

Handout #3

Meeting #37 Summary

Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP)

Stakeholder Committee Meeting

June 7, 2011, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

BCAG Conference Room

Stakeholder Committee Attendees

Colleen Cecil (Butte Co. Farm Bureau)

Anjanette Martin (WCWD)

Woody Elliott (CNPS)

Richard Price (Butte Co. Ag. Comm.)

Virginia Getz (Ducks Unlimited)

Jeff Swindle (Caltrans District 3)

Resource Agencies Attendees

Nina Bicknese (USFWS)

Steering Committee and Staff Attendees

Jon Clark (BCAG)

Juan Pablo Galván (SAIC)

Chris Devine (BCAG)

Paul Cylinder (SAIC)

Interested Public Attendees

Allen Harthorn (Friends of Butte Creek)

Lauren Wemmer (Eco-Analysts)

Barbara Vlamis (Aqulliance)

Associated Documents/Handouts

Agenda packet including:

1. Meeting Notes from May 4, 2011 Stakeholder Meeting (Handout #1)

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions and Agenda Review
2. Overview and discussion of revisions and new information contained in first administrative draft of the BRCP – PowerPoint Presentation
3. Meeting Notes from May 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #1)
4. USFWS/DFG/NMFS Items for Discussion
5. Action Items and Next Meeting Agenda

Introductions and Agenda Review

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

Overview and discussion of revisions and new information contained in first administrative draft of the BRCP (PowerPoint Presentation)

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SAIC reviewed the location and content of the Administrative Draft posted online on the BRCP website. It was explained that more detailed comments and questions would be expected at the next Stakeholder Committee meeting since there had not been much time to review the document. It was also explained that filling out the comment form would be the best way to submit comments on the document. Attendees were shown the location of the comment form on the BRCP website and it was also mentioned that each CD handed out at the meeting contained a comment form along with the Administrative Draft document.

It was explained that chapters, tables, figures, and appendices online are provided separately rather than in a single document due to file size limitations. It was explained that appendices E (*Survey Protocols and Mitigation Guidelines*) and F (*Implementation Costs Supporting Materials*) would be included in a later version of the document. Appendix G (*Independent Science Advisors Report*) only contained the first ISA report and that the second report being prepared by the ISA will be added when it is completed. Appendix J (*Glossary*) would be updated and uploaded to the website later this month. The outline of the document is found in the bookmarks of the document itself and could be used as the table of contents. A separate table of contents file would be uploaded to the website later in the month.

SAIC delivered a PowerPoint presentation summarizing revisions to and new information contained in the first administrative draft of the BRCP. It was explained that content dealing with the impacts and conservation strategy for Butte County meadowfoam was not included in the document, but that issues and actions relevant to this species were running on a parallel track and would be presented at a later date. It was explained that the landowners most affected by the impacts and conservation strategy for Butte County meadowfoam would review these issues first before presenting this information to the Stakeholder Committee.

It was commented that protection of land may not make the greatest conservation impact for lands and species, specifically Butte County meadowfoam, without taking management into account. It was explained that Ch. 5 of the Administrative Draft describes and explains protection and management issues of existing protected lands and lands that would come under protection under the BRCP.

A question was raised if any landowners had been consulted on Butte County meadowfoam issues and it was explained that some meetings had already occurred between several landowners as well as some county and city staff. It was explained that an important difference between the conservation strategy for Butte County meadowfoam and all the other covered species is that a “hard-line preserve”, meaning delineation of specific properties for protection, is necessary for protection of the species within the city of Chico (the preserve process north and south of Chico would mirror the general preserve strategy used for all the other covered species). It was commented that all chapters, especially the Conservation Strategy would be reviewed by different bodies (e.g., Science Panel, City Councils) before the final draft of the BRCP is released to the public.

It was explained that acreage numbers for species impact and conservation values have not been included in the text of the document but are included in the tables of this draft. Acreages for the

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species are the last thing to be included in the text because there may be small changes with species models or targets that do not affect the overall benefit of the Plan to the species, but do affect number values that would need to be changed throughout the document rather than a single table.

It was explained that if new information is available on the distribution or condition of sensitive species within the Plan Area then such information would be appreciated. It was also explained that habitat models tend to be of greater use than occurrence data, but figures referencing occurrence data could be adjusted if new information is found and shared.

It was explained that while Section 4.5 has not been completed, this section would describe and detail the level of take to be requested under the BRCP. Limits of impact and required distribution of conservation action in each CAZ is detailed in the BRCP. Ch. 6 explains that mitigation must be concurrent to or in advance of habitat removal. The schedule for the Conservation Strategy is independent of the impacts that occur within the Plan Area. It was explained that funding for impact mitigation is typically local, while funding for conservation is generally on a state or federal scale.

Examples of new figures in the Administrative Draft were also presented. It was explained that even though a natural community or species habitat may fall within a UPA, not all the area within the UPA would be developed. Sensitive habitats, such as riparian, would be avoided using avoidance and minimization measures and preserve design principles, and therefore would be protected within UPAs. It was commented that for the pie chart figures in Ch. 5 the “BRCP Protected” category should be renamed “BRCP to be Protected” or “BRCP Anticipated Protected” categories to make it clear that the BRCP protected acreage has not already been protected, but will be protected over the course of the Plan. It was suggested that figures that have pie charts of habitat to be impacted and habitat to be protected in each CAZ for each species would also be helpful. It was commented that it is important that a good visual not be cluttered or “too busy”, but that something could be developed. It was commented that any information provided on where impacts are expected to occur would be of great use when writing the biological opinion for the BRCP.

A question was raised on the biological goals and objectives related to wetland species, specifically objectives related to the restoration/creation of wetland and protection of rice habitat. It was explained that the strategy for wetland conservation is tied to the amount of rice land that will be protected under the BRCP. The more emergent or managed wetland that is restored and created, respectively, for a species, less rice land would need to be protected for the species. This allows flexibility for meeting the goals and objectives related to rice/wetland protection and/or restoration/creation for species. The appropriate word to use regarding “create” or “restore” wetlands was discussed and it was agreed that appropriate wordage would be used, as well as the appropriateness of the word “maintain” in objective NCAO1.11.

A question was raised on the management of protected areas and if an area is actually protected if it is not managed for the covered species. It was explained that a conservation measure in the Administrative Draft calls for helping to manage existing protected lands for covered species so

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that appropriate management provides for real protection of covered species on existing protected lands.

It was explained that Section 6.4 detailed the assurances that the applicants want but that it was currently a placeholder and that text would be added to this section in a later version. It was commented that a different title for the section may be better.

It was explained that Ch. 8 details implementation costs and funding sources for the BRCP and was currently under development. It was commented that it may be useful to have it ready or a portion of the document ready before the public workshops begin, or hold a series of public meetings after the ones currently planned to present the details of the cost of the plan, since for many in the public the cost of the Plan is the most important factor. It was then commented that it is important that people understand both the biological purpose of the Plan and the cost associated with it, and especially understanding that the costs of the Plan are spread out over 40 years. Who pays is another issue that is important for the public to understand. A variety of ways to adequately present all the different facets of the Plan were discussed, including presenting the biological and planning aspects of the BRCP before the cost information. Another important element to present are the costs associated with permitting projects on a project by project basis in the absence of the BRCP. It was suggested that specific meetings targeting specific sectors of the community, such as agriculture and development, should be conducted. It was commented that meetings have occurred between different sectors of the community and that it was important to present a polished, quality product with most elements of the Plan finalized before final costing issues are presented.

It was explained that Ch.9 Alternatives to Take Considered and Rejected is not yet included but will be included in a later version.

The schedule and way in which comments would be addressed was discussed. It was explained that written comments would be best because written comments allow the development of a disposition table where all comments and dispositions to them could be viewed. It was explained that a second Administrative Draft would be released in September or October. It was decided that an August meeting to discuss comments would be more feasible than a July meeting. It was agreed that a date to receive written comments to be reviewed in the August Stakeholder Committee meeting would be set and emailed. Before this date, comments would be included in the disposition table to be reviewed.

There was discussion on the general development and progress of the BRCP. It was commented that while there is still work to be done, the Plan is in good shape and progressing well.

Meeting Notes from May 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #1)

The meeting notes from May 4, 2011 were approved.

USFWS/DFG/NMFS Items for Discussion

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It was commented that the 40 year permit term change in this Administrative Draft has not been reviewed by the wildlife agencies and would require more discussion.

Action Items and Next Meeting Agenda

The date of the next Stakeholder Committee meeting is August 3, 2011.