

MEETING NOTES
East Alameda County Conservation Strategy
Steering Committee Meeting
September 1, 2009

Attendees

Liz McElligott – Alameda County
John Hemiup – Alameda County Congestion Management Agency
Jim Robins – Alameda County Conservation Partnership
Brian Mathews – Alameda County Waste Management Authority
Mark Lander – City of Dublin
Eric Brown & Steve Stewart – City of Livermore
Janice Stern & Alison Ryan – City of Pleasanton
Liam Davis & Marcia Grefsrud – DFG
Brad Olson – EBRPD
Troy Rahmig – ICF Jones & Stokes
Terry Huff - NRCS
Brian Wines - RWQCB
Kim Squires – USFWS
Mary Lim - Zone 7

- 1) Implementation Subcommittee Report
 - a) The implementation subcommittee was a discussion topic at the last UAG meeting. There were varying ideas of what implementation means. Some proposed ideas about what implementation could include are:
 - i) Ability to measure viability
 - ii) Enforcement and legal authority
 - iii) Monitoring mitigation projects
 - (1) There was a concern that this proposed idea will result in another layer of permit review by the public.
 - (2) This idea is only proposed and is more meant to establish an ongoing committee/group to have shared responsibility over ensuring mitigation was done and done correctly.
 - (3) The group was not opposed to having an ongoing oversight committee that would keep track and update the EACCS information.
 - iv) Note that these were just ideas and may not end up being recommendations in the implementation chapter.
 - v) Cities were open to providing an annual list of anticipated projects to facilitate project and mitigation project tracking.
 - b) Before the next Steering Committee meeting, the Implementation Subcommittee will have a revised chapter outline for review & comment.
 - i) The chapter will be broken out into different components.
 - ii) For efficiency sake, there will be smaller group meetings that will be focused on a component of the chapter.
 - c) Liam noted that one success that came out of the Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy was the establishment of banks.
 - i) Most developers in that area see that the Conservation Strategy is working as a result of these new banks.
 - ii) There are opportunities to establish banks in East Alameda County.

- (1) It can take approximately 2 ½ years to establish banks.
- (2) There is some landowner interests in establishing banks; however, the upfront costs are expensive. There were previous discussions about creating co-op banks, in which the participating landowners would share the upfront costs.
- (3) If there are jurisdictional wetlands, USACE will need to be involved. This can delay bank establishment.

2) CEQA Needs

- a) The Santa Rosa Plain Conservation Strategy was released without a CEQA document.
- b) There seems to be no discretionary action that the local agency's Boards and Councils will be taking that would trigger CEQA.
 - i) EACCS is a feasibility study and guidance/reference document that will be incorporated into future project CEQA and permitting documents.
 - ii) There is no intention to mandate the use of EACCS.
 - (1) EACCS is voluntary.
 - (2) Municipalities will advise/recommend that developers use the EACCS but municipalities will not change or create new ordinances to mandate using EACCS.
 - (3) It will be at the discretion of the project proponent to use it. Because a programmatic biological opinion will be prepared for EACCS, project proponents will more likely follow EACCS in order to streamline their CEQA and permitting processes.
- c) It would be difficult to do an impact study because there is no project attached to the EACCS.
- d) The Implementation Chapter may have recommendations that could trigger CEQA. However, until that chapter is drafted, the Steering Committee cannot definitively say CEQA is not needed.
- e) The group decided to defer CEQA discussion until the entire document has been drafted.

3) Draft goals and objectives

- a) Troy distributed the completed draft EACCS Conservation Goals and Objectives.
- b) Funding mechanisms for conservation actions that recommend establishing landowner incentive programs will be address in the implementation chapter.
- c) The Avoidance Measures, Best Management Practices, Mitigation Guidelines, and Conservation Land Selection Criteria draft tables will be distributed to the Steering Committee by the next meeting for discussion. These tables will provide context to the goals and objectives.
 - i) Selecting mitigation sites that provide habitat connectivity and ratios based on locality from the project impact sites will be provided in these tables.
- d) With regard to ratios, the EACCS will provide limited exceptions to the mitigation ratios in the EACCS under special circumstances.
 - i) For example, a project may impact a small community of blue oak woodland but there may be little to no value or opportunity to mitigate close by the impact site. The project proponent could choose to mitigate in an area that is far from the project site but has high conservation value because there is an existing stand of blue oak woodland.

4) Upcoming Meetings

- a) Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday, October 6th
 - i) Draft goals and objectives
 - ii) Avoidance Measures, Best Management Practices, Mitigation Guidelines, and Conservation Land Selection Criteria Draft tables
 - iii) Implementation Chapter
 - iv) CNPS Presentation on Botanical Priority Areas (Brown Bag)

- v) Note that this will be an extended meeting.
- vi) UAG Meeting: Thursday, October 15th @ 2 pm; Location: City of Dublin Library Community Room