

MEETING NOTES
East Alameda County Conservation Strategy
Steering Committee Meeting
June 1, 2010

Attendees

Liz McElligott – Alameda County Community Development Agency
Jim Robins – Alameda County Conservation Partnership
Brian Mathews – Alameda County Waste Management Authority
Mark Lander – City of Dublin
Steve Stewart – City of Livermore
Janice Stern – City of Pleasanton
Chris Barton - EBRPD
David Zippin – ICF Jones & Stokes
Cay Goude & Kim Squires – USFWS
Mary Lim & Kurt Arends (part-time) - Zone 7

1. Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2.7 – Streams
 - a. Zone 7 staff are concerned with the streams section of the Conservation Strategy and suggested that the stream section to be incorporated back into the riparian section.
 - b. Jim Robins did not want the stream section moved but is willing to soften the language to make it sound more voluntary (“shall” -> “should” or “may”).
 - i. Example comment: Oppose doing a “channel assessment” on any project site with a stream, even if project doesn’t affect a stream.
 - c. Zone 7: In the stream section, it was sometimes unclear what the connection was between species needs and the requirements of the streams section. Jim: section was written more to address stream function rather than with a direct link to species. Zone 7 requests that we be more specific about our intent and goals in this particular section.
 - d. Zone 7 will provide their specific comments to the group for review.
2. Outstanding issues with Chapter 5 – Implementation
 - a. Assurance from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on their participation in the programmatic biological opinion
 - i. USFWS scheduled a meeting with USACE, Regional Board and CDFG to discuss the regulatory framework they will follow in order to implement the Conservation Strategy.
 - ii. The meeting is scheduled for June 24th.
 - b. USFWS commitment to pursue a programmatic BO with the Federal Highway Administration
 - i. USFWS stated that this was harder to do. USFWS has talked to CalTrans but there hasn’t been progress.
 - ii. The programmatic BO with the USACE can be used by anyone; however, Federal Highways will not use it but would pursue individual BOs for their projects.
 - iii. USFWS will know more after the June 24th meeting with USACE.
 - c. CDFG intention to complete a programmatic consistency determination

- i. CDFG were not in attendance at this meeting. However, USFWS stated that CDFG is currently writing a programmatic consistency determination for the Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy.
 - ii. USFWS will write the appropriate assurances in their programmatic BO to satisfy CDFG requirements.
 - d. Database – how long will it take for one to be built?
 - i. Jim Robins heard the BLM put out a RFP for developing a database of conservation easements in the entire Bay region. Jim will be following up.
 - ii. Santa Rosa is not currently tracking data. USFWS and CDFG are tracking preserves.
 - iii. Two kinds of databases would be needed:
 - 1. GIS data: land cover, project locations, open space
 - 2. Project data on mitigation applied through strategy
 - iv. One local agency needs to volunteer to maintain the GIS data initially and compile the project data for the annual report.
 - e. Implementation committee structure
 - i. The Steering Committee discussed adding representatives from the environmental, landowners, and development communities on the Implementation Committee.
 - ii. The local agencies were concerned over the potential inefficiencies that could result in not maintaining the existing structure. In particular, there was a concern that disagreements between amongst the groups that would be involved would stifle the group's ability to move forward with implementation.
 - iii. The local agencies wanted to keep the Implementation Committee limited to the Steering Committee members since there are some decisions that need to be made, particularly with funding some parts of the implementation (i.e. database development, website maintenance, etc.). Since the Implementation Committee role is, in part, to efficiently spend public fund to implement the Conservation Strategy, the local agencies felt that the Implementation Committee should only include the local agencies that were on the Steering Committee.
 - iv. Jim Robins, on behalf of the RCD/NRCS voiced opposition and concern over the motion to change the Committee structure from what was agreed on and proposed to the UAG (i.e. reps from environmental, landowner, and development community integrated into the Implementation Committee).
 - v. To ensure that there is ongoing input from the public, the Steering Committee agreed to elevate the technical committee to be a subcommittee of the Implementation Committee. The Steering Committee sees the value of having a subcommittee of technical experts and representatives from environmental, landowner and the development communities.
 - vi. The Steering Committee majority agreed to limit the implementation committee to those agencies that are currently on the Steering Committee and have a technical subcommittee to advise them.

- f. Commitment to having a technical committee
 - i. As stated above, the technical committee has been elevated to be a subcommittee of and an advisor to the Implementation Committee.
 - ii. To provide transparency, it was suggested that the Implementation Committee have joint meetings with the technical subcommittee at least once a year to assess success in meeting the various goals and objectives of the Conservation Strategy.
 - iii. In addition, the Steering Committee suggested that the UAG designate the appropriate representatives for the technical subcommittee. However, the Steering Committee wanted to ensure that technical experts be involved in this subcommittee.
 - g. Implementation funding
 - i. Section 5.3 – Funding was edited slightly. Added language stating what external funding would potentially fund. In addition, the language regarding land use agencies potentially imposing an administrative fee on projects that utilize the strategy was revised slightly to clarify the purpose of the administrative fee (i.e. ongoing administration of the Conservation Strategy).
 - h. Adoption of strategy by local jurisdictions
 - i. The Steering Committee agreed to the language in Section 5.4.1 that states the local agencies would accept the Conservation Strategy within six months of completion.
 - i. Others
 - i. Section 5.6.5, Item 3 – made additional edits to clarify that local open space funds may later be reimbursed by mitigation funds, which provided an additional level of species protection on lands already protected as open space.
3. Scoring sheets – how to account for rare habitats
- a. Mary & Troy received an email from Robert Nuzum, a biologist who has been working with Colleen Dhaoui and Ahmed Hashmi, regarding the scoring sheets. This email and the suggested revisions were handed out.
 - b. The group was not clear on whether the document adequately described how the habitat scoring sheets were used.
 - i. Mary will check whether Chapter 3 or 5 describes how to apply the scoring sheet to rare land cover types (Table E-12 through E-17). (Did the October 2009 memo on the use of the scoring sheets make it into the document?)
4. Next Steps
- a. Everyone will send comments to Mary by June 11.
 - b. Consider having joint SC and UAG meeting prior to the community meeting to build support (and reduce comments?)
 - c. July 6 SC meeting may be in person rather than conference call.
 - d. Release public draft immediately following July 6 meeting

5. Budget

- a. ICF Jones & Stokes has just under \$5,000 left in their contract.
- b. Waste Management Authority may potentially have the additional funding needed to finish the Conservation Strategy document.

6. Upcoming Meetings

- a. July 6th Steering Committee Meeting
 - i. Mary will send out an email after receiving final comments on June 11th to see whether the July 6th meeting can be a conference call.
 - ii. Note that we may need to reschedule the July 6th meeting since it is the day after the holiday. Mary will send out an email to see if rescheduling would be necessary.
- b. Community Meeting – TBD at next Steering Committee meeting