

4.13 Recreation

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
13. RECREATION—Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.13.1 Setting

Regional

Substantial park and recreational acreage is devoted to park and recreation facilities outside the Grass Valley city limits but within the City’s sphere of influence, including the Empire Mine State Park and the Nevada County Fairgrounds. The Empire Mine State Park, part of the California Park system, encompasses over 800 acres and includes the old mine, historic and interpretive buildings, exhibits, and over one square mile of forested open space, natural areas, and several miles of foot trails. The Nevada County Fairgrounds, classified as a regional park, is a 100 acre facility owned and maintained by the State Fairgrounds Authority. The annual Nevada County Fair and other cultural and recreational activities take place at the Fairgrounds, which are used year-round. The Fairgrounds house several community facilities, including the Senior Citizens Building (City of Grass Valley, 1999b).

Local

The City of Grass Valley owns and maintains six park/recreation facilities (see **Table 4.13-1**). The City currently maintains a public parkland ratio of 9.76 acres per 1,000 population (City of Grass Valley, 1999b).

Project Area

Wolf Creek and the South Fork Wolf Creek lie within the project area; these recreational resources are undeveloped recreation resources in their natural setting. Wolf Creek runs south of Idaho Maryland Road and has a wide flood plain that provides a large open space corridor. The South Fork Wolf Creek runs less than 1000 feet south of East Bennett Road and drains to Wolf Creek. **Figure 3-1** in the *Project Description* shows the proximity of the Creeks to the project sites.

**TABLE 4.13-1
CITY OF GRASS VALLEY-OWNED PARK/RECREATION FACILITIES**

Park/Recreation Facility	Location	Facility Type	Details
Minnie Street Park	472 Brighton Street, Grass Valley	Neighborhood Park	2 acres; children's playground containing swings, climber, other play equipment and large grass area.
Elizabeth Daniels Park	125 Neal Street, Downtown Grass valley	Pocket Park	0.16 acre Urban Plaza with a rest area for downtown visitors; restrooms, 2 picnic tables with awnings, and 2 trash cans.
Dow Alexander Park	220 Bank Street, Grass Valley	Pocket Park	0.5 acres
Memorial Park	415 Central Avenue, Grass Valley	Community Park	7.6 acres; swimming pool, tennis courts, ball field, group picnic area, Memorial Club House and Recreation Annex and children's playground.
Condon Park	660 Minnie Street, Grass Valley	Regional	80 acres; disc golf course, skate park, bocce ball courts, baseball fields, walking trails, arboretum, reception hall, and group and individual picnic areas.
Pelton Wheel Museum/ Glen Jones Park	993 Allison Ranch Road, Grass Valley	Pocket Park	2 acres; picnic tables located next to the Pelton Wheel Mining Museum along Wolf Creek.

SOURCE: City of Grass Valley (2006)

4.13.2 Regulatory Context

Local

Nevada County General Plan¹

The following goals, objectives, and policies related to recreation in the Nevada County General Plan would be applicable to the proposed project:

- Goal 5.1: Provide a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities.
- Objective 5.1: Provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities at a regional, district, community, and neighborhood level.
- Objective 5.5: Coordinate future park and trail planning with other responsible agencies.

¹ Under the proposed project, Nevada County plans and policies would only apply to the New Brunswick site, which would not be annexed into the City of Grass Valley as part of this proposed project.

- Policy 5.12: The joint use of facilities (such as public schools and public and private open spaces) and the joint location of school-park sites shall be encouraged to efficiently use all areas offering recreational potential.
- Objective 5.6: Implement a comprehensive, and where possible integrated, county-wide trail system.
- Objective 5.7: preserve and encourage water based recreational opportunities.

(Nevada County, 1996)

City of Grass Valley General Plan

The following recreation goals, objectives, and policies contained in the City of Grass Valley General Plan would be applicable to the proposed project:

- Goal 1-RG: Allow for expanded and diverse recreational programs, areas, and opportunities.
- Objective 1-RO: Development and continuation of park and open space programs.
- Policy 1-RP: Provide parks and open spaces of different sizes and types to respond to the needs of a diverse population, including trails for pedestrian and equestrian use, bicycle pathways, linear parkways and park-like natural areas.
- Policy 5-RP: Formalize and enhance walking trails in existing City parks.
- Policy 6-RP: Provide non-motorized linkages between parks and open spaces.

(City of Grass Valley, 1999a)

City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies planned recreational resources within the project area. These resources include:

- The Wolf Creek Parkway, a streamside linear park of approximately 25 acres, is proposed to run along Wolf Creek within the Grass Valley city limits. Intended as an “urban trail,” the Wolf Creek Parkway was first mentioned in the 1972 Grass Valley General Plan. While exact boundaries and dimensions of the Wolf Creek Parkway have not been determined, the Parkway would also include a non-motorized bikeway (City of Grass Valley, 1999).
- A sidewalk trail along the entire length of Whispering Pines Lane.
- A sidewalk trail along the entire length of Crown Point Circle.
- The South Fork of Wolf Creek Parkway, a streamside linear park with a multi-use trail is proposed that would connect to the network of multi-use trails proposed throughout Grass Valley.
- A sidewalk trail and other multi-use trails along East Bennett Road.

(City of Grass Valley, 2001).

Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan

The Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan (Wolf Creek Parkway Master Plan) establishes potential routing for a multi-use, non-motorized trail along the Wolf Creek Corridor, provides guidelines for design development, and outlines alternative strategies for implementation. The multi-use non-motorized trail is intended to promote alternative forms of transportation and provide new recreational opportunities consistent with goals set forth in the City of Grass Valley's General Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan. In addition, the purpose of the Wolf Creek Parkway will be to provide the City with greater internal connectivity, enhanced access to the waterway, and improvements to the natural setting of the Wolf Creek corridor.

The trail corridor Study Area traverses approximately 2.2 miles from the eastern area of Grass Valley at Sutton Way, through the Downtown area, and into the central area represented by Glenn Jones Park. The Parkway is divided into six segments, referred to as "reaches," at places where planning conditions and physical characteristics of the waterway change substantially. Along the Idaho-Maryland reach, the preferred concept for the Wolf Creek Parkway provides for a multi-use non-motorized trail on the south side of the Creek, augmented by a developed trailhead at the northwest corner of Idaho-Maryland Road and Sutton Way (a stoplight is suggested at this intersection to facilitate safe crossing). A large area of dedicated public parkland (including vehicular access, parking, and a picnic area), as well as interpretive and educational elements highlighting local species, water stewardship, and regional history (i.e., an exhibit detailing the history of the Idaho-Maryland Mine) are also proposed for the Idaho Maryland reach.

The Wolf Creek Parkway could cost up to an estimated \$14 million to fully implement each element of the Preferred Conceptual Plan. Given the high probability that a project of this size and expense could not be built all at one time, the conceptual plan has been broken up into segments, identifies alternatives, and prioritizes specific reaches so that the implementation process can proceed incrementally, for less cost, as opportunities and funding allows. It is anticipated that the Idaho-Maryland Reach of Wolf Creek Parkway will be the first entire reach to go into construction as part of the first construction phase of the Parkway; however this is not expected to occur in the immediate future (City of Grass Valley, 2006).

City of Grass Valley Subdivision Ordinance

The Grass Valley Subdivision Ordinance provides for land dedication for parks and recreation, and for in lieu fees through which residential developments facilitate park land acquisition. The standard for park and recreation dedications or in lieu fees, established under provisions of the "Quimby Act" (Government Code Section 66477), is a maximum of 5 acres per 1,000 population. This means that developers are required to provide in lieu fees or park dedication of 5 acres for every 1,000 population increase.

4.13.3 Impacts Discussion

Methods

The effort to identify recreational resources in the project area included a review of relevant regional and local plans as well as a personal communication with the City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Department. Regional and local plans that were reviewed included the City of Grass Valley General Plan and General Plan EIR, the City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City of Grass Valley Street System Master Plan, the City of Grass Valley Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan, and the Nevada County General Plan. On February 24, 2006, Sandy Jacobson with the City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Department was contacted to confirm the status of the proposed recreational facilities in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and to further identify recreational facilities in the project area.

Results

Impact 4.13-1: The proposed project could increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. This would be a potentially significant impact.

Since there are no existing developed recreational resources within the project area, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would result in an increase of use of recreational facilities that would result in substantial deterioration of existing facilities. However, the proposed project would result in an increased population, which could indirectly result in physical deterioration of recreational facilities that currently exist outside of the immediate project area. Please refer to Section 4.11, *Population and Housing*, for a discussion of impacts related to population growth. Because the project is estimated to increase local population by approximately 627 persons, to maintain the City's current public parkland ratio of 9.76 acres per 1,000 population, approximately 5 acres of additional parkland would be necessary. Failure to accommodate the increased population with additional recreational resources could result in a potentially significant impact.

The City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan Map identifies a planned Neighborhood/Pocket Park on the Idaho Maryland site at the end of Whispering Pines Lane (City of Grass Valley, 2001). Please see Section 4.9, *Land Use and Planning*, for a discussion of impacts related to this potential conflict with an applicable local plan.

The Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan identifies several reaches along Wolf Creek for the development of a multi-use non-motorized recreational trail. The Idaho-Maryland reach of the Parkway runs along the south side of Wolf Creek and is located on the Idaho Maryland site. Since the Wolf Creek Parkway is still in the preliminary design phases and construction is not anticipated to begin for several years, it is difficult to determine potential impacts or conflicts related to the development of the Parkway at this time; however, any conflicts with this plan would result in a potentially significant impact to recreation resources and

consistency with the Parkway Master Plan should be considered by the project applicant and the City in the planning of the proposed project.

Impact 4.13-2: The proposed project would not include the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. This would be a less than significant impact.

The proposed visitor's center could serve as a recreational facility due to its planned connection to the proposed pocket/neighborhood park mentioned above. In addition, a potential public trail easement that would connect to the proposed pocket/neighborhood park could be constructed along with the park that would connect to the above mentioned Wolf Creek Parkway. The proposed public trail, pocket/neighborhood park, and Wolf Creek Parkway would be constructed and managed by the City of Grass Valley. The City of Grass Valley may decide to form a Joint Powers Authority for the construction and management of the Wolf Creek Parkway Project; however this has not yet been decided upon at this time. Environmental effects that would result from the construction of these recreational facilities are analyzed in the appropriate sections of this MEA.

4.13.4 Data Gaps

1. The location of the proposed pocket park and the proposed public trail easement need to be defined, and a description is required regarding how these recreational resources would be maintained (i.e., through a public/private agreement with the City).
2. Detail is needed regarding the proposed visitor's center and how it would serve as a recreation facility for public use is required. Details should include amenities that would be provided and hours that the resource would be available to the public.
3. Information regarding future plans to conform to the Wolf Creek Parkway Master Plan and to facilitate and/or allow for completion of the Wolf Creek Reach of the proposed Wolf Creek Parkway should be provided.

References – Recreation

City of Grass Valley, 1999a. *City of Grass Valley 2020 General Plan*, November 23, 1999.

City of Grass Valley, 1999b. *City of Grass Valley 2020 General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report*, 1999.

City of Grass Valley, 2001. *City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, April 2001.

City of Grass Valley, 2004. *Street System Master Plan*, October 14, 2004.

City of Grass Valley, 2006. City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation,
http://www.cityofgrassvalley.com/services/departments/public_works/parks_rec_fr_overview.php, accessed March 3, 2006.

City of Grass Valley, 2006. *Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan*, March 2006.

Jacobson, Sandy, 2006. City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Department, personal communication, February 24, 2006.

Nevada County, 1996. *Nevada County General Plan*, 1996.