



NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING MEETING

Date: October 27, 2023

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

Subject: **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for Tentative Subdivision Map No. 186 Putnam Ranch and General Plan Amendment from Agricultural General & Rural Residential to Agricultural Transition (GPA-22;7-1)**

Comment Period: October 30, 2023 through November 30, 2023

Lead Agency: Amador County

Per state law, the deadline for your response is 30-days after receipt of this notice; however, we would appreciate an earlier response, if possible. Written comments will be accepted until **November 30, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.** Please identify a contact person and send your response to:

Contact: Chuck Beatty
Planning Director
810 Court St.
Jackson, CA 95642
Telephone: (209) 223-6380
Email: planning@amadorgov.org

Purpose of Notice

Amador County (County) as the Lead Agency is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.), and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CEQA Guidelines). The County has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15082(a) and 15375. This NOP solicits guidance from responsible, trustee, and involved federal agencies about the scope and content of environmental information to be included in the EIR related to the agencies' statutory responsibilities. The agencies will use the County's EIR when considering their permits or other approvals related to the Project. The NOP also provides an opportunity for other interested parties to provide the County information they may possess or comments on environmental issues they see as being germane to the EIR.

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment, to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts, and to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the EIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project;
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures for the project;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) cumulative impacts.

Project Location and Setting

The project site is located in the unincorporated area in Amador County, California, about two and a half miles southwest of the City of Plymouth and 40 miles east of downtown Sacramento. Regional access to the area is generally provided by California State Route 16 and California State Route 49.

The most significant adjacent land uses are the the Zinfandel Ridge subdivision along the north boundary of entire Putnam Ranch and the Greilich Ranch Subdivision and 49er Village RV Resort Expansion Project located in Plymouth's southwest quadrant. Most of the Zinfandel Ridge parcels consist of single-family residences on approximately half acre lots or retained open space. The 115.5-acre Greilich Ranch Subdivision plans to include 234 single-family residential lots, open space, and new roads. The 44.9-acre 49er Village RV Resort expansion plans to add 214 RV sites, a 4,900 sq. ft. Clubhouse Facility, and amenities.

To the east of the existing Putnam Ranch, the prominent land use is a few small ranchettes and commercial properties that front along this stretch of Highway 49. Ranchland is typical along the opposite side of Highway 49 except for the commercial uses scattered along the highway as it approaches the city of Plymouth. To the west along approximately .75 mile of common boundary with the ranch, is the Rancho Victoria Vineyard. Further to the west and south the dominant uses are open range and agriculture.

Project Description

Tentative Subdivision Map SM 186 and General Plan Amendment GPA-22;7-1 Putnam Ranch, proposing the division of a combined 423 acres into 53 residential lots ranging from ±5 to ±9.9 acres with ±118.7 acres of open-space lots, in conjunction with a General Plan Amendment from RR, Rural Residential and AG, Agricultural General to AT, Agricultural Transition.

The existing and proposed land use designations are summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Existing and Proposed Zoning and General Plan Designation

		Existing	Proposed
Amador County Zoning	Both parcels	R1-A	R1-A
Amador County General Plan	APN 008-100-029 (140 acres)	RR (Rural Residential) And AG (Agricultural General)	AT (Agricultural Transition)
	APN 008-090-015 (283 acres)	AG (Agricultural General)	AT (Agricultural Transition)

Potential Environmental Effects

The EIR will describe existing environmental resources and current conditions in the Project area, evaluate the environmental impacts of implementing the Project, and, where applicable, identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or avoid significant environmental impacts. The EIR will also evaluate alternatives to the Project that meet most of the project objectives, are feasible, and reduce at least one significant impact of the Project. The analysis will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the Project.

Aesthetics	Hydrology and Water Quality
Agricultural Resources	Land Use and Planning
Air Quality	Population and Housing
Biological Resources	Public Services
Energy	Utilities and Service Systems
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	Wildfire
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	

Potential Environmental Impacts of the Project:

The EIR will identify significant environmental effects anticipated to result from implementation of the Proposed Project. These effects may pertain to: (1) conformance with existing plans and policies of Amador County, (2) aesthetics; (3) agricultural resources; (4) air quality; (5) sensitive biological species and habitats; (6) energy use; (7) geology and soils; (8) construction-related air quality and greenhouse gas emissions; (9) hydrology and water quality; (10) land use; (11) population and housing; (12) utilities and service systems; and (13) wildfire. The EIR will evaluate possible alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Project Alternative. The alternative discussion will focus on those alternatives that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic purposes of the project while also avoiding or substantially lessening one or more of the significant effects.

Project Approvals

For the purposes of CEQA, the term “Responsible Agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency which have discretionary approval power over the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381). Discretionary approval power may include such actions as issuance of a permit or authorization.

The following are specific County, State, and federal entitlements that must be granted prior to approval and/or implementation of the Project.

- Adoption of a General Plan Amendment
- Certification of the EIR by Amador County
- Adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan by Amador County
- Approval of Tentative and Final Subdivision Maps by Amador County
- Approval of a water supply
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation for potential impacts to federally listed species in accordance with the Federal Endangered Species Act and Agreements pursuant to Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act
- State Historic Preservation Office – Consultation regarding impacts to historic properties in accordance with Section 106 of the Nation Historic Preservation Act. May be necessary should Federal Permitting be required for the Proposed Project.
- Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Valley Region – 401 Water Quality Certification, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) discharge permit for stormwater and/or wastewater, and Master Reclamation Permit for Recycled Water
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Section 1600 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement and consultation related to potential impacts to state listed species and species of concern

Public Review Period

The Notice of Preparation is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning October 30, 2023. Written comments will be accepted by Amador County through 5:00 p.m. on November 30, 2023. Comments must be mailed to Chuck Beatty at the above address, or emailed to: planning@amadorgov.org.

The Notice of Preparation is available for review during normal business hours at the following location:

- Amador County Planning Department at 810 Court Street, Jackson, CA 95642

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request. If reasonable accommodation is needed, call the Planning Department at (209) 223-6380.

Scoping Meeting

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083.9(a)(2), scoping meetings are required for projects that may have statewide, regional, or area-wide environmental impacts. The County has determined that this Project meets this threshold. Therefore, to provide the public and regulatory agencies an opportunity to ask question and submit comments on the scope of the EIR, a scoping meeting will be held during the NOP review period. The scoping meeting will solicit input from the public and public agencies regarding the scope and content of the environmental impacts to be addressed in the Draft EIR.

At the meeting, a brief presentation will provide an overview of the Proposed Project and the CEQA process. After the presentation, oral comments from the agencies and public about the Proposed Project will be received. Comment forms will also be available for those who wish to submit written comments during the meetings, as well as throughout the 30-day NOP review period.

The public scoping meeting will be held on the following date and location:

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
Board of Supervisors Chamber
County Administrative Center
810 Court Street
Jackson, CA 95642

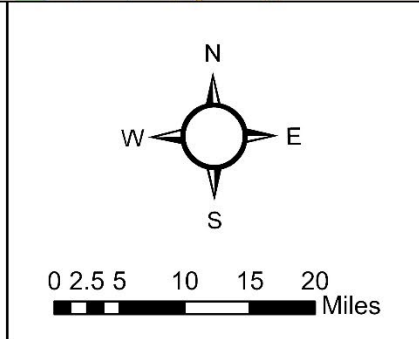
This scoping meeting information will also be published in the Ledger Dispatch newspaper, and is available on the County's website: [Current Projects | Amador County \(amadorgov.org\)](https://www.amadorgov.org/current-projects)

Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed, and will be used to identify the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant effects to be analyzed in the EIR.



Please contact the Amador County Planning Department at 209-223-6380 or planning@amadorgov.org if you have any questions about the environmental review process for the proposed

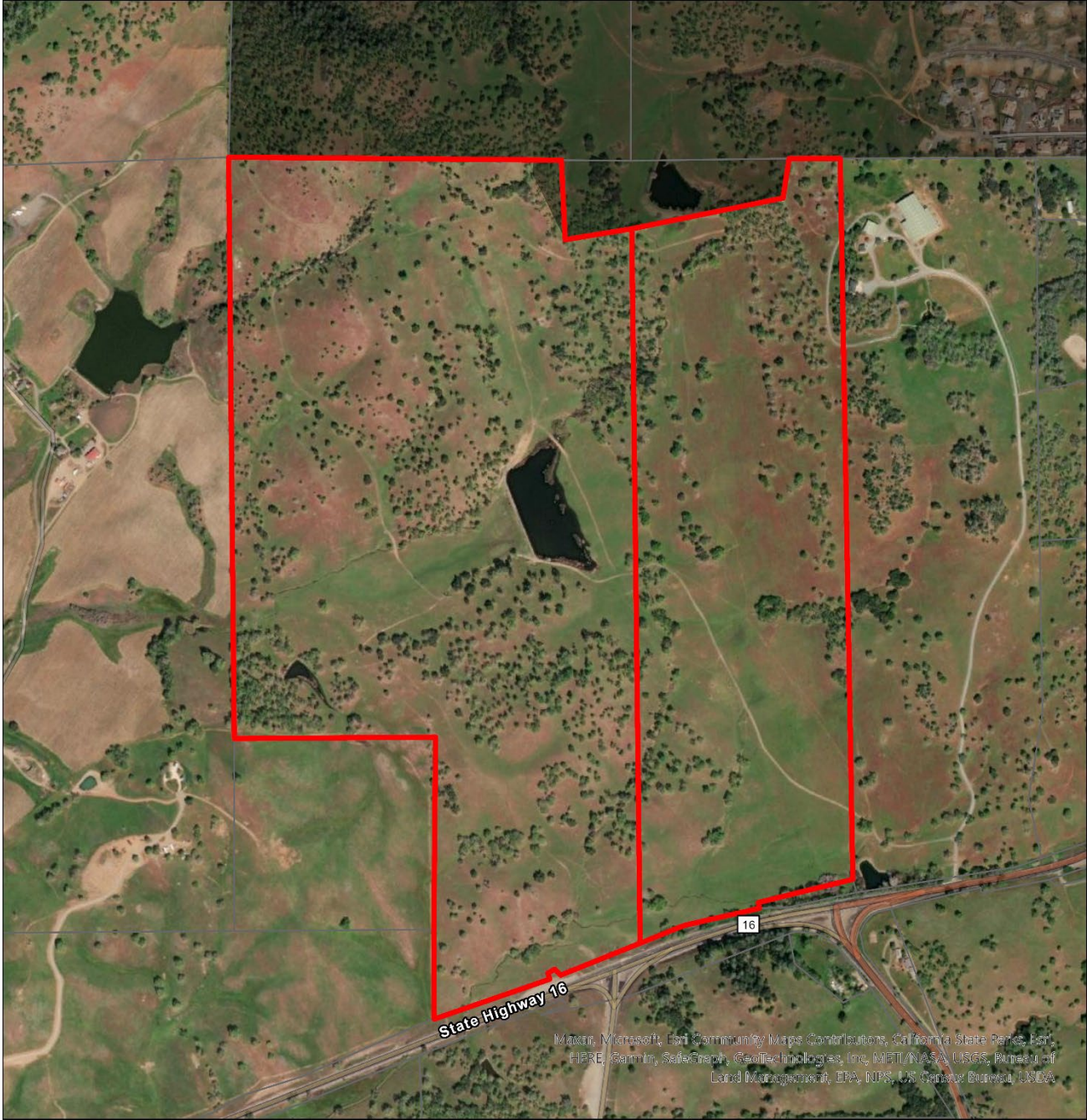


Tentative Subdivision Map 186
 And
 General Plan Amendment 22;7-1
 Putnam Ranch

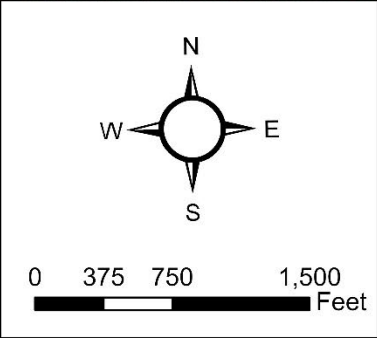


Legend

-  Amador County Boundary
-  Project Parcels



Tentative Subdivision Map 186
 And
 General Plan Amendment 22;7-1
 Putnam Ranch



Legend

- Amador County Boundary
- City Limits
- Assessor Parcels
- Project Parcels