

Feb. 23, 2006

From: Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.
13806 Cliff Drive
Lower Lake, CA 95457

Re: Proposed Plum Flat Subdivision

The following comments are made in my position as the Conservation Chair for the Redbud Audubon Society, Inc. a local chapter of the State and National Audubon Society.

My first comment involves the discrepancy between the proposed subdivision and the recommended zoning for this property in the new General Plan. The Audubon Society would highly recommend against a zoning of fPDR for this property which would allow 182 lots on 100 acres. The proposed general plan calls for Suburban Residential Reserve, or one unit per one to three acres which would conceivably cut the number of homes in half and lessen their impact. The question needs to be asked: Are we going to listen to the recommendations of our general plan advisory committees or not? The proposed general plan zoning does not preclude development of this property; indeed, neither does the current RL zoning.

Now, let's look at some other issues. Do we really need 182 more residential units in the Clear Lake Riviera? With a number of lots currently on the market, why carve up another area of native hillside to create another subdivision? The added traffic from this development spilling on to Point Lakeview Road needs to be considered. We also have questions about the "proposed private water company." Do the developers have lake access for surface treated water? Will they be drilling wells? Waste water treatment is also a concern.

I see no mention of the impacts on view shed or other wildlife in this area, including the California Thrasher, a species of special concern according to the Department of Fish and Game and certainly a species of concern for the Audubon Society as its numbers are noted to be drastically reducing.

We recommend an Environmental Impact Report for this project based on its potential impacts on view shed, traffic, and native chaparral habitat. We oppose the rezoning of this project to PDR rather than the recommended Suburban Residential Reserve with a PDR.

Again, we urge the Planning Department to encourage developers to present proposals based on a conservation design approach. We encourage flexibility on the County's part, to work with developers so they are able to make a reasonable profit on their endeavors. For example, instead of limiting a SRR project to one home to three acres, why not allow the same number of homes that would ultimately be built in the project, on smaller parcels (infrastructure and roads would be more feasible) if the developer agrees to designate larger and more significant areas to parks and open space.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,
Roberta Lyons, Conservation Chair, Redbud Audubon Society, Inc.