

SONOMA

Protections in place:

	Oak Tree Retention/ Replacement Provisions	Oak Protection During Construction	Heritage Tree Protection	Riparian Vegetation Protections	Oak Canopy Retention Requirements	Oak Woodland Conservation Program
General Plan Language	Resource Conservation Element states native oaks should be considered in review of development projects	None	None	Open Space Element protects riparian vegetation from 50-100' of stream depending on zone	None	None
Specific Ordinance	Zoning ordinance requires valley oaks to be retained or replaced in Valley Oak District (or payment of fee)	None	None	Zoning ordinance protects riparian vegetation from 50-100' of stream depending on zone	Valley Oak Habitat Combining District overlay for valley oaks	Valley Oak Habitat Combining District overlay for valley oaks
Voluntary Guidelines	None	None	Voluntary county program	None	None	None

Documents reviewed:

Date of Review: July 2003

- Open Space Element
- Conservation Element
- Land Use Element
- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance

- Grading and Erosion Ordinance
- Roads/Sidewalk Tree Ordinance
- Tree Removal Ordinance (in Valley Oak District –Zoning Ordinance)
- Voluntary Guidelines
- Other County Codes

Summary of Oak Protection Policies:

Land Use Element, 1994	ZONES: Land use categories for natural resource conservation include the Resources and Rural Development categories. Residences are allowed at very low densities due to lack of infrastructure, greater distance from public services, poor access, conflicts with resource conservation and production, and significant physical constraints and hazards. Natural resource areas are to be managed and conserved (2.8)
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<p>Open Space Element, 1994**</p>	<p>CRITICAL HABITAT: An objective of the Open Space Element is to establish development guidelines to protect designated critical habitat areas (OS-4.2). To do this, the county should add a Biotic Resources combining district to the zoning ordinance (a), rezone any lands designated as a critical habitat areas (b), require preparation of a biotic resource assessment to develop mitigation measures in critical habitat (c), establish building envelopes to avoid designated critical habitat areas on tentative maps (d), consider waiver of the setback if applying the setback makes the parcel unbuildable (e), and consider voluntary transfer and purchase of development rights (f).</p> <p>RIPARIAN PROTECTION: Another goal is protection of riparian corridors along selected streams (OS-5). The county should classify important streams with native vegetation as "riparian corridors" and develop guidelines to protect and manage these areas. Riparian areas will be defined as urban, flatland, upland or Russian river riparian corridors (a). Corridors should be rezoned to Biotic Resources combining district and 50 to 200' in width depending on type (b). Additional riparian corridors should be designated in specific plans, area plans, or local area development guidelines subject to these policies. A biotic resource assessment may be required for a waiver (f).</p> <p><i>**All these guidelines, districts, and zones have been adopted, according to Greg Carr, County planner.</i></p>
<p>Resource Conservation Element, 1994</p>	<p>OAK WOODLAND CONSERVATION: An objective of the Resource Conservation Element is to identify and encourage protection of areas with important wildlife habitats and woodland resources (RC-5.1). "Resources and Rural Development" land use categories should be used to manage vegetation habitats (RC-5a). The preservation of significant native oaks and other native trees a primary consideration in the review of development projects (RC-5c). Landowners should be encouraged to voluntarily participate in the County's Landmark Tree Program (RC-5e).</p>
<p>Zoning Ordinance Article 67</p>	<p>VALLEY OAK CONSERVATION: The Valley Oak Habitat Combining District protects valley oak woodlands per Section 5.1 of the resource conservation element. Mitigations required when any person removes any large valley oak, or any small valley oaks with a cumulative dbh greater 60" include retaining or replanting valley oaks or paying an in-lieu fee to the county valley oak planting program. The landowner has the sole discretion to choose the mitigation measure that must be undertaken and completed within one year. Removal of a tree with dbh greater than 20" requires retention of a similar oak or replacement by 16 new trees (or a combination of retention and replacement). The in lieu fee is \$50. Mitigations are not required for emergencies or dead or storm damaged trees. New developments in the VOH district must include measures to protect and enhance valley oaks on the project site including requiring valley oaks to account for at least 50% of landscape trees. Violations require mitigations at 5 times the rate otherwise required.</p>
<p>Zoning Ordinance Article 66</p>	<p>RIPARIAN PROTECTIONS: The Biotic Resource Combining District protects riparian corridors as per Sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the open space element. Riparian corridors designated in the general plan are defined as flatland,</p>

	Russian River, upland urban. Corridors range from 50 to 200' from the top of the higher bank. Structures, roads, utility lines, parking lots, lawns, grading, fill or excavation are prohibited within riparian corridors unless this makes a lot unbuildable, no significant disturbance of riparian habitat would occur; or the use involves only the maintenance, restoration or minor expansion of an existing structure. Agricultural cultivation may be permitted starting in the halfway point of the corridor. Other uses require a permit from the county.
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Contact Information:

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County Contacts:

- No contacts
- Policies provided by county staff
- Policies discussed with county staff
- Policy inventory reviewed by county staff