

# Handout #1

## Meeting #36 Summary

Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP)

Stakeholder Committee Meeting

May 4, 2010, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

BCAG Conference Room

### Stakeholder Committee Attendees

Mary Daniels (Butte Co. Ag. Dept.)	Scott McNall (CSU Chico)
Woody Elliott (CNPS)	Suellen Rowlinson (CNPS)
Virginia Getz (Ducks Unlimited)	Ted Trimble (Western Canal Water District)
Phil Johnson (Altacal Audubon Society)	

### Resource Agencies Attendees

Nina Bicknese (USFWS)	Jenny Marr (DFG)
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### Steering Committee and Staff Attendees

Jon Clark (BCAG)	Juan Pablo Galván (SAIC)
Chris Devine (BCAG)	Pete Rawlings (SAIC)
	Jim Estep (Estep Consulting)

### Interested Public Attendees

Rob Capriola (Westervelt Ecological)	Gregg McKenzie (Restoration Resources)
Linda Dahlmeier (Mayor, Oroville)	B. Vlamis (Aqualliance)
Jody Galloway (Galloway Consulting)	Lauren Wemmer (Eco-Analysts)
Rodney Lacey (Eco-Analysts)	Chris Winkle (Galloway Consulting)

### Associated Documents/Handouts

Agenda packet including:

1. Chapter 5. *Conservation Strategy* – PowerPoint (Handout #1)
2. Meeting Notes from March 2, 2011 Stakeholder Meeting (Handout #2)

### Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions and Agenda Review
2. Updates on Independent Science Advisors and other processes
3. Overview and discussion of revisions to Chapter 5, *Conservation Strategy* – PowerPoint Presentation (Handout #1)
4. Meeting Notes from March 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #2)
5. USFWS/DFG/NMFS Items for Discussion
6. Action Items and Next Meeting Agenda

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## **Introductions and Agenda Review**

The agenda was distributed and the names of attendees were introduced.

## **Updates on Independent Science Advisors and Other Processes**

It was explained that a ISA panel was assembled to provide recommendations to Sections 5.1-5.5 of the draft Chapter 5, *Conservation Strategy*. On April 18, the panel received Chapter 5 in its entirety as well as Chapter 3, *Ecological Baseline Conditions*, and Appendix A, *Covered Species Accounts*, to provide context and background information. It is anticipated that the ISA report presenting its recommendations will be available for discussion by the Stakeholder Committee at its July meeting.

It was announced that BCAG is planning on holding public workshops on the BRCP Conservation Strategy following completion of the ISA report. Workshops would likely be held in June or July and continue until August or the beginning of the fall. It was commented that if the entire document will be reviewed during the public meetings then a short list of frequently asked questions would be helpful in facilitating understanding of the BRCP. It was also commented that during the public workshops it should be made very clear that the BRCP is a process in which landowner participation is voluntary and that the plan is an iterative process that is open to input from stakeholders and the general public.

It was announced that the full draft BRCP document would be presented to the Stakeholder Committee in June, though it may not include sections of the plan dealing with costing and Butte County meadowfoam.

It was announced that preparation of some sections of the EIS/EIR is underway and that the Army Corps of Engineers permitting process is moving forward. More detailed information would likely be brought to the Stakeholder Committee next month.

## **Overview and Discussion of Revisions to Chapter 5, Conservation Strategy (PowerPoint Presentation)**

SAIC delivered a PowerPoint presentation summarizing revisions to the September 27, 2010 draft BRCP Chapter 5, *Conservation Strategy*. It was explained that the details of the Plan will continue to evolve but the basic structure of the BRCP Conservation Strategy is there.

A question was raised about habitat conservation percentage targets for vernal pools and vernal pool species relative to the recovery targets identified in the vernal pool recovery plan. It was explained that the BRCP percentages of habitat to be conserved for vernal pool species were meant to meet the overall acreage targets for vernal pool species required under the recovery plan without limiting conservation to recovery core areas. Basically the minimum percentage of conservation that must occur in core areas will be met and the rest of the conserved acreage target could be met outside of core recovery areas. This adds flexibility to BRCP implementation while still ensuring conservation in recovery core areas. It was commented that further

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explanation of how recovery plan goals would be met without limiting conservation to core areas may be beneficial. DFG explained that there is a constant checks and balances process to ensure that NCCPs provide for the conservation of the species before the habitat impacts resulting from covered activities occur.

It was explained by DFG that since 2005 there has been a certain amount of vernal pool habitat that has already been lost and therefore things have changed since its publication; in other words the baseline has been reset. It was explained that habitat extent for the BRCP is based on 2007 aerial photos and it was commented that other HCPs have updated their photo and GIS data each year to track how much habitat has been lost (or newly protected) so that the shifting baseline is effectively tracked. It was explained that calculations of current protected habitat have been made and are mapped.

A question was raised about the objective dealing with protection of stream reaches and if one or both sides of the stream required is to be protected. It was agreed that this objective and others dealing with linear miles of habitat would be reviewed further. USFWS also commented that some objectives might not be measurable and may be discussed further.

It was explained that comment forms were available on the website for people to submit their thoughts and comments later outside of today's meeting. All Stakeholder comments will be posted to the BRCP website and reviewed in subsequent Stakeholder Committee meetings.

It was explained that there would be ongoing revisions and discussion of the conservation strategy in technical meetings with USFWS, NMFS, and DFG. Questions were raised on the blank spaces for the habitat restoration targets and how comments and questions would be addressed. It was explained that disposition forms stating how a comment was addressed or why it was rejected would be made and that discussions and revisions of the strategy would take place through technical meetings. It was also explained that restoration targets were left blank pending the impact analysis and that this was made clear to the ISA. These values would be added to the document later. It was also explained that the values currently in the document do not include the activities associated with new BRCP participants and that this would be assessed later, but the numerical values presented in the plan today will probably not change very much.

DFG commented that a new occurrence of western spadefoot toad had been detected across from the Chico Airport to the east on the DFG preserve lands.

USFWS commented that there has been recent guidance that covered activities be described in and assessed in greater detail and this may require further descriptions and details of covered activities for the new applicants and the BRCP in general. It was confirmed that no water transfers by the water districts would be covered under the BRCP.

DFG raised a question on what the definition of "existing protected lands" is under the BRCP and explained that even DFG lands may not necessarily be considered protected for the covered species (e.g., recreational lands that are managed for public use and not managed for the conservation of covered species). It was explained that management of protected areas is represented in the categorization hierarchy of protected lands. It was also explained that

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protected lands as they are defined in the BRCP are lands that will stay in the same land use (e.g., not be developed) independent of what the land is managed for, and that lands protected by the BRCP will be managed for covered species. There was discussion on the utility and practicality of taking management into account when defining lands as protected or not and information related to management, especially grazing, was available on the BRCP website in the Other Documents section in the first report from the Science Panel.

## **Meeting Notes from March 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #2)**

The meeting notes from March 2, 2011 were approved.

## **USFWS/DFG/NMFS Items for Discussion**

USFWS reiterated that they are being given direction to ensure the Plan is clear and hence would pay special attention to definitions of conservation measures and the inclusion of measurable objectives. Overall the USFWS indicated that they are pleased with how the BRCP is developing.

## **Action Items and Next Meeting Agenda**

The date of the next Stakeholder Committee meeting is June 1, 2011.