

Meeting Summary

Butte Regional HCP/NCCP

Stakeholder Committee Meeting

August 13, 2008, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

BCAG Conference Room

Stakeholder Committee Attendees

Scott McNall (CSU Chico)	Phil Johnson (Altacal Audubon)
Richard Price (Butte County Ag. Commission)	Colleen Cecil (BC Farm Bureau)
Virginia Getz (Ducks Unlimited)	Jeff Mott (Alternate, CSU Chico)
Suellen Rowilson (CNPS)	Pia Sevelius (RCD)

Resource Agencies Attendees

Jenny Marr (DGF)	Nina Bicknese (USFWS)
Julie Cunningham (DFG)	

Steering Committee and Staff Attendees

Jane Dolan (BCAG/ Supervisor)	Pete Rawlings (SAIC)
Jon Clark (BCAG)	Jim Estep (SAIC)
Chris Devine (BCAG)	Holly Wilson (SAIC)
Paul Cylinder (SAIC) (Phone)	

Interested Public Attendees

Dylan Paul (Horning Family Lands)	Robert Capriola (Westervelt Ecological Services)
Riley Swift (Restoration Resources)	Chris Swift (Restoration Resources)
Jamison Watts (No. Calif Regional Land Trust)	

Associated Documents/Handouts:

1. Agenda packet including: Conservation Measures for Basin CAZs and Giant Garter Snake; Spatial requirements of cover species and planning species; Revised Biological goals and objectives, Draft Newsletter Summer 2008, and Meeting Notes from June 4, 2008

2. Additional Handout: Comments on draft Biological Goals and Objectives

Action Items and Key Recommendations:

- The next Stakeholder meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, 11:00 am- 3:00 pm, at BCAG.

Meeting Agenda:

- Introductions
- Butte County General Plan – Board of Supervisors Preferred Land Use Alternative
- Update on Other General Plan Processes
- Conservation Measures for Basin CAZs and Giant Garter Snake
- Existing protected land categories – update on private easements
- Spatial requirements of covered species and planning species (Attachments #1a-c)
- Revised Biological Goals and Objectives (Attachment #2)
- Draft Newsletter Summer 2008 (Attachment #3)
- Update on General Plan Processes
- Meeting Notes from June 4, 2008 (Attachment #4)
- Action Items and Next Meetings

Butte County General Plan—Board of Supervisors Preliminary Preferred Land Use Alternative

- Jane Dolan and Chris Devine presented preliminary land use alternatives of the Butte County general plan. The county should have an EIR/EIS by the end of 2009.
- HCP EIR will address air quality and climate change.

Update on General Plan Processes:

- Chris Devine indicated Chico City Council will have their preferred land use alternatives at their September 16 meeting. The HCP can now move forward with the Impact Analysis and other Administrative Draft documents.
- The City of Chico's schedule for their general plan will affect the BCAG HCP/NCCP process of developing the Impact Analysis chapter of the plan. The EIR/EIS for BCAG is a separate effort but will rely heavily on the EIR/EIS endeavors of the County and city general plans (incorporated by reference).
- Jenny Marr suggested that trends of water transfers from rice fields may have a major effect on Butte County habitats. In addition, the activities of the Irrigation

and Reclamations districts are complex and will engender complex effects, including effects on take.

Conservation Measures (CM) for Basin CAZs and Giant Garter Snake

- Stakeholder members discussed CAZ map status. The maps will be updated now that the general plans are out.
- Pete Rawlings presented the handout on conservation measures. Species and natural community conservation will be addressed by conservation measures at 3 ecological levels (scales): landscape, natural community, and species specific. A sample template was provided that highlighted conservation measures for the Giant Garter Snake.
- Stakeholder members discussed issues raised by the presentation including: the process for mitigation, take, assistance of DFG with standards and funding of mitigation, working with willing landowners, land banks, work of land conservation industry, influence of others not on the permit and how they affect species.
- Stakeholder members discussed the rationale for conservation measures presented on basin habitats and giant garter snake, the need to develop a relationship with the agriculture industry to address giant garter snake conservation over the long term, conservation easements and incentives (especially with rice farmers), how to address adaptive management, determining how much land is needed for conservation, importance of habitat connectivity, important need for acquiring core preserves, addressing conservation needs of different habitats within a natural community.
- Jim Estep provided an overview of the natural community component of the handout.
- Pete Rawlings provided an overview of the species level conservation measures.
- Jenny Marr requested moving GGSN CM1 to go *after* “Avoidance and Minimization Measures”.
- Colleen Cecil suggested adding irrigation districts to the plan.

Existing protected land categories—An update:

- Pete Rawlings presented the updated existing protected land categories. Chris McColl, of SAIC, had contact with Jamison Watts to assist with the adjustment of the categories. The comments were incorporated into the document.

Spatial requirements of covered species and planning species:

- Stakeholder members discussed how spatial requirements of covered species and planning species were developed and how these will be used to help develop conservation measures. They can be used to determine minimum patch sizes, for example. FWS and DFG will be submitting written comments.

- Stakeholder members were reminded that the red-legged frog is not a covered species. However, conservation of habitat suitable for red-legged frog is being addressed in the plan.
- Questions were raised about badgers (as a planning species for grasslands), Document needs notes to explain why the badger is being included.
- Nina Bicknese indicated 25-acre habitat patch size is not enough for western yellow billed cuckoo.
- A request was made to modify the table to put natural community column first, as well as the need to indicate that the species listed in the table is representative of the natural community.
- Jenny Marr indicated the Plan may need to go to larger patch size requirements to protect covered species by referring to representative species.

Revised Biological Goals and Objectives:

- Pete Rawlings presented the handout indicating that it has been updated with comments from June meeting along with Phil Johnson's comments.
- Whether or not the agencies will want separate conservation measures and goals and objectives for conservation and mitigation will be negotiated between agencies and applicant. The agencies indicated that total conservation amount needs are not separate and are more than for mitigation.
- Stakeholder members discussed the need for additional rationale for blank acreages, measurability for green sturgeon goals (may need to qualify with boundaries), biological effectiveness monitoring programs, and adaptive management.
- The fish agencies will send written comments.

Meeting Notes from June 4, 2008:

- Meeting notes from June 4, 2008 were approved.

Upcoming Workshops/Meetings:

- The next Stakeholder meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, at BCAG.
- Initiation of the EIR/EIS development process is on hold until later in the fall.
- Steering committee meeting scheduled for September 3, 2008.
- Jenny Marr raised the need to have applicants meet with senior staff at the agencies. She also asked for a project management time line.
- Nina Bicknese asked about the timing of the implementing agreement.

- Chris Devine will add the implementing agreement to the timeline.