



CHAPTER 4

Environmental Conservation Element

The environmental conservation element is a supplement to the Conservation Element of the TRPA Regional Plan and the Conservation and Open Space Element of the El Dorado County General Plan. It contains the plan's environmental conservation and management strategy. It lists the environmental improvements which the area plan will achieve.

A. EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The Meyers Area Plan boundary (Meyers) includes 669 acres including 118 acres of mixed-use lands (including the Meyers Community Center, Industrial, and Upper Truckee Residential/Tourist areas), 137 acres of Recreation lands, 348 acres of Conservation lands and 66 acres associated with public rights-of-way. The plan area is surrounded by a mix of public and private Residential, Recreation, and Conservation lands. Land ownership is approximately 32 percent (192 acres) private and 68 percent (411 acres) public (Figure 1-2). Remaining lands within the Area Plan boundary consist of road rights-of-way. The public lands are owned primarily by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC). Approximately 5 acres of the public lands support public service facilities and approximately 6 acres are not set aside for open space or environmentally sensitive and potentially meet the criteria of the CTC asset lands program, which could allow their sale to private parties. Another 44 acres of public lands are managed for their natural resource values and are expected to remain as open space in perpetuity.

SOIL CONSERVATION

The mixed use areas of Meyers are predominately flat, high capability land suitable for redevelopment and infill (approx. 118 acres). The Area Plan includes three primary areas of environmentally sensitive or SEZ lands including approximately 69 acres surrounding Meyers Creek on the east end of Meyers, approximately 338 acres adjacent to the Upper Truckee River on the west end of Meyers, and approximately 12 acres of SEZs associated with drainages in the southern portion of the Industrial District and Upper Truckee Residential/Tourist District (Figure 4-1). The sensitive land surrounding Meyers Creek is mostly private land that is already developed for a variety of commercial uses. This area includes opportunities for land coverage reduction and environmental enhancement as a component of redevelopment projects. The majority of the sensitive land adjacent to the Upper Truckee River is owned by the USFS with several private parcels containing single-family residences. Additional information on groundwater levels and potential constraints was obtained and is summarized in Figure 4-4.

WATER QUALITY

As of 2013, only 10 percent of the developed parcels within Meyers have water quality BMP certificates. On average, commercial and public service uses generate significantly more pollutants than residential uses, and of the parcels with water quality BMP Certificates in the Meyers Area Plan, all are in the Meyers Community Center, Meyers Industrial, Upper Truckee Residential/Tourist, Zoning Districts. Water quality projects have been completed or are in progress along US 50, SR 89, and along County roadways in portions of Meyers and in residential areas surrounding Meyers (Figure 4-2).

The Lake Tahoe Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) sets targets and a timeline for pollutant loads for fine sediment particles, phosphorus, and nitrogen (Table 4-1). The TMDL also requires that each local jurisdiction prepare a load reduction plan demonstrating how the jurisdiction will achieve its share of the load reduction target.

TABLE 4-1: LOAD REDUCTION TARGETS FROM THE 2004 BASELINE CONDITION FOR THE LAKE TAHOE TMDL.

Pollutant	2016 Target	2021 Target	2026 Target	Transparency Standard (2076)
Fine Sediment	10%	21%	34%	71%
Total Phosphorus	7%	14%	21%	50%
Total Nitrogen	8%	14%	19%	46%

In March 2013, El Dorado County adopted its first Pollutant Load Reduction Plan (PLRP) detailing the county's strategy for attaining TMDL load reductions. The strategy focused on stormwater infiltration projects in public right-of-ways, road shoulder improvements, private property BMPs, abrasive controls, and enhanced street sweeping. The western portion of Meyers drains into the Christmas Valley Catchment, and water quality projects completed since 2004 in this area helped achieve the 2016 load reduction targets. The eastern portion of Meyers drains into Meyers Creek, and El Dorado County is proposing to construct the Meyers Water Quality Improvement Project in this area to help in achieving 2021 load reduction targets.

SCENIC RESOURCES

Meyers includes the entirety of scenic roadway unit 36C, along US 50 through Meyers, and portions of roadway unit 38 along SR 89. Roadway unit 36C is not in attainment of TRPA scenic threshold standards due to the condition of the built environment. The scenic rating of this roadway unit has been improving gradually as older structures are redeveloped consistent with the Meyers Design Standards and Guidelines. Roadway unit 38 is in attainment of scenic threshold standards. Meyers also includes several identified scenic viewpoints (Figure 4-1), which are protected from scenic degradation under Chapter 66 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances.

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

Meyers contains a mix of upland conifer forest and landscaped areas. Riparian vegetation exists along Meyers Creek and the Upper Truckee River on either end of Meyers. Several Invasive weed species exist on public right of ways and private properties. Lake Baron is an adopted TRPA waterfowl threshold site. No special status wildlife or plant species are known to occur within Meyers. Potentially suitable habitat for several special status species exists on primarily public lands surrounding Meyers.

NOISE

The community noise equivalent level (CNEL) standard for the mixed-use portions of the Area Plan is 65 dBA. Noise monitoring occurred in July 2011 at two locations along US 50 within the Meyers Area Plan boundary and one location on SR 89 just south of the Area Plan Boundary. Average monitored CNEL levels around Meyers ranged from 58.6 to 61 dBA, indicating that the 65 dBA standard was being met. The CNEL noise standard for the US 50 corridor outside of Meyers is 65 dBA. Based on monitored noise levels within Meyers, this standard is also likely being met in the vicinity. The noise standard for SR 89 outside of Meyers is 55 dBA. Noise monitoring along SR 89 just south of Meyers measured an average CNEL of 59.4 dBA, indicating that this standard was not being met. Primary noise sources include traffic noise along US 50 and SR 89, with a substantial amount of noise generated outside of the Area Plan boundary as vehicles decelerate or accelerate. Other noise sources include industrial and public service uses that occur in proximity to residential areas.

AIR QUALITY

Site-specific air quality information is not available for Meyers. Regional status and trends related to air quality are reported every four years in the TRPA Threshold Evaluation Report. As of 2012, all regional air quality standards were in attainment except for 24 hour concentrations of PM¹⁰, which was not in attainment. Sufficient information was not available to determine the regional status of average PM¹⁰ concentration, or sub-regional visibility standards. In general, the primary source of air pollution within the Area Plan boundary is from vehicle exhaust along US 50 and SR 89. Sources of PM¹⁰ within Meyers include vehicle emissions, wood smoke, dust from roadways, and construction dust.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION GOALS & POLICIES

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION VISION:

Improve environmental values in Meyers as part of implementing the Area Plan.

Goals and Policies:

1. *Goal:* Attain and maintain the environmental threshold carrying capacity standards.

Policy 1.1: The plan recognizes and incorporates environmental improvement projects implemented in the Area Plan since July 1, 1987. Such projects include, but are not limited to, placing overhead utility lines underground along US 50 and related water quality improvements.

Policy 1.2: All projects, whether the proponent is a private or public entity, shall implement the applicable improvement projects identified herein.

Policy 1.3: Public agencies having jurisdiction within the plan area are requested to implement public improvement projects identified in the plan. The policy shall apply to plans and programs which may be contained in an agency's capital improvements program.

2. *Goal:* Identify and protect the unique Sierra juniper tree. Consider its potential as an interpretive resource.

Policy 2.1: Live mature Sierra juniper trees within the Plan Area which are not a risk to public health and safety shall be preserved.

Policy 2.2: Encourage snow removal practices that protect the Sierra Juniper

Policy 2.3: Promote the planting of Sierra Juniper seedlings in landscaping and revegetation efforts.

3. *Goal:* Protect and enhance existing scenic views, ridgelines, and vistas from the Plan Area.

4. *Goal:* Protect and enhance stream environment zones. Encourage property owners with natural drainage channels in closed conduits to restore them to an open system.

Policy 4.1: Increase the area of naturally functioning SEZs by preserving existing SEZs and initiating and completing the restoration/rehabilitation of disturbed SEZs through Environmental Improvement Projects, requiring onsite excess coverage mitigation, providing incentives for coverage removal, and implementing SEZ enhancement strategies in the TRPA Regional Plan.

Policy 4.2: Onsite land coverage reduction will occur primarily through environmental redevelopment by providing incentives in Centers that promote the relocation and transfer of land coverage. The County will endeavor, where feasible, to reduce and avoid creating new coverage in order to benefit the objectives of this Area Plan, and attain and maintain environmental thresholds.

5. *Goal:* Take an active role in the planning and review of nearby projects which may impact Meyers.

6. *Goal:* Improve water quality by implementing all applicable elements of the Lake Tahoe TMDL.

Policy 6.1: The Meyers Area Plan incorporates by reference all monitoring, operations and maintenance, and reporting required by the County's NPDES permit, and the adopted Pollutant Load Reduction Plan, which will also be utilized by TRPA in the 4-year Area Plan recertification process pursuant to TRPA Code Sections 13.8.2 and 13.8.5.

Policy 6.2: Develop an area-wide BMP program to address stormwater runoff from public and private properties.

7. *Goal:* Manage the Upper Truckee River Corridor District primarily for natural resource values including watershed and floodplain functions, and as a wildlife habitat corridor.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The following key environmental improvement actions are necessary to achieve the Goals and Policies listed above. Implementing these actions will contribute to attaining and maintaining

environmental threshold standards and therefore will be a key component in the consideration of the extent of additional growth that may be allowed. The Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) is incorporated by reference, and all projects identified in the EIP within the Area Plan boundary shall also be implemented regardless of whether they are listed below. Additional detail on each action is provided in Chapter 7, Implementation.

WATER QUALITY

1. Lake Tahoe TMDL. Implement recommendations identified in the El Dorado County Pollutant Load Reduction Plan, as amended, for achieving required load reduction targets. Priorities include enhanced street sweeping, abrasive controls, private property BMP compliance, and the Meyers Water Quality Improvement Project, which can be developed in coordination with the Meyers Creek Enhancement Project described under Soil Conservation, below.
2. Area-Wide BMP Program. Develop an area-wide BMP program to address stormwater runoff and pollutant loading consistent with Chapter 13 (Area Plans) of the TRPA Regional Plan. Include funding mechanisms and assurances for ongoing maintenance of Area-Wide BMP improvements. Priority areas include commercial properties without completed BMPs. The Area-Wide BMP Program can be developed in coordination with the Meyers Water Quality Improvement Project and/or the Meyers Creek Enhancement Project. Parcel level BMP requirements in Chapter 60 (Water Quality) of the TRPA Code apply until an Area-Wide BMP program is in place.
3. Water Quality EIP Projects. Implement all water quality projects that are included in the Environmental Improvement Program five year list of priority projects, as amended, to address runoff from public right of ways and other sources (Figure 4-2).

AIR QUALITY

4. Implement Transportation and Land Use Improvements. Implement improvements described in the Transportation and Land Use Elements of this Area Plan, and in the Linking Tahoe: Regional Transportation Plan to reduce air pollution associated with vehicle use.
5. Enhanced Street Sweeping. Implement enhanced street sweeping consistent with the El Dorado County Pollutant Load Reduction Plan, to reduce sources of roadway dust.

SCENIC RESOURCES

6. Underground Utilities. Convert existing aerial utilities to underground systems to improve scenic conditions and safety along US 50 and throughout the Area Plan. Discourage the placement of additional above ground utility infrastructure.
7. Implement Land Use and Transportation Elements. Implement the Goals, Policies, and Implementing actions included in the Transportation and Land Use Elements of this Area Plan to improve the scenic quality of the built environment within the Area Plan.

SOIL CONSERVATION

8. Reduce Excess Land Coverage. All excess land coverage shall be mitigated as required by Chapter 30 (Land Coverage) of the TRPA Regional Plan. A minimum of 5% of excess land coverage mitigation shall occur through on-site coverage reduction.
9. Restore Disturbed Stream Environment Zones (SEZ). Restore disturbed SEZs within and adjacent to the Area Plan through public projects, private redevelopment projects, or public private partnerships.
10. Restore Sensitive Lands through Transfers of Development. Promote restoration of SEZs and other sensitive land within and outside of the Area Plan through transfers of existing development, development potential, and coverage to high capability lands within the Area Plan. All transfers must be consistent with and are eligible for incentives in Chapters 30 (Land Coverage) and 51 (Transfer of Development) of the TRPA Code of Ordinances (see Figures 4-3a-f).
11. Enhance Meyers Creek. Develop and implement an SEZ enhancement project to restore or enhance the segment of Meyers Creek that flows through the eastern portion of the Area Plan. The Meyers Creek Enhancement Project can be developed in coordination with an area-wide BMP program and/or the Meyers Water Quality Improvement Project.
12. Upper Truckee River Tahoe Paradise Reach Enhancement Project. Develop and implement a river restoration or enhancement project to reduce erosion, enhance habitat, and improve fish passage.

NOISE

13. Mitigate Noise Sources. Mitigate noise sources that exceed applicable threshold standards and implement all applicable elements of regional noise reduction programs. Priorities for noise mitigation include the interface between commercial or industrial uses (including the boat inspection station) and residential areas, and major roadways surrounding Meyers (including US 50 from Echo Summit to Meyers, SR 89 from Meyers through Christmas Valley, and Pioneer Trail east of Meyers).

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

14. Preserve and Expand Sierra Junipers. Discourage the removal of all existing Sierra Junipers that do not pose a risk to public health and safety. Identify a source for free or low cost Sierra juniper seedlings and promote their planting in landscaping and revegetation efforts.
15. Manage Invasive Weeds. Control or eradicate invasive weeds within Meyers. Prioritize control efforts along bike trails and roadways that may serve as a vector source for transporting invasive weeds to other sites.
16. Preserve Open Space. Enforce all provisions of the Regional Plan to protect native habitat in existing open space. Provide incentives for property owners to preserve additional native habitat in sensitive lands or in areas that provide open space connectivity to large areas of open space outside of Meyers.

FIGURE 4-1: MEYERS CONSERVATION MAP

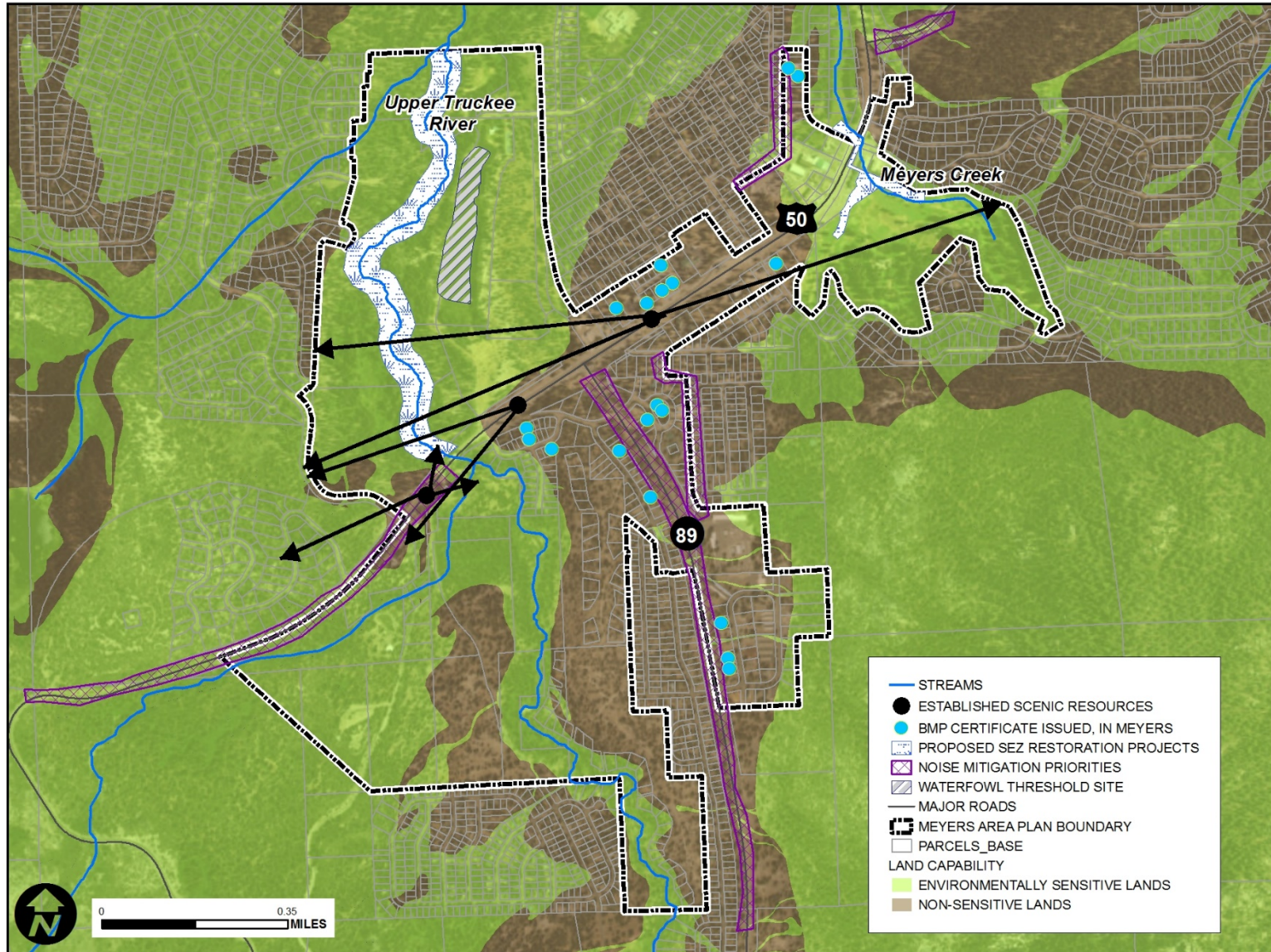
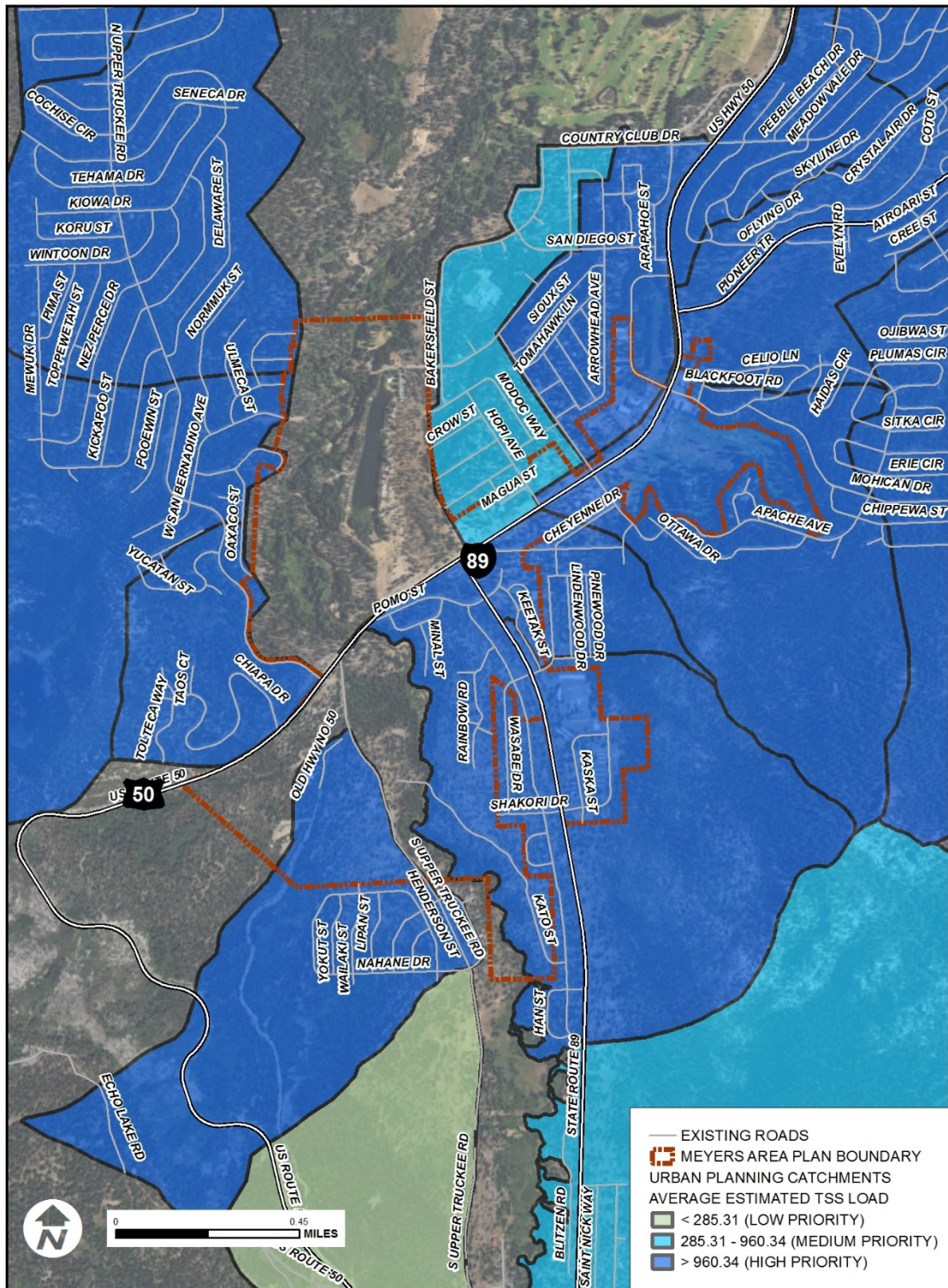


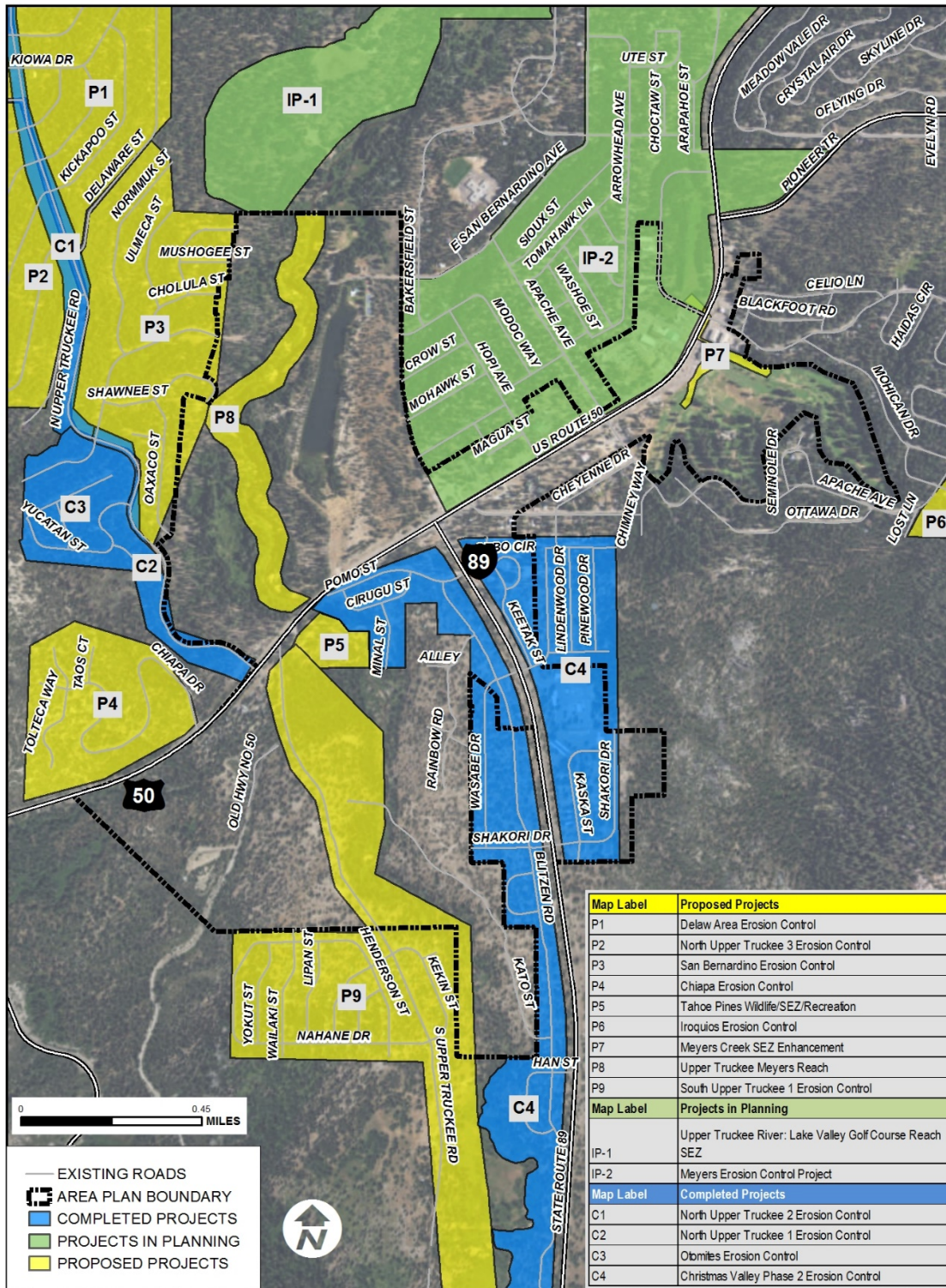
FIGURE 4-2A: TMDL SEDIMENT LOADING ESTIMATES BY CATCHMENT



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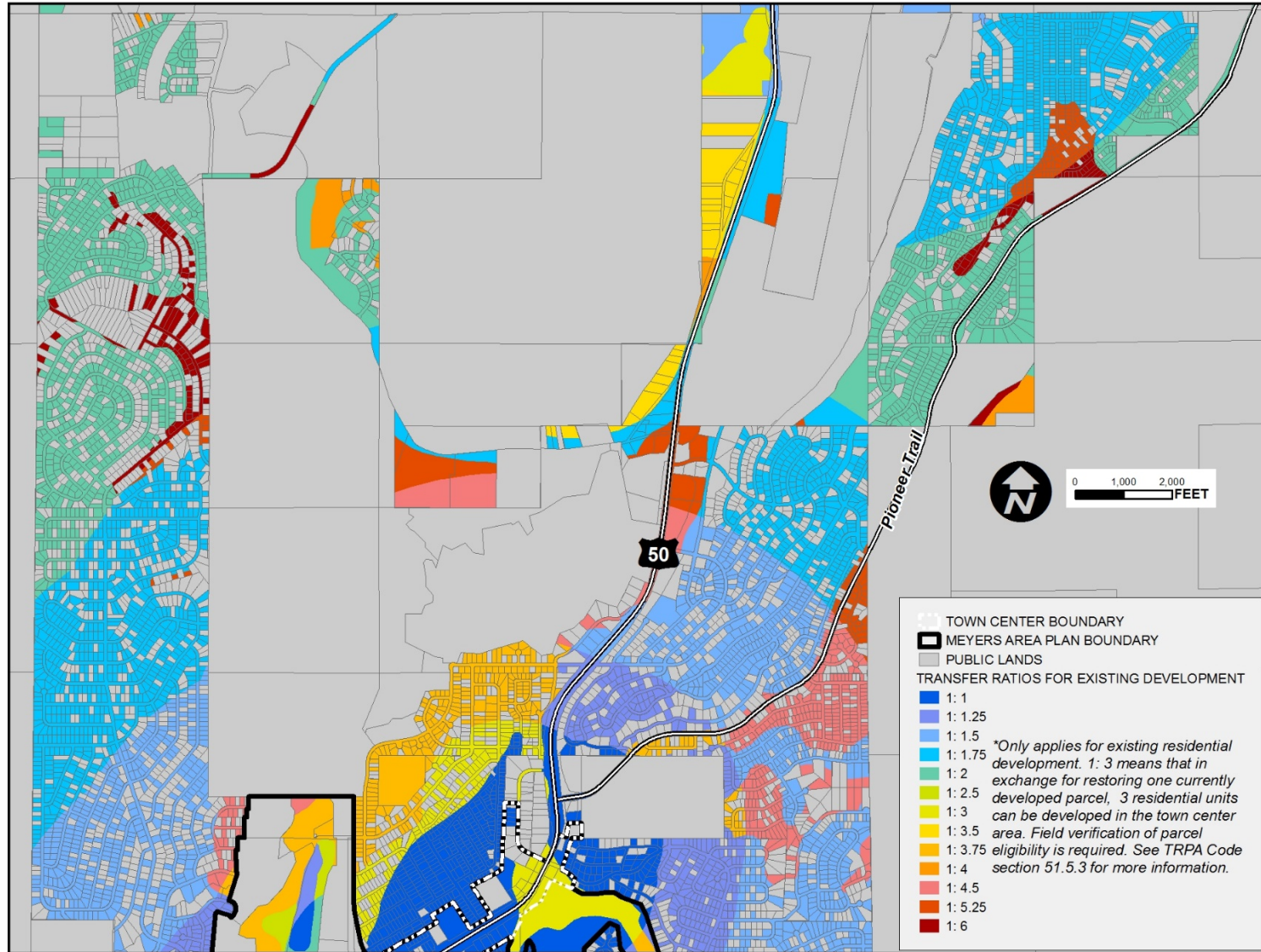
FIGURE 4-2B: WATER QUALITY AND STREAM ENVIRONMENT ZONE PROJECTS



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FIGURE 4-3A: CONCEPTUAL RESTORATION PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFERS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT (NORTH OF MEYERS)



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FIGURE 4-3B: CONCEPTUAL RESTORATION PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFERS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT (MEYERS VICINITY)

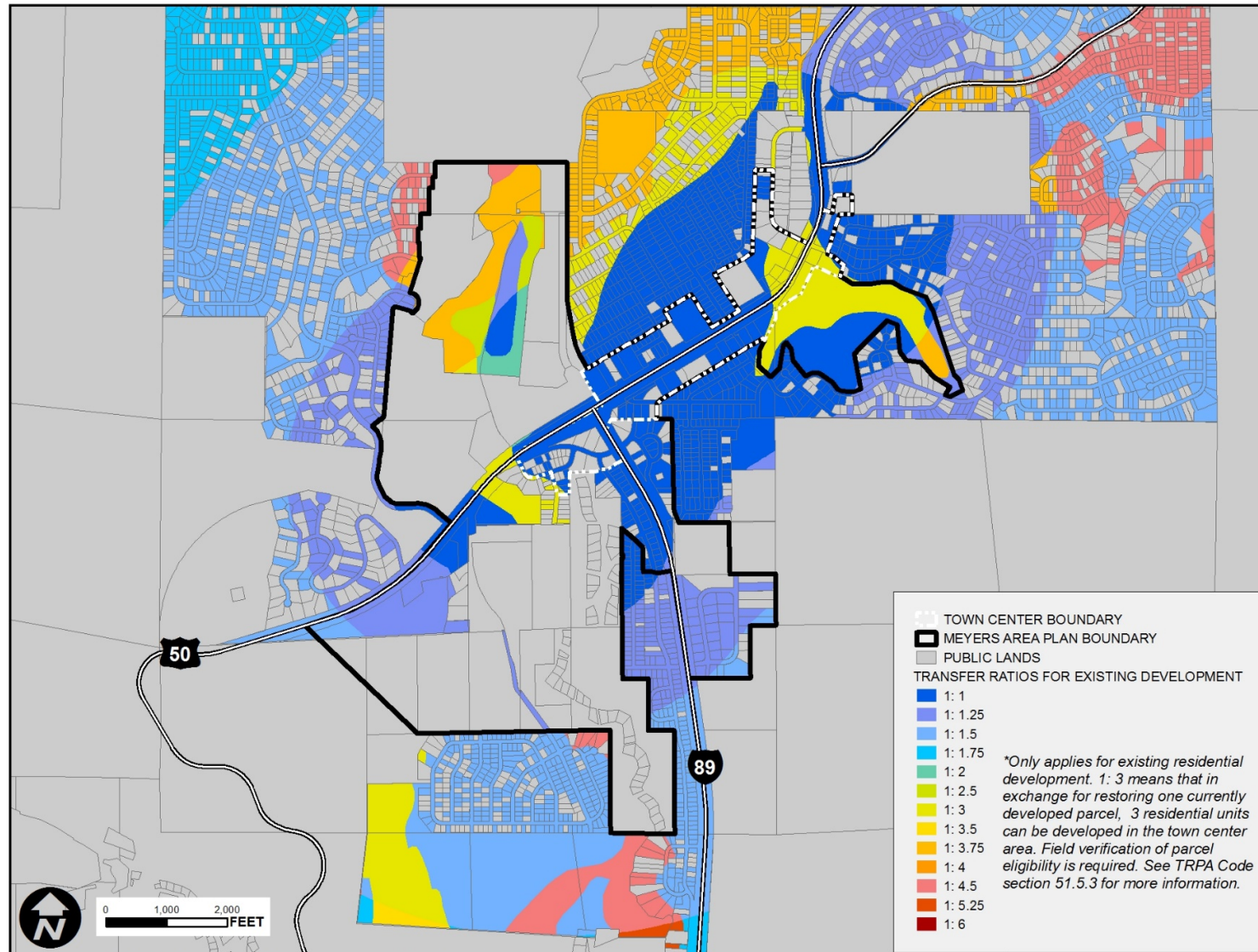
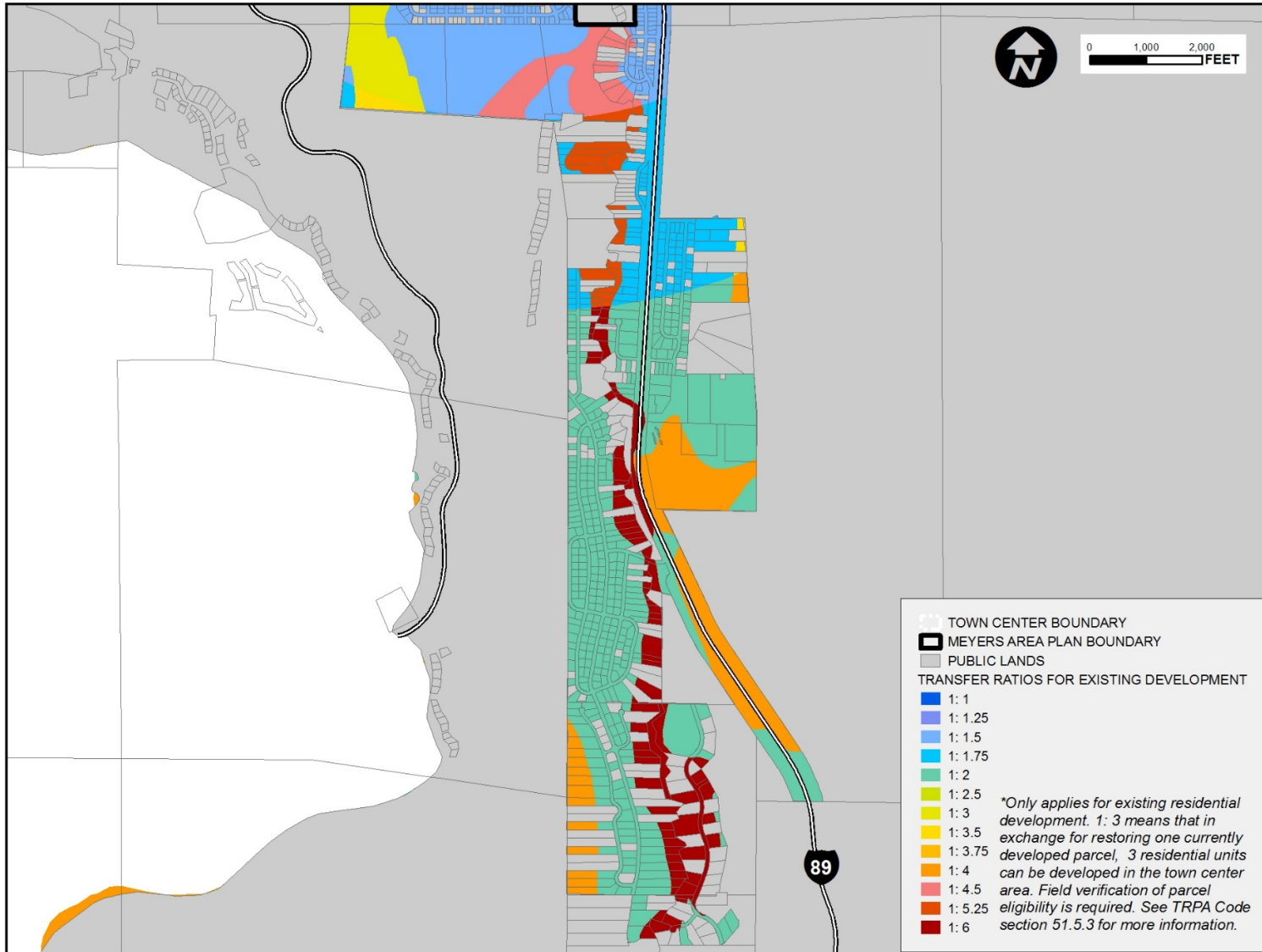


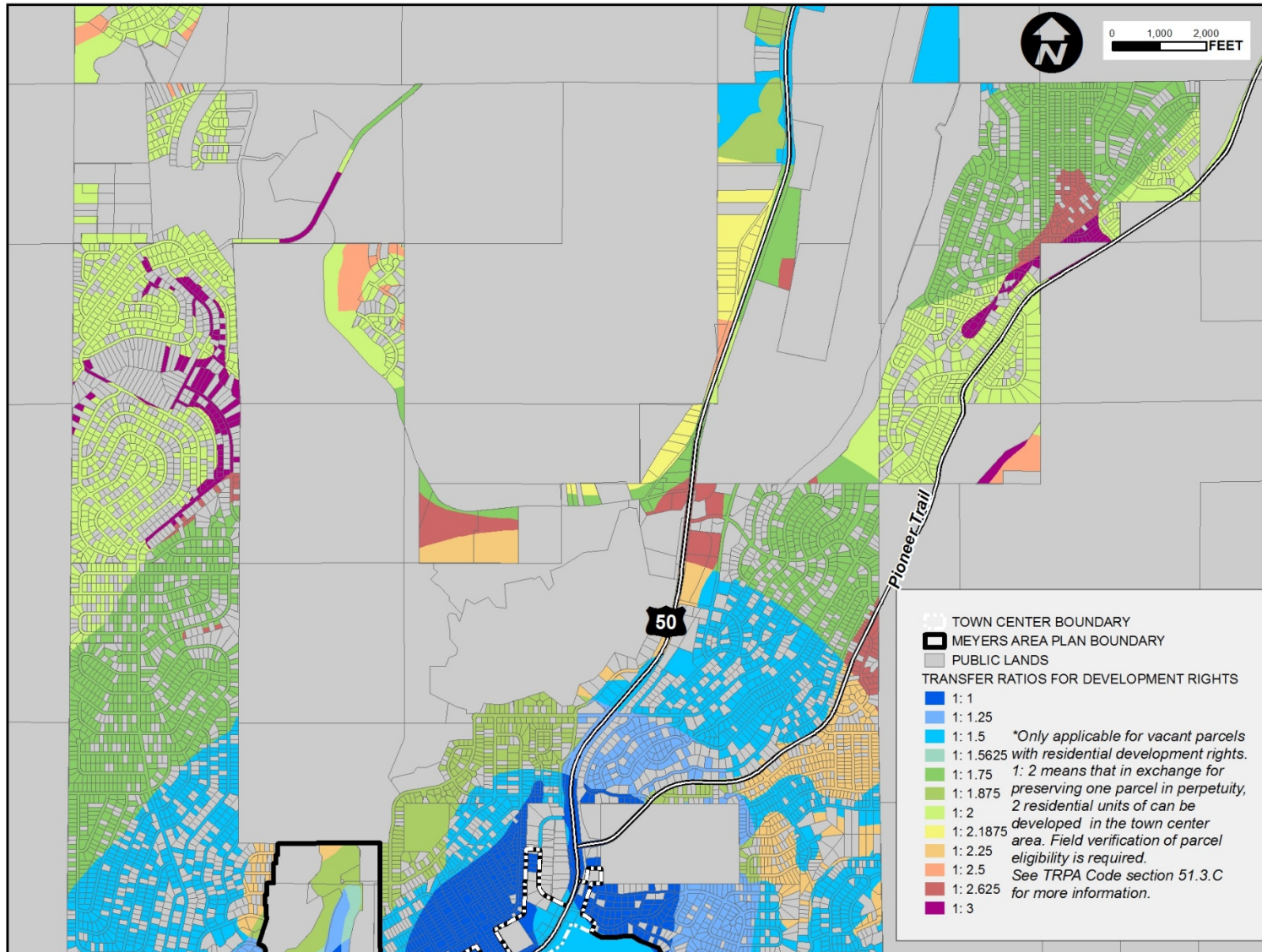
FIGURE 4-3C: CONCEPTUAL RESTORATION PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFERS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT (SOUTH OF MEYERS)



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FIGURE 4-3D: CONCEPTUAL RESTORATION PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFERS OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (NORTH OF MEYERS)



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FIGURE 4-3E: CONCEPTUAL RESTORATION PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFERS OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (MEYERS VICINITY)

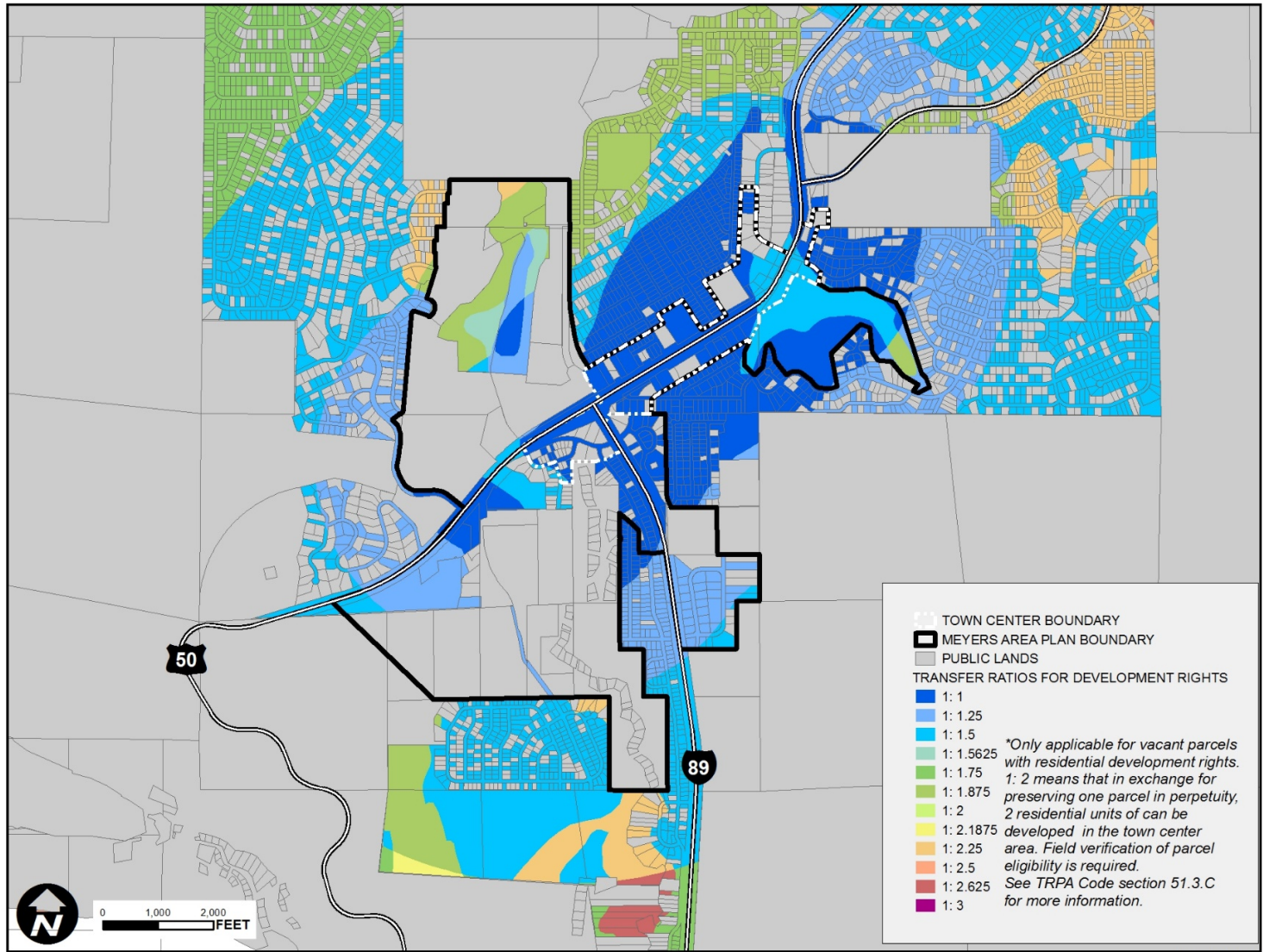
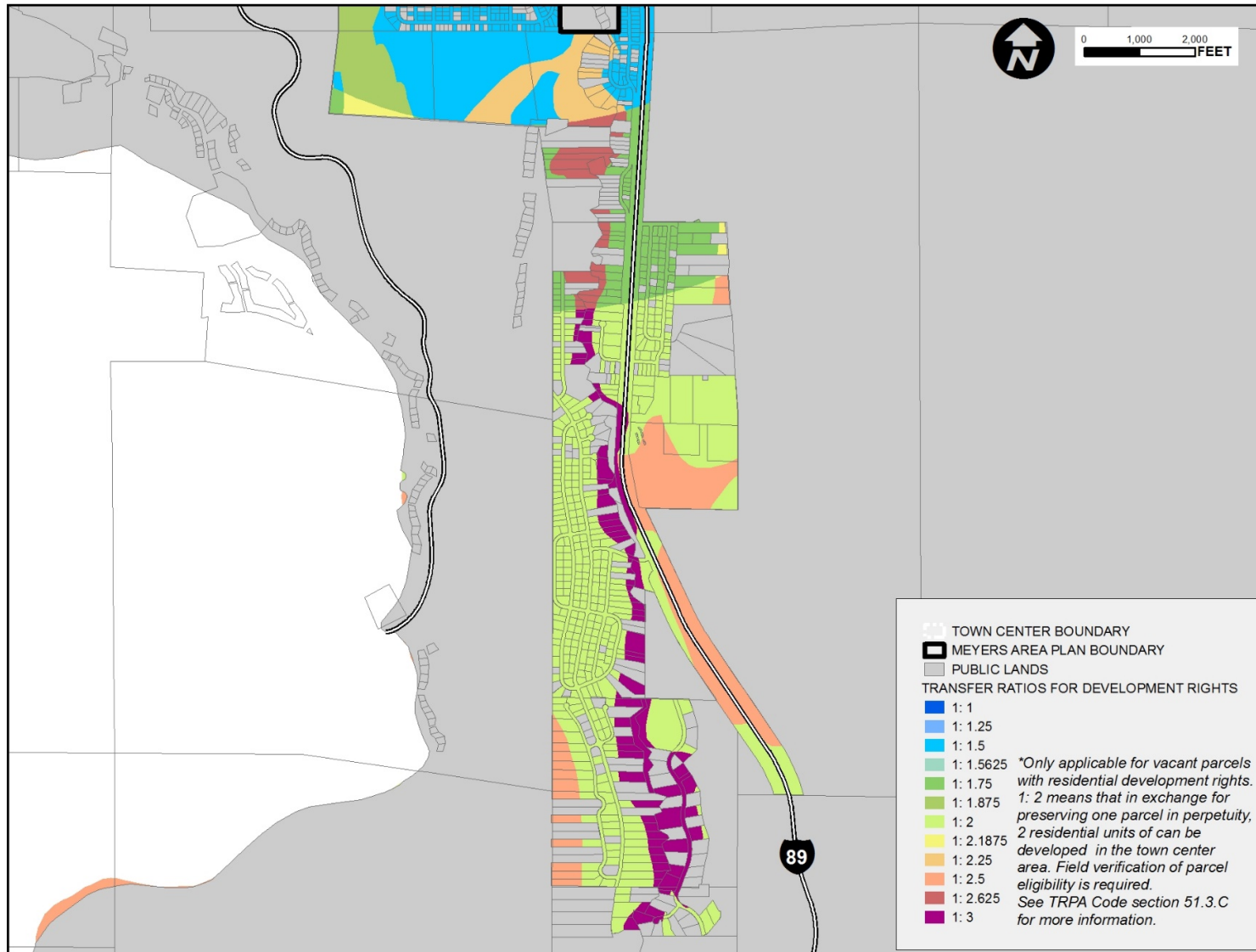


FIGURE 4-3F: CONCEPTUAL RESTORATION PRIORITIES FOR TRANSFERS OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (SOUTH OF MEYERS)



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FIGURE 4-4: LANDMARK TREE PROTECTION MAP

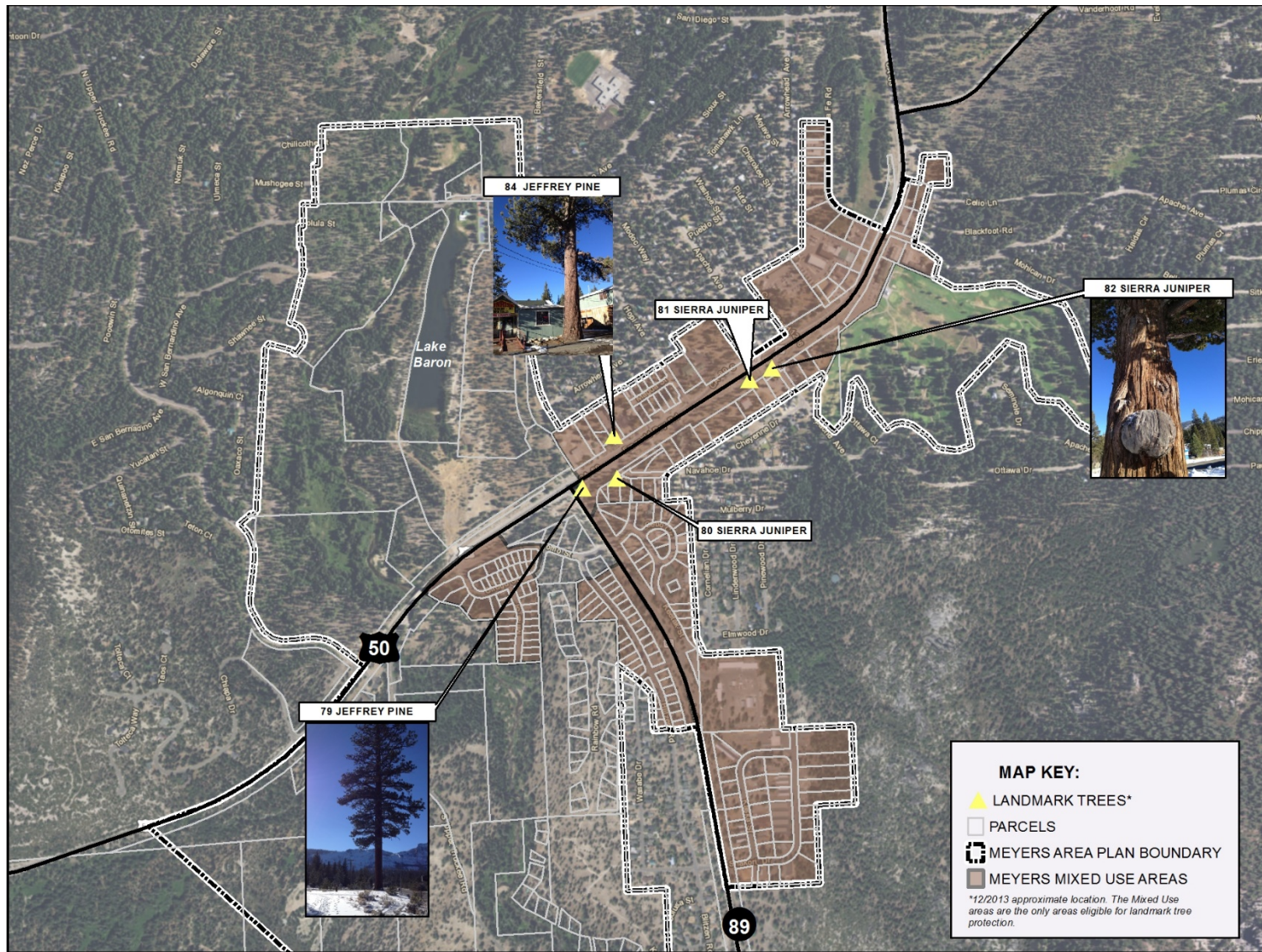


FIGURE 4-5: GROUNDWATER CONSTRAINTS MAP

