

Minutes

South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan Steering Committee

September 14, 2005

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

700 H Street, 7th Floor Large Conference Room

Attendee	Affiliation
Anna Whalen	Sacramento County
Curt Campion	City of Galt
Eva Butler	California Native Plant Society
Jack Mulligan	Taylor & Wiley
Jessie Wild	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
John Hodgson	The Hodgson Company
John Hopkins	Institute for Ecological Health
John Lundgren	Sacramento County
Joyce Hunting	City of Rancho Cordova
Leighann Moffitt	Sacramento County
Mike Eaton	The Nature Conservancy
Paul Junker	City of Rancho Cordova
Rich Radmacher	Sacramento County

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by John Hodgson and introductions were made.

Anna Whalen announced that Rich Radmacher was now the Project Manager for the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP).

2. Web-Page Update – Docs Available

Rich Radmacher provided a web-page update stating that the species/habitat documents and draft chapters were now posted. Additionally, he announced that meetings, agendas and minutes will be posted at the same site - <http://www.saccounty.net/planning/habitat-conservation/overview.html>.

John Hopkins reminded the group that the posted documents were in draft form only.

John Hodgson solicited input for the web-page and none was immediately given.

3. Budget/Timeline

Rich Radmacher explained the old budget form tracked the grants and was too detailed. He indicated John Hodgson had provided a preferred budget format and that it would be used in the future. County staff explained that the County Planning Department has made available an Administrative Services Officer III to assist with preparation of the revised budget.

Anna Whalen announced that the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved grant award acceptance for two Section 6 grants totaling approximately \$500,000.

County Staff explained that the first grant would be used to complete the rest of the chapters and prepare a preliminary draft. The second grant would partially fund the EIR/EIS.

County Staff reported that the 404 portion of the project was not funded at this time. John Hodgson stated that depending on the scope of the 404 analysis he may be able to arrange funding. We need to distribute the proposed scope of work for the 404 analysis as quickly as possible.

4. Economic Analysis Request For Proposal (RFP)

John Lundgren reported that the RFP for the economic analysis had been sent out to five companies and that proposals are due by September 23rd at 5:00 pm.

Paul Junker indicated the importance of having an analysis that didn't fall apart if one or more jurisdictions did not participate.

John Lundgren stated that the RFP made it clear that a cornerstone of the plan had to be that it would still function in the absence of one or more jurisdictions.

Paul Junker indicated the RFP made it look as if the economic consultant was going to write the conservation strategy.

County Staff explained that that was not the intent. That the economic consultant would work only on the economics of the strategy but was expected to participate in the iterative process as new ideas came forward.

It was agreed that this would have to be explained clearly to the consultant in the final scoping process.

John Hopkins emphasized that a significant component of the economic analysis will be monitoring and adaptive management. Numerous people in the group nodded and affirmatively acknowledged that we needed a plan that was both biologically and economically acceptable.

Paul Junker asked about the concept of "maximum extent practicable" indicating that perhaps people did not really have a firm definition of the concept.

Jessie Wild stated that she and the Service had an understanding of "maximum extent practicable" as defined by recent court rulings on the subject.

5. Cities Update/Galt SOI & Take Area

Curt Campion explained that Galt's City Council approved Galt's participation in the SSHCP.

Anna Whalen stated that Sacramento County would have to go to their Board to get approval to add Galt to the SSHCP study area. She didn't expect there to be any problem.

Paul Junker stated that the Rancho Cordova City Council would hear the item regarding their participation on October 3rd.

The group had a general inquiry as to whether the City of Elk Grove intended to participate, however no Elk Grove staff attended the meeting.

6. Other Business

Paul Junker stated that 404 permit issues were the biggest deal for Rancho Cordova.

John Hopkins explained the regional 404 approach that the plan is taking and indicated that Placer and East Contra Costa Plans were farthest along on this and served as the best examples.

John Hopkins said that the six-county group that heads up the regional 404 approach would be going back to the South Pacific Division of US Army Corps of Engineers to remind them of the agreements and commitments reached in prior negotiations and are outlined in the white paper.

It was reiterated that we needed a concrete path to 404 and John Hodgson said emphasized the need to scope the 404 process as soon as possible.

7. Recap Assigned Tasks

The next meeting was set for October 12th, 2005 from 11AM-12PM in the large conference room of the County Executive's Office at 700 H St.

County Staff will continue to place updated information on the web-site.

County Staff will prepare a budget handout.

County Staff will prepare and distribute a draft scope of work for the 404 analysis.

County Staff will begin economic consultant selection process and strive to have a recommendation by next meeting.