

Minutes

South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan Steering Committee - October 5, 2006

11:00 AM - 12:30 - 700 H Street, Board Hearing Rm. Two

<http://www.saccounty.net/planning/habitat-conservation/overview.html>

Attendee	Affiliation
Alta Tura	Sacramento Audubon Society
Cynthia Garcia	SOS Cranes
Dan Gifford	California Department of Fish and Game
Duane Paul	ENTRIX
Kate Wheatley	Taylor & Wiley
Jesse Wild	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
John Hodgson	The Hodgson Company
John Hopkins	Institute for Ecological Health
John Taylor	Taylor & Wiley
Joyce Hunting	Rancho Cordova
Judy Waegell	-
Linda Budge	Rancho Cordova City Council
Paul Junker	Rancho Cordova
Rich Radmacher	Sacramento County
Rick Balazs	Sac. Co. Economic Development
Steve Norris	Regional Sanitation District
Steve Pavich	ENTRIX
Vincent King	Sacramento County

1. Call to Order and Introductions

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

2. SSHCP Overview

Rich Radmacher began by describing the history of the SSHCP process explaining that the SSHCP was and is designed to be a permit streamlining tool. He continued to say that while the SSHCP began as far back as 1996, the preliminary document has been produced as a part of a new program that began in 2001. Rich R. reviewed the attached background document.

Paul Junker broached the concept of the SSHCP being a voluntary plan and it was clarified that no person or project would be required to participate in the SSHCP. Applicants will have the option to contact the regulatory agencies to seek permits outside of the SSHCP. It was noted, however that it is the intent of the HCP to craft a permitting process that is quicker and cheaper than the status quo and will thus become the preferred option for mitigation.

John Hodgson asked if we have an Army Corps. representative invited to the Steering Committee meetings. Rich R. said that Kathy Dadey was on training for the week, but would be invited to future meetings where 404 & 401 issues may be discussed.

Joyce Hunting asked if SAFCA would be a party to the plan. It was explained that SAFCA had not shown interest yet, but that it would be logical for them to participate in the plan if they chose to do so. This is also true of other major municipalities such as SMUD and PG&E.

While reviewing the list of covered activities, Paul Junker asked if roads would receive coverage under the plan. It was explained that roads within the Urban Development Area will be covered but that it has not yet been decided if roads outside of the UDA will also have coverage. The list of covered activities would be sent to department heads in the County for revisions and suggested additions.

Concern was expressed by some members that adding other parties as permit holders or expanding permitted activities beyond the UDA could potentially stall the HCP process and would need to be considered carefully.

3. SSHCP Preliminary Draft Outline

Rich R. introduced the preliminary draft document and clarified that this was not an administrative draft, but was intended to initiate discussion and feedback. He reviewed the broad structure of the document that lead into the Conservation and Implementation chapters.

4. Conservation & Implementation Chapters

Conservation - Rich R. reviewed the overall conservation strategy (see Sec. III, pg 4 of attached Background Document). Paul Junker asked for clarification of the statement 'aid recovery of the species.' Rich R. explained that the plan was established to be NCCP like and therefore must aid in the recovery of species. It was also mentioned that developer fees would not be used to cover any additional acquisition beyond their mitigation requirements. John Hopkins noted that aiding in the recovery of species was a very important aspect of the HCP to many stakeholders and helped explain that there are various grants available to approved HCPs for land acquisition. Blue Oak Woodlands were given as an example of where 'above and beyond' preservation would be required. Paul Junker asked to clarify which lands would be counted towards preservation. It was explained that many lands preserved now would be counted towards the overall preservation goals of the HCP.

Rich R. presented preliminary numbers associated with the costs of the SSHCP. John Hodgson mentioned that this plan was not something that could be done cheaply, but stressed that it would have to make sense from all perspectives. He said that development interests would begin to look at these numbers to see how it will function. Rich R. noted that these numbers are very preliminary and that they were based on a single tier system and the final costs would be based on a multiple tier system. Also, Steve Pavich mentioned that the fee numbers would need to be re-calculated without the 'above and beyond' preservation component. John Hodgson affirmed that the economic sub-committee was needed. (An Econ-sub meeting was scheduled for Tuesday October 24, from 10-12).

Plan Implementation - Rich R. prefaced this discussion to say that we need to engage the HCP partners to help develop the implementation mechanisms and entity. He then reviewed Section V, Plan Implementation, of the attached background document. John Hodgson asked if there were any good guidelines or other plans we could learn from. Jesse Wild responded to say that there are no specific guidelines and that HCPs have developed a wide array of implementing strategies. John Hodgson and Paul Junker helped explain details of the Natomas Basin HCP, which is directed by a board appointed by the permit holders. Linda Budge asked if the Natomas Board is subject to the Brown Act and Paul Junker explained that they choose to abide by the act. The group proceeded reviewing other HCPs such as those in

San Joaquin and Yolo Counties. John Hodgson asked if there was any group that could provide a recommendation. Rich R. said he would first like to do some research and ask the participating Cities about their view of how to implement the plan. Linda Budge suggested presenting four examples of different structures and showing how they succeed and fail. She also thought that the difficulty of working through a JPA should be conveyed particularly voicing the concern that each jurisdiction put in equivalent resources to what they receive. Jesse Wild said she could put the County in contact with people who have worked on other HCPs.

The conversation shifted towards how to achieve particular conservation goals. Rich R. presented the example of how to provide incentives for the conservation of higher category VWADI. John Hopkins noted that many HCPs have taken a wrong step by allowing areas of high conservation value to be developed early in their implementation and that it was important to ensure a strong understanding is developed early in the process. Paul Junker said that there is a definite need to create incentives, but proposing varying ratios would be a tracking nightmare. John Hodgson mentioned that people have become accustomed to preserving roughly ½ on site, but disincentives like 7:1 mitigation ratios would be a red flag.

5. Recap/other business

An economic sub-committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for the morning of October 24th.

John Hodgson requested an e-mail be sent out with the background document and that it be put on-line.

Rich Radmacher suggested that the group begin reviewing chapters in subsequent Steering Committee meetings. He said that chapters would be e-mailed a month in advance of the meeting so that people could prepare and have comments developed before hand.

The next steering committee meeting is set for Thursday November 2, 2006 from 11:00-12:30. The meeting will be held in the 7th floor CEO-Large Conference Rm. of the County Administration Building at 700 H Street, downtown Sacramento.