4.2.3 Alternative 3: Maximize Recreation Opportunities

4.2.3.1 Purpose and Vision

The management of Folsom Lake SRA is a balance of providing outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities and protecting and managing natural and cultural resources. This Alternative would place greater emphasis on providing recreation opportunities in the SRA. In this Alternative the management emphasis and land use classification would switch from Conservation to Recreation in nine management zones. This would be accomplished by providing higher intensity recreation facility development in these management zones. The timing and priority of implementing some of the recreation facility improvements proposed in this alternative may be dependent on staffing and budget constraints.

4.2.3.2 Key Issues

The key issues have been identified through public involvement and by the planning team. These are issues for which there is a substantial amount of public interest or controversy or issues which the lead agencies identified as important in the development of this management plan. For most of these key issues there are several options or approaches to resolve or address the issue. Articulating these different options to address the key issues is one of the primary means of developing a range of alternatives for the EIS/EIR. Described below is the approach proposed in Alternative 3 to address the key issues which would emphasize recreation opportunities and facilities.

The Park and Reservoir Operations

- To the extent flood control and dam safety projects require borrow material, where possible promote removal of borrow material from within the Folsom Reservoir area during times of low water and in locations that will maximize recreation opportunities such as excavating boat launch areas to extend boat ramps.

The Future of Mississippi Bar

- Expand stables and riding facilities at the Shadow Glen concession. Include covered stables, riding ring, etc.
- Develop vehicle access into the Mississippi Bar area with entrance station, several parking areas and vehicle access to facilities along Lake Natoma.
- Develop boat launching facilities including ramps and docks for hand launching of small boats.

- Develop day use facilities that include individual and group picnic sites with picnic tables, shade ramadas and barbeques.
- Develop swim beach along the Lake Natoma shoreline at Mississippi Bar in association with other day use facilities.
- Develop boat house facilities and suitable docks for rowing craft to provide additional opportunities for rowing.
- Develop visitor/interpretive center to educate public and interpret natural and cultural resources within area.

Trails

- Develop paved bike trails from Dike 7 to Salmon Falls and from Beal's Point to Rattlesnake Bar.

Marina Capacity

- Double the capacity of the marina facilities at Brown's Ravine by developing roads, land-based facilities and slips on the west side of the cove at Brown's Ravine in the Mormon Island Cove Management Zone. This would increase the number of slips from 685 to approximately 1,000 to 1,200 slips and likely develop additional boat ramps and dry storage as well.
- When Rattlesnake Bar Road is appropriately improved, develop a marina facility on the Peninsula.
- If the acquisition of additional lands permits, develop a marina facility along the Placer shoreline of the North Fork Arm of Folsom Lake.

Traffic Congestion at Major Day-use Areas

- Improve entrance stations at Beal's Point and Granite Bay to better manage traffic during peak use periods.
- Expand day use parking at Granite Bay Main Beach to accommodate more vehicles.
- Develop a new park entrance to the Granite Bay North area. Develop larger formal paved parking areas in the Granite Bay North area with additional facilities.

Camping

- Expand camping at the Peninsula Campground by 100-200 sites. This is double the amount of expanded camping proposed in the preferred alternative.

Urban/Wildland Interface

- Same as Preferred Alternative.

Off-Road Vehicle Use

- Provide formalized, paved low water parking areas for day users at high use areas around Folsom Lake, including: Granite Bay Main Beach, Beal's Point, Rattlesnake Bar, Granite Bay North and Folsom Point.

Whitewater Course

- Develop a whitewater course from the Folsom South Canal to the American River below Nimbus Dam.

Folsom Lake Quiet Day

- Same as No Action Alternative, no special provision would be provided for addressing quiet day concerns.

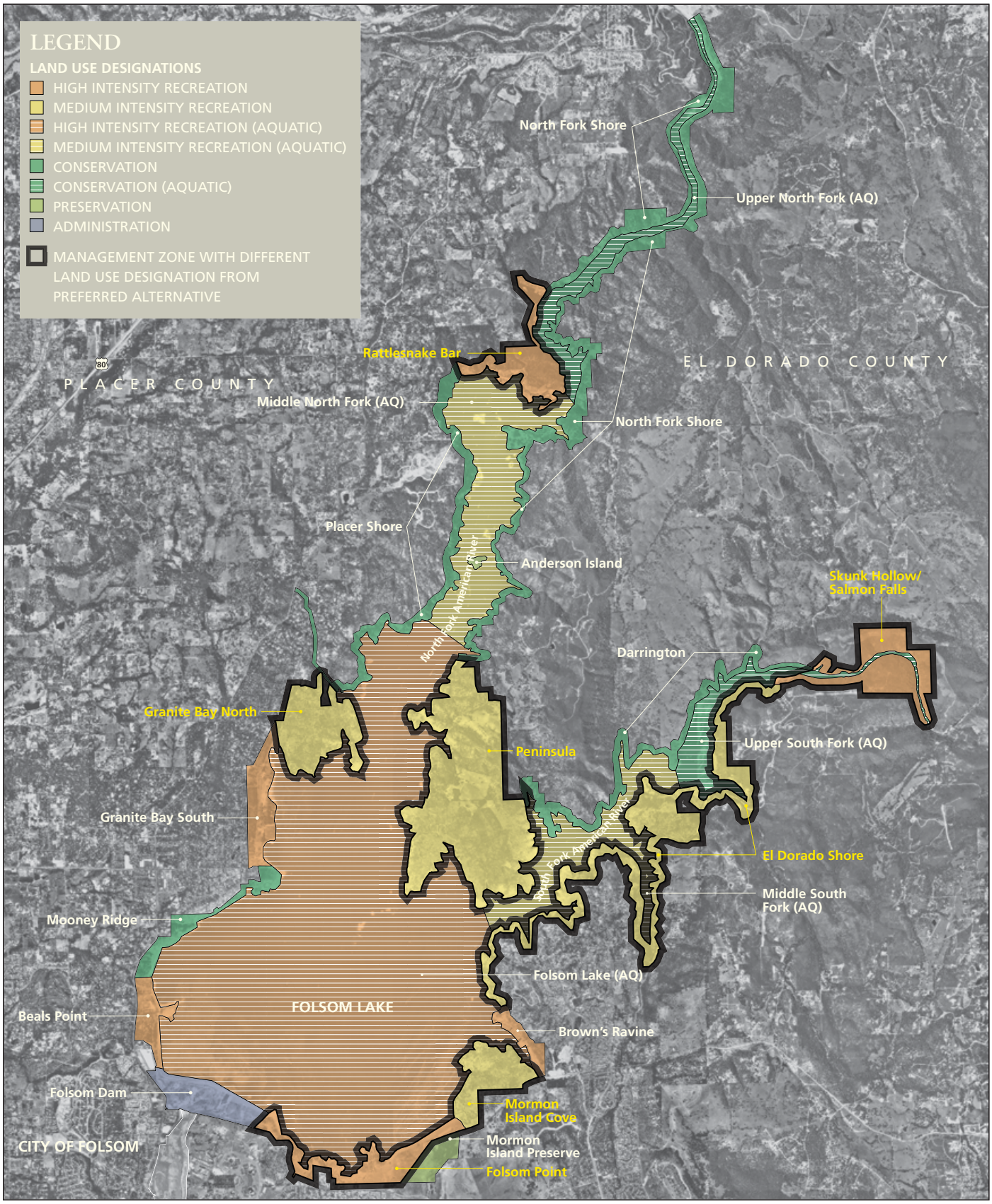
State Indian Museum

- If the State Indian Museum is not located at the site, consider the area for other developed park facilities.

4.2.3.3 Management Zones/Land Use Classifications

The following management zones would shift from a land use classification of Conservation to a land use classification of Recreation: Lake Overlook, Mississippi Bar, Natoma Shore North, Natoma Shore South, Upper Lake Natoma, Peninsula, El Dorado Shore, Mormon Island Cove, and Granite Bay North (Figures 2.C and 2.D). Additionally Negro Bar, Rattlesnake Bar and Folsom Point would shift in management emphasis from medium intensity recreation to high intensity recreation.

Refer to the tables Comparing Land Use Classifications by Designation (Table 2.A) and Acreage (Table 2.B).



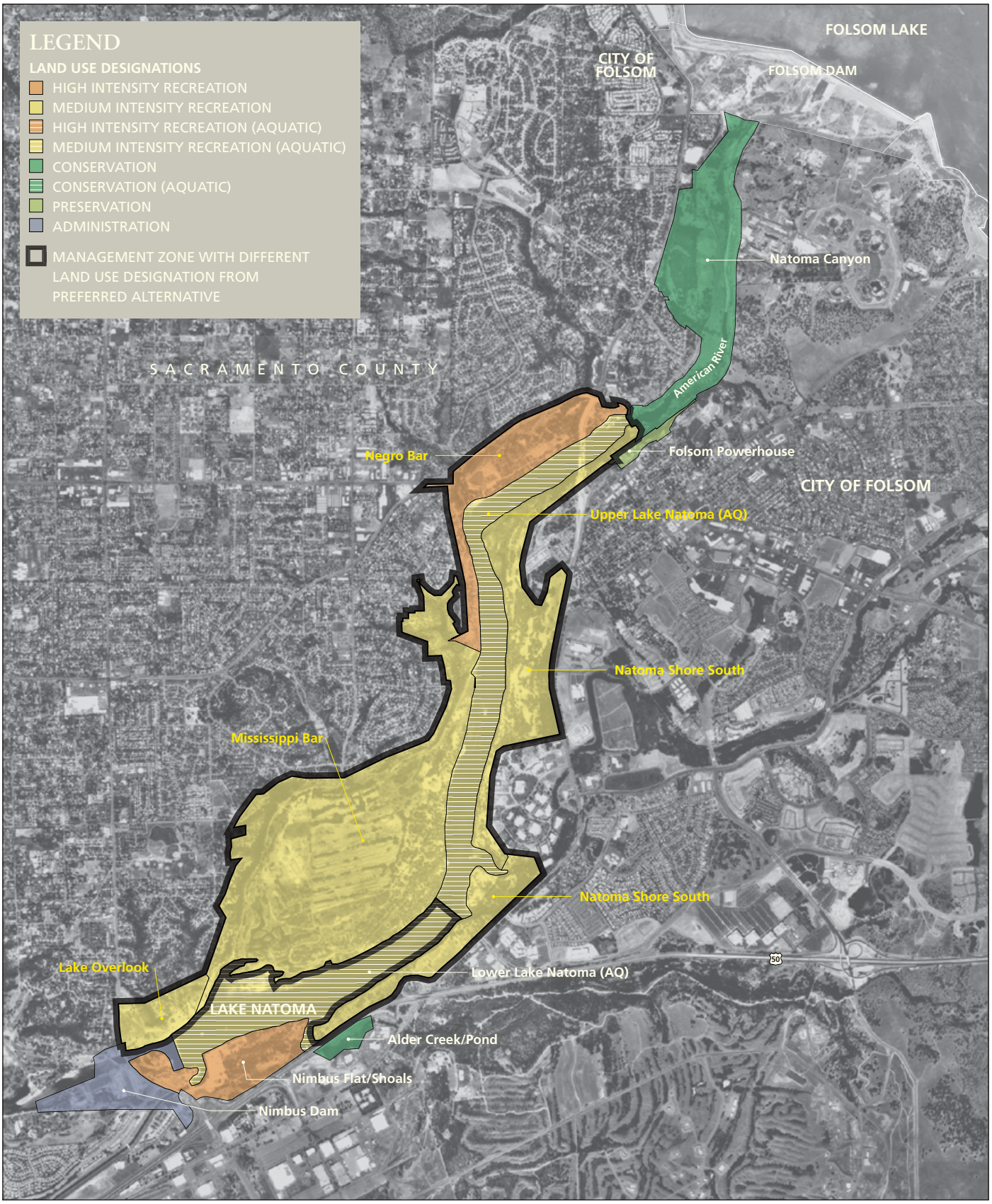
Folsom Lake State Recreation Area & Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park
General Plan/Resource Management Plan

Credit: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

Figure 2.C
FOLSOM LAKE ALTERNATIVE 3:
MAXIMIZE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

0 .25 .5 1 mi.

November 2007



Folsom Lake State Recreation Area & Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park
General Plan/Resource Management Plan

Credit: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

Figure 2.D
LAKE NATOMA ALTERNATIVE 3:
MAXIMIZE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

0 .125 .25 .5 mi.

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4.2.3.4 Park-wide Management Goals and Guidelines

The Park-wide direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative except where that direction conflicts with specific direction in this Alternative related to the key issues or changes in management zone classifications. These differences in the Park-wide direction for this Alternative are highlighted below.

Vegetation Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Cultural Resources Management

- Would not pursue Cultural Preserve designation for a portion of the South Fork Arm of Folsom Lake due to potential constraints this may place on recreation use.
- Otherwise unit-wide direction for cultural resources management would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Wildlife Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Watershed and Water Quality Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Visual Resource Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Unit-wide Interpretation

- A Visitor Center or similar facility would be developed at Museum Flat along Lake Natoma.
- Otherwise direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Visitor Services

- Aquatic Recreation: Capacity of existing marina would be doubled; a second or third marina would eventually be developed; new swim beaches would be developed; additional facilities for rowing (boathouse and docks) would be developed on Lake Natoma.

- Upland Recreation: Camping capacity of the unit would be doubled or tripled; existing day use areas would be expanded and additional areas developed; paved trails would be extended around much of Folsom Lake.

Park Operations

- Formalized, paved low-water parking areas would be developed at more sites than in the Preferred Alternative.
- Otherwise direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Visitor Capacity

- Additional boat launching and marina facilities in this Alternative could result in higher boating densities than are proposed in the Preferred Alternative.
- Additional parking would be provided at existing high use day use areas, which is not recommended in the Preferred Alternative.

4.2.3.5 Specific Area Goals and Guidelines

The management zones described below would be managed differently in this Alternative than in the Preferred Alternative. Other than the management zones listed below, all other management zones would have the same land use classification and management direction as in the Preferred Alternative.

Nimbus Flat/Nimbus Shoals

The area would be managed according to a land use classification of high intensity Recreation. An artificial whitewater course would be developed in the area taking advantage of the elevation loss from Lake Natoma to the American River below Nimbus Dam.

Lake Overlook

The land use classification for this are would be Recreation (it is classified as Conservation in the no action and preferred alternatives). In addition to developments proposed in the preferred alternative, develop additional paved parking, develop flush toilet restroom facilities and drinking water. Develop a small amphitheater that takes advantage of the views and can be used for interpretive programs and other activities.

Mississippi Bar

The land use classification for this are would be Recreation (it is classified as Conservation in the no action and preferred alternatives). The following improvements would be made:

- Expand facilities at Shadow Glen stables (covered stables, riding ring, etc).
- Develop vehicle access into the Mississippi Bar area with entrance station, several parking areas and vehicle access to facilities along Lake Natoma.
- Develop boat launching facilities including ramps and docks for hand launching of small boats.
- Develop day use facilities that include individual and group picnic sites with picnic tables, shade ramadas and barbeques.
- Develop swim beach along the Lake Natoma shoreline at Mississippi Bar.
- Develop boat house facilities and suitable docks for rowing craft to provide additional opportunities for rowing.
- Develop visitor/interpretive center to educate public and interpret natural and cultural resources within area.

Negro Bar

This area would be managed for high intensity recreation. Reconfigure, improve and expand the existing group camping facilities. Develop a boathouse, and docks to accommodate rowing and other non-motorized water craft to relieve use demands on the CSUS Aquatic Center. Expand the day use and beach area. Expand the existing boat launch ramp. Develop an amphitheater that could accommodate interpretive programs, special events and other activities.

Natoma Shore North

The land use classification for this are would be Recreation (it is classified as Conservation in the no action and preferred alternatives). Develop a boat dock and non-motorized boating access point on the western side of the Folsom Boulevard Bridge Crossing.

Natoma Shore South

The land use classification for this area would be Recreation (it is classified as Conservation in the no action and preferred alternatives). Make improvements and expand the facilities at the Willow Creek Day use area. Develop more formalized individual and group picnic sites, expand the paved parking and develop a boat ramp and low profile boat dock.

Upper Lake Natoma (Aquatic)

The land use classification of this aquatic zone would change from Conservation to Recreation to accommodate the additional use that would occur on this part of the Lake due to additional boat access facilities at the Negro Bar, Natoma Shore North and Willow Creek areas.

Granite Bay North

The land use classification for this area would be Recreation (it is classified as Conservation in the no action and preferred alternatives). A new park entrance would be developed into this management zone. Formalized paved parking, picnic and restrooms and other developed day use facilities would be developed at Oak Beach, Oak Point and Doton's Point. A formal beach area would be developed in this area.

Rattlesnake Bar

This area would be managed for high intensity recreation. The boat ramp would be widened and extended. Additional parking would be provided. Flush toilets and water would be provided. The access road to the western portion of the management zone would be improved and paved. Individual and group picnic sites with shade ramadas would be developed along this newly paved road. Approximately 50 to 100 picnic sites would be developed. Trailhead facilities, including equestrian staging area(s), would be further developed.

North Fork Arm

The area would be managed to a Conservation land use classification however some recreation facilities would be developed, including a boat-in campground at Wild Goose Flat.

Peninsula

The land use classification for this area would be Recreation (it is classified as Conservation in the no action and preferred alternatives). As noted in the key issue – Camping above, the campground capacity (currently 104 campsites) would be expanded to 200-300 campsites total. When Rattlesnake Bar Road is improved, a marina would be developed at the Peninsula.

El Dorado Shore

This area would shift from a Conservation land use classification (in the no action and preferred alternatives) to a Recreation classification. Develop paved formalized parking areas

at Sweetwater Creek and Falcon Crest. At Falcon Crest develop a major trailhead and staging facility, paved parking, information and interpretive signs and restrooms.

Develop vehicle access into and day use facilities in the vicinity of the former Monte Vista Campground in the area. This would include individual and group picnic sites, paved parking and restroom facilities. Retain native vegetation for landscaping in the day use area. Develop site along lakeshore to hand launch car top boats.

Mormon Island Cove

This area would be managed as a Recreation land use classification. The Brown's Ravine Marina would be expanded into this management zone. Roads, parking areas, boat ramps, slips, dry storage and other facilities would be developed to double the size and capacity of the existing marina. Pave and make other improvements to the parking lot on the east end of Mormon Island Dam. Develop walk-in picnic sites in the area east of Mormon Island Dam.

Folsom Point

This area would be managed for high intensity recreation. The paved parking for the boat ramp would be expanded. The ramp would be extended and widened. A multi-use facility would be developed that focuses on providing boating safety instruction for motorized boats. A formal beach area would be developed between the picnic area and Mormon Island Dam.

4.2.4 Alternative 4: Increase Protection and Restoration of Natural/Cultural Resources

4.2.4.1 Purpose and Vision

The management of Folsom Lake SRA is a balance of providing outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities and protecting and managing natural and cultural resources. This Alternative would place greater emphasis on protecting and restoring natural and cultural resources within the SRA. In this Alternative the management emphasis and land use classification would switch from Recreation to Conservation in three management zones and from Conservation to Preservation in four management zones from the existing condition.

4.2.4.2 Key Issues

The key issues have been identified through public involvement and by the planning team. These are issues for which there is a substantial amount of public interest or controversy or issues which the lead agencies identified as important in the development of this management plan. For most of these key issues there are several options or approaches to resolve or address the issue. Articulating these different options to address the key issues is one of the primary means of developing a range of alternatives for the EIS/EIR. Described below is the approach proposed in Alternative 4 to address the key issues which would emphasize the protection and restoration of natural and cultural resources.

The Park and Reservoir Operations

- To the extent flood control and dam safety projects require borrow material, where possible promote removal of borrow material from within the Folsom Reservoir area during times of low water and in locations that will minimize the impacts on natural and cultural resources.

The Future of Mississippi Bar

- Mississippi Bar to be managed as a Preservation land use classification. The management emphasis will be on protecting and restoring natural and cultural resources. Low intensity recreation will be provided where it does not impact resources.
- Phase out the riding stable concession, remove facilities and restore stable area.
- Retain the trailhead between Main Street and the stable concession facilities as the parking and access point for Mississippi Bar. Do not provide any other vehicle access into Mississippi Bar.

- Continue to provide trail access to portions of Mississippi Bar, including maintaining the paved bike trail. Retain and improve select dirt trails and obliterate and rehabilitate trails that will not be retained.
- Re-establish natural drainage patterns within Mississippi Bar area. Restore landform contours. Restore riparian and floodplain vegetation and habitat in areas disturbed by recent aggregate mining.
- Conduct assessment and evaluation of all tailings across Mississippi Bar. Complete determinations of eligibility placement on State and National Registers of Historic Places. Preserve those tailings or examples of tailing determined to be significant and eligible for the register(s). Provide minimal interpretation on-site (signing) and additional interpretation off-site.
- Develop second large culvert between lagoons and Lake Natoma to provide non-motorized boating loop to access to lagoons and ponds. Do not provide any other boating facility at Mississippi Bar.

Trails

- No trails would be developed between Peninsula and Auburn SRA along the south side of the North Fork Arm of Folsom Lake. This area would remain undeveloped. No trail bridge would be considered across the North Fork Arm of Folsom Lake. The North Fork Arm management zone would be classified and managed as a Preservation area.

Marina Capacity

- Maintain existing marina facilities, no expansion of marina capacity within the SRA.

Traffic Congestion at Major Day-use Areas

- Improve entrance stations at Beal's Point and Granite Bay to better manage traffic during peak use periods.
- Reduce the size of the Beal's Point and Granite Bay Main Beach parking areas to prevent over-crowding at beach areas. Do not provide over-flow parking during peak use times. Develop more visible information signs along all roadway approaches to Granite Bay and Beal's Point informing visitors when use areas are full.
- Implement a reservation system for picnic sites at Beal's Point and Granite Bay. Designate parking for reserved picnic sites. Provide public information regarding reservations and inform public when picnic site reservations fill (internet, news media, signing).

Camping

- No additional camping capacity would be provided within the SRA. Portions of the Beal's Point Campground would be converted to group camping to meet the demand for group camping facilities and to provide a better quality visitor experience at the Beal's Point Campground.

Urban/Wildland Interface

- Same as preferred alternative.

Off-Road Vehicle Use

- Prohibit all vehicle use off designated roads within Folsom Lake SRA. No special provisions would be made to provide vehicle access to the Folsom Lake during low-water periods.

Whitewater Course

- Do not develop whitewater course in the Nimbus Shoals area. Focus on restoration of riparian and floodplain management in the Nimbus basin/Shoals area.
- Prohibit vehicles in the Shoals area. Require river users to park in the parking lot adjacent to the CSUS Aquatic Center and walk down to the Shoals.
- Support replacement of the Nimbus Fish hatchery weir with a naturalized fish passage channel. Work with Reclamation and Department of Fish and Game to re-establish native riparian vegetation along the channel. Allow pedestrian access to the area, but do not develop the Shoals as a boat launch location in order to limit use impacts on natural resources.

Folsom Lake Quiet Day

- Prohibit all motorized boat use, year round in the Upper North Fork and Upper South Fork aquatic management zones of Folsom Lake.
- Implement a year round 5 mph speed limit for motorized boats to the Middle North Fork and Middle South Fork aquatic management zones of Folsom Lake
- Prohibit motorized boat use in the Middle North Fork and Middle South Fork aquatic management zones 3 days per week (Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday).

State Indian Museum

- Same as direction for preferred alternative.

4.2.4.3 Management Zones/Land Use Classifications

The following management zones would shift from a land use classification of Conservation to a land use classification of Preservation: Mississippi Bar, North Fork Arm, Upper North Fork (aquatic) and Upper South Fork (aquatic) (Figures 2.E and 2.F). Additionally, the following management zones would shift from a land use classification of Recreation to a classification of Conservation: Rattlesnake Bar, Middle North Fork (aquatic) and Middle South Fork (aquatic).

Refer to the tables Comparing Land Use Classifications by Designation (Table 2.A) and Acreage (Table 2.B).

4.2.4.4 Park-wide Management Goals and Guidelines

The Park-wide direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative except where that direction conflicts with specific direction in this Alternative related to the key issues or changes in management zone classifications. These differences in the Park-wide direction for this Alternative are highlighted below.

Vegetation Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Cultural Resources Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Wildlife Management

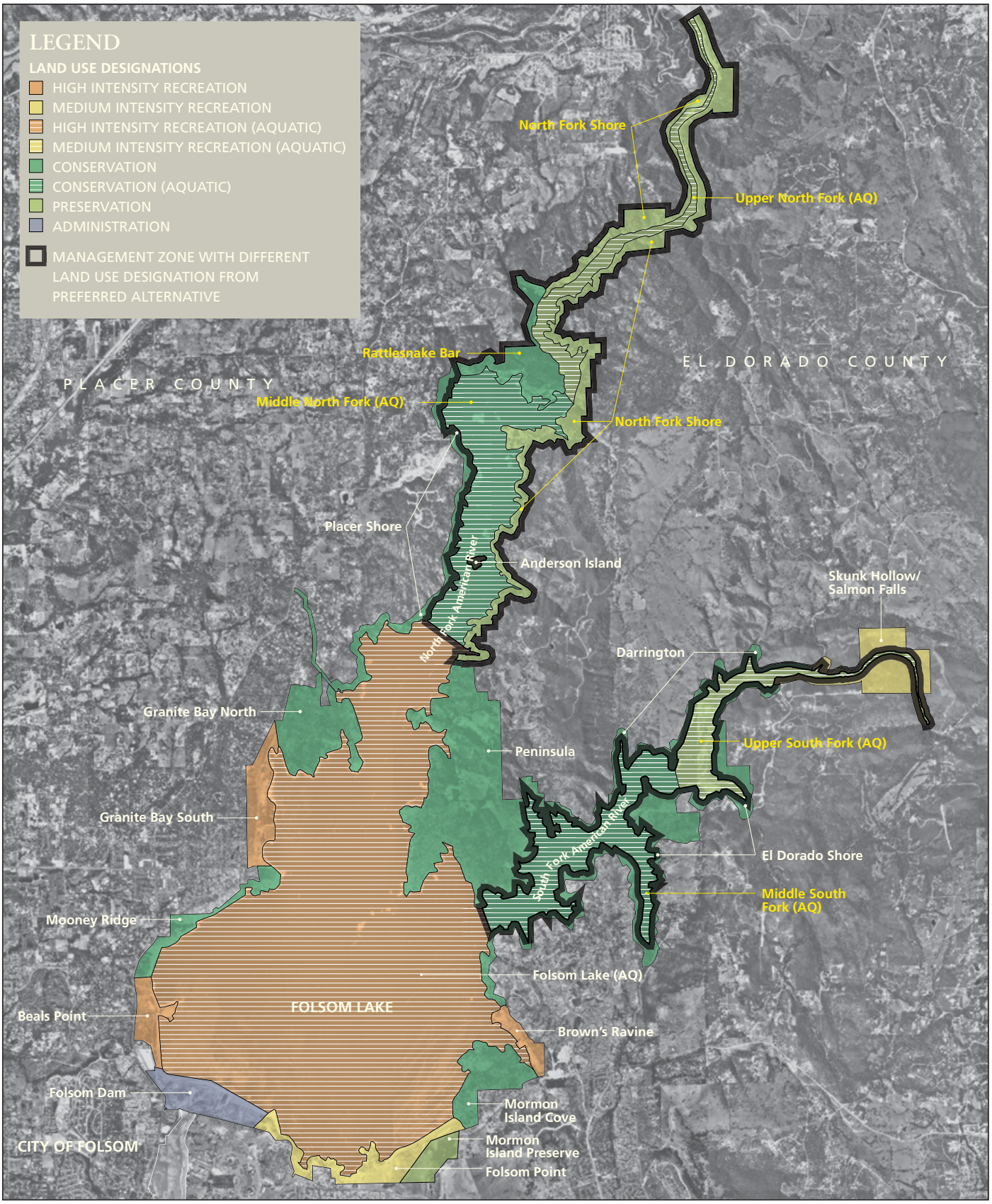
- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Watershed and Water Quality Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Visual Resource Management

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.



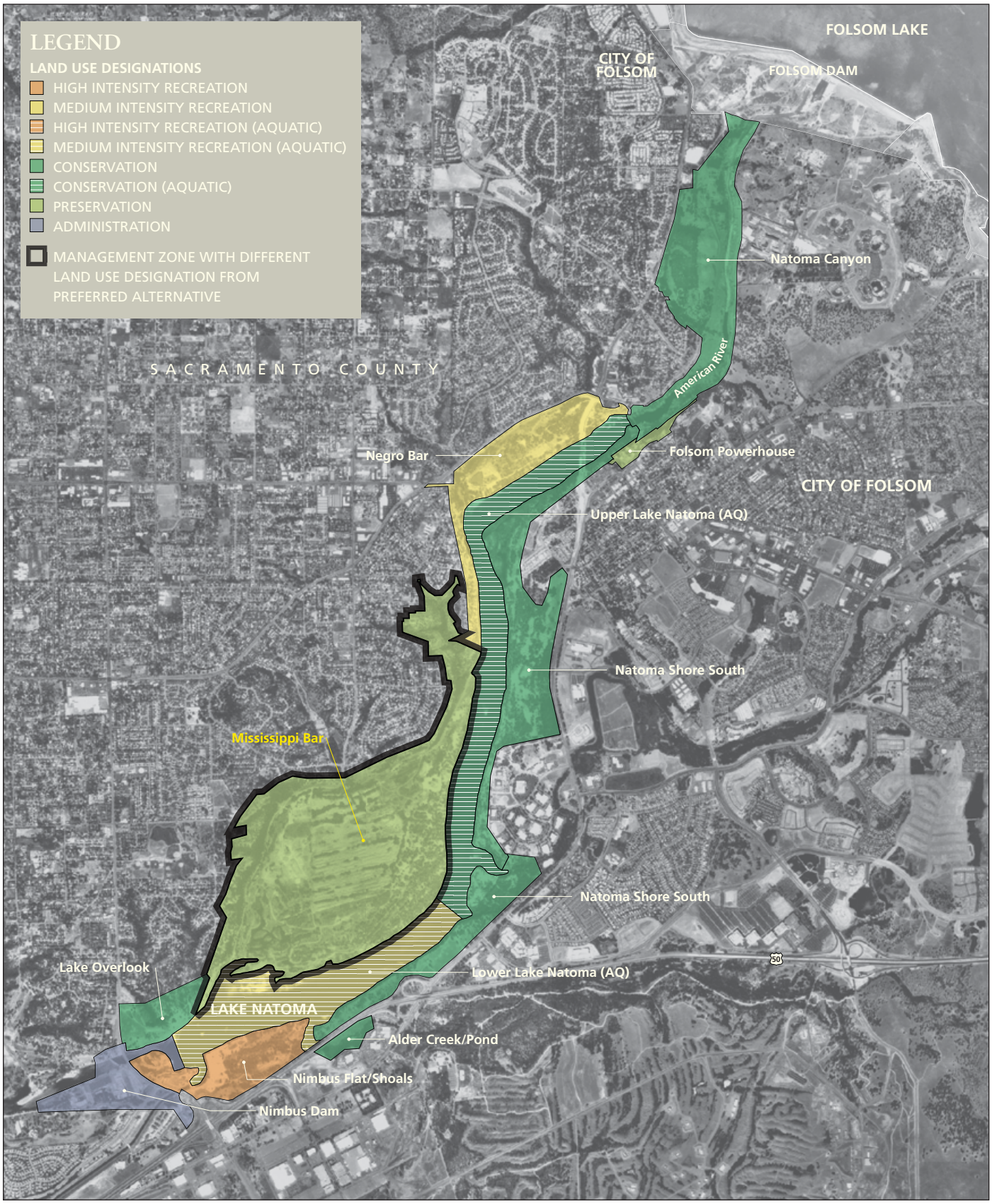
Folsom Lake State Recreation Area & Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park
General Plan/Resource Management Plan

Credit: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

Figure 2.E
FOLSOM LAKE ALTERNATIVE 4: INCREASE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES

0 .25 .5 1 mi.

November 2007



Folsom Lake State Recreation Area & Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park
General Plan/Resource Management Plan

Credit: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

Figure 2.F
LAKE NATOMA ALTERNATIVE 4: INCREASE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES

0 .125 .25 .5 mi.

November 2007

Unit-wide Interpretation

- Direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Visitor Services

- Aquatic Recreation: No additional marina capacity would be provided.
- Upland Recreation: Few new facilities would be developed and a few existing facilities would be eliminated (e.g. riding stable at Mississippi Bar).

Park Operations

- Vehicle use would be prohibited off designated roads within the SRA and no low-water parking areas would be provided.
- Otherwise direction would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

Visitor Capacity

- Marina capacity would not be expanded, few new aquatic facilities would be developed; therefore boating densities may be lower than described in the Preferred Alternative.
- Parking areas at high use day use areas (e.g. Beal's Point, Granite Bay) would be reduced in size to reduce congestion and prevent overcrowding. A reservation system would be developed for picnic area. Fewer visitors would be accommodated but the quality of visitor experience may improve.

4.2.4.5 Specific Area Goals and Guidelines

The management zones described below would be managed differently in this Alternative than in the Preferred Alternative. Other than the management zones listed below, all other management zones would have the same land use classification and management direction as in the Preferred Alternative.

Mississippi Bar

Mississippi Bar would be managed as a Preservation land use classification area. The riding stable concession would be phased out and eventually eliminated. The stable facilities would be removed and the area restored. Natural drainage patterns and topography would be restored and native riparian and floodplain vegetation would be re-introduced. The paved bike path through the area would be retained. Other trails would be assessed, some retained and maintained, others obliterated and rehabilitated. The existing trailhead parking area adjacent to the stable concession facilities would be retained as the only vehicle parking and primary access point into the area (see key issue – Future of Mississippi Bar above).

Negro Bar

Remove excess pavement in the parking area above the boat ramp, in the vicinity of the group campsites and in the parking area adjacent to Rainbow Rocks. Restore the land form contours in these areas and re-vegetate with native vegetation. Restore the large and under-utilized equestrian staging area adjacent to the day use parking area. Re-contour area as appropriate and restore with native vegetation.

Upper Lake Natoma (Aquatic)

All motorized boat use would be prohibited in this management zone.

Rattlesnake Bar

The land use classification for this area would shift from Recreation to Conservation. Emphasis would shift to providing low-intensity recreation opportunities, protecting natural and cultural resources and restoring disturbed areas. Some developed facilities would be removed. The dirt roads and informal use areas on the western side of the area would be obliterated and natural land forms and native vegetation restored. Parking capacity at the boat ramp would be reduced. The emphasis will be on hand launching car top boats. All off-road vehicle use would be prohibited and barriers would be erected along roadways to prevent off road use.

North Fork Arm

This area would be managed according to the Preservation land use classification. No new facilities would be provided in the area. The existing Pioneer Express Trail would be the only recreation facility permitted in the zone.