

EXISTING ORDINANCES

The Tree Protection Ordinance (Section 26-88-010 (m)) was adopted in 1989, by Ordinance 4014. It addresses trees on sites where a private development project is proposed, when that project is discretionary in nature. The ordinance does not require a separate permit for tree removal and does not prohibit removal of trees. Instead, tree issues are addressed as part of the development permit process. Agricultural activities, including cultivation, are exempt from the Tree Protection Ordinance.

The Valley Oak Habitat (VOH) Zoning District (Article 67) was adopted by the Board in 1996, by Ordinance 4991. The purpose of the VOH District is to protect and enhance valley oaks and valley oak woodlands. The VOH zoning was placed on parcels using soil types that typically support valley oak trees. On properties within the VOH zone, a permit is required to remove valley oak trees. The applicant must mitigate the resulting valley oak loss by methods included in the ordinance, such as retaining other valley oaks on the subject property, planting replacement valley oaks on- or off-site, or paying an in-lieu fee.

The Riparian Corridor Combining Zone (Article 65) was adopted by the Board in 2014, by Ordinance 6089. The RC combining zone is established to protect biotic resource communities, including critical habitat areas within and along riparian corridors, for their habitat and environmental value, and to implement the provisions of the General Plan Open Space and Resource Conservation and Water Resources Elements. The provisions of this section are intended to protect and enhance riparian corridors and functions along designated streams, balancing the need for agricultural production, urban development, timber and mining operations, and other land uses with the preservation of riparian vegetation, protection of water resources, floodplain management, wildlife habitat and movement, stream shade, fisheries, water quality, channel stability, groundwater recharge, opportunities for recreation, education and aesthetic appreciation and other riparian functions and values.

The county also has **Timberland Conversion ordinances** that regulate the conversion of timberlands (as defined in the state Forest Practice Rules), which generally include land capable of growing commercial timber species.

Minor Timberland Conversions (Section 26-88-140) were adopted in 1996, by Ordinance 4985. These permits are processed with a zoning permit is required for the one-time conversion of less than 3 acres of timberland to a non-timber growing use. The applicant must specify the new non-timber use and neighbors are notified of the conversion application. In order to approve the zoning permit, the analysis must include the economic feasibility of the conversion, the environmental feasibility of the conversion, including the suitability of soils, slope, aspect, quality and quantity of water, and microclimate, and any other foreseeable factors necessary for successful conversion to the new non-timber growing use. Minor timberland conversions are allowed in most rural zoning districts.

Major Timberland Conversions (Section 26-88-160) were adopted in 2006, by Ordinance 5651 § 1(y). These regulations require a use permit for conversion of more than three acres of timberland in the Resources and Rural Development (RRD) and Timberland Production (TP) zoning districts. Major conversions must include protection of other timberlands and must demonstrate public benefit. Major timberland conversions in the TP zoning district cannot detract from or inhibit timber production on the property.

Major timberland conversions are a permitted use in all other rural zoning districts (including agricultural zones) and are subject to regulation by the state (CalFire)