

## Fact Sheet: History of Natomas and the NBHCP

- In 1975, North Natomas (north of I-80) had 476 people and 176 houses, and South Natomas had 8,412 residents and 2,826 housing units. The 2010 census reported 43,697 residents in South Natomas and 55,141 in North Natomas. There was a flood control moratorium between 2008 and 2015; the moratorium was lifted but flood control work is on-going and more is needed to meet the 200 year flood control standard set by the State after Katrina. The Army Corp of Engineers estimates this work will be complete 2024 if fully funded.
- South Natomas (south of I-80) developed predominantly as residential subdivisions from 1950 to 1980. The South Natomas Community Plan, adopted in 1978, revised in 1982 and after litigation in 1988, was the focal point of Mayor Heather Fargo's political rise. Primary issue- lack of parks and traffic management.
- The North Natomas Community Plan was enormously controversial, first adopted in 1986, revised, after flood events and litigation, in 1994, and depends on the **Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan**, first adopted 1997, strengthened after successful litigation in 2003. (Sierra Club/ECOS/Friends of the Swainson's Hawk.). The NBHCP is an agreement between the US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the City of Sacramento and the County of Sutter and covers the 55,000 acre Basin.
- In 1994, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) proposed a flood control project for the Natomas Basin (Basin) that required a Section 404 Clean Water Act permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). In order to comply with its responsibilities under the Act, the Corps consulted with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In its March 11, 1994, biological opinion (Service File # 1-1-94-F-0013) for the project, the Service determined that the project would remove an obstacle to urbanization in the Basin and that such development would result in the take of federally- listed species (giant garter snake). The **Corps issued a Section 404 Permit for SAFCA's flood control project, conditional on the preparation of a habitat conservation plan (HCP) for the Basin.** The State participated and issued a companion 2081 permit.
- In 1997, the County approved a 1,983 acre long-planned industrial/commercial development east of the airport called **Metro Airpark**; the owners obtained incidental take coverage (ITPs) consistent with the NBHCP. The Conservation Strategy of the NBHCP accounted for the Metro Airpark project. The **Panhandle** area of North Natomas (east of City's North Natomas Community) has also always been included in the NBHCP permit area though it has not yet been annexed to the City. Infrastructure projects by the **Airport and SAFCA** have mitigated to the satisfaction of wildlife agencies, including 1:1 mitigation ratio, and received permits. Since 2000, developers have worked through the City and County to try to get additional land in North Natomas entitled for development despite the NBHCP strategy of limiting development to 17,500 additional acres (post 1997). The permit areas are City, 8,050 acres, Sutter County, 7, 467 acres and Metro Airpark 1,983 acres.

- In 2005, the City of Sacramento began the process of annexing and entitling the 600 acre **Greenbriar** community project at 99 and I-5. Despite environmental community action and litigation, the development has been authorized though not begun. Greenbriar obtained take permits (ITPs) from both wildlife agencies, who must approve mitigation lands and conservation operator. The land has not been occupied and the Conservation Operator has not been approved.
- On February 27, 2019, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved initiation of a specific plan process for the 2000 acre **entitled Upper Westside in the Boot area of North Natomas**. The City has specifically declined to consider development in the Boot. Much of this area is in the Swainson's Hawk zone, a specific conservation area in the NBHCP.
- The City rejected annexation of the **West Lakeside** site, immediately west of the City limit and east of Fisherman's Lake, but the owner, Angelo K. Tsakopoulos (AKT) convinced the Natomas Unified School District to buy the property in 2007, despite admonition from Sierra Club and FOSH that building on the property was inconsistent with the NBHCP. (The West Lakeside property is specifically referenced in the Implementation Agreement). The NUSD approved construction of **Paso Verde Elementary School** on the site Mar 13, 2019. But the school depends on City services that the NBHCP prohibits unless new ITPs are issued. The school site is heavily impacted by airport noise, pollution and has impacts on neighboring NBC Rosa Preserve.
- The **Natomas Basin Conservancy**, a non profit whose Board is appointed by City of Sacramento and County of Sutter, was created in 1997 and owns and manages 4,100 acres of preserve (see map), about half the ultimate mitigation area. It also manages SAFCA mitigation properties, but not those for the Airport or Greenbriar. The NBC protects 22 species. The Basin is nesting territory for 54-58 Swainson's Hawk pairs each year, with 28 of these along the Sacramento River. The Basin fledged 68 young in 2017. There are 22,000 acres of foraging habitat available in the Basin and the population has been stable. Only 25 percent of NBC preserve lands are Swainson's Hawk foraging habitats (1600 acres). The Giant Garter Snake population in the Basin is the largest remaining population, and difficult to enumerate; habitat includes rice, managed marsh and irrigation and drainage ditches. The NBHCP is land-poor and depends upon maintenance of private agricultural lands and ditches and drains in the Basin for success in preserving the population of Giant Garter Snake and Swainson's Hawk in the Basin. All mitigation is required to be provided in the Basin to benefit those populations.

# 2019 BASE MAP

