

**MEETING NOTES**  
**East Alameda County Conservation Strategy**  
**Steering Committee Meeting**  
**October 6, 2009**

**Attendees**

Liz McElligott – Alameda County  
John Hemiup – Alameda County Congestion Management Agency  
Jim Robins – Alameda County Conservation Partnership  
Brian Mathews – Alameda County Waste Management Authority  
Mark Lander – City of Dublin  
Eric Brown & Steve Stewart – City of Livermore  
Liam Davis & Marcia Grefsrud – DFG  
Troy Rahmig – ICF Jones & Stokes  
Brian Wines - RWQCB  
Cay Goude & Kim Squires – USFWS  
Mary Lim - Zone 7

- 1) DRAFT Conservation Goals and Objectives
  - a) The Draft Conservation Goals and Objectives will be the backbone of the Conservation Strategy.
  - b) Ground truthing (see Objective 6.1 as an example) is meant to catch nuances not caught during digitizing effort and would be done during project level analysis.
    - i) The information from project ground truthing would be used to update an EACCS database, which would track the progress of EACCS.
    - ii) Ground truthing will help us better understand species composition.
  - c) Question regarding Altamont Wind Resources Area (AWRA) HCP/NCCP and its relation to EACCS
    - i) EACCS and the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP are guiding documents for the AWRA HCP/NCCP.
    - ii) The data from the AWRA HCP/NCCP may be the first opportunity to update the EACCS database.
  - d) Recovery Plans are referenced in these goals and objectives.
    - i) Recovery plans are very broad and EACCS refines it for our area.
  - e) Action item: Submit comments to Mary & Troy by Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.
  
- 2) Avoidance Measures and Mitigation Guidance Memo
  - a) This memo provides two options for scoring impact and mitigation sites for consideration.
    - i) The scoring system provides an indication of the quality of the site.
    - ii) The scores could be incorporated into project CEQA documents.
    - iii) Should consider creating two scoring systems, one for the impact site and the other for the mitigation site. Want to be sure that project proponents do not try to hide data for the impact site in an attempt to get a lower score for the impact site quality.
  - b) The memo also provides a proposed table of mitigation ratios.
    - i) This table focuses on the geography between the impact and mitigation site.
  - c) Want to ensure that mitigation and conservation projects link existing preserves and corridors as much as possible. Where linkages are provided, ratios should be lower.
  - d) These tables should consider protecting existing and potential beneficial uses, which are Regional Board's focus. In addition, for aquatic species, Regional Board has a no net loss policy.

- e) With regard to steelhead, incorporate Draft Steelhead Recovery Plans into the mitigation guidance.
    - i) Need to note that NMFS will have to do a separate section 7.
  - f) Action items
    - i) Develop a hybrid scoring system
      - (1) Evaluate impact and mitigation site value
      - (2) Plug score into the broader mitigation ratio (this will help inform project biological assessments)
    - ii) Develop scenarios, using an existing project and creek/stream restoration project, and run them through the scoring system
- 3) CNPS Presentation on Priority Protection Area Project (Lech Naumovich & Heath Bartosh)
- a) This project started as part of the Bay Area Open Space – Upland Habitat Goal Project.
  - b) Although the focus of this work is on plant species, CNPS evaluated areas that served as habitat for special status species as well.
  - c) Based on currently available species information, CNPS identified large areas that have a high value. These areas are where conservation efforts should be focused.
  - d) It was noted that setting minimum conservation acreage targets could convey the wrong message to developers – that this is all we need to conserve.
  - e) However, we need to make clear that assumptions supporting target acreage are based upon existing plans over a specified planning horizon.
  - f) Troy will work with CNPS to incorporate CNPS map and data to determine conservation priority areas.
- 4) Implementation Subcommittee Update
- a) This chapter should be written in a way that it can be pulled out and used as a how to implement the strategy guidance document for planners “at the counter”.
  - b) Introduction to chapter should point out what the Conservation Strategy does and does not do. Some of this will be a repeat of Chapter 1 but it should be included if this chapter is going to be referenced without context.
  - c) FWS recommended that there is essentially a checklist of things that project proponents need to bring to the process of project approval right from the start. Basically this would be a users database and checklist for local jurisdiction planners. FWS recommended that the Steering Committee look at the draft Implementation chapter of the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan for examples of that. Troy will distribute to the Implementation Subcommittee.
  - d) CDFG recommended that the Steering Committee look at the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) website for ideas of how unique conservation programs can work.
  - e) Include description of what we have done in the past to show how EACCS will be better. A comparative process flow chart could be used to illustrate this.
  - f) Regional Board pointed out that reference to the Porter Cologne Act was currently missing from the outline.
  - g) FWS mentioned that while most of their permits could be handled under a programmatic Biological Opinion, consultations with NMFS would still need to occur using individual Section 7 consultations as before.
  - h) FWS has guidance on mitigation banking that will be informative.
- 5) Upcoming Meetings
- a) UAG Meeting: Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> @ 2 pm; Location: City of Dublin Library Community Room

- i) Agenda: Discuss Draft Conservation Goals and Objectives
- b) Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>