

**East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan**  
Science Advisory Panel Meeting #3

26 February 2003  
11:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
Lake Temescal Regional Recreation Area, Oakland

Tentative Agenda

- 11:00 – 11:30
1. Introductions
  2. Review objectives for meetings #3 and #4
  3. Review outcomes from the 20 September 2002 panel meeting
    - Biological goals and habitat models have been revised
    - Introduction of proposed method for filling data gaps—solicitation and compilation of credible expert information on covered species
  4. Update on procedural aspects of the HCP (duration, participants, and so forth) and next steps
  5. Address synthesized questions submitted by Coordination Group and other members of the public in September 2002
  6. Public comment (2–3 minutes)
- 11:30 – 12:00
- Biological goals and habitat models**
1. Critical ecological relationships between covered species and their resources
  2. New sources or relevant advances in conservation biology
  3. Data gaps
  4. Public comment (2–3 minutes)
  5. Open discussion regarding life history, resource requirements, and threats to the persistence of covered species
- 12:00 – 12:30
- Conservation strategies part I generalize**
1. Logical ways to group covered species based on ecology, threats
  2. Current and potential threats to probability of persistence of covered species
    - a. Ability of humans to mitigate these threats
    - b. Key threats that cannot be addressed
  3. Public comment (2–3 minutes)
- 12:30 – 1:00
- Lunch break

1:00 – 1:30

### **Conservation strategies part II**

1. Open discussion of preliminary draft alternative conservation strategies
2. Open discussion regarding conservation planning and reserve design in general and in the context of the HCP, including preliminary draft alternative conservation strategies
3. Public comment (2–3 minutes)
4. Potential modifications to increase the probability of achieving biological goals

1:30 – 2:30

### **Adaptive Management**

1. Identification of relevant hypotheses that can be addressed most effectively through the process of adaptive management
2. Identification of current and potential threats to covered species that can be addressed most effectively through adaptive management
3. Discussion of potential objectives for the adaptive management strategy relative to broad conservation goals, feasibility, and evaluation of success
4. Public comment (2–3 minutes)
5. Open discussion regarding adaptive management in general and in the context of the HCP

2:30 – 2:35

Break

2:35 – 2:55

1. Unfinished business
2. Next steps and meeting reports
3. Schedule meeting #4

2:55 – 3:00

Further public comment on agenda items and / or new business

## **EAST CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HCP / NCCP**

### **Potential points for discussion at the 26 February 2003 Science Advisory Panel meeting**

The third meeting of the Science Advisory Panel will focus on issues related to conservation strategies, monitoring, and adaptive management. Discussion will be an open forum for addressing both (1) broad concepts and questions related to conservation and land-use planning and (2) potential aspects of the conservation strategy. We will use the preliminary draft conservation strategy as a springboard for discussion (not as a constraint to discussion). We also may ask you to provide input on specific questions related to conservation measures for individual covered species. You are at liberty to suggest new approaches on key topics, such as the configuration of reserves. Please give some thought to the following issues and questions, many of which we hope to address on 26 February.

- What are the most critical ecological relationships between covered species and their resources?
- Are you aware of any new sources of biological information (including but not limited to taxonomy, systematics, and genetics) or advances in conservation biology that are relevant to biological goals, conservation strategies, and management strategies for covered species and land cover types?
- Are there any data gaps that must be filled in order to adequately assess the suite of biological goals and management strategies included in the HCP / NCCP?
- Based on life history and ecology, are there any logical ways to group covered species in the process of designing a conservation strategy, monitoring, and adaptive management?
- What current and potential threats to natural communities and to covered species, especially human land uses, can be addressed most effectively in the context of the HCP / NCCP, especially through adaptive management? Are there current and potential threats that may affect the probability of persistence of covered species that cannot be addressed effectively in the context of the HCP / NCCP, or that may affect whether the HCP / NCCP meets its conservation objectives? What types of human land use may be compatible with achieving the biological goals?
- Do the preliminary draft alternative conservation strategies differ dramatically with respect to their potential biological benefits (or costs) for different covered species? If so, should covered species be prioritized in the context of reserve design and adaptive management? Do conservation strategies adequately address management needs specific to riparian areas?
- What hypotheses are most relevant to address, and what hypotheses can be addressed most effectively, through the process of adaptive management? What objectives are appropriate from the perspective of broad conservation goals, our ability to achieve these objectives, and our ability to assess whether the objectives are being met in an adaptive management framework? These objectives might include, but are not limited to, status of covered species; magnitude of threats, especially threats that can be managed; and ecology of covered species.

- With respect to preliminary draft alternative conservation strategies, are there modifications that might substantially increase the probability of achieving biological goals of the HCP / NCCP?

**EAST CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HCP / NCCP**  
**Questions from the public**  
**To be addressed at the 26 February 2003 Science Advisory Panel meeting**

Please give some thought to the following questions, collected from the written and verbal comments of HCPA Coordination Group participants and other members of the public at the last meeting. We intend to address these questions on 26 February.

1. Is the land-cover mapping process adequate to determine the status of vegetation types within the project area? Do the land-cover classes accurately describe major vegetation types in the project area?
2. Are you aware of any locally rare species (i.e., rare within the planning area) that have not been covered under the draft HCP/ NCCP?
3. What is the probability that the proportion of native annual grasses can be increased by management actions? Do the alternative conservation strategies include such actions?
4. Are the alternative conservation strategies likely to facilitate maintenance of woody debris within oak woodlands, disturbances processes necessary to maintain riparian woodland and scrub, and native shrubs and forbs?