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# MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

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## ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

The Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

1 to 3 p.m.

SANDAG, Conference Room 7  
 401 B Street, Suite 800  
 San Diego, CA 92101-4231

Staff Contact: Janet Fairbanks  
 (619) 699-6970  
 jfa@sandag.org

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# ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

May 9, 2006

ITEM #		RECOMMENDATION
1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Chair Carrie Downey, Councilmember, City of Coronado)	WELCOME
+2.	MEETING SUMMARY OF MARCH 14, 2006 (Chair Carrie Downey)	APPROVE
	Review and approve the meeting summary of the March 14, 2006, meeting.	
+3.	2007 COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN ISSUE PAPER ON ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM (Shelby Tucker)	INFORMATION
	A number of issue papers are being developed for the 2007 Comprehensive RTP. Staff will present the draft issue paper for the Environmental Mitigation Program.	
4.	STATUS OF CONTRACTS FOR ALLOCATION OF FY 06 MONIES FROM THE REGIONAL HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (Shelby Tucker)	DISCUSSION
	In March, the SANDAG Board of Directors approved the expenditure of \$1,000,000 in <i>TransNet</i> EMP funds for eight eligible land management projects, the conserved lands database, and the post wildfire monitoring project. The Board also authorized the Executive Director to execute agreements with each of the applicants. Staff will provide an update to the EMPWG on the status of these contracts.	
5.	STATUS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM MASTER AGREEMENT (Shelby Tucker)	INFORMATION
	In March, staff distributed a memo from Chair Downey highlighting several of the issues covered by the EMP Master Agreement. Staff will provide an update on the status of the negotiations between SANDAG, Caltrans, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game.	

**ITEM #**

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 6. DEVELOP A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF *TransNet's* REGIONAL HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (Janet Fairbanks)

DISCUSSION

On March 14, 2006, the EMP Working Group discussed the need to develop a process by which the EMP Working Group can make recommendations on the expenditures of the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund. The group discussed funding needs for land acquisition, habitat management, regional biological monitoring, and contingency and endowment funds. The group decided to use the transportation fund allocation process as a model to develop a five-year strategy. Today, the group will begin developing this strategy.

- 7. PUBLIC COMMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

COMMENTS

Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the EMP Working Group on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Working Group. Speakers are limited to three minutes each.

- 8. ADJOURNMENT

The next EMP Working Group meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2006.

+ next to an item indicates an attachment

San Diego Association of Governments  
**ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM  
WORKING GROUP**

May 9, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **2**

**Action Requested: APPROVE**

MEETING SUMMARY OF MARCH 14, 2006

**Members in Attendance:**

Carrie Downey, City of Coronado, Chair  
Tom Oberbauer, County of San Diego,  
Vice-Chair  
Craig Adams, San Diego Conservation  
Resources Network  
Matt Adams, Building Industry Association  
Jeannette Baker, Army Corps of Engineers  
Craig Benedetto, Alliance for Habitat  
Conservation

Robert Fisher, USGS  
Kevin Mallory, East County Subregion  
David Mayer, Department of Fish and Game  
Patrick Murphy, North County Coastal  
Subregion (Alternate)  
Kathy Viatella, The Nature Conservancy  
Mary Jo Wilson, South Bay Subregion  
Susan Wynn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**SANDAG Staff in Attendance:**

Bob Leiter  
Shelby Tucker  
Janet Fairbanks

Josh Schiffer  
Sue Carnevale  
Craig Scott

**Others in Attendance:**

Kelly Dunlap, Caltrans  
Mary Niez, San Diego County

Jim Whalen, J. Whalen Associates

**1. Welcome**

Chair Carrie Downey welcomed the group and began the meeting.

**2. Review of the TransNet Ordinance, Specifically the EMP Principles**

Craig Scott summarized the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) principles which allocate funds for transportation project mitigation needs (the Transportation Project Mitigation Fund) and economic benefits (the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund).

Mr. Scott stated that a unique component of the *TransNet* measure was the creation of the EMP which goes beyond traditional mitigation for regional and local transportation projects. The EMP includes an allocation for the estimated direct costs for mitigation of upland and wetland habitat impacts for regional and local transportation projects; it also includes additional funding for regional habitat acquisition, management and monitoring activities necessary to implement the MSCP and the MHCP. Funds are estimated based on the economic benefit derived from purchasing land with the Transportation Project Mitigation Fund in advance of need in large blocks at a lower cost, and with mitigation predetermined and held constant over time for each of the habitat conservation plans.

Janet Fairbanks stated that one way to look at it is that there are two pots of money: the Transportation Project Mitigation Fund and the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund. Funds for transportation project mitigation are held in the Transportation Project Mitigation Fund. If we can expedite the process to mitigate transportation projects, we earn economic benefit which then releases the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund. SANDAG is preparing a master agreement among Caltrans, the wildlife agencies, and SANDAG which will define the process by which economic benefit can be earned. The draft agreement is proposing that the benefit is earned in increments based upon mitigation steps as they are known to date.

Susan Wynn clarified the ordinance, stating that the only time SANDAG would take money away from the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund is if the EMP fails in the process.

Matt Adams said that at a minimum, it is the charge of the EMP Working Group to recommend an appropriation of the \$200 million, if earned.

Jeannette Baker said that the Corps is not participating in the expedited agreements. She asked how this would affect the process of earning the money.

Bob Leiter answered that SANDAG will be able to review with the Corps proposed mitigation banks for a project, which will contribute to economic benefit.

Craig Adams said we should not draw a line between the \$200 million and the \$650 million; we need to understand where transportation projects are being mitigated in order to decide the best way to spend the \$200 million. They must be linked if you want them to work together effectively.

### **3. Regional Habitat Conservation Fund Allocation Proposal**

Janet Fairbanks presented this item. She suggested that the EMP Working Group discuss various allocation scenarios based on the Habitat Conservation Program funding needs. A matrix (page 6 of these minutes) designed to aid the discussion on funding needs, allocation formulas, and a proposed allocation process was distributed to the EMPWG.

Kathy Viatella asked how the \$1 million that we just approved was derived. Carrie Downey stated that the funds were advanced from the \$200 million based on guidelines adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors. Craig Scott added that the new *TransNet* Ordinance starts July 2008, so expenditures accrued prior to then is an advance from the existing program. Janet Fairbanks said the SANDAG Board approved the expenditure of \$1 million this fiscal year, and \$2 million next fiscal year.

David Mayer asked what was meant by the term "restoration" in the guidelines. Bob Leiter stated that this guideline was added after discussions with the wildlife agencies. It is designed to address restoration needs as required for mitigation of upland and wetland habitat impacts of transportation projects.

Craig Adams said the "Contingency" category was not just for emergencies, but also for opportunities that would potentially be lost. Carrie Downey added that the category should contain two needs: one is opportunities that would be lost, but the other one is true emergencies. Matt Adams cautioned about having a contingency fund and a separate emergency fund, because

the emergency fund would be banking away money that could be put into play. In addition, Matt Adams said that until you establish a global annual operating amount, he does not see how you can figure out what that endowment should be.

Bob Leiter said if we do not create an endowment and buy individual parcels instead, then we need to ensure that we are allocating funding for the long-term management of those parcels. It is a policy question that if you buy land through the EMP fund, that you also put aside money for the long-term management of those parcels.

Jim Whalen stated that we need to be clear what habitat management means. He distinguished between stewardship and management. Stewardship is picking up trash and mending fences, while management is work that is done to the land such as restoration or erosion control. He recommended splitting the "Habitat Management" category into management and stewardship. The long-term management is given priority over opportunistic availabilities. He recommended adding "review monitoring protocols" to the "Regional Biological Monitoring" category under "Next Steps."

Susan Wynn said that the Department of Fish & Game has funded three local assistance grants as identified in the Needs Assessment. The first grant is for rare plant monitoring, the second grant went to San Diego State for developing a framework to prioritize monitoring efforts with limited funds, and the third grant is for developing monitoring protocols for animals. Upon completion of this work, there should be enough information to rewrite the MSCP Monitoring Plan.

Mary Niez asked for clarification on the line of credit versus advanced funding for land acquisitions. She asked how this factors into our discussion and what money we will see on July 1, 2006.

Craig Scott answered that the line of credit is already established for the overall *TransNet* program. SANDAG already has a \$335 million line of credit for the entire *TransNet* program, not just the EMP. The *TransNet* Ordinance as approved by the voters in November 2004, which contains the EMP, does not become law until July 2008, yet there is an interest in moving things earlier than that. For example, purchasing mitigation land for State Route 76 (SR 76). Yet, there will be a financing cost associated with advancing funds from the 2008 measure. Bob Leiter added that the wildlife agencies and SANDAG agreed that a valid use of the \$200 million is to pay financing costs. Janet added "Interest" under the "Land Acquisition" category.

Mary Niez said that the guidelines talk about habitat restoration, and suggested that habitat restoration be included in the "Habitat Management/Stewardship" category. Janet changed the category to "Habitat Management/Stewardship/Restoration."

Craig Adams stated that "Endowments" does not belong in Funding Needs. The other categories are a means and endowments are an end. Janet Fairbanks wrote "further review of purpose" under the "Next Steps" for endowment.

David Mayer asked if we are discussing endowments in the context of existing conserved land or also applying it to new purchases. Janet Fairbanks answered that it applies to new purchases. David Mayer stated that when state and/or federal grant money is used to purchase land, sometimes the jurisdiction agrees to manage the land. If *TransNet* money is used to buy land and it goes to a jurisdiction who agrees to manage it, should the jurisdiction receive credit for completing

their plan? Janet added “new acquisition endowment” under the “other” category for further discussion.

Janet Fairbanks asked the group for input on the allocation process of earned EMP money.

Susan Wynn asked when we can expect to earn economic benefit. Janet Fairbanks said it depends on SR 76, which is the first transportation project we expect to see permitted under the new *TransNet*. Bob Leiter estimated that it would be about two years. Susan Wynn said much can happen between now and then, so deciding on the allocation process now would not be helpful. Janet added that it took a year to allocate the first \$1 million. Susan Wynn said that we will have a much better idea of funding the monitoring needs once we know what the monitoring plan is. She added that the Needs Assessment already outlines the tasks that need to be completed, and some of them are already in progress. She added that there is no point to come up with a percentage of allocation today, when in a year we could have a real number. Janet Fairbanks said that we do not need to come up with a distribution today, but she would like to get a sense of the distribution method that the EMP WG would like to see - a percent distribution, a dollar distribution, distribution on a yearly basis, or on an as needed basis?

Craig Benedetto stated that the Alliance for Habitat Conservation supported the EMP provision of the *TransNet* ordinance because of the lack of funds available for permit requirements and the need to assure that the permits will not be compromised because of the lack of regional funding. He does not want a percentage or dollar amount allocated to any particular funding need; instead, he wants to measure the need against potential jeopardy of the permits. Guessing percentages of allocation is not relevant because it should be dependent upon need.

Carrie Downey said that allocating by need is one option; allocating by formula distributes the funds around the region. Matt Adams stated that priorities for these funds are the existing MSCPs. That has to be acknowledged and identified upfront as a key priority. Carrie Downey asked the group if we want to put all the funds towards funding existing MSCPs, or would the group rather put a percentage towards this. Matt Adams said the driving force of the \$200 million was the protection of the adopted MSCPs. The purpose of this money is to ensure that the MSCPs are in full compliance so that they are protected legally, and that they are improved biologically.

Tom Oberbauer said that he agrees with Craig Benedetto, but he believes we can create a program where we identify broad-based categories of where the needs are, rather than following the process we just completed for the first one million dollars.

Craig Adams agreed that it should be needs driven, but needs driven has different definitions. One concern is permit jeopardy; another is having the plan accomplished. The problem is that waiting to accrue benefits is a serious limitation on doing advanced work that could help move projects along. Carrie Downey said that it is actually an incentive, it is a carrot and stick approach and this is the carrot.

Bob Leiter suggested an approach that starts from a needs base and then gives the flexibility to make decisions year-by-year. For transportation funding there is a five-year program called the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. In that program, the long-term transportation plan is developed, and then a five-year program is derived from the projects and needs identified in the long-term plan. Evaluation criteria are identified. The projects are matched with projected

revenues. Bob suggested that we could do a similar program for habitat conservation; we can predict year by year how much money will flow through this program. He suggested developing a five year program, looking at projected needs and revenues five years in the future, developing criteria and percentages as a basis for allocating funds. This model gives us a long term needs picture, with a strategy for five years worth of expenditures and the flexibility to deal with emergencies or opportunities annually.

Susan Wynn said that the EMPWG spent a lot of energy on the Needs Assessment, which identified the different tasks that need to be funded; we could use this to follow the transportation model.

Janet Fairbanks said that the next steps for the "Land acquisition" category could be developing a five-year strategy based on projected needs and revenue. She added "define contingency and emergency" to the "Next Steps" column. She crossed "formula" off the grid under "Allocation Process." How we allocate the funds will be addressed after we develop the five-year strategy.

Jeannette Baker said that the path we are on right now is a good one. Once all the immediate needs are addressed, we may be able to allocate by percentage. Nevertheless, for now, we need to focus on who needs what the most. Carrie Downey said that we will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

#### **4. February 14, 2006 Meeting Summary**

Craig Adams said that the record on the minutes should show actions over what people said. For example, under number 3, where it states that Craig Adams and Emily Young "said" they did not participate, it should say, "they did not participate." In general, the minutes should reflect actions.

Kathy Viatella added that the Nature Conservancy recused themselves from the vote under item 3 on the February minutes even though this was not reflected in the minutes.

Tom Oberbauer motioned to approve the corrected minutes, Craig Adams seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **5. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **6. Adjourn**

Carrie Downey adjourned the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

**REGIONAL HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND – ALLOCATION DECISION MATRIX**

<b>Funding Needs</b>	<b>Allocation Process Criteria</b>	<b>Allocation % or \$? When?</b>	<b>Recipients</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Other?</b>
Regional Biological Monitoring				Review monitoring protocols (rare plants, priority analysis, animals), then rewrite MSCP Monitoring Plan	
Habitat Management/Stewardship/Restoration				Develop criteria based on need	
Land Acquisition/Interest				Develop a 5-year strategy	
Contingency/Opportunities/Emergencies				Define contingency/emergencies	
Endowment				Define - need further review of purpose	New Acquisition Endowment
Other?					

**San Diego Association of Governments**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM**  
**WORKING GROUP**

May 9, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **3**

**Action Requested: INFORMATION**

2007 COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN:  
DRAFT ISSUE PAPER ON ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM

File Number 3002700

**Introduction**

SANDAG has identified a list of issue papers to be developed for the 2007 Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). For each of these issue areas, staff is preparing a paper to stimulate discussion and gather input from SANDAG's policy committees and working groups.

Attachment 1 is the issue paper for the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP), which is listed under the category of Land Use/Transportation Connection. Since the passage of the *TransNet Extension* Ordinance and Expenditure Plan, staff has been working to implement the components laid out as part of the EMP. This issue paper provides background information on the EMP and how it relates to the RTP.

**Background**

The issue papers address several of the specific issue areas that have been identified as requiring focused analysis and discussion during the preparation of the RTP.

Two efforts have begun that are independent of the RTP, but whose results will be incorporated into the RTP and for which issue papers are being prepared. The first is the Independent Transit Planning Review, which was conducted in late 2005 and early 2006. This review is a follow-up action to the *TransNet* extension that was approved in November 2004 and the results of this review will affect the transit network and service assumptions in the RTP. The second effort is the EMP, which also is a result of the extension of *TransNet*. As work begins to set up habitat mitigation banks related to the development of transportation projects and identified funding, SANDAG staff will work closely together to ensure the work being done to implement the EMP is coordinated with the development of the RTP.

Several other topics are routinely updated along with any RTP, but have a new focus with the adoption of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) in 2004. They include land use forecasts, which will include the Smart Growth Concept Map currently under development, a review of the Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria, and an update of the Regional Arterial System. The preparation of a Regional Freight Strategy also was identified in the RCP as a priority action for the RTP.

Eight other issue papers will cover new topics or will report on results of recent studies. The five issues that were identified initially include Cross-Border Travel, Interregional Travel, Energy Demand and Infrastructure, Tribal Development Issues, and Public Safety/Homeland Security. Three more topics that were recently added to the listing of issue papers include Ground Access to the Regional Airport, Toll Facilities, and Network Improvements using high-occupancy vehicle (HOV)/Managed Lanes or General Purpose Lanes.

Attachment: 1. Environmental Mitigation Program Issue Paper for the 2007 RTP

Key Staff Contact: Shelby Tucker, (619) 699-1916, [stu@sandag.org](mailto:stu@sandag.org)

**Environmental Mitigation Program Issue Paper  
for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan  
Draft: 3/15/06**

## **Introduction**

In 1987, voters approved the *TransNet* program — a half-cent sales tax to fund a variety of transportation projects throughout the San Diego region. This 20-year, \$3.3 billion transportation improvement program expires in 2008. In November 2004, 67 percent of the region's voters supported the extension of *TransNet* to 2048 - thereby generating an additional \$14 billion for highway, transit, and local road projects and other transportation improvements.

A unique component of the *TransNet Extension* Ordinance and Expenditure Plan (*TransNet Extension*) is the creation of an environmental mitigation program (EMP), which goes beyond traditional mitigation for regional and local transportation projects. While the EMP includes an allocation for the estimated direct costs for mitigation of upland and wetland habitat impacts for regional and local transportation projects, it also includes additional funding for habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities. The EMP will help implement the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) and the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP).

The *TransNet Extension* identifies \$850 million to be used for the EMP. The EMP principles state that two funds shall be established. The first one, the "Transportation Project Mitigation Fund," (TPMF) covers direct mitigation costs for regional and local transportation projects estimated to be \$650 million (\$450 million for regional projects, \$200 million for local projects). These funds will be used for the mitigation needs of the major transportation infrastructure improvement projects and programs identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), known as MOBILITY 2030.

The second fund, the "Regional Habitat Conservation Fund," (RHCF) will be approximately \$200 million. These funds will be made available for regional habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities necessary to implement the MSCP and the MHCP, if certain requirements related to transportation project mitigation are met.

## **Objectives for 2007 Comprehensive RTP**

The objective for the 2007 Comprehensive RTP is to obtain permits for specified projects through the process outlined in the EMP. The EMP provides an alternative approach to project by project mitigation requirements. A more comprehensive approach is to consolidate as much as possible transportation mitigation requirements thus expediting permit processes while at the same time implementing the MHCP and MSCP.

## **Background**

The intent of the EMP is to provide a fund for acquisition and management of habitat lands identified in the region's habitat conservation plans and to create a reliable approach for funding required mitigation for transportation improvements thereby reducing future costs and accelerating project delivery.

The projects identified in the RTP have been evaluated in a preliminary manner to estimate the potential impacts associated with implementation of each project and the potential cost of mitigating these impacts. The total estimated mitigation cost for all RTP regional projects has been identified by project, and totals approximately \$450 million. The total estimated mitigation cost for

all local projects is approximately \$200 million. This total amount of \$650 million allocated to cover full mitigation for all RTP projects makes up the TPMF.

SANDAG, through a partnership with Caltrans, will mitigate impacts of all regional and local transportation projects. The regional transportation projects are identified in the RTP. Local jurisdictions will identify their mitigation needs and through the use of funds from the TPMF, one of the options laid out below will be utilized to meet those mitigation needs.

- Establish a mitigation/conservation bank
- Purchase appropriate credits in an existing bank
- Perform restoration or habitat creation activities at a new or existing bank
- Purchase land for preservation outside of a formal bank

Funds in the RHCF are estimated based on the economic benefit derived from establishing fixed mitigation requirements for transportation projects early in the planning process, and purchasing land with the TPMF. Principle number 4 of the *TransNet Extension* EMP principles states that, "The EMP shall include a funding allocation for the estimated economic benefit of incorporating specified regional and local transportation projects into applicable habitat conservation plans, thereby allowing mitigation requirements for covered species to be fixed, and allowing mitigation requirements to be met through purchase of land in advance of need in larger blocks at a lower cost." By predetermining mitigation ratios and purchasing land for mitigation in advance of actually needing it later in the planning process, the economic benefit is created from the cost savings.

The RHCF is estimated to be approximately \$200 million. The accrual of economic benefit monies is tied to the completion of regional projects. Milestones within each project have been established and once a milestone has been met, a proportion of the economic benefit money associated with that project (both the local and regional share) will be released into the RHCF. The milestones are as follows:

- Establishing and fixing project mitigation ratios
- Approval of mitigation methods (utilizing one of the options laid out above)
- Receiving permits

The RHCF monies will be allocated for regional habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities necessary to implement the MSCP and MHCP. The first allocation of RHCF funds is currently underway. The current allocation is being distributed through a competitive process and future funds could be allocated in a similar manner or through another process.

### **Current Conditions**

SANDAG is preparing a Master Agreement (Agreement) among the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and California Department of Transportation. The Agreement identifies a process for allowing mitigation, through one of the methods outlined above, to help reduce project mitigation costs and expedite processing for environmental documents and permits for local and regional transportation projects.

Over the course of the 30-year buildout of various RTP projects and 40-year generation of *TransNet* revenue, individual projects will be proceeding at various times. SANDAG will work with Caltrans and local jurisdictions to determine the best means available to mitigate local and regional transportation projects.

## **Identification of Challenges Associated with the EMP**

There are several challenges associated with implementing the EMP. The first is addressing changes that are made to the list of RTP regional projects. As mentioned above, the estimated allocation of funds from the TPMF and RHCF has been identified for each RTP regional project. Since this list is tied to MOBILITY 2030, which was the current RTP at the time of the passage of the *TransNet Extension* ordinance, how to address changes that would be made to the list by subsequent RTPs, such as the 2007 Comprehensive RTP, needs to be decided.

The second challenge associated with the EMP is the uniqueness of this type of program. This is a new way of addressing project mitigation and requires collaboration among many parties. The Agreement is the first step in laying out the processes for implementing the EMP. However, once the process has been established, applying it to specific projects is the next challenge. Every project identified in the RTP will have its own mitigation requirements and the methods chosen to meet each of the milestones laid out in the Agreement will be specific to that project. This becomes an even greater challenge when dealing with the "Early Action Program" because satisfying the mitigation requirements for these priority projects will be addressed comprehensively rather than on a project-by-project basis in order to maximize early land acquisition opportunities allowing for the creation of the economic benefit. Although the *TransNet Extension* does not begin until April 2008, work on the "Early Action Program" has begun and is the first set of projects used to implement the EMP process outlined in the Agreement.

Another challenge will be how to distribute the funds available in the RHCF. In 2005, SANDAG created the Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group (EMPWG) to advise the Regional Planning Committee and the SANDAG Board on issues related to the coordination and implementation of the EMP. The EMPWG is responsible for making recommendations on the allocation of the RHCF and provided guidance for the first allocation mentioned above. The EMPWG prepared a "needs assessment" identifying the short-term and long-term activities necessary to implement the MSCP and MHCP, such as biological monitoring, land management coordination, and supplemental land acquisitions. Additionally, the EMPWG will assist in identifying specific organizations to perform the monitoring, management, and acquisition activities identified in the needs assessment. Based on this analysis, the EMPWG will develop criteria and recommend priorities for allocation of RHCF funds.

## **Conclusions/Recommendations/Follow-up**

The goals of the EMP are identified below. In order to achieve these goals, the relationship between the EMP and the RTP needs to be included in the 2007 Comprehensive RTP.

- Expedite the permitting process of transportation projects
- Mitigate comprehensively instead of project by project
- Purchase land in advance of need to maximize cost efficiency
- Implement the MSCP and MHCP

Over the next several weeks, staff will be finalizing the Agreement and will work to implement the next phase of the EMP, which includes work on projects in the "Early Action Program." The Agreement will resolve many of the issues presented above but as we move forward with this project we anticipate needing to address any additional issues that arise. Since the EMP was part of the *TransNet Extension*, work will continue over the life of the ordinance, beyond the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive RTP through 2048.