PCR Ranch Development Analysis

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By
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Chapter 1 Introduction

“Small farmers find they have only limited ability to influence the market prices that allow them to continue farming, let alone make a profit. This concentration of markets — along with global competition — has forced producers to look for new niches” (Rilla, 2003). Small farms in California, such as PCR Ranch, are being forced to look for new niches in order to survive. Farms are turning to tourist attractions, such as agritourism. Others are hanging up their spurs and selling their land over to developers, or developing the property themselves. This transition from small farm agricultural practices, is affecting the planning climate in rural areas. There are local and state issues associated with the decreasing number of small farms in California. In order to adjust to these economic times, planning and land use law will aid in dictating the survival of small farms through allowable uses. Pyro Canyon Ranch in Tulare California will serve as a case study, displaying the actions of the county in relations to the transition of uses small farms are practicing.

Problem Statement

Will Tulare County’s regulatory environment permit Pyro Canyon Ranch to develop 3 low density housing units and an agritourism or guest ranch operation, including overnight accommodations, water activities, hunting, bass fishing, trap shooting and horseback riding?

Hypothesis

Tulare County’s current Regulatory environment will not allow for the development of low density housing units in the agricultural foothill region. PCR Ranch will have the opportunity to develop an agritourism operation.
Objectives

1. Create a Tulare County profile identifying county location, growth trends, and planning climate.
2. Identify the history and issues associated with sprawl in California.
3. Introduce PCR ranch’s history and existing regulatory and environmental conditions.
4. Based upon the above research, identify planning and design recommendations for Pyro Canyon Ranch.

Justification

The changing climate of agriculture in the central valley is causing ranchers to explore different farm operations in order to generate a profit. The owner of Pyro Canyon Ranch, Gary Leslie, wishes to explore opportunities to diversify the ranch’s means of profit generation. Specifically, he requested a potential subdivision of the property into low density housing units, as well as an agritourism operation on site. Ranchers are looking for ways to increase the value of the land, and in turn are diversifying local economies and removing the cyclical practices which are generally embodied in agricultural economies, such as Tulare County.
Chapter 2 Sprawl Analysis

In order to properly examine the feasibility of development in Tulare County, the factual and ethical implications of sprawling development must be explored. The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines sprawl as “the spreading urban development (as houses and shopping centers) on undeveloped land near a city.” For example, the development of single family residential housing units in prime agricultural land outside of a community is considered sprawl. After World War II, sprawl became common practice for development of residential housing units (Gregor, 312). California’s agricultural land is depleting due to the building of residential, commercial, and industrial areas in prime agricultural land.

History of Sprawl

The three major historical land use patterns include: post World War II suburban housing, commercial development in suburban areas, and today’s edge cities. Joel Garreau, a reporter for the Washington post and author, describes the edge city; the city which “represent’s the third wave of our lives pushing into new frontiers in this half century. First, we moved our homes out past the traditional idea of what constituted a city. This was the suburbanization of America, especially after World War II. Then we weared of returning downtown for the necessities of life, so we moved our marketplaces out to where we lived. This was the malling of America, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, we have moved our means of creating wealth, the essence of urbanism - our jobs - out to where most of us have lived and shopped for two generations. That has led to the rise of Edge City (Garreau, 4).” Garreau touches in the three major pivotal development patterns contributing to the edge city; a byproduct of sprawling land uses.
In California sprawling development raises constituents concerns because of twofold: “(1) the limited amount of agri-cultural land (only one-fifth of the total state area), and (2) California’s high national ranking as a provider of specialty crops, due in great part to peculiarly favorable climatic conditions” (Gregor, 311). The stock of California agricultural lands and opportunities to farm are jeopardized by sprawled developed patterns.

**Viewpoints**

Although it is widely accepted sprawl is occurring, there are arguments accepting and denying the extremity of damage sprawl is causing, on social and environmental levels. Porter discusses the issues with sprawl from a physiological standpoint. “The traditional tight-knit fabric of urban living has given way to greater physical and, some believe, social separation among individuals, families, and groups, lending support to us and them outlooks” (68). Porter also discusses the environmental stipulations of sprawl which include: increasing dependence of the automobile, and depletion of open space (70). He suggests strong regulatory action through approaches such as urban service limits, growth boundaries, and growth area designations. Porter gauges the effectiveness of these programs through case studies.

The effects of sprawl are difficult to quantify; therefore it is complex to mediate an issue that is difficult to measure. From a federal standpoint the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) sponsored a research study conducted by the Real Estate Research Corporation identifying the Costs of Sprawl. “The purpose of *The Costs of Sprawl* is to help the mayor, the city manager, the planning board, and other concerned local officials and citizens” address environmental concerns associated with sprawl (1974). The study estimates the monetary cost of sprawl to the government, or the citizens tax dollars, as well as negative lifestyle effects. This federal study
extensively lists issues community members will experience associated with sprawl including: economic, environmental, physical, and personal issues. From a federal and local standpoint sprawl is an accepted issue, however some argue against the strong regulation of sprawl.

Groups that oppose the regulation of Sprawl, such as the National Association Realtors and National Association of Homebuilders, commonly believe that regulating sprawl will increase the cost of land and further inhibit progress (Gillham, 2002). Aside from associations economists, such as Randy O’toole, disapprove of regional growth management tactics. O’toole states “the high housing prices caused by growth management planning were an essential element of the housing bubble that has recently shaken our economy: for the most part, this bubble was limited to urban regions with growth-management planning” (2007).

**Conclusion**

Today, California’s cities and county’s attempt to control growth through slow growth policies and mechanisms. For example, San Luis Obispo County issues a limited number of residential building permits each year. Although San Luis Obispo County is considered slow growth, there are other county’s, specifically in the central valley, which permit the development of large master planned communities and continued residential development. California adopted the California Environmental Quality Act, which provides rigorous standards for development and curbs the effects of sprawl on the existing environment. Specifically, Tulare County is not a slow growth community. In Chapter 3, the Tulare County Profile, the current regulatory and demographic state of the county is examined. The relation of Tulare County’s growth policies and regulations either provide opportunities or constraints for Pyro Canyon Ranch.
Chapter 3 Tulare County Profile

Regional Setting

Tulare County is one of the 58 counties in California. Tulare County’s geographic location is premier for agriculture, specifically because of the county’s soils contents. “It is estimated that Tulare County contains 685,000 acres of prime soils within its boundaries” (Tulare County General Plan, 2004). The county is located in the heart of the central Valley, serving the second largest agricultural producers in the area (American Farmland Trust). The County is about 5,000 square miles (3,158,400 acres). There are nine incorporated cities in Tulare County. The incorporated cities include: Corcoran, Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake.

Figure 3.1: Regional Setting
Source: Tulare County Background Report 2008
County Boundaries

The study area, Tulare County, is centrally located within the state of California in the San Joaquin Valley, midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. It is bordered by Kern County to the south, Fresno County to the north, Inyo County to the east and Kings County to the west. The Sierras form the boundary with Inyo County to the East. The border to the north passes through Reedly and State Route 180. The southern border passes through the northern portion of the City of Delano. The western border, extending north south, passes just east of the City of Corcoran. The county is divided into three topographic regions which include: the valley region, foothill region and mountain region.
**County Population**

Tulare County’s population in 2008 is estimated to be 426,276 (US Census Bureau) based upon an 8% growth rate from 2000. The cities within Tulare County are growing rapidly; as expected residential and community uses is estimated to be 31,000 acres by 2040 (American Farmland Trust).

![Figure 3.3: Population Estimates, by city](image)

Source: California Department of Finance

**Agricultural Preservation**

Tulare County’s General Plan update is currently facing many issues. As identified by the County the area intends to preserve local city economies, but also ensure the steady growth of the county’s strong agricultural production. The question of city growth versus preserving agricultural uses will be included in the General Plan Update.
**Economics**

The economic base within Tulare County consists of agriculture and agricultural production. Agriculture has played an important role in the development and identity of Tulare County. Together with state institutions, tourism and recreation, agriculture makes up the principal economic background (Opermann). As the second-leading producer of agricultural commodities in the nation, the county’s total gross production value for 2008 was $5,018,023,000 (California Farm Bureau Federation). This represents an increase of $143,983,800, or 3% above 2007’s value of $4,874,039,000.

Tulare County’s agricultural strength is in part due to the diversity of crops produced. The 2008 Tulare County’s Annual Crop and Livestock Report covers more than 120 different commodities, with forty five commodities valued over $1 million dollars (USDA). Although individual commodities may experience difficulties from year to year, Tulare County continues to produce high-quality crops that provide food to more than 80 countries throughout the year.

![Figure 3.4: Employment](source: Tulare County Background Report 2008, California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division)
Agriculture, services, and retail are the basis of Tulare county’s economy. As compared to the State of California’s 4% agricultural employment 29% of Tulare County’s totally economic base is from agricultural related jobs. Next to agriculture 14% of the economy is based on services and 14% based on retail (Figure 3.4). In terms of growth finance insurance and real estate growing 7%, construction and mining growing 5%, and government growing 3% represent the largest grow rates from 2000 to 2002. Agriculture grew 2% from 2000 to 2002.

Tourism

Tulare County has a strong economic base in the tourism industry. In 2002 tourism employed about 1,400 people, which represents a change in employment increase of 4% from 2000 to 2002 (Figure 3.6).
Tulare Farm Characteristics

The number of small farms in Tulare County is slowly decreasing. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) categorizes small family farms with annual sales of $250,000 or less. Data from the Census of Agriculture and National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS, 2002) indicates Tulare County had 5,738 farms, representing a decrease of 485 farms from the 1997 to 2002 census. This is approximately an 8% decrease in the number of small farms in Tulare County from 1997 to 2002. Nationally, small farms account for 91 percent of the total number of farms (NASS, 2007). The same holds true for Tulare County where small family farms with annual sales of under $250,000 represent 91 percent of all the farms in the county. Specialization varies by farm size; small farms tend to raise beef cattle and other grazing livestock, while medium-sales farms and large family farms are most likely to specialize in grain. Further, over 66% of the farms in Tulare County earned under $25,000 in sales during 2002, providing little income for the operator (NASS 2007). Small farms in Tulare County are receiving lower than average returns, therefore there is a need for small farms to diversify their operations and find other means of income.
Rural Amenities

Natural Amenities Scale

The USDA conducts economic research for communities through the Economic Research Study and the development and application of the natural amenities scale. Through the natural amenities scale the possibility of recreation and tourism in an area can be determined. Recreation and tourism industries in agricultural communities aid in the diversification of a communities economic base. Tourism creates jobs as well as increases the value of the land. Also, recreation and tourism can help diversify an economy, making the economy less dependent on the ups and downs of a single industry. In 1998, Beale and Johnson identified recreation counties based on a Natural Amenities Scale they designed, representing empirical data. The Natural Amenities scale is “a measure of the physical characteristics of a county area that enhance the location as a place to live or visit” (Beale and Johnson, 1998). “The scale was constructed by combining six measures of climate, topography, and water area that reflect environmental qualities most people prefer” (USDA 2004). These measures are warm winter, winter sun, temperate summer, low summer humidity, topographic variation, and water area (USDA 2004).

Each county receives ratings within the natural amenities scale. Tulare County received a Land Surface Form Code of 21, which refers to a topography consisting of large numbers of hills and mountains. The Rural-urban Continuum code, or the Beale Code, rates the county under a score of 2. This score represents the county’s location in metro areas with a population of 250,000 to 1 million with smaller metro areas with smaller amounts of people living in them. Lastly, Tulare County received a natural amenities score of 6, 7 being the most desirable location (USDA 2004). This reflects the opportunities for tourism and recreational uses in Tulare
County. This typology includes not only places with significant tourism-related activity, but also those with a significant number of seasonal residents (Reeder et al).

**County Wide Amenities**

PCR Ranch is located in Springville California. Springville is located on SR 190, a less-traveled State Route, to the Sierras. New construction is taking place in the region. The Tule Indian Tribe recently built Eagle Mountain Indian Casino. The United States Forest Service has completed a marketing plan to enhance outdoor visitation to this portion of the Sierras. The USFS has granted the Sequoia Regional Visitors Council a grant to draft a marketing plan for visitation to this portion of the Sierras. The plan is scheduled for completion in late 2004.”

Tulare County background report

**PCR Ranch**

The ranch is located just 3 miles west of the historic town of Springville, and 11 miles north-east of Porterville; to the west of the Sierras Foothill Mountains. Pyro Canyon Ranch was originally built as a homestead in 1882. Through inheritance, it remained in the same family until its sale to the present owner who has been managing the resources on the property. PCR current uses consist of recreational, agricultural, and a working Angus cattle ranch. Due to the property owner’s right to the water in the Tule river, running through the east side of the ranch, the 163 acre ranch is green year round. This separates PCR Ranch from the surrounding agricultural ranches in the area.

Currently, the ranch primarily functions as an Angus Cattle Ranch. The property owner recently planted orange trees for harvest in the winter of 2010. The ranch also fosters local sustainable practices through the inclusion of a small organic garden with over 10 different types of vegetables.
Agritourism Proposal

The lower than expected returns on lands are requiring the property owner to explore different uses on the property. Pursuant the property owners request, a guest ranch operation and low 3 low density housing units will be added to the current cattle and agricultural operations on PCR ranch. If so, certain structures will need to be up-graded in order to accommodate ranch guests.

The PCR ranching team aspires to offer the ultimate guest ranch experience on the west coast. With the strong belief in preserving and sharing the foundations of American western life, they feel that PCR can offer an opportunity for agricultural and outdoor education. The outdoor activities available include 4 bass ponds used for water sports and fishing, a competitive trap facility with voice activated hydraulic stations, hunting, horseback riding, hiking, kayaking, golfing (at a nearby golf course) and tennis.
Chapter 4 PCR Ranch Environmental and Regulatory Setting

**PCR Ranch Location**

The study area, PCR Ranch, as shown in (Figure 4.1) is centrally located within County of Tulare. PCR Ranch is owned by Pyro Canyon Incorporated. The property is within the County of Tulare and is located in the unincorporated city of Springville. The ranch is located just three miles west of the historic town of Springville, and 11 miles north-east of Porterville. The site is 163.3 acres, and is located at the intersection of Road 320 and Cambell Creek Road. PCR Ranch is within unincorporated Tulare County; therefore the site is subject to county standards and regulations, such as zoning and other local and state planning documents.

![Figure 4.1: Regional Setting](Tulare County Background Report 2008)

Figure 4.1: Regional Setting
Source: Tulare County Background Report 2008
Property Lines

As identified by the County Assessor’s Map, the property location is county assessor parcel number is 284-4. Map part 329 of the Tulare County assessors map displays parcel number 284-4, or PCR Ranch.

Figure 4.2: Tulare County Assessors Map Part 329
Source: Tulare County Assessors Map

Regulatory Setting

Zoning

The county of Tulare’s General Plan Land Use map designated the specific land uses within the county. The PCR Ranch is located in an agricultural foothill zone (AF). The surrounding parcels are also located in an agricultural foothill zone. The agricultural foothill zone is intended for “intensive” agricultural uses. “The AF Zone is an exclusive zone for intensive and extensive
foothill agricultural uses and for those uses which are a necessary and integral part of intensive and extensive foothill agricultural operations” (Tulare County Zoning Code). In terms of the built environment the zone allows for one residential unit for the property or company owner, one residential unit designated for worker/employee housing and one additional unit for the property owner, lessee, or employee housing.

The project site is currently built out to the sites capacity based upon its agricultural foothill zoning designation. The three existing residential structures including a second unit built above the garage, the property owner’s residence, the employee housing, and the guest house represent one building per 40 acres as designated in the zoning code.

_Foothill Growth Management Plan_

The property is also located within the jurisdiction of the Foothill Growth Management Plan (FGMP) boundary. According to the Tulare County General Plan Update, the FGMP has three main goals:

- “Rationally direct urban/suburban growth into specific areas of the foothills in order to protect the fragile environment and preserve important agricultural land.
- The agricultural viability of the foothills by identifying areas to be maintained or encouraged for intensive and extensive agricultural uses.
- Accommodate urban/rural growth in the areas serviceable by the state and/or County agencies in a manner which is cost efficient, safe, and consistent with the environmental constraints” (Foothill Growth Management Plan 1981).

The plan designates the site and Mixed Use Foothill, or a development corridor. “This designation establishes areas within the foothill development corridors for residential, commercial recreation, and light industrial uses” (Tulare County General Plan Update 2010).
The Mixed Use Foothill Zone, or development corridors, must adhere to the following applicable regulations for development:

- “The property has reasonable access to a publically maintained road or highway (for example, within one mile)
- The property is within a reasonable response time (15 minute attack time) of a Tulare County fire station
- The property has a slope less than 30 percent
- The property does not contain any unique physical, biological, archeological or land use factors, which, if included in the development corridor, would be inconsistent with certain policies of the FGMP. For the purpose of this plan, rocky hill is considered unique, The consideration of unique for future projects will be evaluated on a case by case basis as documented through the environmental review process” (Foothill Growth Management Plan, 1981).

FEMA

According to the Tulare County GIS information and the FEMA flood plain map a small portion of the site is within a 100 year flood plain. “Within 100 year floodplains residential units are 26 times more likely to incur flood damages” (FEMA). The site is subject to the Tulare County Flood Insurance study. Therefore the western portion of PCR Ranch is located in a 100 year floodplain and will require specific residential development regulations in accordance with FEMA. The Growth Management Plan identifies goals, objectives, and policies for development within the agricultural foothills.
Williamson Act

The Tulare County Agricultural Preserve Program implements the Land Conservation Act of 1965 and Sections 421 and 429 of the State Revenue and Taxation Code (or the Williamson Act). Prior to discussing the relevance of the Williamson act to PCR Ranch, the California Natural Resources Department released the 2010 California Land Conservation Act Status Report. The Status report summarizes the current land acreage leaving the Williamson Act Contract. According to the report parcels of land disengage from the contract through six means on cancellation: non-renewal, public acquisition, net adjustment, city annexation, easement exchange, and cancellation. Tulare County, or the San Joaquin region, is within the top 4 under each cancellation category. Through claims in subvention payments, tax breaks are distributed to participants under the Williamson Act.

The process of making subvention payments to land owners is changing due to current economic times, and in response state legislation. Assembly Bill X-4 (Chapter 1, Statutes of 2009) states that the “total fiscal year 2009-10 Open Space Subvention Act Entitlement Amounts were limited to a combined total of $1,000 for all participating counties.” Therefore, counties, including Tulare County, are currently redistributing budgets and attempting to make subvention payments to the deserving participating farmers in the Williamson Act Program. According to the California Association of Counties Williamson Act Survey, conducted in March 2010, counties are responding differently to the cuts in the state Williamson Act budget. Specifically, some counties are not accepting new applications and some are even considering “cessation of the program if the State continues to not appropriate subvention fund” (2010). Specifically Tulare County is standing to collect about $2.2 million as well as decreasing the life of the life of current Williamson Act contracts. In order to raise the funds “the County Board of Supervisors
will first need to vote to implement new contracts that are 10 percent shorter in return for the 10 percent reduction in the landowners’ property tax relief” (Chandler 2010). The Western portion of the site, the same land that is designated as a FEMA floodplain was entered into the Williamson Act Agreement by the property owner. Land under the Williamson act must be preserved as prime agricultural lands. In return for preserving the land the property owner receives a tax break. Therefore, PCR Ranch is subject to the Williamson Act and cannot be developed.

**Environmental Setting**

*Topography*

The Tulare County GIS data provides the topography and slope grading for the area. Insert GIS MAP. In order to properly determine the percentage slopes of the property an engineer must survey the site.

*Soil Typologies*

According to the United States Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service the site is composed of four different soil types. The following soil types are Grangeville silt loam, Vista coarse sandy loam 15 to 30 percent slopes, and Cieneba-Rock outcrop complex: 15 to 75 percent slopes. The National Resource Conservation Service provides soils maps within the United States and also provides descriptions of each soil type. According to the NRCS “the Grangeville series consists of very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils that formed in moderate coarse textured alluvium dominantly from granitic rock sources. Grangeville soils are on alluvial fans and floodplains and have slopes ranging from 0 to 2 percent” (1999). Granville Soil, see soils map part 131 is located on a floodplain and is not suitable to build upon. Secondly, Vista coarse sandy loam soil “consists of moderately deep, well drained soils that formed in material weathered from decomposed granitic rocks. Vista soils are on hills and mountainous uplands and
have slopes of 2 to 75 percent. The mean annual precipitation is about 16 inches and the mean annual air temperature is about 62 degrees F” (1999). Vista sandy loam soil is located in part 166 of the PCR soils map. This soil type is premier for agricultural uses due to the soils high decomposition and high absorption rate. Therefore, PCR recently planted orange groves within this soil typology. This soil type is not ideal for PCR to built upon because the agricultural yields are ideal. Thirdly, the rock outcrop complex soil is generally located in the foothills, or the eastern portion of the property. This soil is located in 15-75% slopes; therefore building on high slopes would be difficult. Again, an engineer must determine the exact slopes of this portion of the property in order to determine if building is appropriate. In summary, the property consists of variations of sandy loam, rock outcrop, and Granville soils.

*Fault Lines*

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map requires state geologists to establish ground shaking potential. The Project site is not identified as a fault rupture hazard zone according to the US geological survey. Therefore earthquake hazards on the PCR property in not an issue.
Fire

As identified in the foothill growth management plan all Urban Growth Areas must be within 15 minutes of a Tulare County Fire Station. The closest fire station to PCR is 10.9 Miles of the Ranch. The station is Springville Fire Station #22:

Springville Fire Station #22
35659 Hwy 190
Springville, CA 93265
Phone: (559) 539-2626
There are adequate fire services serving PCC Ranch, therefore is development occurs the existing fire stations will properly service the site.
Chapter 5 Proposal

Pursuant the property owner’s request for the development of low density residential units, a potential subdivision, and the establishment of agritourism operation, PCR Ranch’s marketing study, conducted by Ashlie Leslie BS Agricultural Business, and the existing conditions and regulatory setting place various opportunities and constraints on the development of PCR Ranch.

**Agritourism: Guest Ranch Permit**

To establish the desired uses to incorporate in the agritourism operation, the “Market Segmentation Analysis of Desired agritourism Opportunities in Tulare County” serves as a reference. Through the administration of a survey in Tulare County, the following uses and activities were identified as significant: water activities, horseback riding, bass fishing, trap shooting, and hunting. The identified activities establishes that the existing built environment will suffice for the proposed agritourism operation.

The Guest Ranch use will require permitting. As designated in the Agricultural Foothill zone, the following permits must be obtained in order to function as a guest ranch. The allowable use permit titled “Guest Ranch or Summer Camp” must be obtained in order to house guests and function as a Guest Ranch business. Permits of this nature can be obtained through the County of Tulare Permit Center located in Springville. The county issues two types of permits, minor and regular permits. This use permit will fall under the category of a regular permit, because it requires discretion of the county.

**Low Density Residential**

As stated in the hypothesis, the property owner is proposing three low density housing units. The development of low density residential units has various constraints and opportunities.
**Constraints**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>AF land uses allow a specific number of built structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AF land uses subdivided parcels must be a minimum on 160 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foothill Growth Management Plan</td>
<td>Mixed Use Foothill Zone Goals and Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goals of the foothill growth management plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Western portion of the site is located in a FEMA Floodplain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific first floor elevations required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamson Act</td>
<td>The site is currently entered into the Williamson Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under the act, agricultural lands must be preserved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdivision</td>
<td>Tulare County subdivision regulations do not allow subdividing over a ditch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Pleasant Valley ditch runs through the site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Opportunities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FGMP</td>
<td>The Development corridor can request special review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proving development is economically beneficial provides reason for county approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamson Act</td>
<td>The Williamson Act could become obsolete if the state does not fund the program, therefore development for properties under the Williamson Act could be come feasible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Development</td>
<td>The Northern and western portions of the site could be developed if the Williamson Act is removed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommendation**

The above constraints are substantial legal reasons not to develop the site. Including the Foothill Growth Management Plan, Federal Emergency Management Plan, subdivision regulations, and the current General Plan land uses, as agricultural foothill land use, does not allow for the subdivision of parcels less than 160 acres. Tulare County subdivision regulations don’t allow subdivision lines over ditches, such as the Pleasant Valley Ditch, which runs through the ranch. Another regulation based entity, FEMA, designates the eastern portion of the Ranch in a Zone A 100 year flood plain. The Ranch is also currently entered into the Williamson Act, which requires the agricultural preservation of the land, and does not allow for development.
As identified in Chapter 2, Tulare County is not a slow growth county and Sprawled development occurs within rural counties. The Foothill Growth Management Plan identifies the area as a development corridor. This designation establishes areas within the foothill development corridors for residential, commercial recreation, and light industrial uses” (Tulare County General Plan Update 2010). Therefore, residential and recreational uses are proposed on the site and are supported by the FGMP. However, there is a contradiction with the Agricultural Foothill zone, which does not allow for residential subdivisions under 160 acres. As the county policy continues to progress and plan for growth, the residential proposal could be feasible in the future.
References

<http://www.farmland.org/programs/states/-ca/Tulare.asp>.


<http://www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/lca/Pages/Index.aspx>.


Tulare County Fire Department. (2008). *Springville Fire Station*. Retrieved from<br>
<http://www.co.tulare.ca.us/government/fire/stations/springville.asp>.


The 2007 Census of Agriculture shows an increase in the number of small farms in the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines small farms as farms with $250,000 or less in sales of agricultural commodities. In 2007, there were 18,467 more small farms counted than in 2002. It is important to understand the attributes and characteristics of these farms and the role they play in the changing structure of U.S. agriculture.

**Growth Trends**

The number of small farms counted in the 2007 Census of Agriculture was 1,995,133, or 91 percent of all farms. Overall small farms increased 1 percent from 2002 to 2007, but the increase was not seen in all sales classes. Farms with sales less than $10,000 increased while farms with sales of more than $10,000 decreased. U.S. farms with sales between $100,000 and $249,999 decreased by 7 percent.

**Small Farms account for 91 percent of all farms in the United States.**
## 2007 Census of Agriculture

**How Do They Compare?**

Small farms account for 91 percent of all U.S. farms and more than half of the land in farms. Operators of farms with value of sales between $100,000 and $249,999 are younger than average and are more likely to be full-time farmers. Operators of farms with sales of less than $10,000 typically work off farm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATIONS</th>
<th>Sales $100,000 - $249,999</th>
<th>Sales $10,000 - $99,999</th>
<th>Sales &lt; $10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Farms</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Payments</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Land and Buildings</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cropland Harvested</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Inventory</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Inventory</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Sales</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct to Consumer Sales</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority, 57 percent, of direct to consumer sales is from small farms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATORS</th>
<th>All Farms</th>
<th>Sales $100,000 - $249,999</th>
<th>Sales $10,000 - $99,999</th>
<th>Sales &lt; $10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 Years or Older</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not White or Hispanic</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked Off Farm</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Years or Less on Present Farm</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Small Farms

What Is Produced?
Almost 50 percent of the farms that sold between $100,000 and $249,999 of agricultural products in 2007 specialized in grain and oilseed production followed by cattle and milk production. The largest category of production for farms with sales between $10,000 and $99,999 was beef cattle and calves followed by grains and oilseeds. More than half of farms that produced less than $10,000 were beef cattle or "other crop" farms. This category includes hay farms and farms where no single crop comprised more than 50 percent of sales.

Percent of Farms by North American Industry Classification System

Small farms account for 56 percent of the total U.S. value of agricultural land and buildings.
Where Are Small Farms Located?

Nationally, 91 percent of all farms fall under the USDA small farm definition, which are places that sell less than $250,000 in agricultural products annually. The percentage of small farms is highest in the South and New England.

There are 14 states where 85 percent or more of all farms are small. West Virginia has the highest percentage of small farms. There are only five states where less than 80 percent of all farms are small – Delaware, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Iowa.

For more information:
www.nass.usda.gov
www.agcensus.usda.gov
Agricultural Statistics Hotline
(800) 727-9540

Small Farms
www.agcensus.usda.gov
# Appendix B
## Natural Amenities Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIPS Code</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>County Name</th>
<th>2003 Rural-Urban Continuum Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>County Population 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6097</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Sonoma County</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>County in metro area of 250,000 to 1 million population</td>
<td>458,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6099</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Stanislaus County</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>County in metro area of 250,000 to 1 million population</td>
<td>446,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6101</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Sutter County</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>County in metro area of fewer than 250,000 population</td>
<td>78,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6103</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Tehama County</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nonmetro county with urban population of 20,000 or more, adjacent to a metro area</td>
<td>56,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6105</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Trinity County</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nonmetro county completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, adj. to metro area</td>
<td>13,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6107</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Tulare County</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>County in metro area of 250,000 to 1 million population</td>
<td>368,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6109</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Tuolumne County</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nonmetro county with urban population of 20,000 or more, adjacent to a metro area</td>
<td>54,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6111</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Ventura County</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>County in metro area of 250,000 to 1 million population</td>
<td>753,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6113</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Yolo County</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>County in metro area with 1 million population or more</td>
<td>168,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6115</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Yuba County</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>County in metro area of fewer than 250,000 population</td>
<td>60,219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 10.3: "AF", FOOTHILL AGRICULTURAL ZONE  
(Added by Ord. No. 2407, effective 3-26-81)

PURPOSE A.  The AF Zone is an exclusive zone for intensive and extensive foothill agricultural uses and for those uses which are a necessary and integral part of intensive and extensive foothill agricultural operations. The purposes of this zone are as follows:

1. To protect the general welfare of the foothill agricultural community from encroachments of unrelated uses which, by their nature, would be injurious to the physical and economic well-being of the foothill agricultural community and the community at large.

2. To prevent to minimize the negative interaction between various foothill agricultural uses.

3. To prevent or minimize land use conflicts or injury to the physical or economic well-being of urban, suburban, or other non-agricultural uses by foothill agricultural uses.

4. To disburse intensive animal agricultural uses in order to avoid air, water or land pollution otherwise resulting from compact distribution of such uses.

5. To provide for a minimum parcel standard which is appropriate for foothill areas where soil capability and other characteristics are such that the unregulated breakdown of land would adversely affect the physical and economic well-being of the foothill agricultural community and the community at large.

6. To implement land use controls and development standards which are necessary to achieve the goals and objectives for foothill agricultural lands as required by the General Plan.

7. To function as a holding zone in certain foothill areas which should be retained in extensive agricultural use until such time as the General Plan is amended to provide for the conversion of such lands to urban use.

The minimum parcel size permitted to be created in this zone is, with certain exceptions, one hundred and sixty (160) acres.

USE B. No building or land shall be used, and no building shall be erected

Section 10.3, Page 1
or structurally altered, except for the following uses:

1. One (1) single family residence or mobilehome for the entire contiguous property owned by one (1) person, firm, partnership or corporation or owned jointly by more than one (1) person, firm, partnership or corporation or any combination thereof. Such residence or mobilehome shall be occupied only by an owner of the property and his family or a lessee of the property and his family.

2. In addition to the residence allowed under Paragraph 1 above, one (1) additional residence or mobilehome for each forty (40) acres in the entire property. Such additional residences and mobilehomes shall be occupied only by relatives of the owner or lessee, or farmworkers or by employees who work on the property, provided that the total number of farmworkers and employees shall not exceed nine (9) at any time. Housing for ten (10) or more farmworkers and employees may be allowed under the Use Permit procedures set forth in Section 16 of this Ordinance. However, if the property is less than forty (40) acres, but greater than ten (10) acres in area, and was of record at the time this zone became applicable to the property, one (1) such residence or mobilehome may be constructed and used as a dwelling by the persons designated hereinabove. In addition to the number of residences and mobilehomes allowed under this paragraph, additional residences and mobilehomes for use by such relatives, farmworkers and employees may be allowed under the Use Permit procedures set forth in Subsection E of this section. (Amended by Ord. No. 3009, effective 9-24-92.)

3. Incidental and accessory structures and uses including barns, stables, coops, tank houses, storage tanks, wind machines, windmills, silos and other farm buildings, private garages and carports, storehouses, garden structures, greenhouses, recreation rooms, storage and use of petroleum products, and kennels for private non-commercial use. (Amended by Ord. No. 2828, effective 3-31-88.)

4. The growing and harvesting of fruit and nut trees, vines, vegetables, horticultural specialties and timber, but excluding the growing of mushrooms, which requires a use permit under Subsection D of this section.

Section 10.3, Page 2.
5. The growing and harvesting of field crops, grain and hay crops, and the growing of grass for pasture and grazing.

6. The raising and slaughter of poultry up to a maximum of three (3) birds for each 1,300 square feet in the entire property, and not to exceed a total of 1,000 birds in all, unless a use permit has been secured as required under Subsection D of this section.

7. The raising and slaughter of rabbits and other similar fur-bearing animals. The maximum number of mature animals allowed on any parcel shall not exceed 240 unless a use permit has been secured as required under Subsection D of this section. Any offspring of the animals may remain on the property until they reach the normal age for weaning.

8. The raising of sheep, goats, horses, mules, swine, bovine animals and other similar domesticated quadrupeds; provided, however, that no feed lots as set forth in Paragraph 6 of Subsection D of this section may be permitted unless a Use Permit has been secured as required under Subsection D or under Paragraph B of Part II of Section 16 of this Ordinance.

9. Feed lots or areas for concentrated feeding of animals which are used on an intermittent basis and which are accessory to a permitted animal raising operation as set forth in Paragraph 8 of this Subsection.

10. Fish farming operations for the raising and harvesting of fish as a crop but not including fishing clubs or fishing for members of the general public on a commercial basis, unless a use permit has been secured as required under Subsection D of this section.

11. Game preserve, private or public, but not including hunting clubs or hunting for members of the general public on a commercial basis, unless a use permit has been secured as required under Subsection D of this section.

12. Plant nursery, not including retail sales. (Amended by Ord. No. 2754, effective 1-15-87.)

13. Sale of agricultural products, including sale at roadside stands and from vehicles, if more than one-half (1/2) of the retail value of the agricultural products offered for sale at

Section 10.3, Page 3
DIVISIONS OF LAND

C. All real property, improved or unimproved, which is shown on the latest adopted County tax roll as a unit or as contiguous units and which is owned by the same person or persons shall not be divided, after AF zoning is applied to such property, except in compliance with this Subsection. No such land may be divided for any purpose if any one (1) parcel resulting from the division of land contains less than one-hundred and sixty (160) acres, provided, however, that the transactions set forth in Subsection D.2 and D.3 of Section 15 of this ordinance are not subject to this restriction.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned restrictions, if the entire property contained less than one hundred and sixty (160) acres at the time AF zoning was applied to the property, the entire property may be sold as a single unit.

Any divisions of land which are allowed under this subsection shall be made in compliance with the provisions of Section 7-01-1000 - 7-01-2855 of the Ordinance Code of Tulare County. (Amended by Ord. No. 2693, effective 2-27-86; amended by Ord. No. 2751, effective 2-1-87.)

USE PERMITS:

D. Because of considerations of smoke, fumes, dust, odor and other hazards, regardless of the other provisions of this section, the establishment and operation of the following uses shall be permitted in this zone only if a Use Permit is first secured pursuant to the procedures referred to in Paragraph B of Part II of Section 16 of this Ordinance.

1. Agricultural service establishments primarily engaged in performing agricultural animal husbandry services or horticultural services to farmers.

2. Agricultural chemical experiment stations. (Repealed to Ord. No. 2416, effective 5-28-81; added by Ord. No. 2720, effective 8-5-86.)

3. Asphalt manufacturing and refining.


5. Concrete products manufacturing.

5.5 Establishments for the curing, processing, packaging, packing, storage and shipping of agricultural products. (Added by Ord. No. 2720, effective 8-5-86.)
6. Feed lots for more than twenty-five (25) animals; provided, however, that no use permit shall be required for any feed lot operation set forth as a permitted use under Paragraph 9 of Subsection B of this section.

7. Fertilizer manufacturing.

8. Guest ranch or summer camp.

9. Hunting and fishing clubs and hunting and fishing on a commercial basis for members of the public.

9.5 Manufacture of irrigation pipe and accessory equipment and agriculture machinery, equipment, implements and containers, including sales and storage thereof, provided that any such irrigation pipe, machinery, equipment, implements or containers are used specifically to aid in the production of farm animals or crops and at least fifty percent (50%) of the manufactured products are sold directly to farmers. (Added by Ord. No. 2520, effective 2-24-83.)

10. Mushroom growing.

11. Petroleum products; manufacturing and wholesale storage.

12. Potash works; provided, however, that no Use Permit shall be required if a surface mining permit and/or reclamation plan is required under the provisions of Section 7-25-1000 et seq. of the Ordinance Code of Tulare County.

13. Quarry and stone mill; provided, however, that no Use Permit shall be required if a surface mining permit and/or reclamation plan is required under the provisions of Section 7-25-1000 et seq. of the Ordinance Code of Tulare County.

14. Raising or slaughter of poultry when more than three (3) birds for each 1,300 square feet in the entire property, or more than a total of 1,000 birds in all, are on the property at any time.

15. Raising or slaughter of rabbits or other similar fur-bearing animals when a total of more than 240 mature animals are on the property at any time.
vines which have continuously existed on the property for less than five (5) years. No special use permit may be approved for such division of land unless it is found that a sufficient water supply for irrigation is available and that the land proposed to be divided is suitable for the commercial cultivation, growing and harvesting of said perennial agricultural crops. Any parcel created pursuant to this subparagraph shall be at least twenty (20) acres in size; provided, however, if that portion of the property containing said perennial agricultural crops is less than twenty (20) acres but greater than five (5) acres, the property containing said crops may be conveyed as a single unit. There may be more than one division of land pursuant to this subparagraph.

d. Divisions of land resulting in parcels containing less than one-hundred and sixty (160) acres for the purpose of conveying property for the development of perennial agricultural crops such as fruit and nut trees and vines. No special use permit may be approved for such division of land unless it is found that a sufficient water supply for irrigation is or will be available and that the land proposed to be divided is suitable for the commercial cultivation, growing and harvesting of the proposed perennial agricultural crops. Any parcel created pursuant to this subparagraph shall be at least twenty (20) acres in size. There may be more than one division of land pursuant to this subparagraph.

e. Divisions of land resulting in parcels containing less than one-hundred and sixty (160) acres for the purpose of financing on-site improvements other than a residence.

**FENCES, WALLS AND HEDGES:**

E. Fences, walls and hedges shall be permitted. However, no solid fence, wall or hedge shall exceed three (3) feet in height within the area contiguous to two (2) intersection streets in which is described as follows: that area on the street side of a diagonal line connecting points, measured from the intersection corner, fifty (50) feet on a minor street side of the property and seventy (70) feet on a major street side of the property.

**YARD**

1. Front Yard: The minimum front yard shall be twenty-five

Section 10.3, Page 8
APPENDIX A
TULARE COUNTY ZONING - AGRICULTURAL FOOTHILL

REQUIREMENTS:

(25) feet except along those streets and highways where a greater setback is required by this Ordinance or by other ordinances of the County.

2. Rear Yard: The minimum rear yard shall be twenty-five (25) feet except along those streets and highways where a greater setback is required by this Ordinance or by other ordinances of the County.

3. Side Yards: The minimum side yards shall be ten (10) feet except along those streets and highways where a greater setback is required by this Ordinance or by other ordinances of the County.

4. Required yard areas may be used for grazing of animals and for growing of agricultural crops.

HEIGHT OF STRUCTURES:

G. Not more than fifty (50) feet to the uppermost part of the roof except that water tanks, silos, granaries, wind machines, barns and other agricultural accessory structures may exceed fifty (50) feet in height provided they do not project into the landing or take-off zone, or other restricted areas of an airport, established pursuant to Section 7-13-1000 - 7-13-1085 of the Ordinance Code of Tulare County.

DISTANCES BETWEEN STRUCTURES:

H. The minimum distance between two (2) structures used for human habitation shall be twenty (20) feet. The minimum distance between a structure used for human habitation and a pen, coop, stable, barn, corral, or other structure housing livestock or poultry which is not on the same lot or parcel as the structure used for human habitation shall be one hundred (100) feet. When structures are in existence at the time that AF zoning is applied to the property which do not comply with the minimum distance set forth above, such structures may be structurally altered and additions made to such structures so long as the distance between the structures is not reduced.
APPENDIX D
EXISTING BUILT ENVIRONMENT

LEGAL

1. EMPLOYEE HOUSING AND AG STORAGE
2. MAIN HOUSE
3. SHADE STRUCTURE
4. GUEST HOUSE
5. AG STORAGE
6. AG STORAGE
LEGEND

**SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS SUBJECT TO INUNDATION BY THE 1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD**

- **ZONE A**: No Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE AR**: Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE AH**: Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually areas of ponding); Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE AO**: Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet usually from rising river; average depths determined. For areas of alluvial fan flooding, velocity also determined.
- **ZONE AE**: Special Flood Hazard Area formerly protected from the 1% annual chance flood by a flood control system that was subsequently destroyed; Zone AE indicates that the former flood control system is being replaced to provide protection from the 1% annual chance flood or greater flood.
- **ZONE AH**: Area to be protected from a 1% annual chance flood by a Federal flood protection system under construction; no Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE V**: Coastal flood zone with velocity hazard (wave action); no Base Flood Elevations determined.
- **ZONE VE**: Coastal flood zone with velocity hazard (wave action); Base Flood Elevations determined.

**FLOODWAY AREAS IN ZONE AE**

The Floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of obstructions so that the 1% annual chance flood can be carried without unacceptable increase in flood height.

**OTHER FLOOD AREAS**

- **ZONE X**: Areas of 1% annual chance flood prone to less than 0.5 foot flood or with drainage areas less than 0.1 square mile and are protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood.

**OTHER AREAS**

- **ZONE X**: Areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain.
Williamson Act
Topography

Legend
- County_50ft
- gisroads
- parcels
Waterways

Legend

- waterways_2005
- PARC_public_2001Q3
- county_bndy