

## Example Covered Species Conservation Strategy Summary

*Note to Reviewers: the following is a draft example of the contents of a covered species conservation section of Administrative Draft HCP/NCCP Chapter 5, Conservation Strategy. The outline will continue to develop as the planning process proceeds and is subject to change.*

### 5.6 Conservation of Covered Species

This section will describe the section contents and direct the reader to all locations of relevant information provide elsewhere in the Butte Regional HCP/NCCP document.

#### 5.6.X Tricolored Blackbird

##### 5.6.X.X Summary of Goals, Objectives, and Conservation Measures

**Goal TRBL1:** Maintain or increase the extent of tricolored blackbird habitats to potentially increase the abundance and distribution of breeding and wintering tricolored blackbirds in the Planning Area.

**Objective TRBL1.1:** Identify and preserve active tricolored blackbird breeding colonies and identified patches of suitable breeding habitat with minimum patch size of 0.5 acres on lands preserved under the Plan.

**Target:** Protect 100 percent of active colony sites.

**Distribution:** Any CAZ where active colonies are located.

**Conservation Measures (see Section 5.X for full text description of conservation measures):**

**LAND CM1:** Conduct pre-land acquisition surveys.

**LAND CM2:** Acquire or enter into conservation easements for the preservation of oak woodland and savanna, grassland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic natural communities.

**AGLA CM6:** Enter into conservation easements to protect remnant habitats on farmlands.

**Objective TRBL1.2:** Enhance a total of  acres of emergent wetland and willow scrub vegetation with minimum patch sizes of 0.5 acre that provide tricolored blackbird nesting habitat distributed within the Planning Area as indicated in Table 5.X.1 [to come].

**Target:** Enhance  acres of nesting habitat.

**Distribution:** See Table 5.X.1 [to come].

**Conservation Measures (see Section 5.X for full text description of conservation measures):**

**LAND CM1:** Conduct pre-land acquisition surveys.

**LAND CM2:** Acquire or enter into conservation easements for the preservation of oak woodland and savanna, grassland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic natural communities.

**LAND CM6:** Develop and implement preserve-specific management plans.

**WETL CM1:** Enter into conservation easements with water and irrigation districts to preserve and enhance wetland habitats along canals.

**WETL CM3:** Manage wetland habitats.

**AGLA CM6:** Enter into conservation easements to protect remnant habitats on farmlands.

**TRBL CM1:** Enhance emergent wetland habitats on preserve lands (WETL CM3) to provide breeding habitat for tricolored blackbirds.

**Objective TRBL1.3:** Annually provide a minimum of  acres of tricolored blackbird foraging habitat distributed within the Planning Area as indicated in Table 5.X.2 [to come].

**Target:** Protect 50% of breeding and foraging habitat.

**Distribution:** See Table 5.X.2.

**Conservation Measures (see Section 5.X for full text description of conservation measures):**

**LAND CM1:** Conduct pre-land acquisition surveys.

**AGLA CM1:** Establish a rice lands preservation program.

**AGLA CM2:** Enter into in-perpetuity conservation easements for rice Lands.

**AGLA CM3:** Enter into short-term conservation easements for rice lands.

**AGLA CM4:** Enter into in-perpetuity conservation easements for non-rice/orchard/vineyard irrigated crops.

**Table 5.X.2. Tricolored Blackbird Habitat Conservation Objectives by Conservation Acquisition Zone**

Conservation Acquisition Zone	Rationale for CAZ Distribution: Tricolored blackbird habitat occurs mainly in the Basin, Sacramento River, Cascades, and Sierra CAZs, and to a lesser extent in the Northern Orchard and Southern Orchard CAZs due to the predominance of unsuitable orchard-dominated agriculture. While the Basin CAZ supports the largest extent of agricultural foraging habitat, the rice-dominated agriculture provides less value during the spring and summer months when the rice fields are flooded than do the seasonal wetland, pasture, and grassland habitats that are found primarily in the Sacramento River, Cascades, and Sierra CAZs. This may also explain, in part, why there are no reported occurrences of breeding colonies within the Basin CAZ. However, the southern end of the Basin CAZ supports primarily wetland habitats, much of which may be available as both breeding and foraging habitat for tricolored blackbirds. Thus, tricolored blackbird conservation emphasizes the Cascade, Sierra, and Sacramento River CAZs where the majority of reported breeding colonies have been documented. Conservation within the Basin CAZ, which includes the largest number of conservation acres (although proportionately less) will focus on the managed wetland habitats in the southern portion of the Planning Area.		
	Total (acres)	Target (percent of total acres)	Total Conserved <sup>1</sup> (acres)
Sierra Foothills	54,549	50	27,275
Cascade Foothills	47,517	50	23,759
Northern Orchards	12,457	30	3,737
Southern Orchards	9,854	40	3,942
Basin	131,909	30	39,573
Sacramento River	15,274	50	7,637
Total	271,560		105,923

<sup>1</sup> Includes existing tricolored blackbird habitat areas.

**5.6.X.X Summary of Impacts**

This section will summarize impacts identified in Chapter 4, *Impact Assessment and Estimated Level of Take*.

**5.6.X.X Expected Outcomes**

This section will describe the expected population level of effects on the species with full implementation of the covered activities and conservation measures. This section will also describe why the proposed conservation for the species achieves the NCCP standard for conservation and the portion of proposed habitat conservation that serves as mitigation under ESA section 10.