

EAST CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVANCY

2013 Year in Review

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/ Natural Community Conservation Plan

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan / Natural Community Conservation Plan (the "Plan") gives local cities and agencies control over endangered species permitting in their jurisdiction.

Under the Plan, project proponents pay a fee or provide their own conservation, conduct limited avoidance measures and receive species permits from their local land use agency. Fees and grants fund Preserve System acquisitions, management and restoration.

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (the "Conservancy") implements and ensures compliance with the Plan and oversees assembly and operation of the HCP/NCCP Preserve System.

Conservancy Board Members

Joel Bryant
City of Brentwood

Hank Stratford
City of Clayton

Randy Pope
City of Oakley

Salvatore Evola
City of Pittsburg

Mary Piepho
Contra Costa County



The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy continued to experience success in 2013 in securing grant funding for restoration; staying ahead of targets for land acquisition and in meeting specific conservation requirements. Several urban development and rural infrastructure projects received streamlined permitting through the HCP/NCCP in 2013 and are under construction. The Conservancy added 114 biologically-rich acres to the HCP/NCCP Preserve System. These acquisitions are not large in acreage, but are strategically important for the Preserve System. 2013 was also year of laying the groundwork for future large acquisitions, restoration projects and permitting improvements.



East Contra Costa County
Habitat Conservancy

PROJECT PERMITTING

The HCP/NCCP gives local cities and agencies control over state and federal endangered species permitting in their jurisdiction. Twelve projects received take coverage under the Plan in 2013, including 3 urban development projects, 8 rural infrastructure projects, and 1 rural operations and maintenance projects totaling approximately 40.3 acres of permanent impacts and 15.2 acres of temporary impacts on terrestrial land cover types.



PG&E Pittsburg-Tesla Re-Conductoring Project

One significant project covered under the Plan in 2013 was the Emerson Ranch project. The project consists of 567 residential lots, a 23.74-acre commercial parcel, 10-acre park storm water detention pond/basin, and other trails and open space. This project is the first major subdivision project covered under the HCP/NCCP.

Also in 2013, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority State Route 160/State Route 4 Bypass Phase 2 Connectors project was covered under the Plan. This is a significant transportation project for East Contra Costa County and the second phase of the State Route 4 Bypass Project covered through the Plan. Coverage of this project through the HCP/NCCP is another example of how the HCP/NCCP helps to streamline and facilitate major infrastructure projects in the County.

Another large project is the Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) Pittsburg-Tesla Re-Conductoring project. Although the project spanned Contra Costa and Alameda counties, the portion of the project in Contra Costa County was covered under the Plan, whereas the portions outside of the HCP/NCCP inventory area, required a Biological Opinion from USFWS.

WETLAND COORDINATING

The HCP/NCCP was designed to enable permit streamlining to extend beyond endangered species and include regional permitting under state and federal laws for impacts on jurisdictional wetlands and waters. On May 4, 2012, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued Regional General Permit 1 (RGP) related to the HCP/NCCP. The RGP is designed to streamline wetland permitting in the entire HCP/NCCP Plan Area by coordinating the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures in the Plan with the Corps' wetland permitting requirements. A few days earlier, on April 30, 2012, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued a Biological Opinion on the RGP. The Biological Opinion for the RGP relies on the HCP/NCCP for mitigation measures and eliminates the need for the Corps to consult individually with the USFWS for each project covered by the RGP.

Implementation of the RGP to further streamline projects covered under the HCP/NCCP has been successful. Approximately 10 projects have benefited from coordinated permitting under the RGP to date.

ACTIVITIES BY THE NUMBERS

2013 and cumulative since 2008

Projects Permitted

In 2013: 12
To date: 56

Fees and CTRs Received

In 2013: \$2,280,919
To date: \$10,370,919

Acres Impacted

In 2013: 157
To date: 305

Restoration Projects Constructed

In 2013: 0
To date: 7

Properties Acquired

In 2013: 2
To date: 25

Acres Conserved

In 2013: 114
To date: 7,543

Grants Received

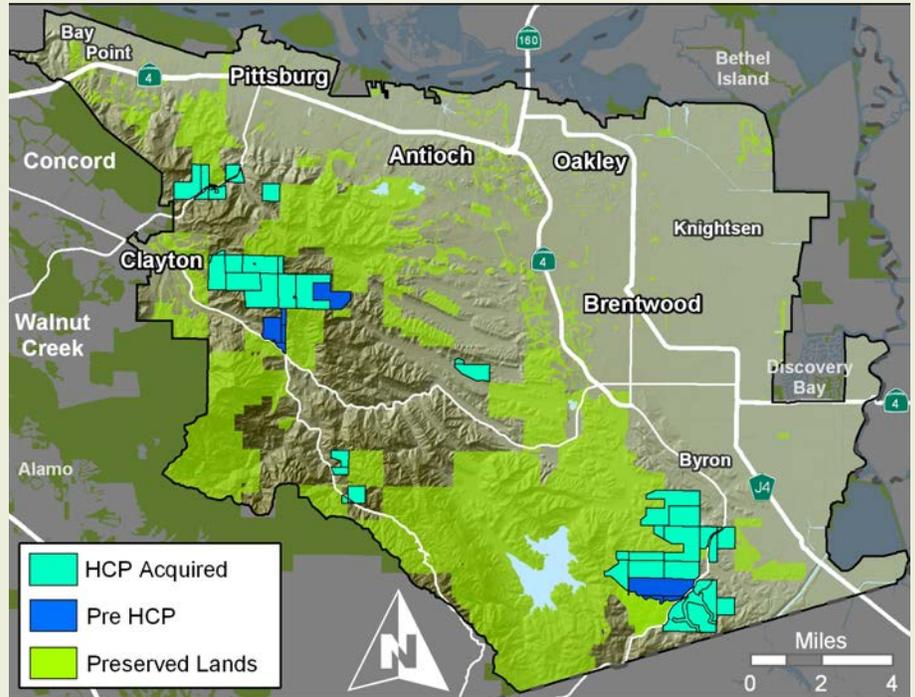
In 2013: \$1,487,100
To date: \$30,457,100

LAND ACQUISITION

The first six years of Plan implementation have resulted in significant progress toward acquisition goals, including two properties acquired in 2013. All acquisitions to date, totaling 9,213 acres, have been completed in partnership with East Bay Regional Park District (i.e. EBRPD will own and manage Preserve System lands). Acquired lands will also become part of the regional park system. There is still a long way to go, but the 9,213 acres already acquired is ahead of the average pace necessary to assemble the 30,300-acre Preserve System estimated to be required by Year 30 (2037).

Highlights of the Preserve System include the following achievements:

- 5,450 acres of annual grassland preserved
- Oak woodland preservation requirement exceeded by 312%
- 62% of the oak savanna preservation requirements achieved
- 43% of pond and 21% of alkali wetland preservation requirements achieved
- 26 stands of covered plants preserved
- Intermittent and ephemeral stream preservation requirements achieved
- Occupied or suitable habitat provided for at least 20 of the 28 covered species



ECCC HCP/NCCP Preserve System to date

HABITAT RESTORATION & CREATION

The Plan requires stream, wetland and pond restoration and creation to compensate for impacts to these habitat types. The Conservancy has aggressively pursued wetland and pond restoration requirements. To date, seven restoration projects have been constructed and each is now monitored and adaptively managed. The seven restoration projects provide a range of benefits to covered species.



Monitoring at the Souza I wetland project site

Conservancy projects are monitored and managed to ensure they function well for species. This more intensive monitoring and management continues for a minimum of five years. Close monitoring of restoration sites has informed management actions including: reseeding areas, adjusting grazing patterns, and aggressively combating invasive weeds. The first two projects that the Conservancy constructed (Lentzner Spring and Souza I) have met most of established success criteria and will be monitored less intensively in 2014 and moving forward.

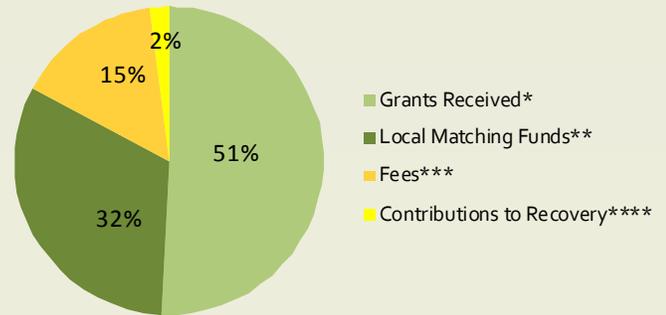
Conservancy efforts toward restoration and creation of wetland habitat types in 2013 were focused on planning and design for the Hess Creek and Wetland Restoration Project. The project will restore a section of Hess Creek and wetlands on the floodplain. This project will be visible from Kirker Pass Road in the western portion of the Plan area.

FUNDING

The Conservancy takes in revenue from three primary sources: grants, fees, and contributions to recovery. These sources fund Preserve System acquisitions, management, monitoring and restoration. Various federal, state, and private funding sources generously granted \$1,487,100 to Conservancy activities during 2013. Fees received from the twelve projects permitted in 2013 totaled \$1,995,232, while contributions to recovery received from seven projects totaled \$285,687. Local matching funds, which include funds provided by or grants awarded to local partners, totaled \$696,500.

| New Conservancy Revenues in 2013 | Amount |
|--|--------------------|
| Grant Funds received in 2013* | \$1,487,100 |
| Local Matching Funds leveraged in 2013** | \$696,500 |
| Fees received in 2013*** | \$1,995,232 |
| Contributions to recovery received in 2013**** | \$285,687 |
| Total new funding in 2013 | \$4,464,519 |

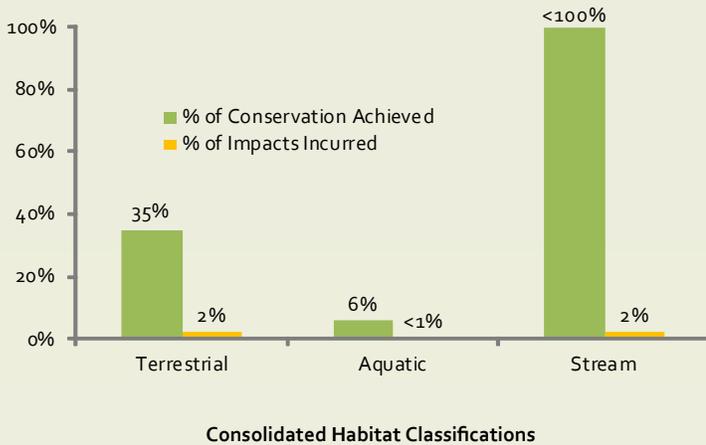
Sources of Funding for Plan Implementation
2008-2013



* The grants in 2013 were awarded by various State and Federal Agencies including CDFW, USFWS, and WCB.
 ** Local matching funds include contributions by the East Bay Regional Park District of its own funds or grant funds for joint acquisition and management.
 *** Development, rural infrastructure, wetland, stream and administrative fees.
 **** Payments by permit recipients that fund habitat improvements beyond required avoidance and mitigation measures.

STAYING AHEAD

Conservation Compared to Impacts



For streamlined permitting to continue under the Plan, conservation must stay ahead of impacts. The Plan specifies detailed metrics that the Conservancy uses to track progress of Plan implementation.

Summarized data is displayed (left) showing that 35% of all conservation of terrestrial habitat expected over the 30-year life of the Plan has already occurred. All categories of habitat conservation are well ahead of the impacts to these habitat types.

A more detailed accounting of conservation, restoration, creation and impacts is provided in Figure ES-1 and Table 14 in the 2013 Annual Report.

PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING THE HCP/NCCP

City of Brentwood
 City of Clayton
 City of Oakley
 City of Pittsburg
 Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
 East Bay Regional Park District
 East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
 California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Agricultural-Natural Resources Trust of Contra Costa County
 California Native Plant Society
 Contra Costa Council
 Contra Costa County Citizens Land Alliance
 Contra Costa County Farm Bureau
 Discovery Builders Inc.
 Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed
 Home Builders Association of Northern California
 Rural/suburban residents
 Save Mount Diablo

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information about the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy can be found online at www.cocohcp.org.
 The HCP/NCCP Overview booklet and the 2013 Annual Report can be both downloaded from the website. To reach the Conservancy, please contact maureen.parkes@dcd.cccounty.us or 925-674-7203.