

Meeting #40 Summary

Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP)

Stakeholder Committee Meeting

January 11, 2012, 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

BCAG Conference Room

Stakeholder Committee Attendees

Colleen Cecil (Butte Co. Farm Bureau)	Richard Price (Butte Co. Ag. Comm.)
Bill Connelly (Co. Supervisor)	Suellen Rowilson (CNPS)
Virginia Getz (Ducks Unlimited)	Jeff Swindle (Caltrans District 3)
Phil Johnson (Altacal Audubon)	

Resource Agencies Attendees

Nina Bicknese (FWS; on phone)	Mike Thomas (FWS, on phone)
Jenny Marr (DFG)	

Steering Committee and Staff Attendees

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

Interested Public Attendees

John Byrne (Sycamore Creek Conservation Bank)	Jim Stevens (Northstar Environmental)
Robert Capriola (Westervelt Ecological)	Barbara Vlamis (Aqualliance)
Christy Dawson (Northstar Environmental)	Jamison Watts (NorCal RLT)

Associated Documents/Handouts

Agenda packet including:

1. Updated BRCP Schedule for 2012 (Handout #1)
2. Meeting Notes from September 7, 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #2)

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions and Agenda Review
2. Update on Development of the BRCP
3. Review and Discuss Updated BRCP Schedule for 2012 (Handout #1)
4. Meeting Notes from September 7, 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #2)
5. USFWS/DFG/NMFS Items for Discussion
6. Action Items and Next Meeting Agenda

Introductions and Agenda Review

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

Update on Development of the BRCP

Updates made to the BRCP since the last Stakeholder Committee Meeting were discussed. The new BRCP newsletter format was introduced and described as now matching the BRCP website. Comments on the First Administrative Draft are being reviewed and used to build and modify the Second Administrative Draft which is expected to be introduced to the Stakeholder Committee in May. Chapter 8, *Implementation Costs and Funding Sources*, and Chapter 9, *Alternatives to Take*, that were not included in the First Administrative Draft will be introduced in March. The Butte County meadowfoam conservation strategy will be included in the Second Administrative Draft. An application for additional BRCP funding through Section 6 grants has been made.

Public meetings to discuss the BRCP are also being planned and it was commented that it would be beneficial to have at least two of the meetings in the evening and have a few meetings that target specific stakeholder groups.

Review and Discuss Updated BRCP Schedule for 2012 (Handout #1)

The updated schedule for the BRCP (Handout #1) was introduced and explained. A slightly modified copy from one that had been emailed earlier was distributed to the Stakeholder Committee and will be posted online. BRCP chapters 8 (Implementation Costs and Funding Sources) and 9 (Alternatives to Take) will be introduced at the next Stakeholder Committee Meeting on March 7. The Second Administrative Draft is expected to be introduced in May. The full BRCP Public Draft is expected to be released in November concurrently with the EIS/EIR. A series of public workshops will be held in July 2012 and January 2013. The Public Review Period for both the EIR/EIS and BRCP will start in December 2012.

In response to questions about how substantive comments received during the Public Review Period BCAG indicated that comments would be addressed between March and May 2013. The Stakeholder Committee was reminded that they can comment on any of the document sections before generated before the release of the Second Administrative Draft Public Draft and that it is better to comment on something now rather than wait until it is released.

It was commented that the schedule indicates that public workshops and a Public Review Period for the EIR/EIS will be conducted concurrently with the BRCP document, but no symbols indicate that it will be released to the Stakeholder Committee before the Public Review Period because it is not a Stakeholder Committee process. The EIR/EIS will be posted on the BRCP website and email notices will be sent out to announce the Public Review Period.

It was commented that review periods by the Stakeholder Committee and public are not shown on the Schedule and that adding bars and lines to indicate this would be helpful.

Meeting Notes from September 2011 Stakeholder Committee Meeting (Handout #2)

The meeting notes from September 7, 2011 were approved.

It was commented that since the last Stakeholder Committee Meeting the City of Chico was updated on the conservation approach for the Butte County Meadowfoam and that these meetings went well. Some property owners have been contacted about the strategy but more will be contacted.

BCAG staff has held recent meeting with representatives from the agricultural community to address concerns including the ownership of land by government entities. Additional meetings will occur in the near future, including meetings targeting specific stakeholder groups such as rice growers and ranchers. Some fee title purchase of land is expected to occur under the BRCP, though much more land will be conserved through easements. It was explained that it is possible that BCAG as the implementing entity could deed the title of fee title lands to other non-profit entities such as land trusts, conservancies, etc. and that this might help appease this concern. Relying more heavily on mitigation banks for restoration requirements is also likely.

It was explained that there are cases during implementation of other HCP/NCCPs where some agricultural communities have actually preferred fee title land acquisition and that use of mitigation banks can be an alternative to acquisition of land in fee title where banks meet BRCP requirements. It was commented that there are many ways to find willing sellers of easements and fee title purchases. In the case of the Natomas HCP, all land has been acquired under fee title and this has been viewed favorably by the local agricultural community. The Natomas Conservancy is farming 2,000 acres of rice for giant garter snake. It was explained that the BRCP would not farm rice as Natomas does and that Natomas is a fairly unique HCP in several respects. The in-perpetuity costs of the BRCP and different strategies for meeting conservation objectives were discussed.

USFWS/DFG/NMFS Items for Discussion

It was commented that the Implementing Agreement is often signed after the permit is signed. Stakeholders were encouraged to submit any comments they may have on the draft documents.

Action Items and Next Meeting Agenda

The date of the next Stakeholder Committee meeting is March 7, 2012.