

# 1. Steering Committee Meeting #5 Notes

## Multiple Species Conservation Program – North County Plan

### Attendees:

**PDS:** Mary Kopaskie, Peter Eichar, Crystal Benham, Chelsea Oakes, Eira Whitty, Melanie Casey, Tom Oberbauer, Claudia Anzures

**DPR:** Brian Albright, Jennifer Price

**DPW:** Leann Carmichael

**USFWS:** Doreen Stadtlander, Susan Wynn

**CDFW:** Dave Mayer, Carol Williams

**SC:** Eric Larson, Matt Adams, Rikki Schroeder, Brad Bartlett, Dan Silver, Jim Whalen, Frank Landis, Ann Van Leer, Doug Goad

Steering Committee Member:	Question/Comment/Topic:	Response/Way Forward:	Date Action Item Anticipated for Completion:
Susan	On the Covered Species key points sheet, correct the dot point that references the number of Covered Species that are endangered. Not all of the 29 Covered Species are endangered.	Staff misspoke when reading this point which reads, “29 total species - Covers all endangered or threatened species known to exist within Plan Area”. Not all of those proposed as Covered Species are endangered or threatened, however all species known or projected to occur within the Permit Area that are listed as endangered or threatened (under FESA or CESA) are proposed as Covered Species.	No Action
Eric	Regarding agricultural exemptions and mitigation, acreages are authorized specifically for agriculture to provide opportunities for farmers that may otherwise go to developers. Instead of flat acreages, we may be able to explore an incremental step process.	Staff will continue to review and explore options regarding the portions of the plan relating directly to agricultural exemptions. Staff and the Wildlife Agencies will be meeting to discuss agriculture later this month.	June 29 <sup>th</sup>
Frank	From a conservation perspective, a cattle ranch is not the same as agricultural greenhouses.	Though both uses may be considered commercial agriculture, they may also have vastly different impacts to native species. Staff and the Wildlife Agencies will be meeting to discuss agriculture later this month, including the possible value of creating a Grazing Ordinance.	June 29 <sup>th</sup>

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Dan	I'm concerned about the number of acres that may be exempted for agriculture. Natural habitat developed for agricultural purposes is essentially subsidized by the public under this exemption. I'm concerned that a future developer may purchase land used for agriculture and will not be required to mitigate for the original habitat loss that was exempted.	Under the Agricultural Exemption, the development of new agricultural operations or expansion of existing operations requires discretionary approval of an Agricultural Clearing Permit and the property owner must agree that the land will be retained in agriculture for at least ten years. Staff will explore options for tracking agricultural acreages and how the transfer of agriculture to development will be addressed and mitigated.	June 29 <sup>th</sup>
Dave	There needs to be some type of regulation to prevent important habitat from being cleared. Is a separate amount of acreage set aside for the agricultural exemption?	The proposed plan authorizes clearing for agricultural purposes for up to 4,500 acres within the Permit Area, with a maximum of 2,000 acres within the PAMA. Within the PAMA, Tier I vegetation does not qualify for this exemption and the proposed clearing of Tier II/III must be reviewed by the County to determine that the clearing will not jeopardize Covered Species, species-specific conservation measures, and/or Preserve connectivity and ecological functionality. Outside the PAMA, Tier I/II/III (with the exception of riparian or wetland habitat) may be exempted if the County is able to make similar determinations to those made for lands in the PAMA.	No action.
Susan	Should the number of single-family homes allowed be capped under the single family home exemption?	In determining the goal for future public agency acquisition, staff reviewed the General Plan designations and existing parcel sizes to determine the maximum number of possible dwellings to be built out in the Permit Area. Capping the number of single family developments allowed under this exemption may result in the 'taking' of property, requiring the County to compensate for undevelopable properties.	No action.
Brad	Can acreage that was exempted for agriculture and not used be placed back into the bank of exemptible agricultural acreage?	Staff will explore this idea when we discuss agriculture with the Wildlife Agencies later this month.	June 29 <sup>th</sup>

Steering Committee Member:	Question/Comment/Topic:	Response/Way Forward:	Date Action Item Anticipated for Completion:
Dave	Requested additional time to review the previous meeting's notes.	Please provide any comments or corrections by the end of next week.	April 14 <sup>th</sup>
Frank	To clarify from the previous meeting, insurance agencies have a separate idea of what defensible space is compared to the County Fire Marshals. Speaking only to CALFire will not provide the results needed to verify that the defensible space clearance allowed by the plan is sufficient.	Staff will continue to work with appropriate parties to determine how to handle fire clearing and assumptions in the North County Plan.	September 2017
Susan	Does the PAMA include the Baseline and future Preserve? We need to clarify to the Committee and within the document to ensure consistency.	Staff has worked with the Wildlife Agencies and will clarify this discussion during our next Steering Committee meeting.	May 15 <sup>th</sup>
Ann	What has the County done to ensure the Baseline Preserve is protected?	The Baseline Preserve includes County-owned and managed conserved lands, lands protected by open space easements, and properties owned and managed by a land conservancies.	No Action.
Dave	It should be noted that the lands proposed as the Baseline Preserve will not counted towards the Preserve until the Permit is approved.	(Comment)	No Action.
Rikki	I'm still waiting to receive a document that I can sit down and read through with the maps. Until I can read through the plan and ensure it makes sense to me, I can't say I'm 100% comfortable.	Staff is working towards completing a Preliminary Draft that can be provided to the Steering Committee for review and input. Before a draft can be provided to the Committee, several issues have to be worked out with the Wildlife Agencies and the Conservation Analysis has to be rerun to incorporate changes.	August 2017
Doug	How does the model determine the quality of habitat?	When the model is run, it uses several data sets including existing vegetation communities, soil type, patch size, adjacent disturbance, etc. to determine the optimum locations for specific species to occur. We then manually reviewed those locations on the practical side (i.e. removing properties that have been developed).	No Action.

Steering Committee Member:	Question/Comment/Topic:	Response/Way Forward:	Date Action Item Anticipated for Completion:
Frank	To clarify, when you talk about where a species may occur you're basing this determination on today's data and not projecting the effects of climate change?	Correct, we are predicting species distribution based on current data, not based on future climate change projections.	No Action.
Ann	How does the model consider edge effects and evaluate the viability of the land?	The model includes an edge effect analysis using habitat patch sizes.	No Action.
Jim	Is this the same model used on the SCMSCP? How is the SITES model related to the predictive species model? How was it determined how much area needs to be preserved for each species?	We used several models in our conservation analysis. The Predictive Species model that was used in both the SCMSCP and NCMSCP, however we also used the SITES model to determine the PAMA for the NCMSCP. We do not anticipate rerunning the SITES model, but it should be noted that the model has been manually updated with today's data (i.e. developed properties, agricultural lands, etc.)	No Action.
Frank	Regarding Preserve connectivity, the linkages appear to be areas for movement between the Planning Units as opposed to the smaller areas.	That is correct, the identified linkages connect the planning units and provide movement for species within the North County.	No Action.
Brad	How does the Planning Unit approach help achieve goals and objectives of the plan?	The North County Plan will have goals specifically written for each Planning Unit to prevent homogenization of habitat and ensure a distribution of habitat types across the Plan Area.	No Action.
Jim	Can you talk about some of the assumptions you used to create the level of conservation? How did you determine the mitigation ratios? It would be helpful to have a poster showing the planning assumption differences between South and North County.	Staff will provide a summary of the planning assumptions used between the two plans and why they are different. The currently proposed mitigation ratios are the same as those used in the South County Plan.	May 15 <sup>th</sup>
Susan	The Committee should focus on which tools are appropriate or feasible to reach 102,000 acres conserved. We can use the South County mitigation ratios however if those won't accomplish the 102,000 acres, what is the purpose? This group should really focus on what tools can be used to achieve the required Preserve acreage.	The County will continue to discuss acquisition options with the Wildlife Agencies. These tools will also be discussed during the June 29 <sup>th</sup> Steering Committee when we discuss Implementation Documents.	June 29 <sup>th</sup>

Steering Committee Member:	Question/Comment/Topic:	Response/Way Forward:	Date Action Item Anticipated for Completion:
Doug	Are the North County and South County different environmental zones?	Yes, the North and South County have different species, habitats, development patterns, and elevations.	No Action.
Matt	A 75% conservation requirement is infeasible due the existing parcelization of the North County.	The 75% conservation requirement is not written into the North County Plan.	No Action.
Rikki	One thing I will be looking for in the future is some sort of balance in the Plan. What are the beneficial outcomes of the plan and will they outweigh the detrimental effects of the regulations.	(Comment)	No Action.
Doug	The County has worked hard to take both sides of the fence and use a scientific method to compromise between development and conservation. I'm not opposed to either building or development, but I think there needs to be a compromise between the two.	(Comment)	No Action.
Ann	We don't have very many meetings left, so we should focus on what we can agree to and get to those points. We need to determine if this Preserve works biologically and, if so, how we can implement it.	(Comment)	No Action.
Eric	We need to recognize we represent constituencies, but we aren't the constituents. So we need to realize that the decisions we make and discuss here may not be taken as well by others.	(Comment)	No Action.
Dave	One of the messages to the constituencies needs to be that this is different from South County. One of the requirements for NCCP is the linkage to Riverside, which doesn't provide much wiggle room.	(Comment)	No Action.
Ann	How will we address projects in more than one Planning Unit?	Staff is still exploring options for addressing projects that span multiple Planning Units, as well as the possibility of purchasing mitigation credits outside a project's Planning Unit.	June 29 <sup>th</sup>
Rikki	Can you provide and comparison between the North County and South County Implementing Agreement?	Staff is currently drafting the North County Implementing Agreement (IA). The IA will be discussed during our Implementing Documents meeting on June 29 <sup>th</sup> .	June 29 <sup>th</sup>