

# GLOSSARY

**Abatement** refers to technology applied or measure taken to reduce pollution and/or its impacts on the environment.

**Active recreation** involves playing fields and team participation such as baseball, soccer, and lacrosse.

**Agricultural buffers** are strips of vegetated land (typically ranging from 300 to 500 feet) located within city Municipal Service Areas (MSAs) that are used to help reduce complaints due to normal agricultural operations near residential areas.

**Biodiversity** is the number and variety of organisms found within a specified geographic region.

**Best management practices** (BMPs) are methods or measures designed and selected to reduce or eliminate the discharge of pollutants from point and nonpoint source discharges. As used in the stormwater context, BMPs are a schedule of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintains procedures and other management practices to prevent or reduce the pollution of waters of the state. BMPs include treatment requirements, operating procedure and practices to control plant site runoff, spills or leaks, sludge or waste disposal, or drainage from raw material storage.

**Brackish** water is mixed fresh and salt water.

**Brownfields** are properties that are contaminated, or thought to be contaminated.

**Buffering** for fire safety refers to the removal of combustible vegetation around a building within a given distance, usually 30–50 feet.

**Climate change** is the variation in the Earth's global climate or regional climates over time.

**Clustered development** for fire safety describes buildings that are placed closer to one another and closer to roads to decrease the amount of space fire districts must protect in the event of a wildfire and to increase access to that space.

FOR A REVIEW OF RECORDS REQUESTS, PLEASE CONTACT THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION AT (951) 355-3000

ADMINISTRATIVE

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## Appendix A: Glossary

**Cultural resources** are any material remains of past human life or activities that are preserved in their original setting and that are important to understanding prehistory or history.

**Density** is a term used for residential uses and refers to the population and development capacity of residential land.

**Estuary ecosystem** refers to the region of interaction between rivers and near-shore ocean waters, where tidal action and river flow mix fresh and salt water. Such areas include bays, mouths of rivers, salt marshes, and lagoons. These brackish water ecosystems shelter and feed marine life, birds, and wildlife.

**Farmland of statewide importance** is farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Farmland mitigation programs** are for agricultural land converted as a result of nonagricultural development. Mitigation may be in the form of conservation easements, outright purchase of other agricultural properties for protection, or in-lieu fees paid to the County.

**Fire-safe construction** incorporates fire-resistant materials into various parts of a house including the roof, siding, vents, windows, and patios to minimize the risk of burning.

**Floor-area ratio (FAR)** describes the relationship between the total square footage of development on a lot and the area of that lot. The floor area does not include areas used for parking. The FAR is determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the gross land area of the lot, less any portion used for roads.

**Fossil fuels** are hydrocarbons found within the top layer of the earth's crust.

**Fuel breaks** are large-scale buffers used to prevent fire from approaching communities or blocking roadway access for firefighting equipment.

**Geothermal** power uses heat from below the earth's surface to produce electricity or to heat buildings and water systems.

**Goals** are expressions of desired outcomes that are more specific than the vision.

**Groundwater** is the supply of fresh water found underground, usually in aquifers, which supply wells and springs.

**Hazardous waste** is any waste identified as such under the regulations set by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

**Heritage trees** are scenic resources for the county's residents and visitors. They are generally defined by their size, native origin, or historical value.

**Hydroelectric facilities** use rivers, streams, irrigation canals, and water treatment plants to generate electricity.

**Implementation Programs** identify specific actions to achieve the goals, policies, and plans identified in each General Plan section.

**Intensity** refers to the extent of development on a parcel of land or lot—that is, the total square footage of a building, building height, the floor-area ratio, and/or the percent of lot coverage. Intensity generally describes levels of nonresidential development; however, in a broader sense, intensity also can be used to express overall levels of both residential and nonresidential development types.

**Land settlement** is a gradual lowering of the ground surface caused by compression of fine-textured deposits like clays and silts.

**Lead** is a metal found naturally in the environment as well as in manufactured products.

**Liquefaction** is a change from solid to liquid in certain saturated soils, as a result of ground shaking.

**Lurching** is the horizontal movement of ground next to slope faces, particularly in areas underlain by loosely consolidated soils, such as creek banks.

**Mercury** is a heavy metal that can accumulate in the environment and is toxic if breathed or swallowed.

**Mobile sources** are nonstationary producers of air pollution, such as cars and trucks.

**Municipal service areas** (MSA) define the area of a city's current and/or future jurisdictional responsibility.

**Oak woodlands** are areas that contain native oak trees of a certain size.

**Passive Recreation** is recreation without playing fields and includes trail-based hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, and picnicking.

**Particulate matter** (PM) is tiny particles of solid or liquid suspended in a gas.

**Policies** serve as guides to decision makers and County staff in reviewing development proposals and making other decisions that affect development and conservation in Solano County.

**Polychlorinated biphenyls** (PCBs) are a mixture of chemicals that was banned in the 1970s because of its high toxicity. PCBs are classified as persistent organic pollutants that bioaccumulate in animals.

FOR A RESERVATION  
Administrative

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## Appendix A: Glossary

**Prime farmland** is farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Renewable energy** effectively uses natural resources such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides and geothermal heat, which are naturally replenished, to create solar power, wind power, hydroelectricity/micro hydro, biomass and biofuels for transportation.

**Shrink-swell soils** contain large amounts of clay that swell when wet and shrink when dry.

**Solar energy** uses the heat of the sun to produce electricity or to directly heat buildings or water.

**Solid waste** is any discarded solid, semisolid, or liquid material that is not hazardous waste, manure, or vegetable or animal solid or semisolid.

**Special-status species** include any species that is listed, or proposed for listing, as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act; any species covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty; any species designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a "candidate" or "listing" species or "sensitive" species; and any species that is listed and protected by state statute in a category implying potential endangerment of extinction. There are approximately 500 animal and 750 plant species that are listed as threatened or endangered in the United States.

**Species of special concern** is a species or population that warrants special protection, recognition, or consideration because it has an inherent significant vulnerability to habitat modification, environmental alteration, human disturbance, or substantial human exploitation that, in the foreseeable future, may result in its becoming threatened.

**Stationary** and **area sources** are nonmobile producers of air pollution, such as wood-burning stoves, incinerators, and factories.

**Suisun Marsh Primary Management Area** is the largest contiguous brackish marsh on the West Coast. Suisun Marsh includes 85,000 acres of various types of wetlands and 27,000 acres of surrounding uplands. In 1977 the state legislature passed the Suisun Marsh Preservation Act. The act makes the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission responsible for protecting the primary management area: the marsh's wetlands and sloughs.

**Surface water** is all water naturally open to the atmosphere (e.g., rivers, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, streams, impoundments, seas, estuaries).

**Sustainability** means that current generations can meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do so.

**Take** is broadly defined as an action that would “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in such conduct” listed species.

**Tertiary treatment** is the advanced cleaning of wastewater that goes beyond the secondary or biological stage, removing nutrients such as phosphorus, nitrogen, and most biochemical oxygen demand and suspended solids.

**Total maximum daily load (TMDL)** is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still be in compliance with water quality standards.

**Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)** is a tool that can be used in areas where agricultural lands are threatened by development pressure. TDR programs enable property owners to protect a resource, such as agricultural land, while still benefiting financially from the land’s development potential.

**Transformation projects**, also known as resource recovery projects or “waste-to-energy” development, convert agriculture byproducts and municipal wastes to fuel or electricity.

**Tsunamis** are powerful wave surges that can be caused by earthquakes and have the potential to flood lowland areas.

**Unique farmland** is “farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state’s leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include nonirrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.”

**Urban heat island effects** cause metropolitan areas to be warmer than surroundings areas. The main cause of the urban heat island is modification of the land surface by urban development; waste heat generated by energy usage is a secondary contributor. Partly as a result of the urban heat island effect, monthly rainfall is about 28% greater between 20–40 miles downwind of cities, compared with upwind.

**Urban-wildland interface** is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuel.

**Vision** describes expectations of county residents regarding how future land use and conservation decisions will affect the environment, economy, and social equity within the County.

**Wetlands** are an area that is saturated by surface or ground water and has vegetation adapted for life under those soil conditions (e.g. swamps, bogs, fens, marshes, and estuaries).

FOR A RESOURCES  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
WATER RESOURCES

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**Appendix A: Glossary**

**Wildlife movement corridors** are narrow strips of habitat that are or can be used by wildlife to move from one area of habitat to another.

**Wind energy** uses the energy in the wind for practical purposes like generating electricity, charging batteries, pumping water, or grinding grain.