

**Santa Barbara County  
Regional Conservation Strategy**

**Conservation Steering Committee Meeting**

**The Sutter Room  
The Workforce Resource Center  
1410 S. Broadway, Santa Maria  
Wednesday, August 22, 2007**

**Approved Minutes**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Jerry Bunin – Home Builders Association  
Katie Drexhage – Fish and Wildlife Service  
Rhonda Lucas – Santa Barbara County Farmer Growers  
Susan Petrovich – Ranching Community, (Hatch & Parent)  
Martin Potter – CDFG  
Bill Shipsey – Local Jurisdictions, (City of Santa Maria – Community Development)  
Sam Sweet – Environmental Community, (PhD Biologist UCSB)

**Alternate Committee Members Present:**

Teri Bontrager – Farm Bureau of Santa Barbara  
Willy Chamberlin – Ranching Community, (S.B. County Cattlemen Association)  
Wendy Stockton – Local Jurisdictions (City of Santa Maria – Attorney)  
Suneil Thomas – The Nature Conservancy

**Project Staff Present:**

Joy Hufschmid – Project Manager, Santa Barbara County  
Whitney Wilkinson – Assistant Planner, Santa Barbara County  
David Villalobos – Board Assistant Specialist

**Other Participants:**

Jack Boysen – Fifth District Executive Staff Assistant  
Bill Gillette, Agricultural Commissioner, Santa Barbara County

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**1. Public Comment on non-agenda items.**

1.1. .None.

**2. CSC Comments:**

2.1. None

**3. Consideration of Minutes:**

**3.1 The Minutes of May 23, 2007 were considered as follows:** Approved with the following revisions:

Section 3.2 reads, “A consensus was reached that if County Counsel finds it necessary to seek outside counsel, it will disclose and discuss who they intend to

hire, after first discussing any potential conflicts of interest.” This language was confirmed with County Counsel.

**3.1.2** It was the consensus of the committee that the unabridged documents that members submitted to staff regarding goals, concerns, and desired outcomes be included, rather than the synopsis/paraphrasing that is currently attached to the draft minutes.

**3.1.3** In the Final Communication Plan attachment, in the section regarding community meetings, consensus was reached that community meetings should focus on the North County, as this is where the greatest impact will be felt. The committee also made it clear that this would not preclude or limit meetings from being held in South County.

**3.2 The Minutes of June 27, 2007 were considered as follows:** Approved without alteration.

**4. Presentation and discussion of Land Use within California Tiger Salamander (CTS) Range by Joy Hufschmid:**

**4.1** The question of whether other species were still being considered for inclusion in the plan was raised including the California Red- Legged Frog and the La Graciosa Thistle. Staff responded that there was a topic on the day’s agenda to discuss future meeting topics, one of those being the discussion of covered species in the plan. Staff also clarified that future discussion would not preclude alteration of the boundaries of the scope of the plan if the committee thought it necessary.

**4.2.** Consensus was that “HCP” on slide #2 of the Land Use Presentation that references a Habitat Conservation Plan should be changed to “conservation strategy”, as a consensus has yet to be formed on the type of plan.

**5. Presentation and Discussion of Land Use Changes in the City of Santa Maria by Bill Shipsey:**

This presentation as well as the others, on Land Use and on Agriculture within the CTS Range, will be posted on the project’s website at <http://sbcountyplanning.org/rcs>.

**6. Presentation and Discussion on Agriculture within the CTS Range by County Agricultural Commissioner Bill Gillette:**

**6.1.** Information was requested as to any studies involving the ability of CTS to inhabit areas where other crops, both rotational and non-rotational, are grown as well as additional information regarding statistics on conversion of ag land to non-ag uses. The Agricultural Commissioner responded that the City of Santa Maria should have information on this topic, as most of this conversion is occurring around city boundaries.

**6.2.** The Agricultural Commissioner stated that the statistics in his presentation would be forwarded to staff for distribution to the committee and posting on the web.

**7. Discussion of future agenda topics:**

**7.1** There was general agreement among committee members as to the topics that should be addressed in the upcoming months. There was consensus that the next meeting topic should involve discussion on covered species to be included in the plan. There was discussion of and consensus on the reordering of meeting topics from what was presented in the Meeting Schedule Chart distributed at the meeting.

**7.2** There was discussion regarding the preparation for a discussion of covered species. It was proposed that information on the ranges and habitats of the various species be presented by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Fish and Game with the collaboration of Dr. Sam Sweet.

**7.3** The issue was raised as to whether the inclusion of a Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) should be pursued. The project manager suggested that this discussion could be part of a future meeting once information on the NCCP process was provided by the Department of Fish and Game.

**7.4** It was proposed that a discussion on the current state, federal, and private conservation efforts for the CTS could be helpful at some point in the process. The committee's consensus was to revisit this topic at a later date.

**7.5** The project manager asked that if committee members have any suggestions on future meeting topics between today and the next meeting to send an email.