

**Santa Barbara County  
Regional Conservation Strategy**

**Conservation Steering Committee Meeting**

**Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, Santa Maria**

**Wednesday, June 27, 2007**

**Approved Minutes**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Jerry Bunin – Home Builders Association

Katie Drexhage – Fish and Wildlife Service

Martin Potter – CDFG

Bill Shipsey – Local Jurisdictions, (City of Santa Maria – Community Development)

Sam Sweet – Environmental Community, (PhD Biologist UCSB)

Rhonda Lucas – Santa Barbara County Farmer Growers

**Alternate Committee Members Present:**

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

Peggy Burbank- Senior Planner, Santa Barbara County

Whitney Wilkinson – Assistant Planner, Santa Barbara County

Bob Copper – Facilitator

Yesenia Valero – Board Assistant

David Villalobos – Board Assistant Specialist

**Other Participants:**

Jack Boysen – Fifth District Executive Staff Assistant

Jen Lechuga – Fish & Wildlife Services

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

None.

**2. CSC Comments:**

Minutes of May 23, 2007 are under preparation and will be available at the next meeting. It was announced that the conference call line is available for use. The committee discussed who should be able to participate via the conference line. Consensus was to allow only committee members, alternates, and county staff to use it initially.

**3. Overview of the ESA Presentation:**

- 3.1. Staff gave a presentation on the relevant sections of the Endangered Species Act. There was a request that the RCS Overview Chart be sent to committee members in an easily viewable format. There was also a request that the Federal Endangered Species Act regulations booklet be provided to Committee members. Both items are posted on the RCS website for easy reference and will be made available at the next meeting. There was also a request from the committee for additional information on Section 6 of the Federal Assistance Grants. This will be provided when more information is known about the process by which the project will receive the grant.
- 3.2 Discussion on Section 7 & 10 of the Endangered Species Act:  
There was a request that additional information be provided regarding the specifics of the Section 7 and Section 10 processes. There was discussion about the status of Sonoma County's Section 7 MOU and whether the federal grant Santa Barbara County received would essentially lock the County into pursuing a Section 10 HCP. Staff informed the committee that this was not necessarily the case and that the best process deemed most suitable to constituent needs would be pursued. Consensus was reached that additional research should be done on the Sonoma process and be reported to the committee for discussion at a later date. Also, the possibility of inviting a representative of the Sonoma conservation strategy to present to the committee will be considered.

#### **4. Goals and Outcomes from Previous Meeting:**

The list of Stakeholder Goals, Concerns, and Desired Outcomes were compiled from committee members and presented to the committee. Discussion surrounded what a completed plan will necessitate such as changes in ordinances, elements of the general plan, and mitigation measures that are not currently mandated. The question was raised as to whether all Committee members are still vested in the RCS process; all responded affirmatively. Members expressed their concern that the plan must present clear benefits that outweigh the drawbacks to landowners. It was suggested that the committee discuss and receive information on the state of agriculture in Santa Barbara County and the issues that will allow those involved in this process to understand the perspective of agriculture and ranching within the context of the conservation strategy.

#### **5. Overview of the Habitat Conservation Plan Presentation:**

The committee requested that the slides added to the power point presentation concerning the comparison of Section 7 and 10 of the ESA that were not included in the print outs be sent to them. They were emailed to members following the meeting.

## **6. Minutes**

The minutes from May 23, 2007 will be emailed to the committee members before the next meeting.

## **7. Next Meeting**

It was stated that one of the presenters for the next meeting would be unable to attend the July meeting. Consequently it was decided that the meeting for July 25, 2007 be cancelled and rescheduled for August 22, 2007.

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.