



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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County Seeks Balance on San Geronimo Valley Policy

Stream Conservation Area Ordinance work plan moves forward

San Rafael, CA – Over the next year, County of Marin staff will develop an expanded ordinance for the rural San Geronimo Valley that will enhance the valley’s natural resources for local property owners and all Marin residents.

The Marin County Board of Supervisors on February 11 approved a [work plan](#) for the first phase of the expanded [Stream Conservation Area \(SCA\) Ordinance](#) for the San Geronimo Valley, a lush area west of densely populated parts of Central Marin and surrounded by designated open space areas. A subsequent phase of the expanded SCA ordinance would be developed for the rest of the unincorporated areas with other topical amendments to the [2007 Marin Countywide Plan](#).

Lagunitas Creek in the San Geronimo Watershed remains one of the largest runs of wild coho salmon, steelhead trout and chinook salmon in Northern California. Coho were once plentiful in the natural waters that drain into Tomales Bay and the Pacific Ocean, but recent spawning counts were well below the federal recovery target needed to bring the salmon out of its endangered status. The SCA ordinance for the San Geronimo Valley is scheduled to finish in early 2021 and will include consideration of stream and wildlife impacts.

After the Supervisors certified the final environmental impact report (EIR) as part of its approval of the 2007 Countywide Plan, the County was challenged in court about the plan’s adequacy regarding protections to sensitive habitat and salmonids in the San Geronimo Valley. In 2014, an appellate court ultimately [ruled in favor of the County](#) to lift a development injunction in the valley, but it also determined the EIR was inadequate in addressing cumulative local impacts of development in the San Geronimo Valley. In 2019, the County completed the analysis and adopted a supplemental EIR with mitigations that will inform the updated SCA ordinance for the San Geronimo Valley.

The work is part of the [Community Development Agency](#)’s (CDA) update of the 2007 Countywide Plan. First created in 1973, the Countywide Plan is the long-range land use plan for the unincorporated areas of the

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county. Future phases of the Countywide Plan update will address general plan mandates from the State of California and state housing law. Fire risks, flood hazards, climate change adaptation policy, and other environmental impacts will be considered over the next several years.

CDA staff is planning an extensive public education and outreach program for the SCA work. To assure a wide array of resident feedback, communication with stakeholder groups and broader community workshops will take place at key stages of the SCA ordinance development. There will be public hearings before the Marin County Planning Commission before a draft update is presented to the Board of Supervisors for consideration of adoption.

Learn more about the Stream Conservation Area Ordinance and subscribe to emailed updates at www.marincounty.org/SCA.

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