

Yuba County's Natural Resources

Land Type	Acres	%
Urban and Built-up Land	13,080.65	3.18
Grazing Land	142,706.44	34.66
Prime Farmland	41,986.71	10.20
Farmland of Statewide Importance	11,017.93	2.68
Unique Farmland	32,367.10	7.86
Water	6,628.39	1.61
Other Land	163,971.23	39.82
TOTAL	411,758.44	100.00
LAND IN AGRICULTURE	228,078.17	55%

Source: FMMP 2006

Agricultural Lands

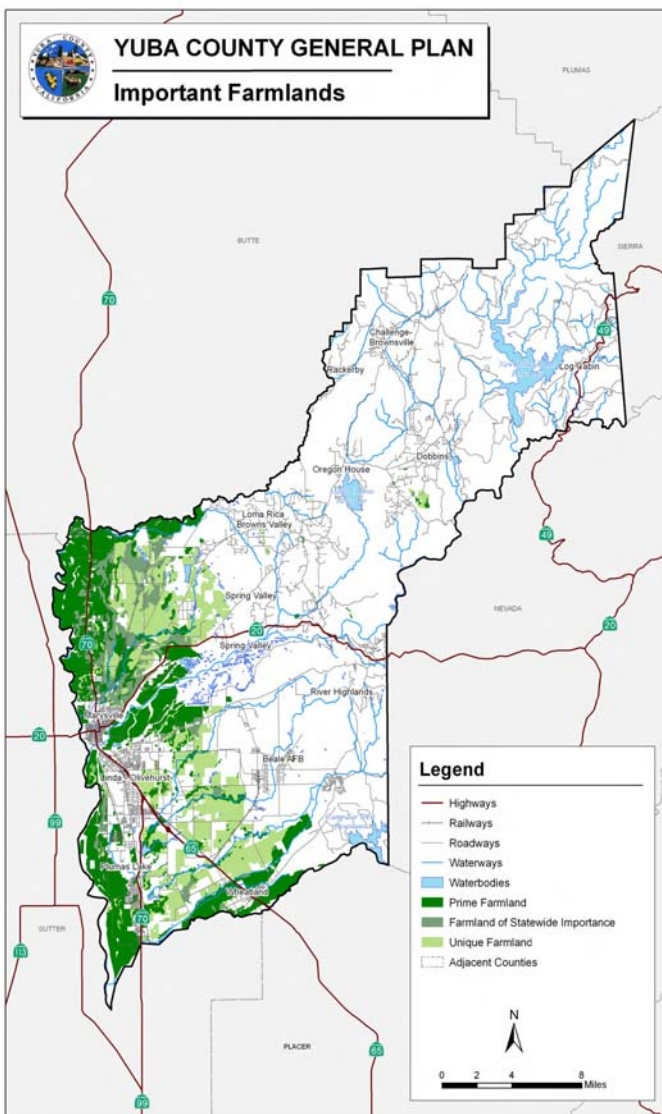
Yuba County contains about 643 square miles of land, of which roughly 55% (over 228,000 acres) is agricultural land. Most of Yuba County's agricultural land (about 143,000 acres) is grazing land. The next largest category of agricultural land is "prime" farmland (farmland with the most productive soils), at nearly 42,000 acres. Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical, chemical, and other characteristics to produce economically sustained high yields.

Other important categories of agricultural lands include farmland of statewide importance (over 11,000 acres) and unique farmland (over 32,000 acres). Farmlands of statewide importance are those containing soils critical to agricultural production, even if they are not as productive as prime farmland. Unique farmlands are those suited to the production of specific high-value crops such as, citrus, tree nuts, vine crops, and olives.

Water Resources

Yuba County has abundant water resources owing to its topography and location in the Sacramento Valley, where several rivers flow and/or converge. Major rivers in or near Yuba County include the Yuba, Feather, Bear, and Sacramento rivers. Many smaller water courses also cross Yuba County. Rivers and streams flow from the Sierra Nevada Foothills and Mountains north and east of Yuba County. The Sacramento River, while not in Yuba County, drains Yuba County's rivers and streams and flows near the Yuba-Sutter county boundary where the Feather River flows into the Sacramento River.

The existence of abundant water resources also means that many areas, primarily in the valley basin of Yuba County, are subject to periodic flooding.

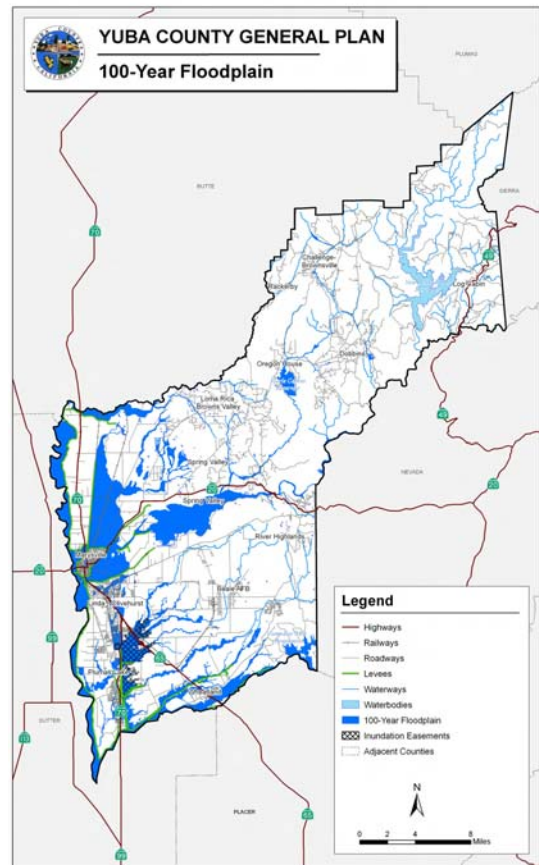


Most flooding is associated with the natural floodplains of various watercourses in the County. Many of the areas subject to flooding also contain important habitat for the County's animal wildlife (see below).

Yuba County has four major water storage facilities:

- The New Bullards Bar Reservoir between Log Cabin and Dobbins, with a storage capacity of just over 966,000 acre feet, activated in 1970;
- The Camp Far West Dam along Yuba County's southeast border with Placer County, with a storage capacity of 104,000 acre feet, activated in 1964;
- The Englebright Reservoir along the Yuba-Nevada County border (near Highway 20 between Smartville and Penn Valley), with a storage capacity of 70,000 acre feet, activated in 1955; and
- The Merle Collins Lake near Oregon House (detailed information was not available in time for this fact sheet).

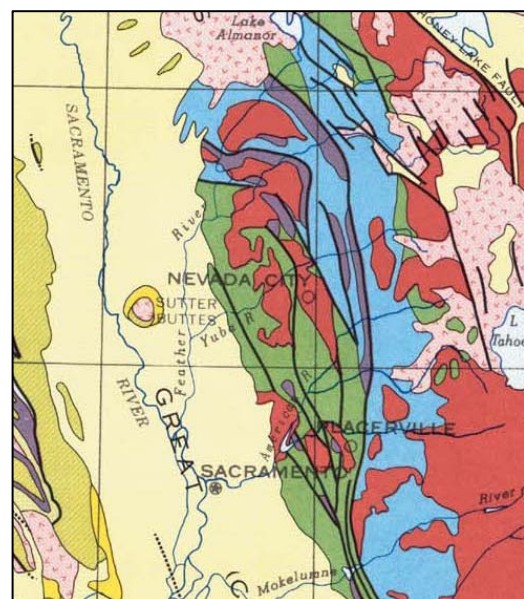
In addition to surface waters, Yuba County has abundant groundwater. The Yuba Basin, which includes Yuba County and portions of surrounding counties within the watersheds of the Yuba and Feather rivers, was estimated in 1992 to contain nearly 1.7 million acre feet of storage capacity¹, which is greater than the storage capacity of the County's surface reservoirs.



Mineral Resources

Yuba County's mineral resources vary by topography and location. Most of the minerals within the lower foothills and valley basin portion of Yuba County are related to sedimentary rock and gravel deposits, particularly within and near river basins (yellows in the map to the left). In higher elevations in northeast Yuba County, minerals are associated with ancient volcanic and metamorphic activities (red areas) and metamorphosed sedimentary rocks (green). Important minerals include sand, gravel, gold, silica, granite and other stones, and clay.

Other minerals present in Yuba County include molybdenum, silver, copper, manganese, arsenic, zinc, tungsten, chromium, iron, limestone, and asbestos.



¹ Based on unpublished study by Bookman Edmonston, Engineering, Inc. and cited in the California Department of Water Resource's Bulletin 118 of the report "California's Groundwater."



Mineral Extraction Activities in Yuba County	
Baldwin Sand Pit	Sand and Gravel
Browns Valley-Smartville	Gold
Brownsville-Challenge-Dobbins	Gold
Clack Rock Quarry	Stone
Debbie's Place	Sand and Gravel
Dry Creek Pit	Sand and Gravel
Garcia Pit And Mill	Sand and Gravel
Hallwood Pit	Sand and Gravel
Hammonton Pit	Sand and Gravel
Hammonton-Yuba River	Silver, Gold
New York Flat Pit	Sand and Gravel
Ore No. 1 Plant	Sand and Gravel
Parks Bar Quarry	Stone - Crushed/Broken
Pearson Quarry	Stone - Crushed/Broken
R-5 Gold Field Pit And Mill	Sand and Gravel
River Rock Sand & Gravel	Sand and Gravel
Simpson Lane Pit	Sand and Gravel
Speckert Pit	Sand and Gravel
Sperbeck Quarry	Stone - Crushed/Broken
Wheatland Pit	Clay - General
Willow Creek Pit	Sand and Gravel
Yuba Consolidated Gold Fields	Gold
Yuba River Pit	Sand and Gravel
Yuba Silica	Silica

The table to the left summarizes mineral extraction in Yuba County. The map on the following page shows the locations of mineral resources and extraction activities. Sand and gravel are the most common minerals extracted. In addition, gold, silver, stone, clay, and silica are extracted in commercial quantities in Yuba County.

Asbestos, a naturally occurring mineral, but also a potential health risk, occurs in a few locations along Yuba County's border with Butte and Plumas counties.

Biological Resources

Yuba County is home to a wide variety of native species of plants, animals, and natural habitats that support these species. The map on the following page shows major habitat areas and types. These include meadows, nonnative grasslands, oak woodlands, coniferous forests, foothill and mountain hardwood forests, chaparral, freshwater wetlands and bogs, vernal pools, other riparian habitats, and natural habitats associated with various lakes in the County (lacustrine habitats). Many

sensitive plant and animal species reside in the various natural areas of Yuba County, including rodents, birds (including waterfowl), frogs, snakes, insects, fish, deer, and several plant species.

Most of the land containing natural habitats in Yuba County is located in the foothill and mountain regions, as much of valley and other low lying areas of the County have been used for agriculture or are developed. Even so, there are still significant natural habitats remaining in the valley. In addition, changing agricultural practices have become an increasingly important tool to protect or re-create natural habitats while still permitting viable agriculture. Prominent examples include the flooding of rice fields in the winter to provide habitat for migratory birds and preserving riparian habitats along natural watercourses and canals in areas used for agriculture.

Yuba County contains several wildlife and refuge areas, including the Spenceville Wildlife Management and Recreation Area, the Marysville Wildlife Area, the Feather River Wildlife Area, the Daugherty Hills Wildlife Area, the Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary, fish access areas managed by the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Sierra Foothill Research Center operated by the University of California Extension.

Early stages of planning are underway to identify important natural communities/habitats, individual species of plants and animals in the valley portion of Yuba and Sutter counties, protection strategies, and various types of development projects and other activities that could be covered under a comprehensive plan (Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan for Sutter and Yuba counties) to protect and restore important habitat areas.





YUBA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

Natural Resources

