

**Santa Barbara County
Regional Conservation Strategy**

Stakeholder Committee Development Meeting

Betteravia Conference Room, Santa Maria

Wednesday, October 25, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Martin Potter – CDFG

Katie Drexhage – USFWS

Bill Shipsey – Local Jurisdictions (City of Santa Maria – Planning)

Teri Bontrager – Farming Community, Alternate for Ronda Lucas

Jerry Bunin – Home Builders Association

Susan Petrovich – Ranching Community

Project Staff Present:

Grady Williams – Project Manager, Santa Barbara County

Abigail Nugent – Project Coordinator, Santa Barbara County

Mike Ghizzoni – Santa Barbara County Council

Marc Ebbin – ESA Specialist, Attorney at Law

Supervisor Centeno – Santa Barbara County Supervisor, 5th District

Others Present:

Willy Chamberlin – Alternate, S.B. County Cattlemen, S.B. County Ag. Advisory Committee

Wendy Stockton – City of Santa Maria

Andy Caldwell – COLAB

Joy Hufschmid – SB County CEO, Comprehensive Planning

Bob Nisbet – General Services

I. DECISIONS OF THE COMMITTEE:

1. Consensus of committee participants was to proceed to make decisions in advancement of the existing committee agenda.
2. Meeting Minutes for September 27, 2006 were adopted, as revised in committee.
3. For environmental/biologist representation, Staff will contact both Sam Sweet (UCSB) and Paul Collins (SBMNH) to determine their interest in representing environmental stakeholder interests on the committee.
4. In Goal #7, the word “voluntary” should be taken from the text so that it reads “Provide incentives to encourage private landowners to undertake conservation actions”.
5. Staff will look at other jurisdictions’ goals and propose a possible additional goal to reflect need to protect land owner rights.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Status of Committee and Decision Making:** The Project Manager, Grady Williams (PM) began by stating the purpose of today’s meeting; to develop and finalize the membership and organization of the Stakeholder Steering Committee (SSC). Pointing out that the environmental community representation has not been established and given the desire to encourage their participation, making important decisions with out them might not be the best way to accomplish that and suggested decisions made should not be considered official action until the recruitment of the SSC is completed and adopted by

the Board of Supervisors. Most members disagreed. Discussions lead to a consensus resulting in decision #1.

2. **Public Comments:** There was discussion regarding the agenda and the provision for public comment only at the end. Various alternatives were discussed and consensus formed around having the committee review that issue at a later date. Public comment was accepted by the PM throughout the meeting.
3. **Meeting Minutes:** There was consensus to strike the last sentence of the “alternates” paragraph (paragraph 5 under item 3): *“The PM stated that he anticipates alternates to be the designated representative at perhaps 10% of the meetings; not 50%”*. The meeting minutes, minus this statement, were adopted.
4. **Update on Environmental Community:** The PM gave an update on attempts to attract environmental community’s participation: EDC has indicated that it is not interested in participating; CEC would like to, but does not have the staff and time; the Audubon Society is interested, but may not have support among the rest of the environmental community. Attempts are being made to contact the Sierra Club, and several other organizations. The SSC desires to have representatives with credentials as an advocate of the species. The FWS suggested a biologist to fill this role.
 - a. Discussion of possible biologists included:
 - i. UCSB Sam Sweet
 - ii. SBMNH Paul Collins
 - iii. Consults; Larry Hunt
Rosie Thompson (SAIC)
John Storrer
Vince Simenson
 - b. Discussions lead to a consensus resulting in decision #3. The PM will report back the results for the committee to consider.
5. **Revision of Goals:** There was a discussion on the revised set of goals, as attached to the agenda handouts:
 - a. A clarification of goal #7 was requested, and there was consensus leading to decision #4.
 - b. There was discussion about the clarity of the main goals; a clearer distinction is needed about the balance between conservation of the species and protection of economic interests such as the ability to develop some portion of land within the CTS range. A consensus formed decision #5.
6. **Court Decision on San Diego HCP:** Project Staff Marc Ebbin (legal consultant), and Mike Ghizzoni (County Counsel) gave a summary of the Federal District Court decision on San Diego Conservation Plan. Handouts were provided, and should be referred to for a summary of the discussion.
7. **Organization of Committee Meetings:**
 - a. **Summary of Status (PM):** The PM explained the need to transition from initiating a project to turning this group into a well organized, fair and balanced committee appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The assumption has been that the committee, once appointed, would be led by a chair chosen among its members.
 - b. **Discussion of Facilitator:** Interest was expressed by members in having a facilitator for the meetings. The PM mentioned that is fine, but that the cost of such has not been provided for in the budget, and that the committee may want to first try a less expensive alternative, such as a chair. Marc Ebbin pointed out that in the dozens of these projects he’s been involved in, some worked fine with and without a facilitator, and some failed with and without a facilitator. No clear

advantage has been observed either way; success or failure is mostly a function of the individual facilitator. There was general feeling among the Committee members that a facilitator would be advantageous and is desired.

- c. **Discussion of Length of Meetings:** There was concern that 2 hour meetings once a month was unrealistic and the consensus was a desire to have meetings be scheduled for a longer period.
- d. **Discussion of Committee Involvement:** There was consensus that the SSC should be thoroughly involved in Staff's preparation of the plan by reviewing and developing consensus agreement on all aspects of the plan, within the confines of existing agency requirements. All stakeholders must agree to accept the plan by consensus, or there is no viable plan.

- 8. **Next Meeting: November 29th, 10:30 a.m. Length of the meeting will be based on the proposed agenda.**