

Consider Win / Win Approaches To the Fisherman's Lake Buffer Issue



The No Additional Cost Alternative

An 800 foot buffer represents 149 acres of land.

51 acres is already required to be financed by NNFP

This proposal addresses the remaining 98 acres.

Background. On February 24, 2005, the City Planning Commission voted, by 7-2, to recommend a Fisherman Lake buffer 800 feet wide, measured from the eastern ownership of RD 1000, running from Del Paso Blvd to El Centro Rd. City staff opposed, arguing for a buffer less than required by the North Natomas Community Plan Mitigation Plan and NBHCP. On April 19, 2005, environmental representatives met with Forecast Homes. Forecast stated that it could make no changes to its project design. That design has not been reviewed by the Planning Commission. City staff continue their hard-line position of minimizing preservation of the Fisherman Lake riparian area. A meeting for May 9 was cancelled by City and there have been no further discussions with the environmental groups.

Suggestions for No Cost Solutions for a win/win no additional cost method for protecting and enhancing an 800 foot buffer corridor on the east side of Fisherman Lake, from Del Paso Blvd to El Centro Blvd:

- **MITIGATION CREDIT** Under our proposal — since the original 250 foot buffer is itself buffered —some portion of the required 250 foot buffer (51 acres) could be protected to the level of being considered habitat and counted towards habitat mitigation for development (if approved by wildlife agencies). This could result in a credit for land dedication and habitat fees to the landowner.
- **USE OF DETENTION BASIN** Cost depends upon the willingness of the landowner to design a project that takes advantage of the the wildlife and habitat values of the area, which add value to the development project. We assume changes in project design. Forecast's proposed project includes a 26.8 acre detention basin-lake, required for drainage and flood control. It can be relocated into the buffer area immediately east of the initial 250 feet (51 acre), as a detention basin-lakefront measuring 150 feet by 7782 feet, or 135 x 8603 feet, or a variation. No added cost to Forecast, because Forecast needs to provide that detention basin. The water feature can provide additional buffering between animal and human uses, protecting wildlife from humans and domestic animals while protecting residences from wildlife intrusion.
- **LOCATION OF BIKE and PEDESTRIAN FACILITY** A public bicycle-pedestrian pathway east of the detention lake in a landscaped corridor, would be an active community amenity and a

connector. We see a 75 feet wide, 13 acres facility that may be countable as part of the project's parks requirement. A bike and pedestrian path is already required inside the project area.

- **ADD CREATIVELY FINANCED NATURE PARK** A "nature park" in the northern part of the project area is another example of multiple use that would significantly add protection and habitat value to the area. In the City of Santa Clara for example, a 40 acre nature park complements an adjacent active park. A nature park would be an amenity for city residents, increase home values of Natomas Central and Westlake, while increasing the protection of habitat area to the west and south. Financing for such a park could be assembled in a variety of ways: through reconveyance fees on nearby properties; through a land trade; or through state park funds. Homes near nature parks and wildlife preserves command premium property values. A land trade for a location suitable for higher density housing with transit access could ultimately yield more housing as well as better protected habitat. Repayment of land cost and M & O could be supported by a reconveyance fee on resales similar to the recent West Roseville Settlement Agreement.
- **PUT FIRE STATION IN BUFFER ON EL CENTRO** There is need for a fire station (5.5 acres) along El Centro Rd, which could be placed within the buffer on El Centro. It would provide a security function by its presence. This corner of the 250 foot buffer which is outside the SWH Zone can be narrowed. The buffer acreage can be transferred to the area within the Swainsons's Hawk Zone
- **PERMANENTLY CLOSE DEL PASO ROAD** Del Paso Road has been closed at Fisherman's Lake for 6 months due to partial culvert collapse. Land north and south of Del Paso immediately west of Fisherman's Lake are now part of the Natomas Basin Conservancy. The permanent closure of Del Paso Road east of Fisherman's Lake could substantially improve the buffering of Fisherman's Lake.

WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THESE AND OTHER IDEAS CONSIDERED.

