

To the Lake County Community Development Department, Lake County Planning Commission, General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), and Kelseyville Local Area Plan Advisory Committee (LAPAC):

I am writing as a resident of the Green Acres community in Kelseyville and an active participant in the Cole Creek Collaborative.

First, I want to thank the Community Development Department, the Planning Commission, and the committees for your hard work in drafting these documents. Creating a comprehensive roadmap for the county's future is a massive undertaking. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the public review process.

My goal with these comments is to offer practical, on-the-ground solutions. For years, our community has suffered from the late 1950s channelization of Cole Creek and the subsequent decades of neglect. Floodwaters inundate our properties for upwards of six months every year, resulting in damage to homes and public roads like Clark Drive, trapping residents, and killing thousands of endangered Clear Lake Hitch in stagnant waters.

To ensure the General Plan provides the necessary framework for practical action on these issues, I suggest the following refinements:

Part 1: Establishing the Blueprint in Appendix B (Background Report)

Appendix B establishes the county's baseline, yet it misses an opportunity to highlight the active, collaborative solutions currently addressing flood hazards. In the "Existing Programs and Regulations" section for Flood Hazards (starting on page B-41), the report lists top-down regulations and large-scale infrastructure projects but omits the role of county-community partnerships. By contrast, the Fire Hazards section rightfully praises the Fire Safe Councils for localized, grassroots risk mitigation.

Proposed Amendment for Appendix B: I propose adding a new subsection to page B-41 under "Existing Programs and Regulations" titled "County-Community Creek Restoration Collaboratives" or similar.

The Cole Creek Collaborative is a partnership between Lake County Water Resources, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California State Parks, Big Valley Rancheria, and the Green Acres community. It can serve

as the county's primary case study and blueprint for localized flood mitigation and should be highlighted as such in the report. This direct partnership resulted in the county publishing an RFP in September 2025 to develop a long-term restoration plan for Cole Creek. Documenting this establishes a proven template for how the county and communities can collaborate to address the issues on other primary flooding sources like Scotts Creek, Kelsey Creek, and Adobe Creek.

Part 2: Mandating Action in Chapter 5 (Health and Safety Element)

To turn the Cole Creek Collaborative's work into practical progress, Chapter 5 must provide the policy tools. I ask you to consider the following additions:

1. Define "Worst Flooding Potential" in Action HS-9.c

Proposed Action HS-9.c directs the county to prioritize facility improvements for areas with the "worst flooding potential and need." I propose this action be amended to explicitly define "worst flooding potential" using measurable criteria, including: duration of inundation (e.g., stagnant floodwaters remaining for 90+ days per year), frequency of recurrence, and impact on residential access and habitability

2. Strengthen Policy HS-9.14 with Maintenance Mandates for Channelized Creeks

Proposed Policy HS-9.14 commits to restoring and maintaining the natural functions of water channels. However, historically altered waterways require stronger intervention. I propose an amendment to this policy that mandates *"regular, scheduled channel maintenance and vegetation clearing for creeks that were historically channelized or rerouted, to prevent debris blockages while long-term restoration planning is underway."*

3. Expand Evacuation-Constrained Mapping Criteria

Under state mandates (SB 99), jurisdictions must identify residential developments lacking at least two emergency evacuation routes. Currently, the draft identifies constraints based largely on distance and fire risk. I propose that the county's mapping criteria be updated to actively evaluate flood-induced evacuation constraints. When roads like Clark Drive and Pharo Place are impassable due to prolonged flooding, Green Acres effectively becomes an evacuation-constrained community and must be mapped as such to prioritize emergency access infrastructure.

4. Link Ecological Protection to Flood Control (Policy HS-9.7)

Policy HS-9.7 requires the county to incorporate flood control measures that support the "preservation of natural riparian habitat." To make this policy actionable, I propose language specifying that *"flood control and mitigation projects in tributaries to Clear Lake must be specifically designed to eliminate stranding hazards and support the spawning migration of the endangered Clear Lake Hitch."*

The Green Acres community and our county representatives have already done the heavy lifting. Our partnership directly resulted in the September 2025 RFP for a long-term Cole Creek restoration plan. It is proof that this collaborative model works. I ask that the Lake County 2050 General Plan recognize this template in Appendix B and fund its execution in Chapter 5 so it can be replicated countywide.

Thank you for considering these updates to the final General Plan.

Sincerely,
Nils Caspar
ColeCreekFlooding.com



Flooded pasture with stagnant stormwater and no drainage (January 2026)