

# Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan

## 6. OPEN SPACE, TRAILS AND RECREATION

### 6.1 Open Space, Trails and Recreation Concepts

The centerpiece of the MVWPSP Open Space program is the preservation of the East Parcel, over 6,300 acres, as open space. Ultimately, this preservation of the cornerstone of the Martis Valley conservation lands will connect 50,000-acres of contiguous undeveloped forested land from SR 267 through the Mount Rose wilderness which spans the California/Nevada boundary. The East Parcel has been coveted by numerous conservation groups since the acquisitions of Waddle Ranch, Siller Ranch and the Jones parcel, making the eastern side of SR 267 a conservation mecca and nucleus of high-Sierra recreation.

The entire 6,376-acre East Parcel will be either acquired via a fee simple acquisition and held by Truckee Donner Land Trust or by recordation of a conservation easement. Either means will eliminate the possibility of future development of this land. In addition, 352 acres of the West Parcel will be preserved as open space upon the recordation of the MVWPSP's last Final Map.

The land use plan for the West Parcel is designed to take advantage of the outstanding recreational opportunities within the MVWPSP site by providing trails throughout the development that can be used for walking, biking, snow shoeing, cross-country skiing, and other recreational activity. This internal trail system will connect to the broader regional trail network that extends throughout the Northstar, Martis Valley and Tahoe Basin areas.

### 6.2 Open Space, Trails and Recreation Overview and Context

The MVWPSP is nestled adjacent to Northstar Resort and is composed of a picturesque natural amphitheater, forested hillsides and mountain peaks. Much of the area to the west, south and east of the MVWPSP is designated for forestry. Notably the two largest land owners are the United States Forest Service and Trimont Land Company. The area east of SR 267 is largely undeveloped, and tens of thousands of acres are owned by land trusts or governmental agencies (see Figure 6-1). Lake Tahoe can be viewed from select points within the MVWPSP.

Winter sports dominate the area, with thousands of snow-sport enthusiasts traveling from the Central Valley, the Bay Area and beyond to ski

and snowboard at local resorts, including Northstar immediately north of the MVWPSP, and to snow shoe and cross-country ski on the trails that crisscross the area. During the summer, hiking and biking are popular recreational activities.

There are several existing and planned trail systems near the MVWPSP: the future Martis Valley Trail, or MVT, the Tompkins Memorial Trail, or TMT, and the Tahoe Rim Trail (see Figures 6-2 and 6-3). The MTV will be a Class 1 trail beginning near the Truckee Airport and crossing the Martis Valley into the Northstar community. The trail will continue south ascending into the mountains and terminate at Sawmill Flats. Sawmill Flats, also known as Four Corners, is on the paved Fibreboard Freeway, providing access to the trail system that connects with Tahoe City. The MVT will be a 10-foot wide paved trail with 2-foot running paths on both sides that will parallel SR 267. Existing trails and dirt roads would be used.

The East Parcel contains approximately 40 miles of trails (see Figure 6-4).

### 6.3 Open Space, Trails and Recreation Goals & Policies

**Goal OS-1: Preserve open space areas that offer a mosaic of natural and biological resources and that are contiguous to other undeveloped lands.**

**Goal OS-2: Emphasize an all-season pedestrian environment within the MVWPSP.**

**Goal OS-3: Create a community and destination that emphasizes the natural environment and the recreational opportunities offered in the immediate area, including regional trails and views of the Martis Valley and Lake Tahoe.**

Policy OS-1: Shift development opportunities from the East Parcel, which is now contiguous to a large expanse of open space, to the West Parcel, which is located in proximity to existing development, public utilities and recreational amenities.

Policy OS-2: Preserve the entire East Parcel and a portion of the West Parcel from future development in perpetuity through the use of a limited conservation easement and/or purchase of the properties by land trusts.

Policy OS-3: Provide an internal network of trails that enable residents and guests to travel to and from commercial and recreational amenities without relying on automobiles.

Policy OS-4: Work with NCSD to identify the appropriate connection from internal trails to regional trail networks.

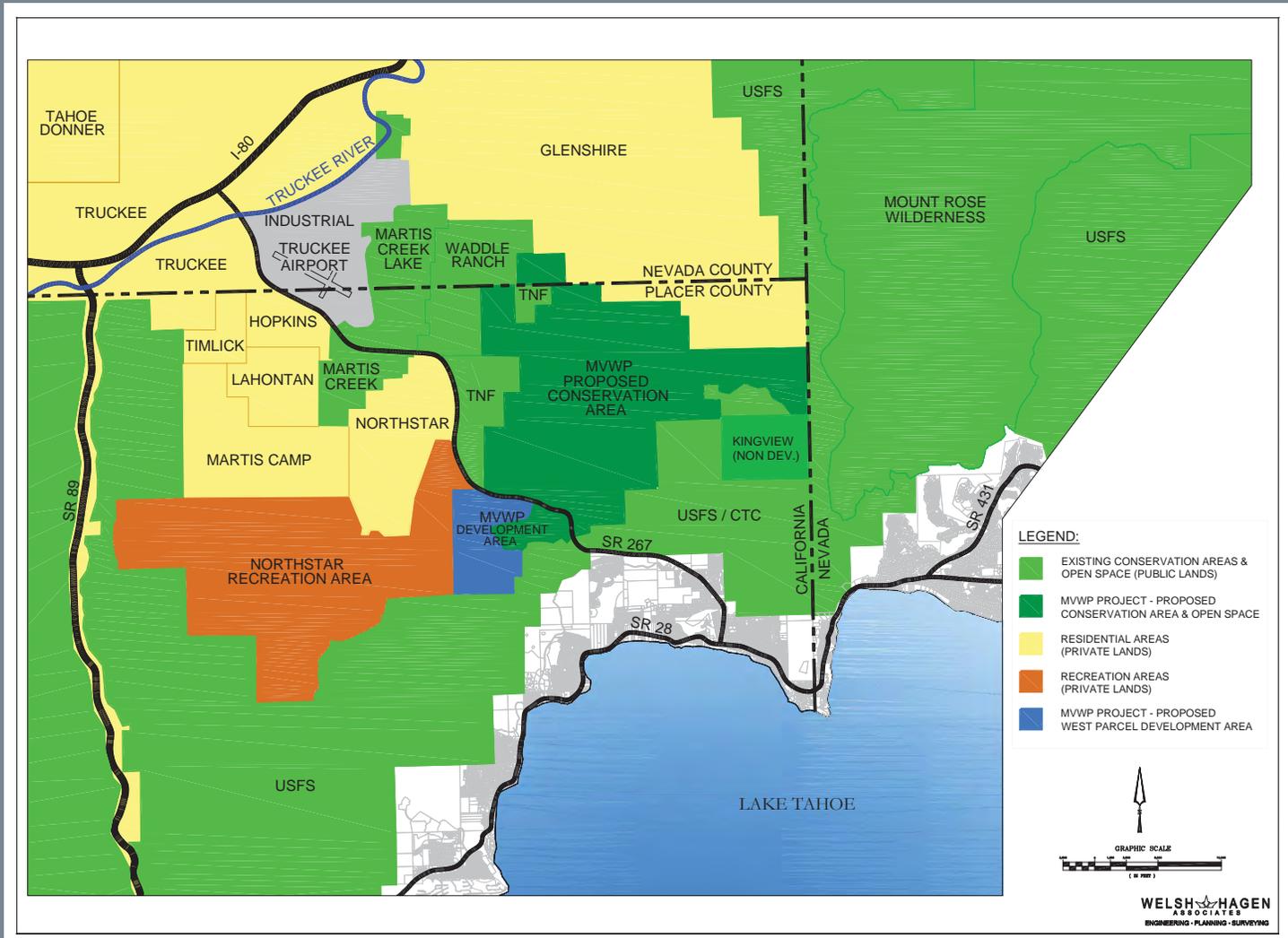


Figure 6-1 Regional Open Space

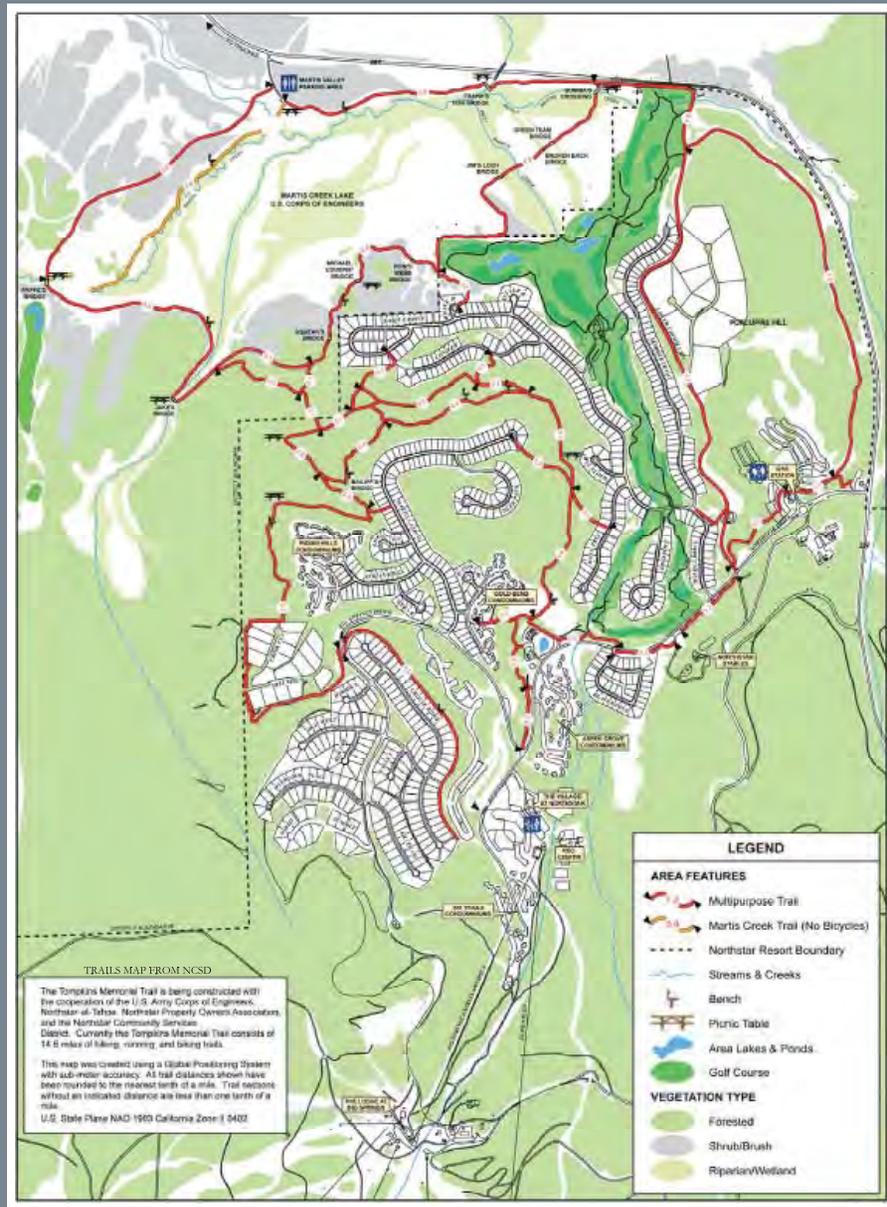


Figure 6-2 Local Trails System  
 Source: Northstar Community Service District

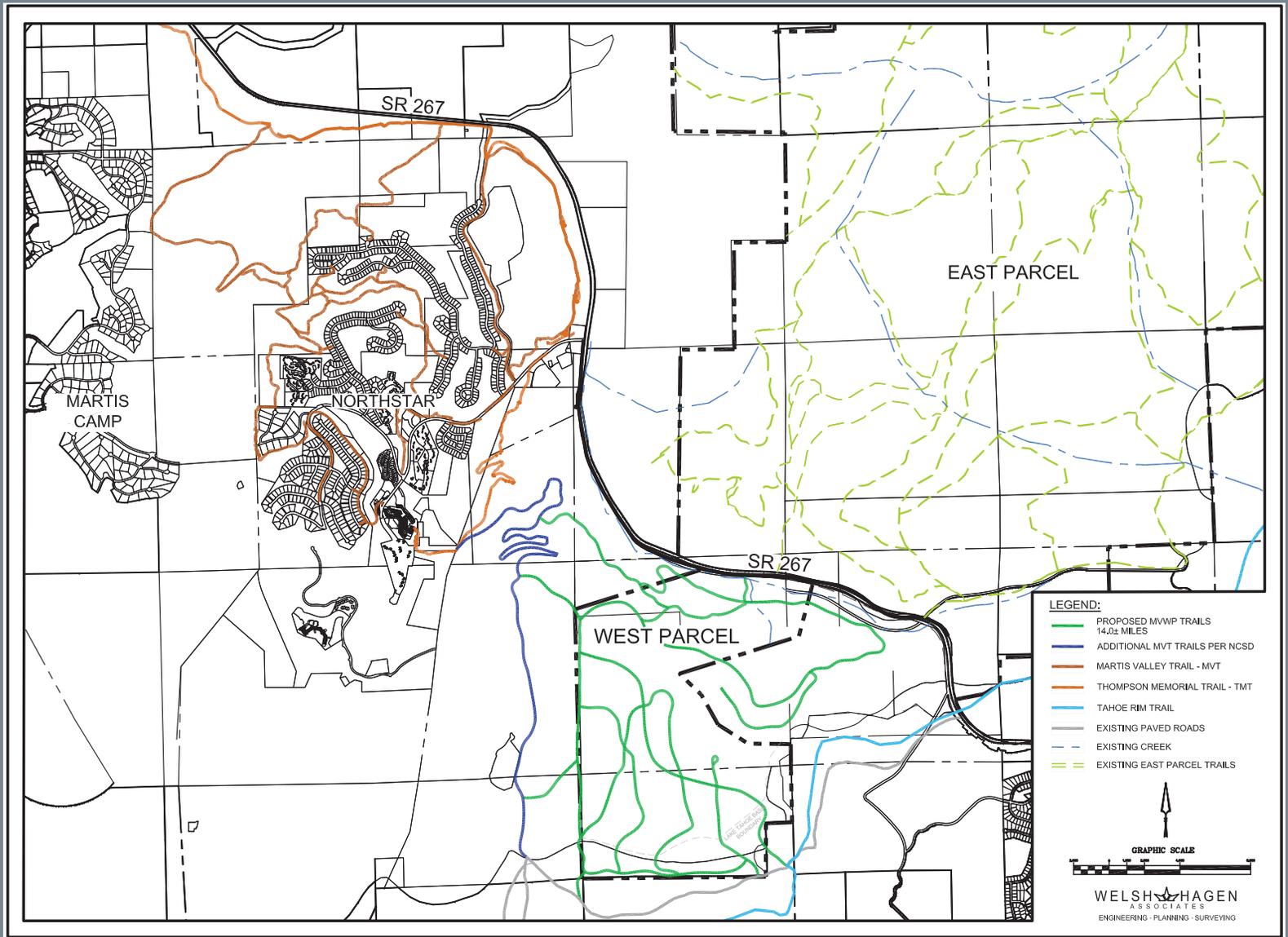


Figure 6-3 West Parcel Proposed Trails

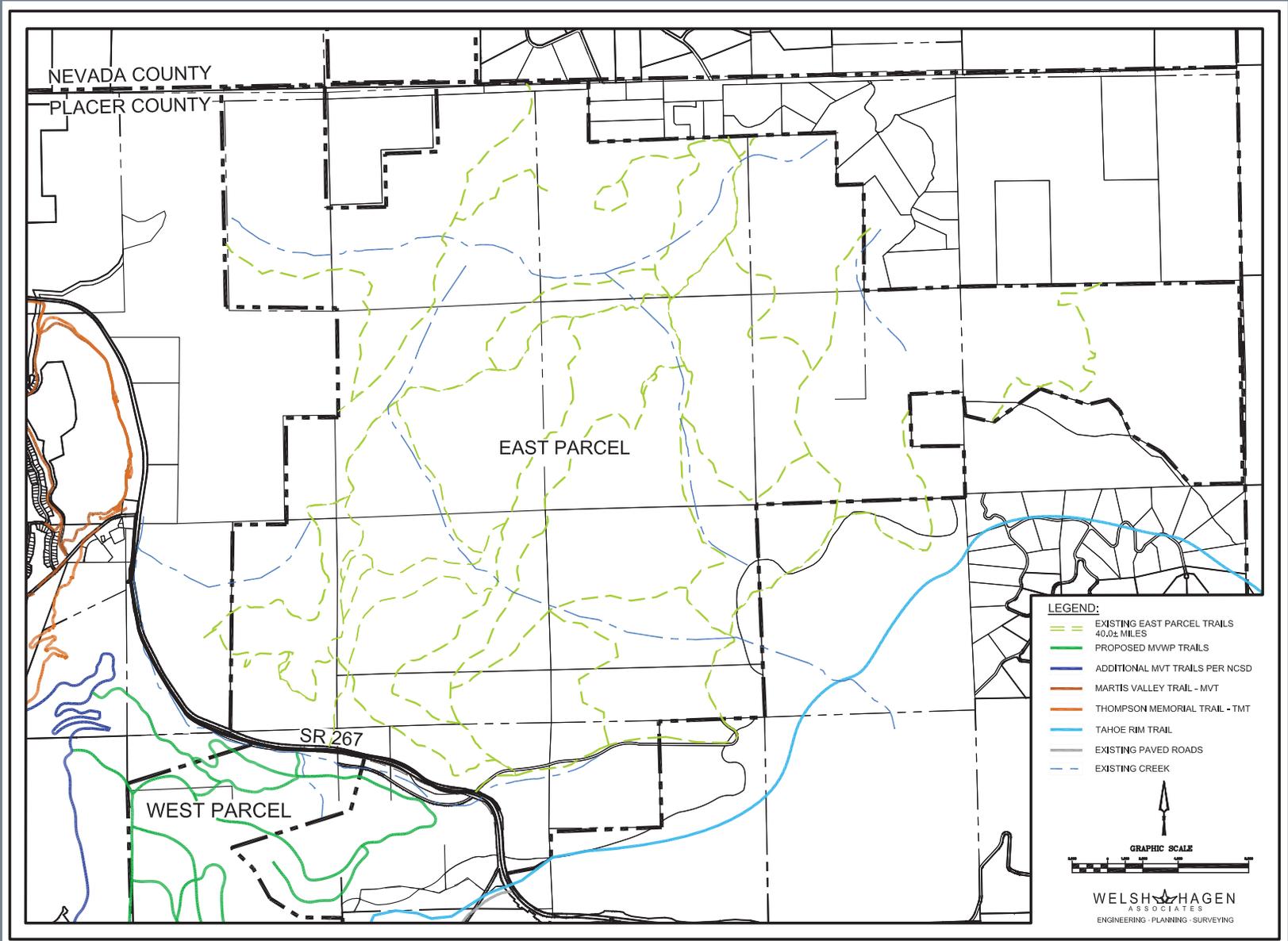


Figure 6-4 East Parcel Trails

Policy OS-5: Provide public access to trails.

Policy OS-6: Offer opportunities for a variety of recreational activities for residents and guests, such as cross-country skiing, biking, hiking, swimming, and tennis.

Policy OS-7: Provide passive recreation facilities (e.g., parks, picnic areas, event lawns) in areas that are easily accessible to residents and guests, and take advantage of the natural environment and proximate amenities.

Policy OS-8: Provide a combination of open space, parks and recreation facilities that meet the County General Plan requirements for parks and open space.

Policy OS-9: Pedestrian and bike trails shall be separated from primary roads unless where feasible while considering topography and other site constraints.

#### 6.4 Designated Open Space

A total of approximately 6,790 acres of open space will be preserved through land use designations and zoning (Forest and TPZ, respectively) and the use of easements or purchase by land trusts. The majority of this land, 6,376 acres, will be on the East Parcel, which is the cornerstone of the 50,000-acre undeveloped area east of SR 267. In addition, approximately 417 acres within the West Parcel would be designated Forest. The 417 acres represent almost 35% of the total West Parcel acreage and almost 53% of total development parcel.

As discussed in Chapter 3, Land Use, the 670 acres within the East Parcel that are designated for residential and commercial development will be re-designated Forest and will be rezoned Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) upon approval of the Specific Plan and the immediate withdrawal of the TPZ of the West Parcel by both the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Forestry. The entire 6,376-acre East Parcel will be conserved through one of two mechanisms. The first is an option agreement for fee-simple acquisition by Truckee Donner Land Trust and the Trust for Public Land, and the second is a Limited Conservation Easement (LCE) which is executed and in escrow.

The two parcels designated Forest within the West Parcel will remain undeveloped. A 352-acre parcel to the east of development parcel will be designated Forest, and will remain undeveloped. A 65-acre parcel to the northwest corner will remain designated forest and undeveloped except for utility infrastructure.

#### 6.5 Trails

New multi-purpose trails will augment existing trails within the MVWPSP to provide connections between MVWPSP neighborhoods and MVWPSP commercial development and recreational amenities (see Figure 6-3). Approximately 14 miles of trails will be developed within the West Parcel. This trail system will provide a substantial recreational amenity in and of itself, and will connect to existing and planned trails at Northstar and the Northstar Village, providing access for residents and guests to the



*The MVWPSP will provide public access to trails and identify the appropriate connection from on-site trails to regional trail networks.*



*Create and promote a multi-use trails system.*

broader regional trails network. NCS D will be consulted regarding the location of internal trails and the most advantageous connections to trails outside of the MVWPSP. The NCS D may construct and/or maintain the trails as well.

Existing access through the West Parcel's trails will be maintained.

## **6.6 Recreational Facilities**

The primary recreational activities undertaken within the MVWPSP residents and guests will be related to the multi-use trail system--winter sports such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing and summer sports such as hiking and biking. The MVWPSP is also proximate to several ski resorts, such as Northstar, and residents and guests are expected to recreate at these resorts as well.

Additional recreational amenities will be provided within the MVWPSP, and could include one or more of the following:

- Passive parks/open space areas,
- Event and yoga lawns,
- Swimming pool/swim, tennis and fitness center,
- Fitness center,
- Tennis courts, and/or
- Basketball or sports courts.

