

APPENDIX K

LAKE VALLEY STATE RECREATION AREA GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT AND WASHOE MEADOWS STATE PARK CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT

For California State Parks (State Parks) to implement the proposed Preferred Alternative for the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project (Project), three actions by the California Park and Recreation Commission (Commission) are necessary:

1. Adjust the classification of certain land areas at Washoe Meadows State Park (SP) and Lake Valley State Recreation Area (SRA) by modifying the boundary of the two units and,
2. Amend the General Plan for Lake Valley SRA.
3. Certify the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project environmental document (EIR)

The Project's Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS/EIS) contains a comprehensive evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives, including a No-Project/No-Action Alternative and four action alternatives. A refined version of Alternative 2 is proposed by State Parks as the Preferred Alternative, hereafter referred to as the Preferred Alternative, because it best meets the project's basic objectives from the evaluated alternatives. The Final EIR/EIS/EIS contains a complete description of the Preferred Alternative.

The summary descriptions of the relevant components of the Preferred Alternative, the amendment of the Lake Valley SRA General Plan, and the classification adjustments for certain lands within both Lake Valley SRA and Washoe Meadows SP that are required as part of the Project's implementation are presented below.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF RELEVANT COMPONENTS OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The Preferred Alternative includes a reconfiguration of the existing Lake Tahoe Golf Course at LVSRA to remove several existing golf course holes located within the active floodplain-stream environment zone (SEZ), and the historic meander belt of the river and relocate them to less environmentally sensitive land on the west side of the river. Removing the golf course holes from the river corridor will allow room for the river restoration actions and create a buffer between the river and the golf course. This reach of the river has been identified as one of the largest stream sediment producers contributing to degradation of Lake Tahoe water clarity, and has been identified as a restoration priority in the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Environmental Improvement Program (EIP). The Preferred Alternative will result in the river regaining important natural geomorphic processes, such as occupying a wider meander belt, reconnecting with the adjacent floodplain, and overbanking into the active floodplain more frequently. This will, in turn, enhance critical riparian habitat and improve water quality of both the river and Lake Tahoe. While the overall footprint of the golf course will increase slightly to allow for optimal use of existing topography, most of the areas relocated will be within higher capability lands (mostly away from the river and outside of SEZ) and the area of non-native golf course turf will decrease, while turf management will be improved irrigation upgrades and more naturalized areas. The Preferred Alternative will allow the continuation of an 18-hole regulation golf course called for in the Lake Valley SRA General Plan: it

calls for a reconfigured course similar to the existing golf course. The existing course is a 6740 yard par 71 course, with and the proposed golf course is a 6820 yard par 72 course. The Preferred Alternative is consistent with the purpose for which Lake Valley SRA was established (i.e., to make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and its environs). It will meet geomorphic, ecological, recreational, operational, and revenue criteria, and continue to provide dispersed recreation in addition to golf recreation.

The Preferred Alternative also has economic benefits. It maintains the economic benefits to the local and regional economy, including the maintenance of golf course jobs and the beneficial multiplier effect of spending by golfers (e.g., food, lodging) which benefits businesses and provides jobs in the community. Lake Tahoe Golf Course provides an affordable golf experience in the area, with prices limited by CSP. The availability of affordable golf contributes to Tahoe's competitiveness as a vacation destination, complementing its other recreation attractions. It also maintains the revenue the state receives from the golf course concession at similar to the existing level.

The Preferred Alternative exemplifies a project that is consistent with State Parks' Mission: to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. Restoring the Upper Truckee River helps preserve biological diversity and protect natural resources. The reconfigured golf course retains and improves high-quality, reasonably priced, golf recreation opportunities within the state recreation area. Cultural resources are protected in the design of the Preferred Alternative.

Reconfiguration of the golf course away from the river allows room for river restoration, including increasing channel length of the river, expansion of functioning floodplain, increase in riparian habitat and corridor connectivity, and other river ecosystem restoration actions. The current 11,840 foot long reach of the Upper Truckee River will be restored to 13,430 feet with at least 20 acres of additional functional floodplain area. Several golf course holes will be relocated to an area on the west side of the river that contains less sensitive land and is further distance from the river. This will also reduce the amount of SEZ occupied by the golf course (see Exhibit 2-1 and Exhibit 2-3 in the Final EIR/EIS/EIS). All five existing bridges will be removed from the Upper Truckee River and one new, longer bridge will be constructed. Four bridges will also be removed from Angora Creek. New trails will be constructed on both sides of the river. The new river bridge will be designed to accommodate both golf and other recreation use, and the new trails will tie into the Sawmill bike path, creating greater recreation connectivity.

Based on the conceptual design of the Preferred Alternative, the amount of golf course adjacent to (i.e., within 50 feet of) the Upper Truckee River will decrease from 6,382 linear feet to 850 linear feet, and the majority of the golf course will have a natural vegetated buffer width of greater than 150 feet. While an additional length of golf course will run parallel to the Upper Truckee River, it will generally be outside the active floodplain, reduce the golf course area in SEZ, and be more distant from the river. Adjoining riparian vegetation communities will be restored improving habitat connectivity as well as increasing the extent of the vegetative buffer which provides treatment areas for protection of water quality from golf course and urban land use. Treatments are also planned along the lower portion of Angora Creek and the unnamed creek to enhance those channels and adjust the confluence with the Upper Truckee River.

The conceptual 18-hole regulation golf course layout for the Preferred Alternative reconfigures Lake Tahoe Golf Course by relocating up to seven entire and two partial golf course holes to the western side of the Upper Truckee River on land currently included within Washoe Meadows SP. The reconfigured golf course will have an overall footprint of up to 155 acres (increased from the existing 134 acres), 64 acres of which will be native vegetation (minimally managed and naturalized landscape). The area of intensively managed landscape will decrease from 104 to 91 acres of (nonnative) vegetation or coverage (facilities). The overall footprint is larger to allow for optimal use of existing topography (i.e., to minimize grading) and allow for buffer areas. The area of non-native turf, however, would be decreased because a portion of existing intensively managed areas will be modified to develop new out-of-play areas of natural landscape, composed of native vegetation (scrub and grasses) that

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surround tees and greens. The area of golf course in SEZ will be reduced from 128 to 96 acres, and the golf course area in the 100-year floodplain will be reduced from 56 acres to 34 acres.

Approximately 850 linear feet of golf course will be adjacent to the river at the replacement bridge to allow for playability; however, the golf course design will include safety measures for trail users. An new trail is proposed where golf course is removed along the south side of the river which will tie into the new golf course bridge and into the county bike path along highway 50, providing improved connectivity. The overall plan is conceptual and final design and acreages may be modified in order to satisfy parties involved in the final decision making process. These modifications will not substantially increase the intensity or severity of an impact or create a new significant impact.

CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT

The purpose statement for Lake Valley SRA is as follows:

The purpose of Lake Valley State Recreation Area is to make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and its environs.

The department shall balance the objectives of providing optimum recreational opportunities and maintaining the highest standards of environmental protection. In so doing, the department shall define and execute a program of management within the unit that shall perpetuate the unit's declared values, providing for golfing along with other compatible summer and winter recreation opportunities while restoring the natural character and ecological values of the upper Truckee River, protecting its water quality, and protecting and interpreting significant natural, cultural, and scientific values.

The current boundary of Lake Valley SRA was originally drawn to encompass the then-existing golf course. The remainder of the state land was placed in Washoe Meadows SP. The proposed classification adjustment will continue this approach of containing the reconfigured golf course in the state recreation area and implementing the purpose of that unit.

The classification of lands at the project site will be adjusted so that Lake Valley SRA will encompass the reconfigured golf course, including the golf holes relocated to the west side of the river, and Washoe Meadows SP will contain most of restored river corridor, except adjacent to the new bridge. The southern portion of an existing South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) sewer access road also becomes part of the SRA.

The classification adjustment results in an exchange of land between the two units. The net change in acreage of the units after the classification adjustments is 40 acres, as shown in Table A-1 and exhibits 2 and 3.

Table A-1 Summary of Acreage Changes with Classification Adjustments			
Park Unit	Existing	Preferred Alternative	Net Change
Lake Valley SRA	155	195	+ 40
Washoe Meadows SP	628	588	- 40

With the adjustments to encompass the reconfigured golf course and the STPUD access road, 92.5 acres of mainly upland area are transferred from Washoe Meadows SP to Lake Valley SRA, and approximately 52.5 acres are transferred from the SRA to the SP along the river corridor. The total acreage included within the combination of Lake Valley SRA and Washoe Meadows SP does not change.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

The General Plan recognizes the importance of both the golf course as a recreational opportunity and the need to restore the Upper Truckee River and its environs. As noted on page 34 of the General Plan, it is uncommon for a golf course to be the primary feature within a unit of the State Park System. However, its classification as a state recreation area recognizes the significance of perpetuating the quality public golfing opportunity in the Tahoe Basin. The Declaration of Purpose is as follows: “The purpose of the Lake Valley SRA is to make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and it’s environs”

On pages 35 – 38 of the General Plan, the natural values of the river are discussed with recognition of the need to restore a balance in its natural geomorphic processes, including restoration of a natural channel configuration and riparian habitat. On pages 59 – 60 of the General Plan, it is recommended that the existing golf course (18 hole, 6700 yard) and winter recreational opportunities be continued. Amending the General Plan to reflect the proposed classification adjustment and boundary modification will be consistent with maintaining the significance of golf recreation opportunity and appropriate management of the river’s natural resources. The amendment is a necessary action for implementing the Preferred Alternative for the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project, which is most consistent (among the other considered project alternatives) with both the river management and golf recreation opportunity provisions of the General Plan.

The Lake Valley SRA General Plan is amended to reflect the adjusted classification of land within the unit as implemented through a boundary modification. Otherwise, the purpose of the unit, objectives of the plan, and plan elements (Resource, Interpretive, Concession, Operations, Land Use, and Facilities) are not substantively modified. The classification adjustment is consistent with the unit’s purpose and objectives.

An updated General Plan vicinity map is provided in Exhibit A-1. The existing park unit boundaries are presented in Exhibit A-2. The adjusted classifications of the land in the park units are shown in Exhibits A-3, essentially “exchanging” land between Washoe Meadows SP and Lake Valley SRA, and realigning the boundaries between the two park units.

The adjusted classification boundary of Lake Valley SRA contains the reconfigured golf course and the existing STPUD sewer access road to encompass land uses of the Preferred Alternative layout that are consistent with the purpose and objectives of the Lake Valley SRA. They also contain the new, shared golf and dispersed recreation trail bridge across the Upper Truckee River and immediately adjacent land. The section of river remaining in the Lake Valley SRA in the vicinity of the new bridge allows room for defining the precise bridge alignment during the final design.

The adjusted classification of Washoe Meadows SP boundary contains most of the restored river corridor, except in the vicinity of the new Upper Truckee River Bridge. The area north of the river near Angora Creek and the adjacent area are changed from Lake Valley SRA to Washoe Meadows SP, as is much of the area adjacent to the river on the south. These areas that are currently golf course turf will be restored to native meadow vegetation. The northern section of Washoe Meadows SP which contains the rest of the wet meadow area associated with Angora creek as well as the fen area will continue to be part of Washoe Meadows SP.

The General Plan Amendment applies to the adjusted classification of land comprising Lake Valley SRA and its new boundaries, but does not include any plan elements for Washoe Meadows SP. The General Plan Amendment will allow for continuation of an 18 hole championship (regulation) golf course to continue within the SRA, while allowing room for the river restoration and improvements also called for in the General Plan. It will also allow for continuation of the winter recreation (snowmobile concession) on the driving range. Because no development is anticipated for Washoe Meadows SP, State Parks has not prepared a general plan for this unit. However the relocation of much of the river from the SRA into the SP will allow for greater recreational access to the river will provide space for a regionally connected trail along the river. The implementation of the Preferred Alternative

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will not include development of permanent facilities within the adjusted boundaries of Washoe Meadows SP, but dispersed activities such as hiking and cross-country skiing will continue.

ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit A-1 Vicinity Map

Exhibit A-2 Existing Unit Boundaries

Exhibit A-3 Adjusted Unit Boundaries

Exhibit A-1 Vicinity Map

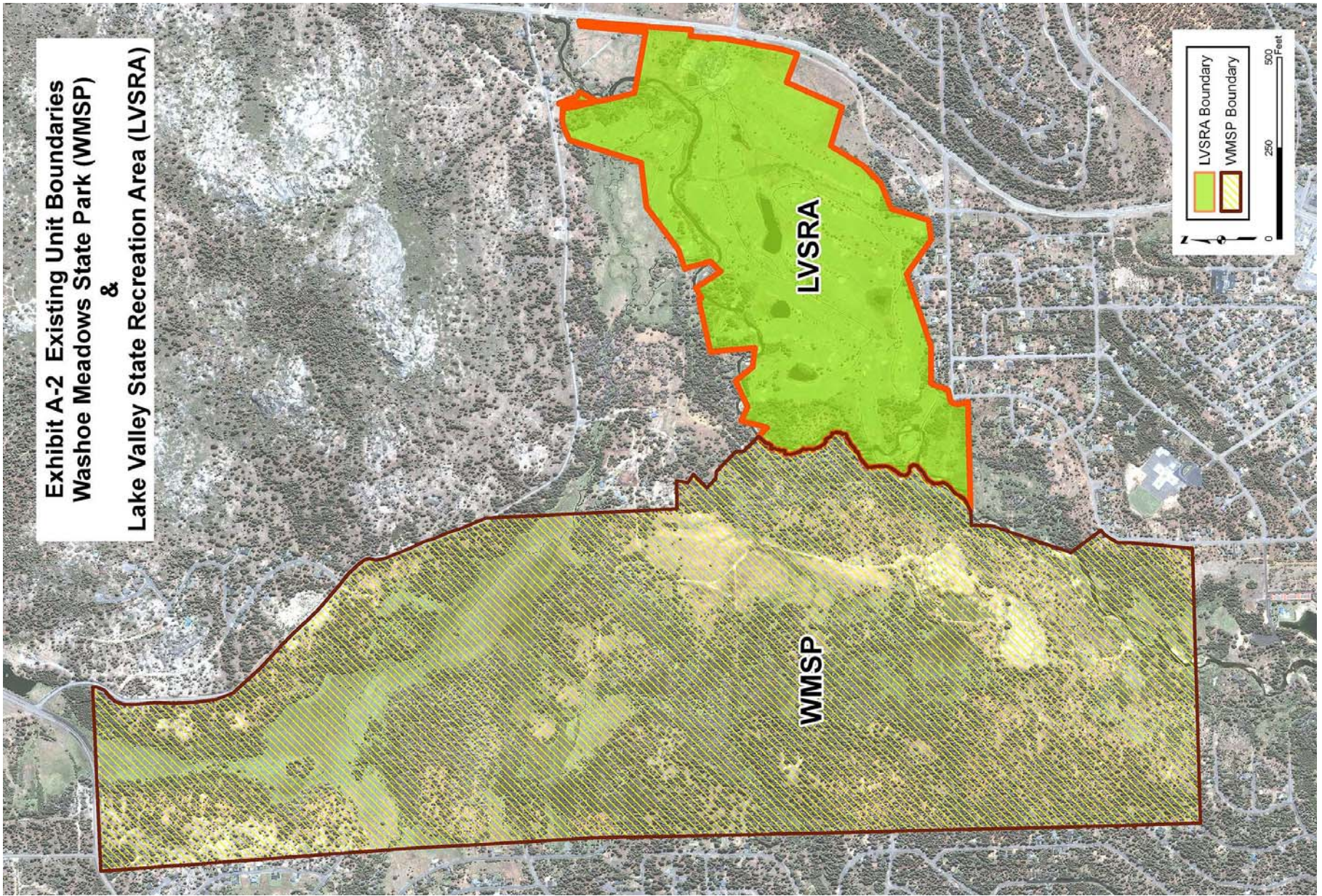


Exhibit A-2 Existing Unit Boundaries

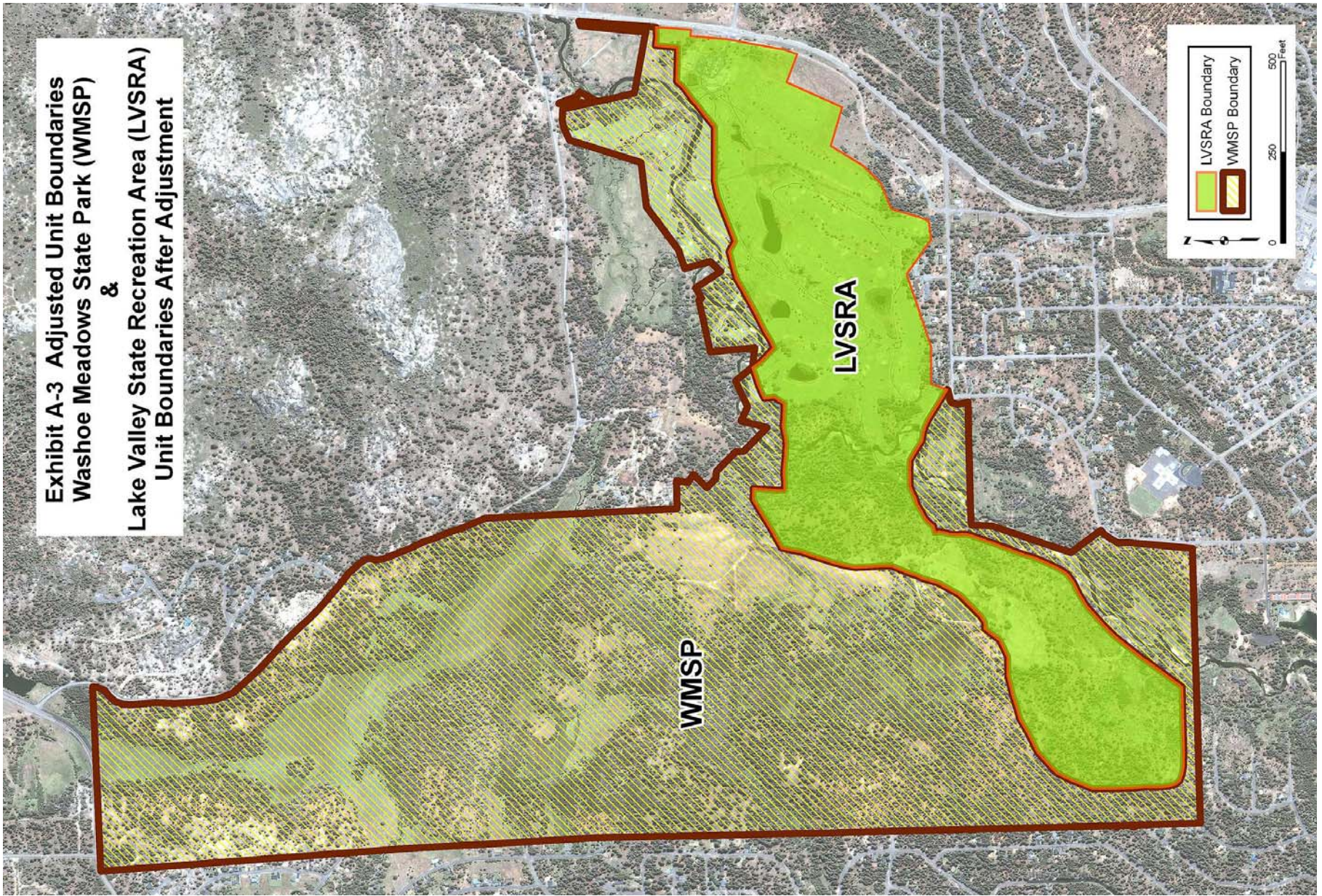


Exhibit A-3 Adjusted Unit Boundaries