

# Butte Regional Conservation Plan

## A Cooperative Planning Effort

[www.buttehcp.com](http://www.buttehcp.com)

### What is the Butte Regional HCP/NCCP?

Local agencies have joined together to prepare the Butte Regional HCP/NCCP (Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan). Our goal is to offer a smart, simple, and environmentally sensitive way for the Butte County region to grow and develop.

An HCP/NCCP is a planning process that brings federal, state and local governmental agencies and community stakeholders to work together to protect the natural resources of Butte County while providing for reasonable development in the region.

An HCP/NCCP replaces a piecemeal, project-by-project process of addressing development impacts on our environment. The current approach is costly and typically results in smaller, disconnected parcels that prove to be ineffective conservation. Our proposed Butte Regional HCP/NCCP will take a larger view and allow for more efficient project decisions, a local approach and better habitat protection over the long-term.

The cities and county have agreed that BCAG will administer this effort to integrate the development goals of each individual General Plan with a coordinated approach to achieve long-term economic, ecological and conservation goals.

### The Planning Agreement – A First Step

The Butte Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)/Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) Planning Agreement is the initial step in the cooperative planning effort. The agreement formalizes the participating parties' intent to plan and prepare the HCP/NCCP.

The Planning Agreement spells out the participating parties' planning goals and commitments, defines the planning area and plan participants, identifies the conservation objectives and the plan preparation process, and states the agencies' commitment of resources to bring available funding to the planning effort. The Planning Agreement also contains a map of the planning area boundaries and a list of the covered natural communities and species to be covered by the plan. The Planning Agreement describes the plan preparation process including the incorporation of independent scientific input and extensive public participation.

The Planning Agreement is currently in draft form and has been reviewed by the Wildlife Agencies (California Department of Fish and Game, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service) and the cities and County in March and April. It is now undergoing a second review by the Wildlife Agencies.

The HCP/NCCP will offer a smart, simple, and environmentally sensitive way for the Butte County region to grow and develop.

Upon completion of the review phase, the Planning Agreement will be signed by representatives of the cities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, and Oroville, Butte County, and the Wildlife Agencies.

A copy of the current draft Planning Agreement can be found on the Documents page of the Butte HCP/NCCP website: [www.buttehcp.com/Document](http://www.buttehcp.com/Document).



Sandhill Crane



Grassland Natural Community



Science Advisory Panel

### You Don't Want to Miss It! Save the Date!

If you care about the conservation of ecosystems, wetlands, and species...

If you care about opportunities for economic growth in Butte County...

If you care about Butte County's rich agricultural heritage...

**Then please come to the Butte Regional Conservation Plan Public Outreach Workshops!**

BCAG will host two public workshops in the Butte County area. They're designed to answer your questions and give you time to find out more about the HCP/NCCP process, benefits, planning area and covered species. BCAG will host two workshops in the Butte County area:

- **September 5, 2007: Chico, CA**  
Chico Masonic Family Center,  
1110 W East Ave, Chico, CA
- **September 12, 2007: Oroville, CA**  
Southside Community Center,  
2959 Wyandotte Avenue, Oroville, CA

These workshops will be held in the evening from 6:00–8:30pm.

Refreshments will be provided and **all community members are encouraged to attend.**

Go to: [www.buttehcp.com/Public\\_Workshops.html](http://www.buttehcp.com/Public_Workshops.html) for more information.



Growth in Butte County



Bald Eagle



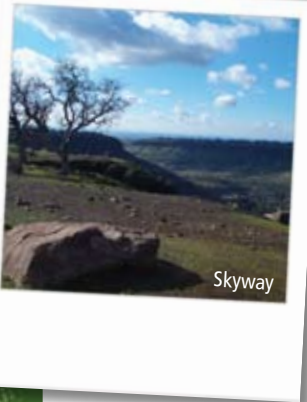
Giant Garter Snake



Butte County Checkerbloom



Swainson's Hawk



Skyway

## Shared Benefits of the Butte Regional HCP/NCCP

### Communities

- Strengthened regional economies
- Protection of scenic habitat and landscapes
- Proactive approach to conservation and development
- Involvement in planning

### Local Governments

- Local control of development and land use
- Long term solutions to land use conflicts
- More thorough protection for region's environmental resources

### Business Owners, Landowners & Developers

- Streamlined regulatory process
- "Economies of scale" allow more efficient mitigation
- Greater regulatory certainty, consistency and predictability

### Agriculturalists

- Relieved of liability for endangered species
- Varied opportunities for participation
- Source of income from conservation programs

### Environmental interests

- Large scale conservation instead of "piecemeal"
- Multi-species and habitat protection — better habitat
- Ability to adapt and respond to changes
- Increased opportunities for grant funding for land acquisition

**Phase 1 Completed**  
Baseline Data Collection, Establishment of Stakeholder Committee

**Phase 2 Underway**  
Assemble Science Panel, Prepare Planning Agreement and Public Participation Plan, Describe Covered Activities.

**Phase 2**  
Develop Impact Analysis and Alternatives for the Conservation Strategy.

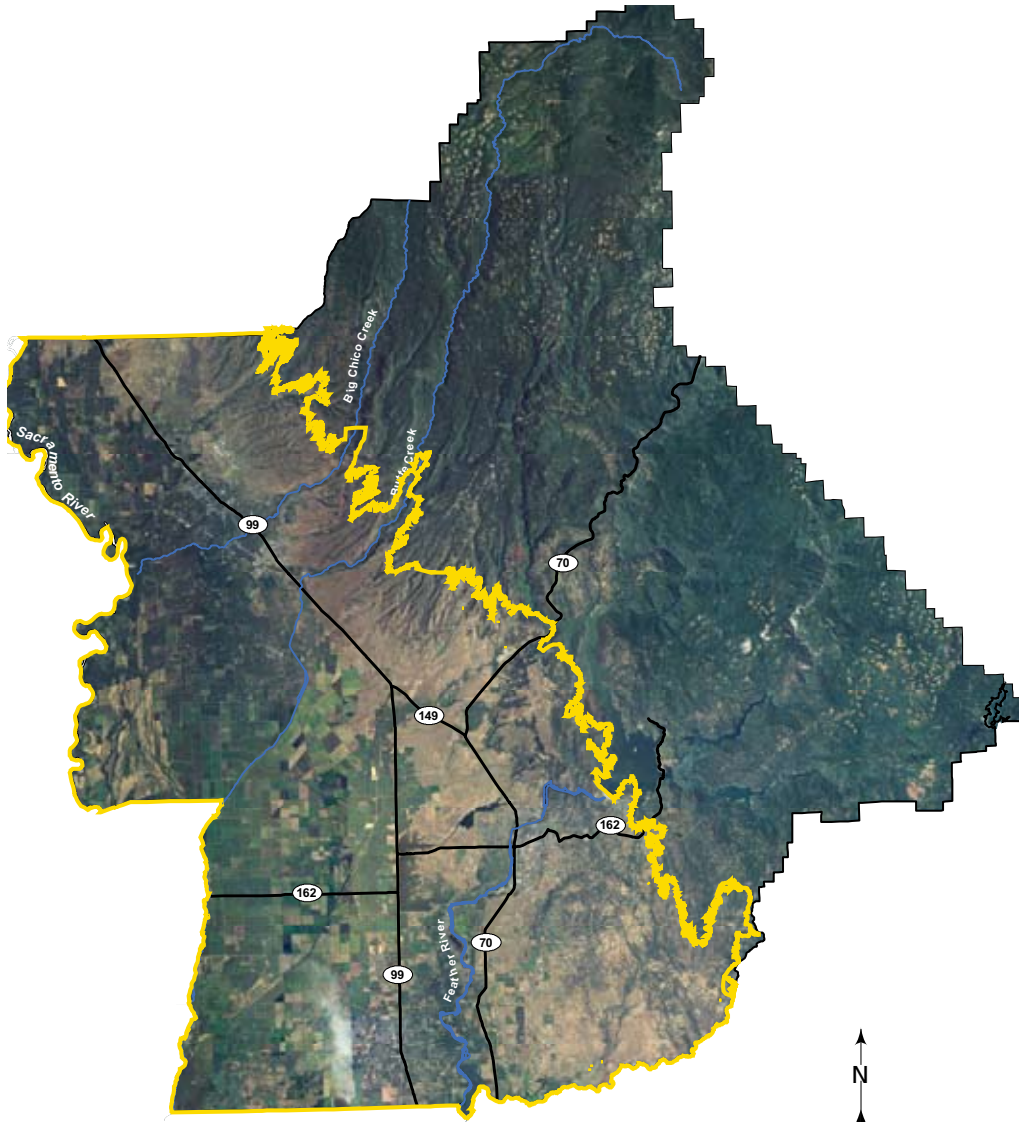
**Phase 2**  
Develop Selected Conservation Strategy and determine Implementation Costs.

2007

2008

# The HCP/NCCP Planning Area

The planning area is the geographic area that will be addressed in the Butte Regional HCP/NCCP. The planning area covers approximately 560,000 acres of land in Butte County. Land and resources will be set aside within the planning area to implement conservation measures to preserve the covered listed species within the area. In exchange, certain "covered activities" such as existing, planned, and proposed land uses and agricultural activities over which the Local Agencies have land use authority will receive permits from state and federal regulators.



Planning Area Boundary

**Phase 3**  
Determination of Conservation Funding Sources and Strategies. Development of public Draft Butte Regional HCP/NCCP & Implementing Agreement.

**Phase 4**  
Draft EIR/EIS, and Draft Section 404 Permit Application. Continued Public Outreach.

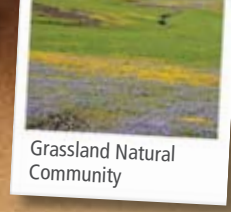
**Phase 5**  
Adoption and Permitting of HCP/NCCP & Final EIR/EIS.

2009

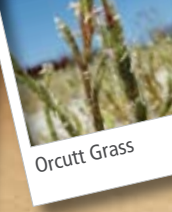
2010



Ahart's Dwarf Rush



Grassland Natural Community



Orcutt Grass

## Covered Species

Selected by the Stakeholder Committee

### Amphibians

- California Red-legged Frog
- California Tiger Salamander
- Foothill Yellow-legged Frog
- Western Spadefoot Toad

### Reptiles

- California Horned Lizard
- Giant Garter Snake
- Northwest Pond Turtle

### Birds

- American Peregrine Falcon
- Bald Eagle
- Bank Swallow
- California Black Rail
- Greater Sandhill Crane
- Swainson's Hawk
- Tri-colored Blackbird
- Western Burrowing Owl
- Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- White-Tailed Kite
- Yellow-breasted Chat

### Fish

- Central Valley Steelhead
- Chinook Salmon Spring Run
- Chinook Salmon Winter Run
- Chinook Salmon Fall Run
- Green Sturgeon
- River Lamprey
- Sacramento Splittail

### Insects and Invertebrates

- Conservancy Fairy Shrimp
- Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
- Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp
- Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp

### Plants

- Ahart's Dwarf Rush
- Butte County Checkerbloom
- Butte County Golden Clover
- Butte County Meadowfoam
- Ferris' Milkvetch
- Greene's Tuctoria
- Hairy Orcutt Grass
- Hoover's Spurge
- Lesser Saltscale
- Veiny Monardella



Vernal Pool



Golden Clover



Burrowing Owl

## The Butte Regional HCP/ NCCP Planning Process

BCAG actively solicits the participation of all stakeholders in the planning process including landowners, agriculturalists, home-builders, environmental groups, and business interests.

The goal: find a collaborative, effective and efficient approach to conserving natural resources by replacing the current project-by-project permitting and fragmented mitigation with a broader, regional approach to conservation and development.



Oak Woodland Natural Community

## Who Are the Stakeholders?

The Butte Regional HCP/NCCP is coordinated by the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) on behalf of the Cities of Biggs, Chico, Gridley, and Oroville, and Butte County. The California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service are also involved in the creation of the HCP/NCCP. A Stakeholder Committee of local citizens is providing regular input into development of the plan.



Public input and involvement for the plan is highly valued. Stakeholder Committee meetings are open to the public and are currently attended by individuals representing irrigation districts, the building industry, educational institutions, farming and agriculture, environmental groups, special districts, hunting organizations, and federal and state agencies. For more information about Stakeholder Committee meetings, go to: [www.buttehcp.com](http://www.buttehcp.com).



The Science Advisory Panel on a field tour of the planning area.



White-tailed Kite



The Science Advisory Panel examines stream ecosystems