

3.6 Land Use, Planning and Recreation

3.6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regional Land Uses

The proposed project would be located within the County of Amador, which is situated in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, approximately 45 miles northeast from Sacramento, California. The total land area of Amador County is approximately 593 square miles (USCB 2000). Amador County General Plan land use designations are shown in Figure 3.6-1.

Land Use and Planning

The City of Lone comprises an area of approximately 5 square miles. Most of the development in the City is confined to the southern half of the City, which is comprised predominantly of single-family residential uses with some limited commercial activity, located mostly on Main Street. No industrial uses are located within the city limits, though several commercial mining operations exist outside the City's boundary, including Unimin Mine to the immediate south of the City.

Other uses in the City of Lone include State-run facilities such as the Mule Creek State Prison, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and the Preston Youth Correctional Facility, all located north of State Route 104. Public and private services exist to serve the City, including schools, parks, churches, fire stations, and community centers.

The City of Lone has a number of agricultural pursuits that are considered compatible with residential uses, including small-scale crop and tree farming and the keeping of horses and other domestic animals. Large-scale farming is not present in with the city limits; however, the City of Lone does possess a few properties that are listed as agricultural properties under the Williamson Act. Agricultural resources are discussed in greater detail in Section 3.14: Agricultural Resources.

The northern half of the City, including those portions of the City of Lone north of State Route 104 and Waterman Road, are currently undeveloped except for the three State-run facilities mentioned above. City of Lone General Plan land use designations are shown in Figure 3.6-2.

The only portion of the existing WWTP facilities that is within the City of Lone city limits is Pond 6 at the secondary WWTP. Pond 6 has a General Plan designation of Public Service (PS), and a Zoning Ordinance land use designation of PS. The zoning designations allow for wastewater treatment plants and associated infrastructure under the 2009 approved "Utility Facilities and Infrastructure" zoning code update.

The remainder of the City's existing WWTP facilities are located immediately southwest of the City of Lone's city limits. These facilities are located on lands owned by the City of Lone, and are located within the City's Sphere of Influence as defined in the 2009 City of Lone's General Plan. The City's Sphere of Influence extends beyond the Lone City limits and represents the area the City is likely to annex and incorporate within Lone's City limit in the future. The facilities are currently located within Amador County's jurisdiction. The properties comprising the existing secondary WWTP (except for Ponds 6-8), the tertiary WWTP, and the site of the potential Pond 9 are located in Amador County's Public Service (PS) land use designations and zoned Single Family Residential (R1A) by Amador County. These land use designations allow for public services such as water treatment plants.

Pond 7 at the secondary WWTP is located in a dual designated Residential-Low Density (R-L) and PS parcel in the County's General Plan. The property is designated as R1A in the County's zoning ordinance. The R-L land use designation specifically allows for single family residential units and

Figure 3.6-1: Amador County General Plan Land Use Designations

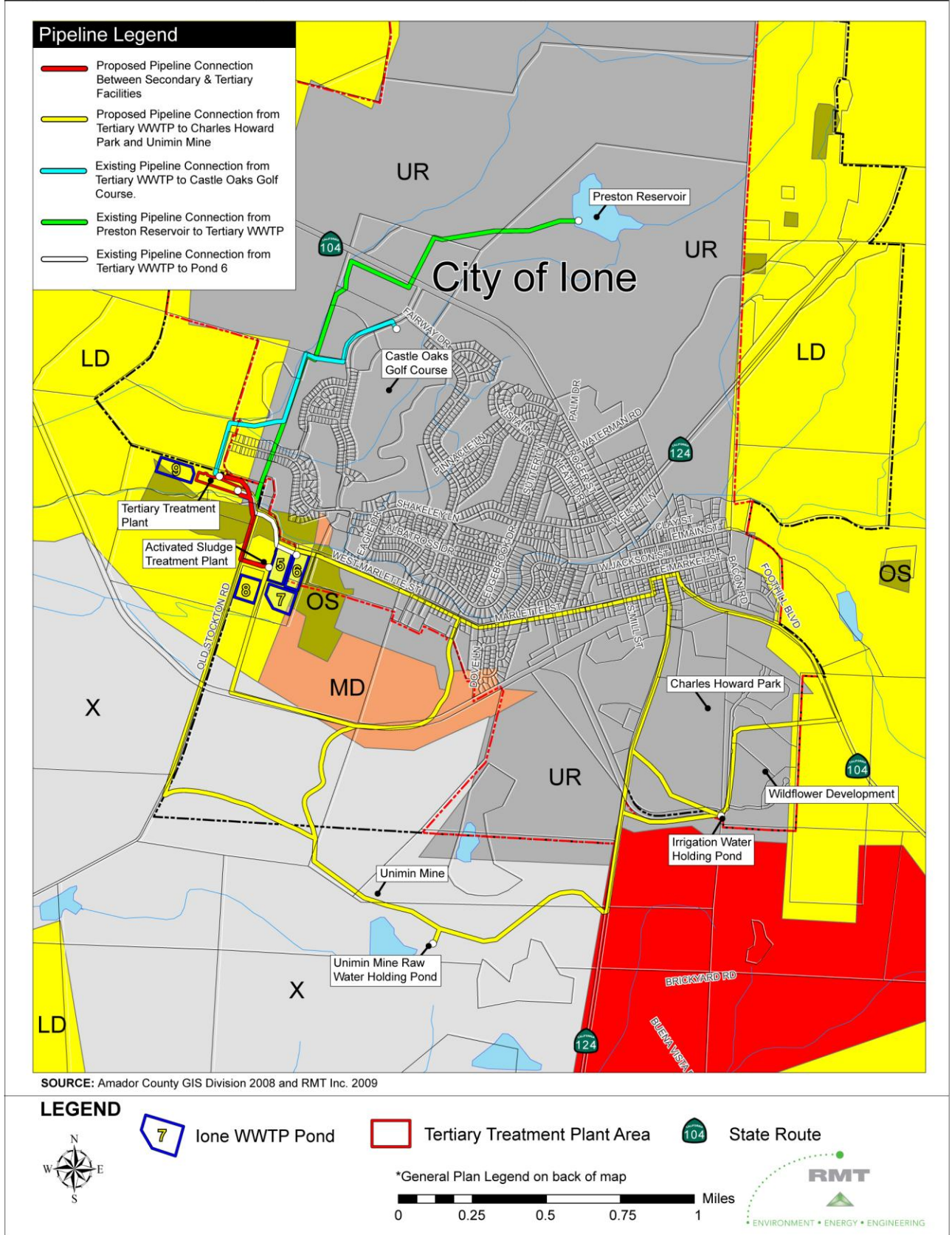


Figure 3.6-1 cont.: Amador County General Plan Land Use Designations Legend



SOURCE: Amador County GIS Division 2008 and RMT Inc. 2009



Figure 3.6-2: City of Lone General Plan Land Use Designations - January 2008

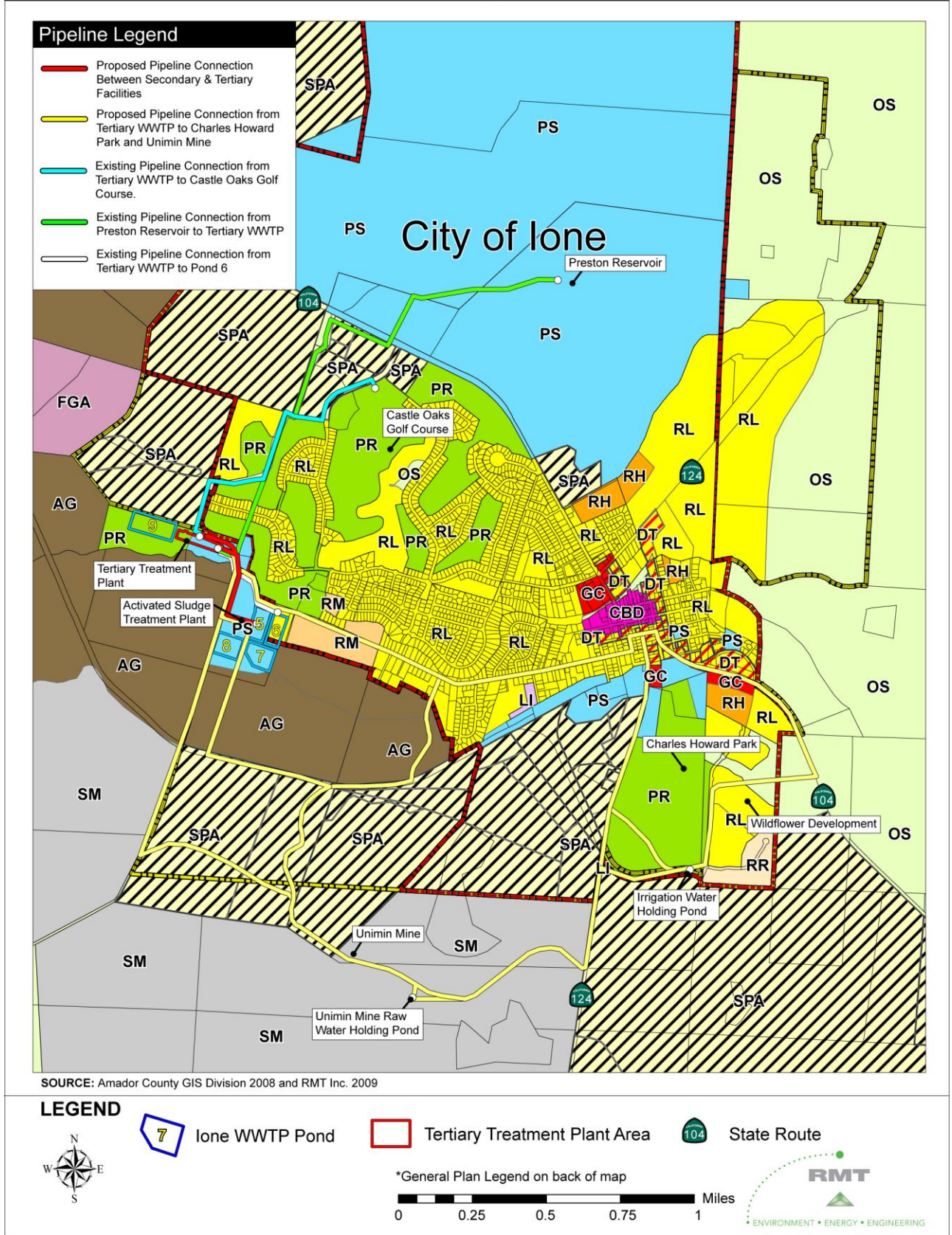
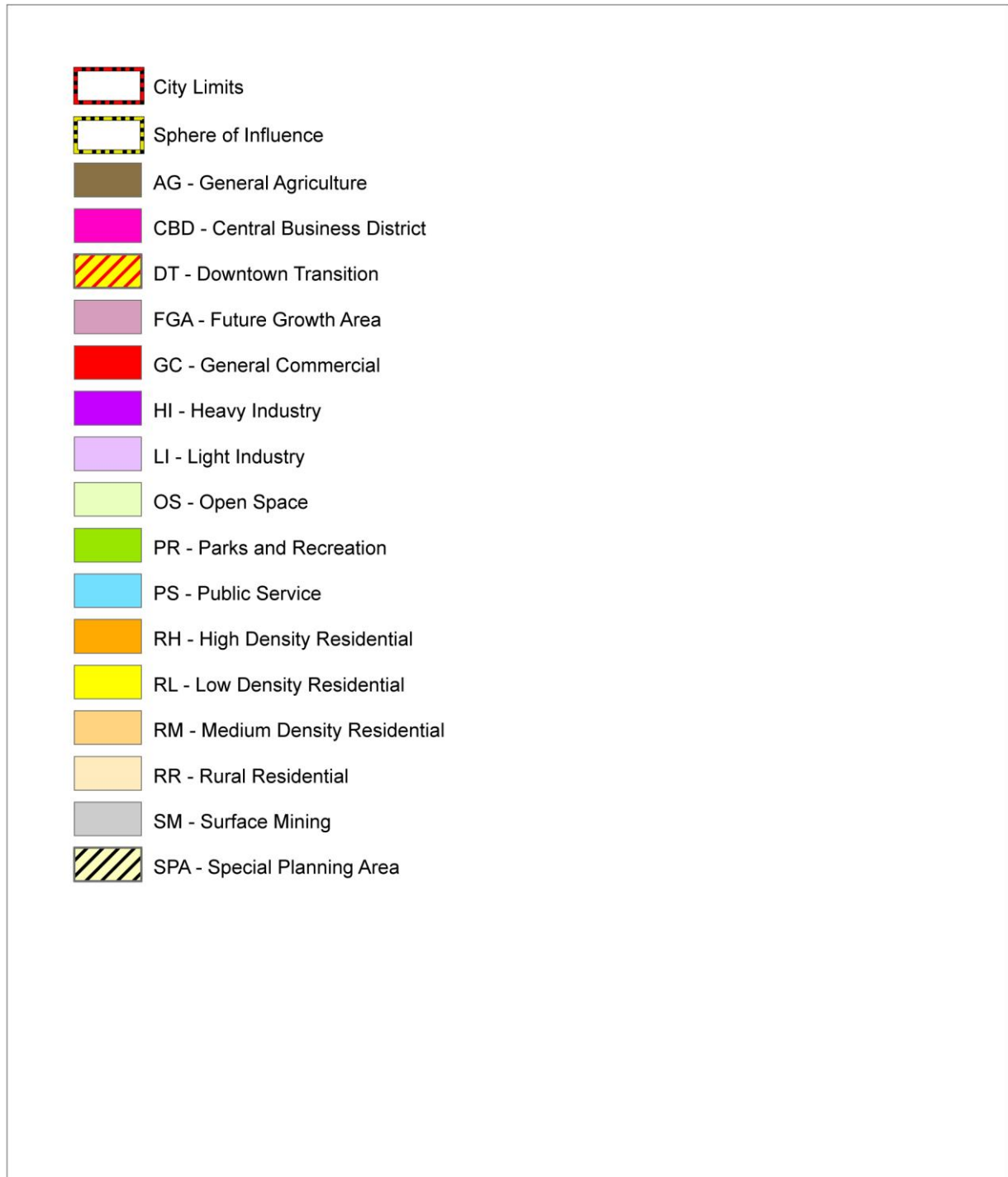


Figure 3.6-2 cont.: City of Ione General Plan Land Use Designations - January 2008



SOURCE: Amador County GIS Division 2008 and RMT Inc. 2009



related schools and parks. In addition, the Amador County General Plan allows public service facilities such as wastewater treatment facilities in any land use or zoning designation with a use permit from the County.

The proposed Pond 8 location has a land use designation of R-L in the Amador County General Plan, and a zoning designation of R1A (Grijalva pers. comm. 2009).

Recreation

The most predominate recreational facilities within the City of Lone include Charles Howard Park, which is located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the secondary WWTP, and the Castle Oaks Golf Course, which is located approximately 0.25 miles north of the secondary WWTP. Charles Howard Park is a multi-use recreational complex. The park is regularly used for soccer and little league games, and also can be rented out for private events (City of Lone 2008a).

The Castle Oaks Golf Club is one of Northern California's premier golf courses. Castle Oaks is an 18-hole, par 71 championship golf course with 5 sets of tees at each hole to accommodate all skill levels (City of Lone 2008b).

Preston Reservoir does not provide any recreational opportunities, as the reservoir is largely inaccessible to the public, and contains secondary treated wastewater that is not suitable for swimming, fishing, or other water-related activities. The Lone Water Reservoir is marginally accessible to the public via an unimproved dirt road, and no recreational facilities exist at this reservoir.

3.6.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal Regulations

There are no federal laws or regulations related to land use, planning, or recreation that are applicable to the project.

State Regulations

There are no state laws or regulations related to land use, planning, or recreation that are applicable to the project.

Local Regulations

Amador County General Plan

The County's General Plan goals, policies, objectives, and standards provide direction for the use of all lands within the County.

The purpose of the PS land use designation is as follows:

"This classification is applied to the larger public, quasi-public utility sites which are used for public services such as schools and public building, corporation yard, fair grounds, water and sewer plants, power substation, etc. Large acreage in freeway right-of-way and interchanges may also be included.

Consistent zoning: PF, Public Facility, when included in basic ordinance, and otherwise is recommended to be added by ordinance amendment. When "PF" is not available, other applicable zoning is consistent, (PD, etc.)" (Amador County 1973)

The purpose of the R-L land use designation is as follows:

"This classification is applied to lands best suited to low density residential uses in suburban areas not served by both domestic water and sewer systems, or by various other urban services.

Appropriate uses are single family residential, agricultural and schools, parks, etc.

Consistent zoning: RE, R-2A, R-1B-3, R-1B-4, R1A" (Amador County 1973).

All of the current and proposed project elements, except for Pond 6 would be located in Amador County's Single Family Residential and Agriculture (R1A) zoning district.

The Amador County General Plan Recreation Element relative objectives are as follows:

- To recognize the needs of all local residents and visitors; and
- To coordinate the recreation plans of federal, state, local governmental, public and district utility agencies (Amador County 1969).

Amador County Code

Section 19.28.020 of the Amador County Code allows for the construction and operation of public uses, such as wastewater treatment facilities in any zoning district, provided that a use permit is first obtained from the County (Amador County 2008).

City of Ione General Plan

Within the City of Ione General Plan Land Use and Conservation and Open Space Elements (City of Ione 2009), the City's policies, goals and implementation programs applicable to this project are as follows:

- **Land Use:**
 - Goal LU-2: Achieve a balance and integrated land use pattern throughout the community.
 - Policy LU-2.4: Promote high quality, efficient, and cohesive land utilization that minimizes negative impacts (e.g., traffic congestion and visual blight) and environmental hazards (e.g., flood, soil instability) on adjacent areas and infrastructure and preserve existing and future residential areas from encroachment of incompatible activities and land uses.
 - Policy LU-2.5: Maintain consistency between the land use categories of this General Plan and the City Zoning Code.
- **Conservation and Open Space:**
 - Goal CO-9: Protect open space areas, including preservation of scenic views.
 - Policy CO-9.1: Create a City-wide standard for the dedication of open space for all development projects and maintaining open space.

3.6.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The project would have a significant effect if it would:

- 1) Physically divide an established community.
- 2) 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, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- 3) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.
- 4) Conflict with recreational activities in the project vicinity.

- 5) 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.
- 6) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have and adverse physical effect on the environment.

3.6.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Potential Impact 3.6-1: Potential to physically divide an established community.

The construction and operation of the proposed project elements would not divide an established community. The project level elements would be built either within the existing footprint or adjacent to the existing footprint of the secondary and tertiary WWTPs. There is no established community that would be separated by the above ground elements, and these elements would not block access to surrounding communities.

The construction of the programmatic elements would not likely divide an established community. All of the potential pipeline routes are proposed to be located underground, which would likely have no impact to an existing community other than a possible temporary disruption due to construction activities. The programmatic elements included in Part III-Storage include the use of an existing reservoir, which would likely have no impact to an existing community. Another option included in Part III-Storage would be to develop a new reservoir for the storage of treated wastewater. A new reservoir could have the potential to impact an existing community. Further site-specific analysis would be completed should any programmatic elements be pursued in the future, and any necessary mitigation would be defined at the time of future environmental review under CEQA.

Potential Impact 3.6-2: Potential to 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, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Overview of Impact

Construction and operation of the project level elements would not create a conflict with any land use designations. The construction and operation of the programmatic elements could include multiple land use and zoning designations within the City depending on pipeline routes and locations selected for other programmatic elements, and further review under CEQA would be required to determine compatibility with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Existing Infrastructure

Pond 7

Construction and operation of Pond 7 has occurred in an Amador County dual designated Residential-Low Density (R-L) and Public Service (PS) in the County's General Plan. This land use designation of PS is compatible with the secondary WWTP activities. Pond 7 has not created any conflict with land use designations.

Part I – Treatment

Phase One

Line or Partially Fill Ponds 5 and 6

Pond 6 is located within the City of Lone on lands designated Public Service (PS) in the City's General Plan, and within zoning ordinance designation of PS. Construction or operation of Pond 6 would not create any conflict with land use designations.

Pond 5 is located within Amador County on lands designated PS in the County's General Plan. The land use designation of PS is compatible with the proposed changes to and continued operation of Pond 5. Pond 5 would not create any conflict with land use designations.

Activated Sludge System

Construction and operation of phase one and two of the activated sludge system could occur in one of three locations. These locations include the area immediately south of Ponds 1-4, the filled in portions of Ponds 5 and 6, and the existing tertiary WWTP.

The first location has an Amador County General Plan land use designation of R-L, which allows for the construction and operation of an activated sludge system upon approval of a use permit from Amador County. The activated sludge system would not conflict with land use policies provided the City of Lone first obtains a use permit from Amador County.

The two remaining possible locations for the activated sludge system have a land use designation of PS. The construction and operation of the activated sludge system would be compatible with the County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance land use designations at either of these two locations, and would not cause a conflict with land use or zoning.

Close and Reclaim Ponds 1-4

Ponds 1-4 are located in Amador County on lands designated as PS in the Amador County General Plan. Closing and reclaiming the four ponds would be compatible with the land use designation and zoning, and would not cause a conflict with land use or zoning. Once the land is reclaimed, no activities would occur on the site of the former ponds, and thus there would be no conflict with any land use designations.

Pipelines between the Secondary and Tertiary WWTP Facilities

The pipeline connections between the secondary and tertiary WWTPs would be located in Amador County on lands designated as PS and R-L in the Amador County General Plan. The construction and operation of these pipelines would be compatible with the PS land use designation, and would also be compatible with the R-L land use designation upon approval of a use permit from Amador County. The construction and operation of these pipelines would have no impacts on land use and zoning.

Tertiary WWTP Expansion or New Construction

Two options exist for the expansion of tertiary treatment capacity in the City of Lone. The first option would be an expansion of the existing tertiary WWTP on the north side of Sutter Creek. The site of the existing tertiary WWTP is located in Amador County on lands designated as PS in the Amador County General Plan. The expansion of the existing tertiary WWTP at this site would be compatible with the County's land use designation, and cause no conflicts with land use or zoning.

The second option would be to construct a new tertiary treatment system adjacent to the new activated sludge system. The land use designations of the three potential locations of the new tertiary system are discussed above under the Activated Sludge System heading.

One of the potential locations, the site of the filled in portions of Ponds 5 and 6, is partially located within the City of Lone, on lands designated PS in the City's General Plan, and with a zoning ordinance designation of PS. The remaining portion of this site is located within Amador County, on lands designated PS in the County's General Plan. This potential location for a new tertiary WWTP would not conflict with land use policies during construction or operation.

The second potential location for a new tertiary WWTP is in the area immediately south of Ponds 1-4, which has an Amador County General Plan land use designation of R-L. This land use designation allows for the construction and operation of an activated sludge system upon approval of a use permit from Amador County. This second potential location for a new tertiary WWTP would not conflict with land use policies during construction or operation provided the City of Lone first obtains a use permit from Amador County.

The third potential location for a new tertiary WWTP would be the site of the existing tertiary WWTP on the north side of Sutter Creek. As explained above, this site has an Amador County land use designation of PS, and construction and operation of a new tertiary WWTP at this site would not conflict with land use or zoning.

Phase Two

The land use designations for phase two project elements (expanding the activated sludge system from 0.80 MGD to 1.60 MGD capacity, and possibly also expanding the tertiary WWTP from 0.80 MGD to 1.60 MGD capacity) would be identical to those discussed above for phase one, as the locations for phase two project elements would be on the same footprint as the phase one elements. Land use designations would be the same because no new infrastructure would be expanded beyond its current footprint. There would be no conflicts with land use designations.

Part II – Disposal

Pond 8

Pond 8 would be located in Amador County on lands designated as R-L in the Amador County General Plan. The construction and operation of Pond 8 would be compatible with the land use and zoning designations upon approval of a use permit from Amador County. Pond 8 would have no impacts on land use and zoning.

Disposal Option 1 – Disposal to Pond 9

Pond 9 would be located in Amador County on lands designated as PS in the Amador County General Plan. The construction and operation of Pond 9 would likely be compatible with the land use and zoning designations. Pond 9 would likely have no impacts on land use and zoning; however, further CEQA analysis would have to be performed at the project level to determine the significance of pond construction and operation impacts.

Disposal Option 2 – Disposal to Charles Howard Park and Unimin Mine

There are six possible pipeline routes identified to deliver tertiary treated wastewater from the City's expanded tertiary WWTP to Charles Howard Park and Unimin Mine. Each of these routes would pass through multiple General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designations in both Amador County and the City of Lone. Further site-specific analysis would be completed should this disposal

option be pursued in the future, and any additional necessary mitigation would be defined at the time of future environmental review under CEQA.

Disposal Option 3 – Other Potential Disposal Options

The construction and operation of other wastewater disposal options, including the construction of additional percolation ponds and/or the construction of new pipeline connections to additional end users of tertiary treated wastewater, has the potential to pass through multiple General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designations in both Amador County and the City of Lone. Further site-specific analysis would be completed should these disposal options be pursued in the future, and any additional necessary mitigation would be defined at the time of future environmental review under CEQA.

Part III – Storage

Preston Reservoir

The pipeline connections to Preston Reservoir would likely be located in City of Lone Special Planning (SP), Public Service-Open Space (PS-OS), and Planned Development Zone land use designations. The construction and operation of these pipelines would likely be compatible with the land use and zoning. Further site-specific analysis would be completed should these disposal options be pursued in the future, and any additional necessary mitigation would be defined at the time of future environmental review under CEQA.

Lone Water Reservoir

The pipeline connections to the Lone Water Reservoir have the potential of passing through multiple General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designations in both Amador County and the City of Lone. Further site-specific analysis would be completed should these disposal options be pursued in the future, and any additional necessary mitigation would be defined at the time of future environmental review under CEQA.

Other Water Reservoir

The construction and operation of a new treated wastewater storage reservoir, as well as the pipeline connections to such a reservoir, have the potential of passing through multiple General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designations in both Amador County and the City of Lone. Development of a new treated wastewater storage reservoir is not likely have a significant impact to land use or zoning; however, further site-specific analysis would be completed should these disposal options be pursued in the future, and any additional necessary mitigation would be defined at the time of future environmental review under CEQA.

Potential Impact 3.6-3: Potential to conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

There are no current plans in the project area vicinity to cause a conflict with any city or county conservation plan. No impact to would occur and no mitigation would be required.

Potential Impact 3.6-4: Potential to conflict with recreational activities in the project vicinity

Overview of Impacts

Construction activities for the project level elements may cause a minor impact to recreation activities by temporarily increasing noise, air pollutants, and traffic in the project area. Operation of

the project level elements would not cause a significant impact to recreation activities, as WWTP facilities would not be located in areas used for recreation and/or would be located underground. The construction and operation impacts of the programmatic elements would require further review under CEQA to determine their level of impact, but would likely be similar to the impacts of the project level elements.

Construction. Project construction activities would have the potential to disrupt nearby recreational activities. Construction activities that produce noise or impact air quality or traffic in the project vicinity may interrupt regional recreational events occurring at Charles Howard Park, or Castle Oaks Golf Club. Implementation of the mitigation measures defined in Section 3.10: Noise, Section 3.7: Transportation and Traffic, and Section 3.4: Air Quality would reduce impacts on recreational activities to a less than significant level.

Operation. Operation of the proposed project elements would not affect recreational activities in the project vicinity. Operation of the proposed wastewater treatment facilities would occur in locations that are not currently used for recreation. The operation of the wastewater treatment facilities would not produce any disruptive noise or air emission that may cause interruptions to recreation activities in the project vicinity. There would be a less than significant impact to recreation, and no mitigation would be required.

Potential Impact 3.6-5: Potential to 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.

Overview of Impacts

Construction and operation activities for the project level elements could cause a minor increase in the use of regional parks and other recreation facilities. The construction and operation impacts of the programmatic elements would require further review under CEQA to determine their level of impact, but would likely be similar to the impacts of the project level elements.

Construction. Minor, temporary increases in the use of local recreational facilities could occur during construction. Construction of the proposed project would create temporary construction-related jobs for the duration of construction activities. The workforce would vary from month to month, and the daily workforce would peak at approximately 66 workers for a period of 14 months of construction for phase one project elements. A second round of construction would later occur for construction of phase two project elements. The workforce for the second phase of construction would also vary from month to month, and the daily workforce could also peak at approximately 66 workers for a period of 14 months of construction.

These construction workers may come from outside of the immediate vicinity, or may be hired from the local area. Workers not from the local area would likely stay in hotels or in RVs in or near the City of Lone. It is anticipated that these workers would reside in the project area vicinity only during the construction period (refer to Section 3.11: Population and Housing for additional details).

The short-term increase of population from construction workers would not increase the use of parks or other recreational facilities to the point where deterioration would occur, due to the relatively low numbers involved and the brief duration of their stay. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

Operation. The operation and maintenance of the project facilities would not cause a significant, permanent increase in the use of parks or other recreational facilities that would result in substantial or accelerated deterioration. The project would result in an increase of approximately two new full-time employees. The operation of the project would not result in a long-term increase in population growth (refer to Section 3.11: Population and Housing for further discussion). Impacts

associated with the use of recreational facilities during operation and maintenance of the proposed project would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

Potential Impact 3.6-6: Potential to include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

The proposed project (both the project level and programmatic level elements) would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. The proposed project would not warrant the expansion of existing facilities or the construction of new facilities. Construction employees would be drawn from the local area as much as possible, and construction workers from outside the area are not expected to remain in the area once construction has been completed. The operation of the project would add approximately five new permanent employees. Even assuming that all five employees and their families move to the project area vicinity from outside the immediate area, the resulting increase in population would not substantially affect the need for expanded recreational facilities or the construction of new facilities. The project would have be a less than significant impact related to construction or expansion of new or existing recreational facilities.

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