

**CONTRA COSTA
 Protections in place:**

	Oak Tree Retention/ Replacement Provisions	Oak Protection During Construction	Heritage Tree Protection	Riparian Vegetation Protections	Oak Canopy Retention	Oak Woodland Conservation Program
General Plan Language	Conservation Element mitigation measures include 3:1 replacement with trees of the same species. The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to encourage propagation of native oaks using proper planting and maintenance techniques	None	The Conservation Element calls for protection of mature native oaks. Damage to heritage trees during construction or by irrigation is prohibited.	The Conservation Element calls for 50' foot setbacks creeks	None	None
Specific Ordinance	Tree Protection Ordinance Requires a tree permit for removal of 6.5" dbh trees in or adjacent to riparian, foothill woodland, oak savanna areas, or part of a stand of 4 or more trees.	Tree Protection Ordinance requires a permit to trench, grade, or fill within dripline of protected trees and use of fencing. Accidental destruction requires replacement with an equivalent tree.	Heritage tree ordinance (designated by the board of supervisors) may not be removed without a permit issued if the tree is a nuisance. Special construction techniques are required within 12' of trunk or within the dripline	None	None	None
Voluntary Guidelines	None	None	None	None	None	None

Documents reviewed:

Date of Review: July 2003

- Open Space Element
- Conservation Element
- Land Use Element
- Zoning Ordinance

- Roads/Sidewalk Tree Ordinance
- Tree Removal Ordinance
- Voluntary Guidelines
- Other County Codes: Tree Obstruction of Views

Summary of Oak Protection Policies:

Land Use Element, 1996	The Land Use Element includes protective policies for specific areas and projects including Crockett, San Pablo Ridge, Gale Ranch and Countrywood. Policies call for preservation of significant natural features including ridgelines, creek corridors, and natural vegetation to conserve scenic beauty and avoid erosion.
Conservation Element, 1996	<p>NATIVE VEGETATION: The Conservation Element calls for preservation of significant trees and natural vegetation including natural woodlands to the maximum extent possible (8-12). Development on hillsides must be limited to maintain valuable natural vegetation (8-14). Existing native vegetation must be retained in the major open space areas (8-15). Planting native trees and shrubs is encouraged in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well-adapted plants are sustained in urban areas (8-21).</p> <p>HERITAGE TREES: All efforts are to be made to identify and protect the County's mature native oak, bay, and buckeye trees (8-28). A biotic resources evaluation may be required prior to the approval of discretionary permits involving parcels in significant ecological resource areas (8-e). Mitigation measures may include requiring three new trees be planted for every one mature tree removed as part of a development (8-h). Replacement trees must be the same species as the tree removed, and be native or naturalized. Damage to heritage trees by soil compaction, grading, filling or alteration of drainage patterns beneath the root zones of heritage trees during construction is prohibited (8-I). Watering programs for lawns and gardens in new subdivisions must be designed to prevent soil saturation around the root zones of oak trees during the summer months to avoid infection by oak root fungus.</p> <p>OAKWOODLANDS: The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to encourage the propagation of native oaks using proper planting and maintenance techniques (8u), and by limiting cattle grazing to compatible light or moderate levels in foothill woodlands.</p> <p>RIPARIAN BUFFERS: Riparian areas should be preserved by 50' foot setbacks on each side of the creek. The county should seek deeded development rights for lands within riparian buffers (8-90). Guidelines for creek maintenance practices which limit removal of native vegetation are to be developed.</p>
Open Space Element, 1996	The Open Space Element restricts development on open hillsides and significant ridgelines (9-11). Public and private projects shall be designed to minimize damages to significant trees and other visual landmarks (9-12.).

<p>Tree Protection/ Preservation, 816-6</p>	<p>TREE REMOVAL: This ordinance provides for the preservation of protected trees by controlling tree removal (.2004) of trees adjacent to or part of a riparian, foothill woodland or oak savanna area, part of a stand of 4 or more trees, measuring 6.5” dbh on any undeveloped or developed property within commercial, professional office or industrial districts. No person may cut down, top, or remove any protected tree on private property within the county without a tree permit (.6002). Applications must include information on trees, reason for removal, methods and effects of removal on soil stability and erosion (.8004). A report by an arborist or RPF may be required (.8008). Permits may be denied when redesign of a site plan will avoid alteration of a healthy tree, if removal will cause drainage, erosion, stability problems, or if value to the neighborhood is greater than hardship to the owner (.8010).</p> <p>TREE PROTECTION: No person may trench, grade or fill within the dripline of any protected tree on private property within the county without a tree permit (.6002). Trees must be protected during development by installation of fencing at the dripline. No grading, compaction, stockpiling, trenching, paving or change in ground elevation is permitted within the dripline unless indicated on the grading plans approved by the county and addressed in any required report prepared by an arborist. If grading or construction is approved within the dripline, an arborist may be required to be present during grading operations (.1202) A cash deposit is required and may be held by the county for 2 years. Accidental destruction of a tree requires replacement with a tree of equivalent size (.1206).</p>
<p>Tree Obstruction Of Views, 816-2</p>	<p>This ordinance provides a method for private property owners to gain restoration of views and sunlight lost due to tree growth by another private property owner. Methods including tree trimming, windowing and replacement and replanting may be imposed through arbitration if the reconciliation process breaks down.</p>
<p>Heritage Tree Preservation, 816-4</p>	<p>HERITAGE TREES: This chapter requires adequate protection of heritage trees (72” dbh or any tree in a group of trees worthy of protection, and designated as a heritage tree by the board of supervisors because of historical or ecological significance, or an outstanding specimen in location, size, age, rarity, shape, or health) during construction (.402). No one may remove any designated heritage tree without a permit (although trimming, pruning, and maintenance is allowed) (.602). Special construction techniques are required when proposed developments encroach within 12’ of the trunk. Storage, dumping, and burning are prohibited. Permits may be issued only if the tree is a danger of falling or a nuisance.</p>

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County Contacts:

- No contacts
- Policies provided by county staff
- Policies discussed with county staff
- Policy inventory reviewed by county staff