Encourage the establishment of industrial and research-oriented businesses specializing in biofuels that can enhance agricultural productivity and food processing activities and provide for new agriculturally related products and markets.

~~AR-4.13~~AR-3.17

Encourage and support the development of alternative energy production (e.g., ethanol) as new agriculture-related industries and for the use of agricultural waste.

~~AR-4.14~~AR-3.18

Continue to support agricultural technical assistance programs and cooperate with public and private groups to promote economic development in agricultural areas.

~~AR-4.15~~AR-3.19

Encourage and support agriculture-related vocational and work-force training programs in public schools, community colleges, and through community programs.

Actions

~~AR-4.a~~AR-3.a

Partner with Tribes, the UC Cooperative Extension, and agricultural organizations to develop pilot projects and educational programs focused on ~~Traditional~~ Tribal Ecological Knowledge and climate-resilient native crops suitable for sustainable production in Lake County.

~~AR-4.b~~AR-3.b

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to expand opportunities for value-added agricultural uses.

~~AR-3.c~~

Develop regulations to institute mandatory production data reporting for cannabis operators to the annual Crop and Livestock Report to support timely data collection and analysis.

~~AR-4.c~~AR-3.d

Develop a streamlined permit process for new or expanded agricultural support industries and services in the county, including permits for special events on lands zoned for Agricultural uses, including Agricultural (A), Agricultural Preserve (APZ), Rural Lands (RL), Rural Residential (RR), and Timber Preserve (TPZ) Districts~~Agriculture-designated land~~.

~~AR-4.d~~AR-3.e

Amend Article 5, *Agriculture District*, of the Zoning Ordinance to establish criteria for allowing development of facilities for agricultural tourism ~~facilities~~uses on lands zoned for ~~A~~agricultural uses, including Agricultural (A), Agricultural Preserve (APZ), Rural Lands (RL), Rural Residential (RR), and Timber Preserve (TPZ) Districts~~e-designated land~~. At a minimum, the criteria should include the criteria listed in **Policy AR-3.~~8~~12**.

~~Goal AR-5~~Goal AR-4 A sustainable and resilient agricultural sector.

Policies

~~AR-5.1~~AR-4.1

Promote the use of cover crops to enrich soil.

~~AR-5.2~~AR-4.2

Assist the local agricultural community in identifying ways to ~~increase the supply of quality irrigation water and~~support sustainable irrigation supply, conservation, recharge, and watershed health ~~implement water conservation techniques~~.

~~AR-5.3~~AR-4.3

Encourage the widespread use of erosion-control programs and techniques in erodible agricultural areas, in cooperation with the Lake County Resource Conservation District.

~~AR-5.4~~AR-4.4

Support landowners' participation in programs that reduce soil erosion and increase soil productivity, including programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Resource Conservation Districts, UC Cooperative Extension, Tribes, and other similar agencies and organizations.

AR-4.5

Require grading activities associated with agricultural development to be designed and managed to minimize sediment runoff and soil erosion—including from wind and rain.

~~AR-5.5~~AR-4.6

Encourage agricultural applications that directly use geothermal resources as a heat source if properly planned and compatible with surrounding land uses.

Refer to the Geothermal Resources Element for information on additional environmental, health, and safety stipulations applicable to geothermal resource activities.

AR-4.7

Encourage and support seed banks, native and culturally significant crops, and crop diversity.

Actions

AR-4.a

Establish a soil improvement plan and seek ways to encourage and reward farmers for healthy soil.

AR-4.b

Develop watershed-level stewardship programs for agricultural valleys designed to reduce nutrient loads into Clear Lake from agricultural runoff into ~~recover~~ major tributary systems ~~that add excess nutrients Clear Lake~~.

~~AR-5.a~~AR-4.c

Lobby the U.S. Department of Agriculture to include highly erodible hillside walnut orchards among agricultural land eligible for its federal erosion-control and conservation reserve program.

~~AR-5.b~~AR-4.d

Encourage tillage and composting practices and alternate methods of vegetation disposal in lieu of agricultural burning practices to avoid adverse air quality impacts and other hazards while improving soil health.

The **Ag Pass** program allows commercial agricultural operations to continue essential activities, such as tending to livestock or crops, during evacuation orders.

~~AR-5.c~~AR-4.e

Expand Ag Pass messaging to reach more farmers.

AR-4.f

Study agrivoltaics, the practice of using the same land for both agriculture and solar energy generation, as a possible use compatible to agriculture.

~~Goal AR-6~~Goal AR-5 An agricultural industry that sustains the housing needs of farmworkers.

Policy

~~AR-6.1~~AR-5.1

Encourage the development of adequate and safe housing for farm labor.

Housing needs of all community members are addressed comprehensively in the Housing Element. Additionally, the Housing Action and Implementation Plan serves as a manual with more detailed strategies to address current and forecasted housing need throughout Lake County.

Action

~~AR-6.a~~AR-5.a

Explore options to streamline development of farmworker housing, including by updating the Zoning Ordinance to allow farm labor camps through a ministerial permit.

~~Goal AR-7~~Goal AR-6 Protected timber resources and sustainable timber production.

Policies

~~AR-7.1~~AR-6.1

Coordinate with land managers on timber management practices to promote healthy, sustainable forests and local economic benefit.

~~AR-7.2~~AR-6.2

Coordinate with federal, State, Tribal, and regional partners exercising responsibilities for timber management in the county to ensure their operations are consistent with this General Plan. As part of this, promote management that balances timber production with fuel management, pest management, cultural resources, and the protection of recreational resources and viewsheds.

~~AR-7.3~~AR-6.3

Support and promote sustainable timber production, including by promoting selective, rather than clear cutting, particularly for old-growth stands of timber, wherever possible.

~~AR-7.4~~AR-6.4

Collaborate with Tribal governments to develop educational outreach programs of Tribal~~aditional~~ Ecological Knowledge for forest and timber management practices.

Actions

~~AR-7.a~~AR-6.a

Distribute educational materials from State agencies, such as CAL FIRE, that promote sustainable forest practices in the county.

~~AR-7.b~~AR-6.b

Seek the advice of a Registered Professional Forester when making decisions regarding forest management.

~~AR-7.c~~AR-6.c

Work jointly with Tribes, CAL FIRE, and the U.S. Forest Service to develop demonstration and co-management projects that apply traditional land stewardship techniques, such as cultural burning, native plant restoration, and habitat protection to enhance forest sustainability and protect sacred and culturally sensitive sites.

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