

# Newsletter #2:

## Existing Conditions Background Report



In May 2023, the County of Siskiyou (the County) began its approximately three year process to update the General Plan and Zoning Code. The Existing Conditions Background Report (Background Report) is the first major deliverable of the Project. This Newsletter provides an overview of General Plan Update Process, a summary of each of the substantive chapters of the Public Review Draft Background Report, and information about next steps in the General Plan Update.

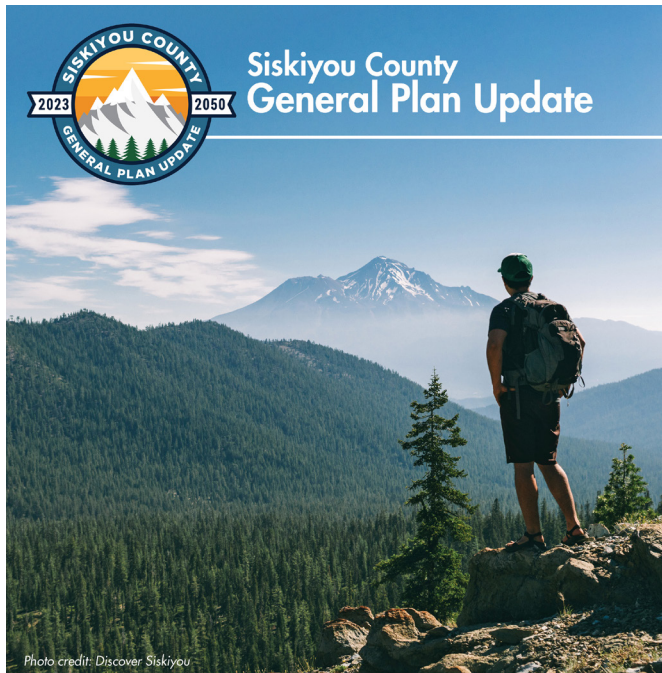
## The General Plan Update Process

The General Plan Update includes seven phases, as outlined here. As of May 2024, the Project is currently wrapping up Phase 2: Existing Conditions Background Report and is moving into Phase 3: Community Vision and Guiding Principles.

In Phase 3, the General Plan Team will work with the community, the Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors to develop a Community Vision and Guiding Principles that will guide the General Plan Update. Upcoming events in Phase 3 include a community workshop series, a meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee, and a study session with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.



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## Visit the Project Website to:

- View and comment on the Public Review Draft Background Report
- Stay informed on the status of the Project
- Find out about upcoming meetings
- Sign up for email updates

**Siskiyou2050.com**

# What is the Background Report?

The Background Report provides a comprehensive summary of current trends and conditions in Siskiyou County. The Report provides a detailed description of a range of topics and decision-makers, residents, and public agencies with context for the draft 2050 General Plan policies. The Background Report also serves as the Environmental Setting section of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the General Plan Update.

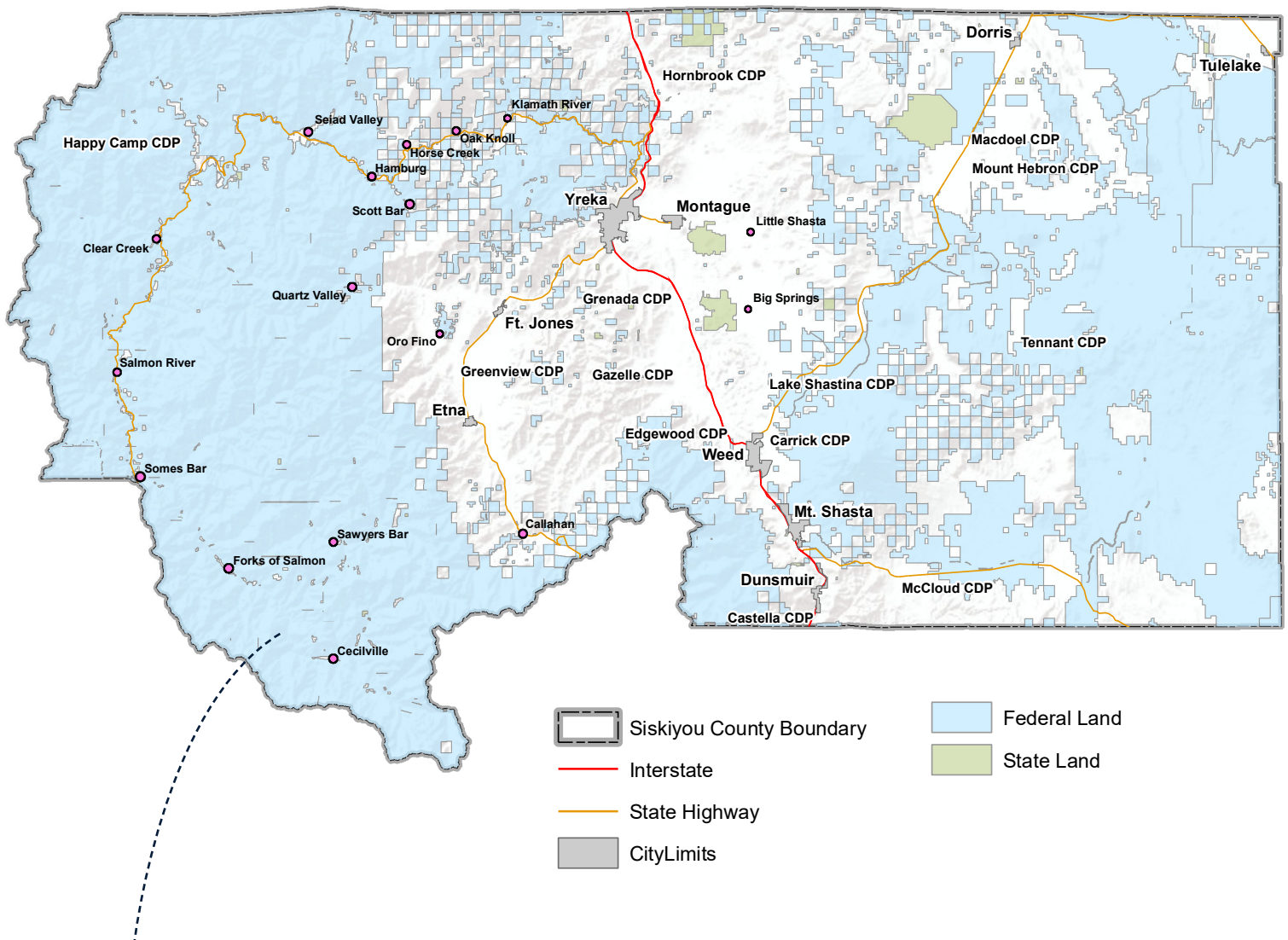
The Background Report includes 10 chapters:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Land Use
- 3 Population, Employment, and Housing
- 4 Economic and Market Analysis
- 5 Circulation and Transportation
- 6 Biological Resources
- 7 Cultural Resources
- 8 Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure
- 9 Safety and Hazards
- 10 Hydrology and Water Quality

The following pages summarize some of the major findings from each chapter of the Siskiyou County Background Report. If you would like to learn more about existing conditions in the county, we encourage you to review the full Report at [siskiyou2050.com](https://siskiyou2050.com)!

# Land Use

The Land Use chapter provides an overview of existing land use and development within Siskiyou County. It covers the General Plan planning area, Census Designated Places within the county, the Siskiyou Local Agency Formation Commission, existing land use categories, existing General Plan and Community Plan land use designations, existing zoning districts, spheres of influence, regional plans, and disadvantaged unincorporated communities. Understanding the type and distribution of existing development in the county is vital to the formulation of an updated land use diagram and development standards for the ongoing General Plan Update.



**60%** of Siskiyou County (**2.5 million acres**) is owned and managed by the State or Federal government. This primarily consists of forest lands.

Siskiyou County has **19** base zones, including two agricultural zones, five residential zones, four commercial zones, and eight other zones related to industrial uses, open space, and public facilities.

About **53%** of unincorporated Siskiyou county is zoned Rural Residential Agricultural (R-R).

About **32%** of unincorporated Siskiyou county is zoned as Agriculture (AG).





## Population, Employment, and Housing

This chapter describes the demographic and housing characteristics of Siskiyou County. Within the context of the General Plan Update, demographic information is used to identify trends and changes in the makeup, composition, and ultimately the demands of Siskiyou County's future population. By studying the existing market and housing conditions in Siskiyou County and the surrounding region, we can better understand the economic strengths and potential areas of growth for the county. Analyzing this demographic data yields important findings relevant to possible shifts in County service demand and to future opportunities for private development investment.



Populations age 65 years and older are a considerably higher proportion in the county and region, compared to California.



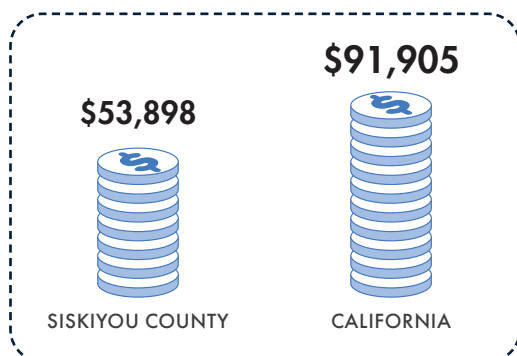
The county and region are similar in having a much higher proportion of owner-occupied housing than California.



In California, about 35 percent of the educated population have bachelors or advanced degrees, compared to 22 percent to 24 percent for the county and region.



Considering race and ethnicity, the county is less diverse than the region, and the county and region are both much less diverse than California.



### Household Income

The median household income in Siskiyou County was \$53,898 in 2022, which was noticeably lower than the statewide median income of \$91,905 in the same year. Both Siskiyou County median and average incomes are generally less than the incomes for the North Valley/North Mountains region.

# Economic and Market Analysis

This chapter provides an overview of potential growth industries in Siskiyou County, as well as more specific market studies for retail, office, industrial and hospitality land uses. The chapter also includes an overview of housing market conditions and ways in which the agricultural sector relates to development opportunities. Local job projections and a real estate market analysis were then conducted to identify business development targets, future employment projections, and opportunities for new office/industrial development in the county. A tourism analysis includes background information about Siskiyou County's visitor-serving economy, with a focus on recent trends in hotel occupancy and potential opportunities for further expansion of visitor services. A housing analysis examines existing conditions, including the high levels of seasonal/second-home use in the county and the challenges associated with expanding housing opportunities.

**Growth in the job market** is expected to put additional stress on the local housing market, which already faces various issues including limited production capacity and a high percentage of homes used for part-time recreational use.

Specialty trade contractors, beverage manufacturing, and merchant wholesalers are expected to see the largest growth of all industrial-oriented sectors, while hospitals and social assistance are expected to see the largest increase in employment among office-oriented sectors.

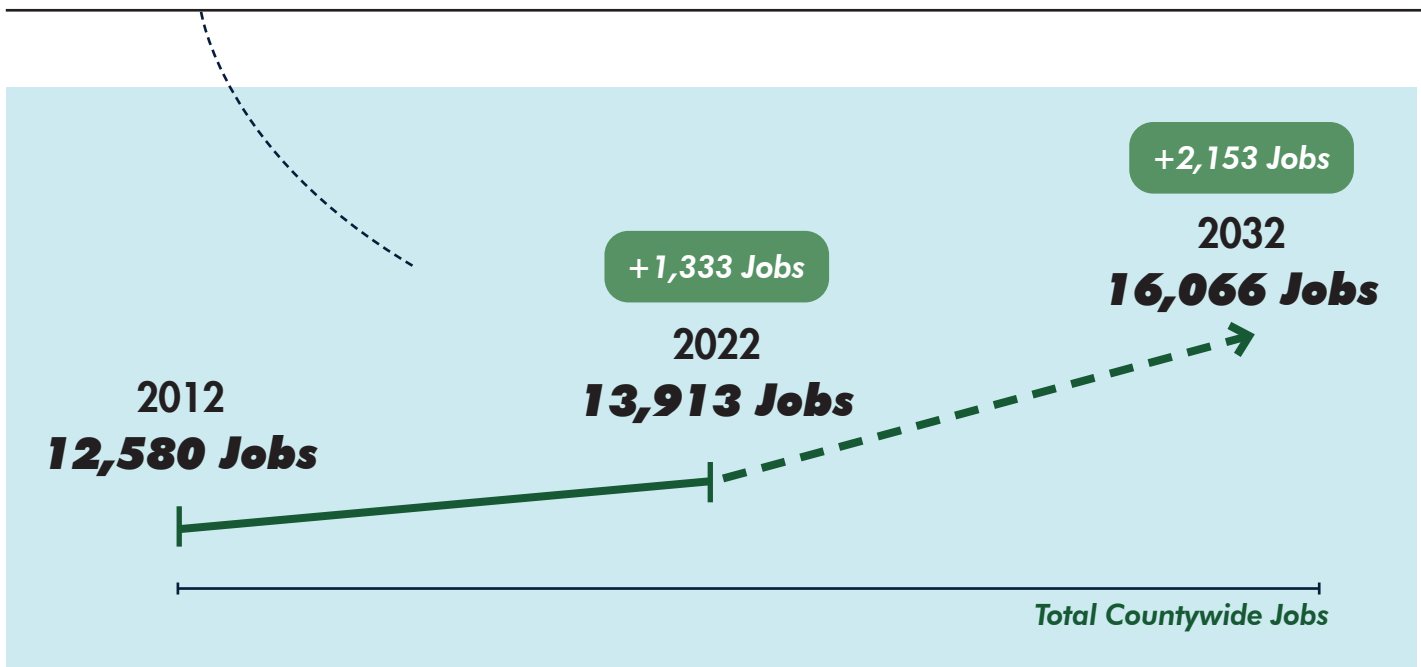


Photo credit: Hornbrook Chevron

## FUN FACT -

Gas stations make up the largest share of taxable sales in Siskiyou County.

# Circulation

This chapter describes the existing conditions of transportation routes and mobility in Siskiyou County. This includes analyses and descriptions of the county's roadways and their functional classifications, trends in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), transit services, rail transportation and goods movements, pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure, aviation transportation facilities and services, and transportation system management. The majority of public roads within the county are maintained by Siskiyou County and federal agencies. These roads account for 49.4 percent and 32.6 percent respectively, of the total road network within the county as of 2021.



In 2021, **76 percent** of residents commuted to work alone in a private vehicle and roughly two thirds of daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) occurred on county roads, while the remaining third occurred on State roads.

**1/2  
JOBS**

In 2020 **nearly half of all jobs** in Siskiyou County were less than 10 miles from the employee's home. This represents a huge opportunity for commute to work modes to shift from private vehicles to transit and active transportation.



Transit ridership has been in decline since 2014, **falling by 69 percent** or about 60,000 annual passenger trips as of 2021.



Truck volumes along I-5 have increased **34 percent** on average from 2013 to 2021.



# Biological Resources

This chapter summarizes agricultural resources, biological resources, open space resources, scenic resources and recreation, mineral resources, and forestry resources in Siskiyou County. Siskiyou County is one of the most ecologically diverse regions in the world, including a range of lakes, dense forests, desert, chaparral, and steep river canyons. It is home to several western mountain ranges, many different habitat types, and has enormous variations in elevation and hydrological and soil conditions. Siskiyou County's diverse landscape and rich soils provides abundant opportunities for agricultural production throughout the county.

The county is home to numerous endangered species including coho salmon, Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, Pacific lamprey, and Klamath River lamprey.



Photo credit: USGS, NOAA Fisheries, High County News

## Cultural Resources



Photo credit: McCloud Historic District

Cultural resources encompass all the physical evidence of past human activity. They are non-renewable resources that are important to the region's history as they tell the story of human past and interaction with the natural environment. This chapter summarizes the cultural and paleontological setting and known resources in Siskiyou County.

Siskiyou County is located in the Northwest Coast Culture Area, which extends from Canada and Alaska. Areas within the county include the traditional territories of the Achomawi (Pit River Tribe), Karuk, Modoc, Shasta, and Wintu groups.

There are a total of 50 known historical resource sites located in Siskiyou County and are listed as National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), and/or a California Historical Landmark.



# Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure

The public facilities, services, and infrastructure in the county are key factors that heavily influence the quality of life, health, and safety of local residents. Understanding the current state and the history of services that protect the well-being of residents helps in anticipating the future needs of their communities and updating the General Plan. This chapter provides an overview of Siskiyou County's public facilities, services, and infrastructure.

Pacific Power is the largest grid operator in the western U.S. and is the only electrical provider in Siskiyou County. Approximately **68%** of Pacific Power's electrical consumption in California was used in Siskiyou County.

In 2023, there were **22 dams** located throughout the county. Three of these dams are a part of the Klamath River Hydroelectric Project, and have been or in the process of being decommissioned. By the end of 2024, Box Canyon Dam will be the last remaining hydroelectric dam in Siskiyou County.

Siskiyou County is home to **25 school districts**, 38 public schools, two charter schools, and two miscellaneous schools serving over 5,865 students from kindergarten to 12th grade.

There are **8 wastewater systems** in Siskiyou County, including those in the city of Dunsmuir, Tulelake, and Yreka, as well as communities serviced by the Grenada Community Services District, Lake Shastina Community Services District, McCloud Community Services District, Happy Camp Sanitary District, and Tennant Community Service District.

The County operates **12 library branches** through the Siskiyou County Library system.

The **Fire Safe Council of Siskiyou County** is a coalition of public and private sector organizations, including the California Department of Forestry, CAL FIRE, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, local governments, Resource Conservation Districts, and the public, all of whom share a common interest in wildfire prevention and loss mitigation.



## DID YOU KNOW?

All fire departments and fire protection districts within Siskiyou County are a part of a mutual aid agreement and often lend assistance to other nearby fire departments across jurisdictional boundaries when requested.







## Safety and Hazards

This chapter describes existing public health and safety issues and concerns relevant to the planning process, such as drought, geologic and seismic hazards, flood hazards, fire hazards, hazardous materials, noise, and air quality.

As part of the Klamath River Renewal Program, new emergency water supplies for firefighting crews will be installed, including hydrants near river crossings and large tributaries, water tanks for ground and aerial crews, and identification of aerial river access points for use by helicopters.

Emergency services are provided by the Siskiyou County Office of Emergency Services (OES), the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office, local fire departments, and hospitals. These organizations use the County's Emergency Preparedness Program to ensure residents and businesses are protected in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency.

## Hydrology and Water Quality

This chapter describes the geographic and regulatory setting for hydrology and water quality in Siskiyou County, including surface and groundwater water resources and reliability, water quality considerations, water conservation measures, flood hazard areas, and water supply. Additionally, water suppliers, treatment, and delivery methods are discussed, both for communities using a community or municipal water provider as well as communities with on-site, individual wells. There are two public water suppliers, four community service districts, and one private company that supply potable and/or irrigation water services to their respective service areas.



Many county residents living in unincorporated communities rely on private wells to access groundwater. As a result, the unincorporated areas of Siskiyou County could face water supply shortages if drought conditions prevent adequate access to water sources.

### DID YOU KNOW?

There are **4** groundwater sustainability plans in Siskiyou County, each with the goal of maintaining groundwater resources in ways that best support the continued and long-term health of the people, the environment, and the economy for generations to come.



There are 2 regional water quality control boards in Siskiyou County, North Coast and Central Valley, and twelve watersheds throughout the county.

# Next Steps: Community Vision and Guiding Principles

## What are the Vision and Guiding Principles?

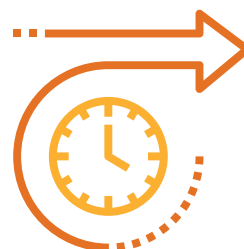
The next phase of the Siskiyou County General Plan involves creating a vision statement and guiding principles designed to reflect what community members value most about their community and the shared aspirations of what they envision their community being in the future. The vision statement should:



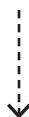
**1. Be inspirational**



**2. Determine key values**



**3. Set aspirations**



Following the creation of the vision statement, the County will then draft the General Plan guiding principles. The guiding principles will be based on the countywide vision and will provide more specific guidance for the development of the General Plan goals, policies, and implementation strategies.



## How Will the County Determine the Vision Statement?

In mid-June, the County will host workshops to solicit feedback from county residents to learn more about what are considered to be the assets, issues, and opportunities in both their local community and the county as a whole. The entire collection of feedback received from the community will then be synthesized into a single countywide vision statement following this workshop series. We hope to see you there!



# Siskiyou County OUTREACH EVENT

## GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS!

The County will facilitate six workshops in locations throughout the county to introduce the General Plan and Background Report. The workshops will present an overview of the project and solicit feedback on the issues, assets, and opportunities in the county. To receive reminders about these and future workshops, please sign up to be on our project e-blast list at [siskiyou2050.com](http://siskiyou2050.com)!

### **Wednesday, June 12, 2024: 6:00pm to 8:00pm**

Fort Jones City Hall - 11960 East St, Fort Jones, CA

Dunsmuir Community Center - 4841 Dunsmuir Ave, Dunsmuir, CA

Gazelle Elementary Grange Hall - 25328 Gazelle Callahan Rd, Gazelle, CA

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### **Thursday, June 13, 2024: 6:00pm to 8:00pm**

Scout Hall - 405 E Colombero Dr, McCloud, CA

Butte Valley Community Center - 52900 Highway 97, Dorris, CA

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### **Thursday, June 20, 2024: 4:00pm to 6:00pm**

The Headway Building, 64101 2nd Avenue, Happy Camp, CA



For more information, visit: [Siskiyou2050.com](http://Siskiyou2050.com)





## How Can You Make a Difference?

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### **PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS!**

The General Plan Update process is an opportunity for community members to guide the county's future. A successful General Plan will reflect the community vision and priorities, and we need public input to create the vision and priorities! Community members can voice their thoughts on this process at workshop events, meetings, and public hearings.

### **VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE**

Check out the project website ([siskiyou2050.com](https://siskiyou2050.com)) to get frequent updates on the status of each project phase, view drafted documents, and learn about any upcoming workshops, meetings, and other ways to stay involved.

### **SIGN UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES**

You can join our email list by visiting ([siskiyou2050.com](https://siskiyou2050.com)). When you sign up, you will get notifications of newly released documents and any opportunities to participate in workshops, meetings, and other events.

### **ATTEND MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS**

Public engagement events are a great opportunity to learn about the General Plan and Zoning Code, connect with other members of the community, and share your ideas about your home county.

## **Questions?**

**Hailey Lang, Deputy Director of Planning**

**530-841-2100 // [generalplan@co.siskiyou.ca.us](mailto:generalplan@co.siskiyou.ca.us)**