



401 B Street, Suite 800
 San Diego, CA 92101-4231
 (619) 699-1900
 Fax (619) 699-1905
 www.sandag.org

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.

September 12, 2006

1 to 3 p.m.

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

Staff Contact: Keith Greer
 (619) 699-7390
kgr@sandag.org

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- **PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES SUBGROUP**
- **PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING 5-YEAR FUNDING STRATEGY SUBGROUP**

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ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

September 12, 2006

ITEM #	RECOMMENDATION
1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Chair, Councilmember Carrie Downey, City of Coronado)	
2. AUGUST 8, 2006, MEETING SUMMARY Review and approve the meeting summary of the August 8, 2006, meeting.	APPROVE
3. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS 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.	COMMENT
+4. PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES SUBGROUP (Vice Chair Tom Oberbauer) The Opportunities Subgroup will report on the progress it has made in refining the acquisition criteria, determining a process for the acquisition of lands using funds from the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund, and developing a weighting system to rank and prioritize the criteria.	DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION
5. REPORT ON REVISIONS TO BIOLOGICAL MONITORING PLANS (Clark Winchell, USFWS) Biological monitoring is a required component of the San Diego region's habitat conservation plans (HCPs). Biological monitoring is necessary to establish if the conservation plans are being effective at conserving the species and habitats as expected. In this regard, biological monitoring is similar to the monitoring of other regional infrastructure which is periodically evaluated to determine their operational condition. An example is SANDAG's State of the Commute report in which SANDAG is monitoring and evaluating the performance and operation of the region's transportation system. Biological monitoring plans currently adopted as part of the regional HCPs are being critically reviewed under the direction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game. Mr. Clark Winchell of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will present the status of this review, initial findings, and considerations for future monitoring.	INFORMATION
+6. PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING 5-YEAR FUNDING STRATEGY SUBGROUP (Susan Wynn, USFWS) Susan Wynn will discuss the recommendation from the 5-year funding strategy subgroup. The recommendation provides a framework for implementing the Needs Assessment discussed at the June 2006 EMP Working Group meeting. The strategy identifies management and monitoring tasks that should be pursued over the next 5 years as economic benefit funds become available.	DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

7. ADJOURN

The next EMP Working Group meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2006, from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

+ next to an item indicates an attachment

San Diego Association of Governments
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP

September 12, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **2**

Action Requested: APPROVE

MEETING SUMMARY OF AUGUST 8, 2006

File Number 3002700

Members in Attendance:

Carrie Downey, Councilmember, City of Coronado, Chair

Tom Oberbauer, County of San Diego, Vice Chair

Craig Adams, San Diego Conservation Resources Network

Matt Adams, Building Industry Association

Karen Bane, Coastal Conservancy (Alternate)

Michael Beck, Endangered Habitats League

Craig Benedetto, Alliance for Habitat Conservation

Pat Brindle, City of Poway

Robert Fisher, USGS

Keith Greer, City of San Diego

Kevin Mallory, City of Santee, East Suburban Communities

Bruce April, Caltrans

David Mayer, CDFG

Kathy Viatella, The Nature Conservancy

Susan Wynn, USFWS

Emily Young, The San Diego Foundation

Staff in Attendance:

Sue Carnevale

Bob Leiter

Trisha Rominger

Rob Rundle

Shelby Tucker

Others in Attendance:

Clare Billett, SDCRN

Rich Geigler, J. Whalen Associates

Scott Grimer, EHL

Mary Niez, County of San Diego

Jerre Stallcup, CBI

Marisa Lundstedt, City of Chula Vista

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Carrie Downey welcomed the Working Group and started the meeting.

2. June 13, 2006 Meeting Summary

Michael Beck motioned to approve the June 13, 2006, meeting summary.

Tom Oberbauer seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment and Communications

Bob Stewart requested that the Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group consider his property a priority when deciding on which lands to acquire for

conservation and mitigation purposes. His North County property contains 330 acres. Biological reports show rare and endangered species are contained on his property.

Mr. Stewart also informed the group that he sent a letter to SANDAG and Mr. Tom Oberbauer with his request. Mr. Craig Adams asked if SANDAG staff had the materials. Ms. Sue Carnevale stated that she did have this information and has forwarded it on to the appropriate staff.

Rob Rundle announced that Keith Greer has accepted the position of Senior Environmental Planner with SANDAG. Mr. Greer will replace Janet Fairbanks as the staff contact for the Working Group. Mr. Greer's first day will be September 5, 2006.

4. *TransNet* Environmental Mitigation Program Estimated Five-Year Cash Flow Analysis

Richard Chavez provided a handout titled *TransNet Early Action Program, Environmental Mitigation Program, Regional Habitat Conservation Fund (Economic Benefit) Projection*. Mr. Chavez explained that the chart reflects project mitigation and economic benefit amounts are reflected as cumulative totals. Mr. Chavez also added that the economic benefit is based upon release points that are contained in the working Master Agreement. Mr. Chavez informed the Working Group that this chart is a projection and that the amounts are conservative estimates. He added that SANDAG updates its budgets each fiscal year and that this estimate would be updated accordingly.

Chair Carrie Downey asked Mr. Chavez to clarify whether the chart implied there would be approximately \$2 million in economic benefit for FY 07, \$4 million for FY 08, etc. Mr. Chavez stated yes, she was correct, the economic benefit can be calculated by subtracting the previous year's estimates.

Michael Beck asked Mr. Chavez if this projection was updated to reflect current dollars. Mr. Chavez stated that it was reflected in current year dollars.

Craig Adams asked Mr. Chavez what type of index was utilized to calculate current dollars. Mr. Chavez stated that Plan of Finance, which is 3.6%, was used.

5. Progress Report from the Acquisition Opportunities Subgroup

Tom Oberbauer explained that the subcommittee created a list of acquisition opportunities and a correlating map. Mr. Oberbauer stated that the list and accompanying map were broadly created and were not submitted to any filtering criteria. Mr. Oberbauer stated that the intention of the list and map was for it to be used as a flexible concept tool. Attachment 1 of the agenda packet outlines what the map and criteria would be used for. Mr. Oberbauer added that the subcommittee was trying to identify a broad range of generalized locations where conservation and acquisition could take place. He added that the map only applies to "willing sellers." Mr. Matt Adams inquired about the criteria that states, "The site is not proposed or does not have the potential to be purchased for transportation project mitigation." Mr. Adams stated that he does not understand why transportation project mitigation opportunities would be excluded from consideration. Mr. Oberbauer clarified that that

particular criteria was added at SANDAG staff's request. Craig Benedetto stated that he feels that this criterion should not be used at this time. Rob Rundle stated that it is not SANDAG's intent to consider buying land that can be purchased with transportation mitigation funds. Craig Benedetto stated that he did not believe that there was a conflict and that these properties should be considered. Mr. Rundle stated that there is another parallel process occurring that is identifying properties specifically for transportation mitigation and would be purchased with transportation money. Mr. Oberbauer stated that he believed that it was the intention of the subcommittee to complement, not compete with, the transportation mitigation opportunities.

Chair Downey informed the Working Group about her concerns with addressing urgent emergency funding needs. Chair Downey stated that the Working Group would need to decide if it did adopt an emergency needs criteria, would it maintain an emergency needs fund or reprioritize projects that will be funded to accommodate the acquisition of an emergent request.

Mr. Benedetto stated that he had concern over the word "potential" in the criteria that states, "The site is not proposed or does not have the potential to be purchased for transportation projection mitigation." Emily Young stated that it appears to her that many of the opportunity areas on the list occur along highways and corridors that will require mitigation. Ms. Young asked if any discussion on a landscape level approach was taken during the Master Agreement negotiations. Mr. Oberbauer stated that the subcommittee was not involved in the Master Agreement negotiations. Susan Wynn added that the list and map are very broad and could apply to any type of purchase. Ms. Wynn added that the criteria would need to be very specific, but the opportunities were intended to be very broad and not parcel-specific. Mr. Rundle stated that this criterion could be reworded and agrees that staff can remove the term "potential." Ms. Wynn agrees that it may be best to reword the criterion. Chair Downey informed the Working Group that staff is working on compiling a list of transportation mitigation needs and she believes this will help further clarify this issue. Mr. Benedetto added that he believes that a project that is proposed for purchase infers that it is in the process of negotiating a sale, not just considering the purchase of the property. Chair Downey asked that staff further clarify the term "proposed" and report back to the Working Group.

Chair Downey asked the Working Group to consider the implications of adopting an emergency needs criteria. She added that if the Working Group did adopt a policy to address emergency needs requests, it needed to decide if it would maintain an emergency fund or re-rank the list of priority projects. Chair Downey asked for the Working Group's input on this issue. Mr. Michael Beck stated that he did not believe that there should be an emergency fund. Mr. Beck believed that the same group that prioritized the projects to be funded would evaluate emergency requests. Mr. Benedetto stated that he did not believe there was a need for an emergency request criterion. Mr. Benedetto added that if an emergency request was made, at a minimum the property should be in an approved NCCP or core biological area. Keith Greer stated that it was his understanding that the list was not static. Chair Downey stated that in remembering how the process occurred the previous year, the Board of Directors would have to approve the list. She added that it is her belief

that the process would be fluid and the list would always change. Mr. Oberbauer stated that the process should be similar to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program, in that a five-year strategy of properties to be acquired was used, being reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Ms. Young stated that timing is the key issue. Mr. Oberbauer stated that if they were high priority, then they could borrow money from a bank with the understanding that they would receive future funding. Chair Downey stated that there would not be any absolute guarantee of funding because at any time the Working Group could re-rank project lists. Ms. Wynn reiterated that the current list is not parcel-specific and that prioritizing would apply to general areas. Robert Fisher stated that he agrees with Mr. Benedetto in feeling that there is not a real need for an emergency criterion. Mr. Fisher added that he believes that if a new species is discovered to be found in an area that is not contained within an approved MSCP or MHCP, it not be excluded from consideration. Mr. Benedetto added that he believes that the Working Group agreed that bulging the preserve was not an acceptable approach. Mr. Fisher clarified that some language should be added to address situations where action must be taken to protect newly discovered endangered species of flora or fauna in either a softline or hardline area. Craig Adams stated that organizations can borrow funds without 100% guarantee of future funding. Mr. Adams added that he believes that one reason to have criteria is to give guidance and manage process.

Chair Downey thanked the subgroup for its work on the list and correlating map. Ms. Kathy Viatella stated that she believes that it will be difficult to decide on the issue of having an emergency criterion without seeing the Master Agreement and how it impacts the financing. Mr. Beck stated that whether or not there is an emergency criterion, the same group that ranks the priorities should be the group that evaluates emergency requests. This subcommittee could make recommendations to the Chair and the Working Group on what action to take on emergency requests.

Bob Leiter stated that SANDAG usually develops a process and then criteria are used in the developed process. Mr. Leiter believes that a subgroup should develop a process, including, for example, a call for projects process. The process should also include a way to identify and determine which projects should have priority. Mr. Leiter added that a maximum and minimum for allocations should be established. Mr. Leiter stated that establishing an emergency criterion has merit but would need to interface with the developed process.

Mr. Benedetto stated that if the Working Group were to accept an emergency request similar to that of the Wright's Field recent request, and projects were reprioritized and the bumped project's goals fell apart, he would not feel comfortable with the outcome.

Kevin Mallory suggested the Working Group consider the process used in the Smart Growth Incentive Program. Mr. Mallory feels that jurisdictions should be given the opportunity to review and comment on any potential land acquisitions the Working Group is considering. Chair Downey stated that the Working Group had no authority to use eminent domain. Chair Downey added that the reason jurisdictions had to agree and comment on Smart Growth eligibility is because SANDAG does not have authority

to re-zone land use to carry out the program's objectives. Chair Downey added that she is not sure if jurisdictions approving the list is appropriate because the land is in private ownership. Mr. Mallory explained that he believes that jurisdictions would be interested because they have land use authority. Chair Downey responded that she does not believe that jurisdictions would even have a say in this matter. She asked the Working Group if it agreed that any proposed acquisitions go to the jurisdictions prior to it continuing onto the Regional Planning Committee. Chair Downey stated that she would have staff further examine Mr. Mallory's suggestion. Mr. Beck stated that the Working Group should not ask for jurisdictional approval on potential acquisition opportunities because local government would not support it if there is the potential for development. Chair Downey stated the Working Group should confer with jurisdictions to ensure there are not any issues. She reminded the group that SANDAG is an association of governments and its input would be important. Mr. Beck stated that he believed that seeking jurisdictional approval would set a bad precedent and would give jurisdictions veto power. Mr. Benedetto stated that having jurisdictions' concurrence is necessary because a vote of approval from the Board of Directions, which represents the jurisdictions, would be needed to proceed.

Mr. Rundle added that staff is trying to remain consistent with the language in the ordinance. Mr. Benedetto stated that the wording is the way it is because the intent was to focus on certain areas. Chair Downey stated that the focus was not intended to only include coastal lands. Mr. Benedetto stated that he believed that when the ordinance was worded, it was not intended to include the East or North County HCPs. Mr. Rundle stated that the language included "and amendments thereto" because the North County MSCP was pending and was not meant to preclude any pending plans or future amendments. Matt Adams stated that he believes that programs that were adopted should be rewarded with priority. Chair Downey stated that she does not want to foreclose opportunity or preclude North or East County. Mr. Benedetto expressed that he feared that considering all identified properties would result in all meeting the criteria. Mr. Benedetto believes that programs that were adopted earlier should be weighted differently and given preference. For example, if an East County MSCP and a City of San Diego request are being considered, Mr. Benedetto believes that City of San Diego request should be given priority because its plan was adopted first.

Mr. Leiter stated that SANDAG staff, along with policy and legal advisors, would meet to discuss issues with differences between the ordinance, guidelines, and principles. Staff will return to the Working Group with more of an absolute analysis.

Mr. Benedetto expressed that he is not supportive of the map attached in the agenda materials. Mr. Benedetto added that his agency strongly opposes the map's existence and is prepared to go before the Board of Directors to convey this. He added that he feels there is not any biological underpinning whatsoever. Mr. Benedetto believes that the map will cause controversy and reiterated that his organization does not endorse or support it. Mr. Rundle stated that the map is not intended to go forward for approval, but merely is intended to be used as a tool. Mr. Benedetto stated that the map reflected and identified cities that have not had the opportunity to review it. Mr. Rundle added that it has been stated that the property owner must be a willing

seller. Mr. Matt Adams expressed that he feels that this will become an obstacle to development and that property owners will become targets. He feels that this map is problematic. Mr. Matt Adams used Fanita Ranch as an example. Mr. Adams pointed out that Fanita Ranch is identified on the map as an opportunity area. Mr. Adams fears that an individual will bring the map to another meeting and state that the property was already identified as a possible conservation area. Mr. Adams stated that only MSCP/MHCP areas should be considered. Mr. Oberbauer stated that the criteria had not been applied to the map or list. Ms. Wynn added that the list or map had not been prioritized or sifted through, but was just merely a collective listing of potential opportunities. Chair Downey explained that she would need a map to visually aid her in understanding the list of opportunity areas. She asked if there was an existing map that could be used rather than creating a map to demonstrate these areas, to avoid any controversy. Mr. Oberbauer stated that it is possible to use any existing MSCP/MHCP maps. Mr. Greer asked if it was the circles around opportunity areas on the map that caused Mr. Benedetto's and Mr. Adams' concerns. Mr. Adams stated that it is the major developments that are in circles that concern him and he feels that it could be used as a tool to stop legitimate development. Mr. Adams stated that he feels that no maps should be generated until the criteria have been established. David Mayer stated that the example that Mr. Adams is using is not entirely accurate. Mr. Mayer added that Fanita Ranch, in its CEQA process, has proposals being considered and entire project is not unavailable for opportunity purposes. Mr. Mayer reiterated the project must have a willing seller to be considered.

Chair Downey asked the subcommittee to reconvene to:

- Recommend process and fine-tune any issues that have been discussed
- Evaluate criteria and consider weighting options

Matt Adams stated that he does not believe that the process and criteria should be made to fit a map. He believes that the map is very premature.

Craig Adams believes that there is a problem with the Working Group's process. He asked that there be a more organized process. Mr. Matt Adams stated that he felt that the honesty and candidness of the group members was a good thing. Mr. Matt Adams added that the Building Industry Association has not taken a position on this issue. Craig Adams stated that he has great concern when the Alliance for Habitat Conservation takes a formal position on an issue that has not been discussed. Mr. Oberbauer explained that after the subcommittee had met and created the list and map, he met with Matt Adams, Craig Benedetto, and Jim Whalen to review, and that is how they were aware of the map and were able to take a position.

6. Progress Report from the Management and Monitoring Five-Year Funding Strategy Subgroup

Susan Wynn went over the five-year management and monitoring recommendations, which were attached to the agenda materials. Ms. Wynn stated that the #1 issue discovered was weeds and non-natives. Ms. Wynn indicated that the subcommittee recommends the retention of an employee to implement proposed strategic plan. Kathy Viatella asked for clarification on whether the FY 06-07 budget funds were to

cover tasks 1-4 on the attached list. Ms. Wynn replied yes, these funds would be used for the tasks. Ms. Wynn added that the contracts would be negotiated in the spring, with work commencing in the fall of 2007. Ms. Wynn added that a person would be needed to implement and manage the tasks.

Ms. Wynn stated that updating the vegetation database is extremely important to the success of monitoring. USGS and the state have invested a tremendous amount of funds in BIOS, but lack the ability to edit database information online (QA/QC data). The subcommittee recommended hiring an employee to be responsible for coordinating effort across the region. The subcommittee also recommended continuing USGS post-fire monitoring and countywide gnatcatcher monitoring. Subcommittee recommends that five year-plan fund positions to complete tasks rather than only funding tasks. Mr. Greer stated that everything recommended was formulated according to the Needs Assessment.

Ms. Wynn stated that the subcommittee will meet again to further refine five-year strategy and will come back to the Working Group at the September meeting with more recommendations.

Craig Adams asked who he should direct any questions to, if needed. Ms. Wynn stated that if anyone had questions, they could contact her. Chair Downey stated that she would like to be included on any correspondence and asked that SANDAG staff (Rob Rundle, and in the future Keith Greer) be included, as well.

7. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m. The next EMP Working Group meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2006, from 1 – 3 p.m.

San Diego Association of Governments
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP

September 12, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **4**

Action Requested: DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION

PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION FROM THE
ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES SUBGROUP

File Number 3002700

Introduction

At the May 9, 2006, Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) Working Group meeting, an *opportunities subgroup* was formed to generate a list of potential opportunity areas for land acquisition and a process for prioritizing these potential areas through a set of defined criteria. The goal was to establish criteria that the Working Group could recommend to the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) and the SANDAG Board of Directors (Board) as Regional Habitat Conservation Fund (RHCF) monies become available.

Recommendation

The subgroup is recommending that the Working Group recommend approval of the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund Criteria for Land Acquisition and the emergency criterion.

Discussion

At the EMP Working Group meeting on August 8, the Working Group requested that the subgroup reconvene to discuss several items, which are listed below. The subgroup met on August 30.

Land Acquisition Criteria

The EMP Working Group made recommendations to the subgroup on potential changes to the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund Criteria for Land Acquisition. The subgroup reviewed and refined the list of criteria, which is included as Attachment 1.

The draft Regional Habitat Conservation Fund Criteria for Land Acquisition will be used to prioritize lands to be purchased with these funds. When RHCF funds are available, these criteria would be used by the Working Group to determine the regional priorities for the allocation of limited funds. These criteria first identify eligibility criteria, which must be met before projects can be further evaluated. Prioritization criteria are then identified, which can be used to provide a relative ranking among all the projects being considered for funding.

The opportunities subgroup also has developed an emergency criterion, which could be considered if a particular property was in imminent threat of loss unless immediate action was taken

(Attachment 2). It is expected that if an emergency project was being considered, that the land acquisition eligibility and prioritization criteria developed above would also apply to a project being considered as an emergency. The Working Group will make recommendations on the allocation of the RHCF to the Regional Planning Committee and Board. The Board will make the final determination on the expenditure of funds.

Process for Prioritization and Selection

The subgroup discussed the process for prioritizing and selecting lands to be acquired at the August 30 meeting, but the subgroup requires additional time for development. The subgroup set an additional meeting date of September 7 to continue the discussion. Since this meeting date is after the distribution of this agenda and prior to the EMP Working Group meeting, a representative of the subgroup will provide an oral report, if discussions have been completed.

Weighting System

The subgroup was unable to get to this item on its August 30 agenda but, if time permits, will begin the development of a weighting system at its September 7 meeting. It is anticipated that additional meetings of the subgroup will need to be scheduled in order to complete this item. However, a representative of the subgroup will provide an oral report, if discussions have been completed.

- Attachments:
1. Land Acquisition Opportunities Subgroup RHCF Criteria for Land Acquisition
 2. Land Acquisition Opportunities Subgroup Emergency Criterion

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

Land Acquisition Opportunities Subgroup Regional Habitat Conservation Fund Criteria for Land Acquisition

The following considerations are intended to be used in the evaluation process to determine if lands should be acquired using funds from the *TransNet* Environmental Mitigation Program Regional Habitat Conservation Fund (RHCF). These funds will be earned through the economic benefit of acquiring transportation project mitigation lands in advance of need, in larger blocks, and at a lower cost, and will be used for regional habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities necessary to implement the regional habitat conservation plans. The criteria listed below address broad level biological considerations to determine if land should be eligible for acquisition or restoration.

Eligibility Criteria

- A. The site is not under negotiation to be purchased for transportation project mitigation
- B. Area or properties exist where there are known willing sellers or options are let
- C. The site contributes to or substantially improves the regional preserve needs by being located within an existing Pre-Approved Mitigation Area or other conservation area designation associated with either an open space program or Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP)
- D. The proposed acquisition will contribute to the success of the San Diego regional NCCP

Prioritization Criteria

- 1. The site serves to further key goals outlined in an accepted resource management plan (for example, watershed assessment, watershed management plan, restoration plan, Southern California Wetland Recovery Project's Regional Strategy and Work Plan).
- 2. Lands contain regionally critical vegetation communities such as vernal pools, maritime chaparral, coastal sandstones or clay soil or habitat for critically sensitive species (for example, the Thread leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*) or Quino checkerspot butterfly).
- 3. Site provides for a critical missing piece to connect existing preserve lands.
- 4. Working landscapes that provide the conservation values described above may be considered (e.g. certain farmlands).
- 5. Acquisition is being funded through a partnership of government, non-profit agencies and/or private landowners (leveraging additional available funding).
- 6. There are pressures for the loss of habitat, there is an unusual opportunity for purchase, or there is an extraordinary threat to important conservation land.
- 7. Long-term management and ownership of the land has been identified.
- 8. The proposed acquisition is supported by the appropriate jurisdiction/permit holder and/or wildlife agencies.
- 9. Emergency land acquisition that could be lost without immediate actions.

Land Acquisition Opportunities Subgroup Emergency Criterion

Background

Due to historic species losses and landscape fragmentation, building the NCCP reserve has required emergency acquisition of land critical to the creation of the “proposed” reserve. Critical species populations, corridors, linkages, and/or rare vegetation communities coupled with threat of development have driven these decisions. Past examples include Los Montonyas, Carmel Mountain, Torrey Surf, and many others. Implementation of a viable reserve and the successful conservation of covered species is directly linked to local government permit authority and third party assurances.

The proposed criteria is intended to provide a pathway for emergency situations while acquisition criteria are being developed by the EMP Working Group. It is assumed that the eventual acquisition criteria will include opportunity, threat, and emergency considerations and will subsume the emergency criteria proposed below. In the interim, if adopted by the Working Group, Transportation Committee, and SANDAG Board, this policy would allow projects to be identified as first and/or highest priority for acquisition with Regional Habitat Conservation Funds as those funds become available for acquisition purposes. Additionally, the policy and criteria could be applied to TransNet mitigation fund expenditure by agreement of the appropriate decision makers (CalTrans, Wildlife agencies, SANDAG).

The EMP Working Group has previously adopted criteria for land management related emergency circumstances.

Policy Question

Will the EMP Working Group propose adoption of interim emergency acquisition criteria to the SANDAG Board?

Proposed Criteria

The proposed acquisition will contribute to the success of the San Diego regional NCCP, is supported by the appropriate jurisdiction/permit holder and wildlife agencies, and could be lost without immediate action.

San Diego Association of Governments
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP

September 12, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **5**

Action Requested: COMMENT/RECOMMEND

FIVE-YEAR FUNDING STRATEGY FOR MANAGEMENT AND
MONITORING ACTIVITIES

File Number 3002700

Introduction

At the August 8, 2006, EMP Working Group meeting, Susan Wynn, USFWS, discussed the preliminary recommendations made by the Management and Monitoring subgroup regarding funding priorities for regional management and monitoring activities. The Management and Monitoring subgroup identified the priorities in the Needs Assessment (Attachment 1) that should be funded in the first five years that Regional Habitat Conservation Funds are available. At the direction of the Working Group, the subgroup met to complete its work and has prepared a five-year funding strategy to be considered by the Working Group (Attachment 2).

Recommendation

It is recommended that the EMP Working Group provide comments on the five-year Management and Monitoring funding strategy and forward the recommendation to the Regional Planning Committee for its consideration.

Discussion

The five-year funding strategy identifies staff positions that could accomplish many of the tasks outlined in the Needs Assessment. The recommendation does not specify how the positions would be filled or to whom the staff positions would report. Specific details of how these staff positions would be hired, managed, and evaluated would have to be defined. The concept of accomplishing numerous tasks in the Need Assessment by hiring appropriate staff positions is the key consideration of the subgroup's recommendation.

Attachments: 1. Proposed EMP RHCF 5-Year Funding Strategy
2. Draft 5-Year Budget for Regional Management and Monitoring

Key Staff Contact: Rob Rundle, (619) 699-6949, rru@sandag.org

Proposed EMP RHCF 5-Year Funding Strategy

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
I. REGIONAL COORDINATION										
1. Research alternative governance structures for a regional monitoring entity.									Yes	
2. Identify an organization or organizations (regional monitoring entity) to perform regional coordinating responsibilities.										
3. Establish an implementing structure and provide resources for its functions.										
4. Define the specific roles and functions of the regional monitoring entity.										
5. Identify specific partnerships that would facilitate functions of the regional monitoring entity.										
6. Oversee regional land management functions. ¹										
7. Identify responsible entities to own and manage land. ¹										
II. REGIONAL DATA BASES										
A. HabiTrak Conserved Lands Databases (for NCCP permitted jurisdictions)										
1. Define baseline conservation for each non permitted jurisdiction.										
2. Input baseline conservation into HabiTrak for non permitted jurisdictions.									Yes	
3. Input acquisitions, mitigation banks, conservation easements, and other conserved lands into HabiTrak and review for accuracy for non permitted jurisdictions.									Yes	
4. Prepare jurisdiction's annual reports.	Permitted jurisdictions								No	

¹ *Italicized* task added since EMP Working Group review in November 2005

^m Yearly funding needed to maintain information; Dollar amount yet to be determined

* Task is part of the Conserved Land Database expenditure

Proposed EMP RHCFC 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
5. Compile all HabiTrak input and create updated, seamless conserved lands database.	SANDAG/USFWS	*							Yes	
6. Review HabiTrak inputs (spatial and non-spatial) for accuracy and distribute to jurisdictions, SANDAG, wildlife agencies, etc.	Wildlife Agencies								Yes	
B. HabiTrak Annual Reporting Application										
7. Maintain HabiTrak.	CDFG								Yes	
8. Recode HabiTrak to a web-based, centralized system.	CDFG									
9. Train jurisdictions in use of HabiTrak.	CDFG/SANDAG									
C. Conserved Lands Database (for non-NCCP lands)										
10. Determine and input conserved lands.	SANDAG/USFWS	*	m	m	m	m	m	m	Yes	
11. Combine NCCP conserved lands and non-NCCP conserved lands databases.	SANDAG/USFWS	*	m	m	m	m	m	m		
12. Prepare subregional and regional maps and reports.	Wildlife Agencies									
13. Provide conserved lands database to SANDAG to update land ownership database.	Wildlife Agencies									
D. Habitat Preserve Planning Area Databases										
14. Update and maintain subarea plan boundaries and regional habitat preserve planning area boundaries (MHPA/PAMA/FPA) due to subarea plan annexations/de-annexations, subarea plan refinements, boundary adjustments, and additions of major and minor amendment areas.										
15. Based on changes to the subarea and habitat preserve planning area boundaries adjust jurisdiction-specific conservation targets accordingly.										
16. Provide updated databases and conservation goals to jurisdictions, wildlife agencies, and SANDAG.										
E. Ownership Database										
17. Maintain land ownership database.	SANDAG		m	m	m	m	m	m		SANDAG funded

Proposed EMP RHCf 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
F. Species Databases	Wildlife Agencies									
18. Maintain USFWS/DFG endangered/sensitive species database.									No	
19. Maintain regional species database including covered species.									Yes	
20. Maintain GIS database of major exotic species locations.									Yes	
21. Maintain GIS database of covered species locations and population sizes, monitoring status, management status, etc.									Yes	
22. Develop protocols and a methodology for tracking species loss and gains and prepare summary maps and reports.									Yes	
G. Vegetation Databases	Jurisdictions, Wildlife Agencies									
23. Choose and agree on a regional vegetation classification system, hierarchy, and cross walk (Sawyer vs. Holland).									Yes	
24. Map vegetation and species distributions for conserved lands.									Partially	
25. Incorporate updated vegetation and species databases into regional database.									Partially	
H. Other Databases										
26. Map monitoring locations for all levels of monitoring.									Yes	
27. Maintain and update fire history database for conserved lands.									Yes	
28. QA/QC regional data layers (i.e., species, vegetation, fire history).									Yes	
29. Maintain copies of all GIS layers in consistent format at one location so all data from jurisdictions and agencies are compiled, updated, and accessible.									Yes	
30. Maintain and update BIOS.	CDFG								Partially	
31. Maintain GIS database of management units and land managers.									Yes	
32. Collect and input climate data to warehouse.										
33. Collect and input road-kill data to warehouse.										
34. Peer review regional database structures.										
III. REGIONAL BIOLOGICAL MONITORING PROGRAM										
A. Plans, Protocols, Data Collection										
1. Inventory existing species monitoring and research programs.	SDSU								Yes	
2. Continue the work begun in the pilot studies for remote sensing –									Yes	

Proposed EMP RHCFC 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
develop feasible remote sensing/monitoring protocols and implement at a larger scale.										
3. Identify needs for and acquire imagery based on results from pilot studies.									Yes	
4. Refine monitoring protocols for preserve-level and regional-level monitoring based on peer review.	Wildlife Agencies; Land Managers								Yes	
5. Train regional managers, technicians, and volunteers on how to collect monitoring data.									Yes	
6. Revise MSCP Monitoring Plan for plants, animals, and habitats.	USGS, USFWS, SDSU								No	
7. Review and revise MHCP Monitoring Plan, as necessary.	MHCP cities								No	
8. Write MSCP North Monitoring Plan.	County of San Diego								No	
9. Write MSCP East Monitoring Plan.	County of San Diego								No	
10. Create and maintain a San Diego regional monitoring plan; revise subregional monitoring plans as necessary.									Yes	
11. Coordinate San Diego Monitoring with the South Coast Ecoregion and the Border region.									Partially	
12. Update and revise monitoring plans as needed (goals, objectives, protocols, sampling design, indicators, stressors, etc).									No	
13. Sponsor regional and ecoregional monitoring workshops.	Wildlife Agencies								Partially	
14. Determine attributes/structure for climate database and input data.									Yes	
15. Determine attributes/structure for road-kill database and input data.									Yes	
16. Develop data warehouse to store and display monitoring data (BIOS).									Partially	
17. Create and maintain a digital library of all monitoring documents (eg., reports; studies) (BIOS).									Partially	
18. Coordinate field data collection for biological monitoring across the NCCP lands in San Diego County.									Yes	
19. Maintain a master schedule of monitoring efforts, and annually identify monitoring priorities.									Yes	
20. Implement monitoring plans and protocols.	Land Managers								No	
21. Conduct post catastrophic event monitoring (e.g. wildfires, flooding).	USFWS	\$125k							Yes	
B. Science Advisors										
1. Establish and fund a scientific review group.									Yes	

Proposed EMP RHCY 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
2. Review and comment on monitoring protocols.										
3. Provide technical input on short-term and long-term management and monitoring priorities.										
4. Review and comment on monitoring reports.										
5. Assist in identifying outside funding sources.										
6. Based on monitoring results, recommend modifications to management policies.										
7. Develop a process for compiling and analyzing data at the subregional and NCCP regional scales.										
8. Develop conceptual ecological models to help identify monitoring components, stressors, and management responses.										
9. Use baseline data and conceptual models to identify spatial and temporal scales relevant for monitoring.										
10. Contribute data from research projects, and direct students to research projects that contribute to the monitoring and management program.										
11. Identify methods for restoring degraded habitats and ecological processes through independent research.										
12. Using a regional perspective, make recommendations regarding priorities for management and monitoring. These recommendations may form the basis for management directives issued by the wildlife agencies.										
13. Make recommendations for prioritizing funds for management and monitoring, consistent with the management and monitoring priorities above.										
14. Provide relevant information for the wildlife agencies and EMP technical and policy committees to use in prioritizing acquisitions.										
IV. DATA STORAGE AND ANALYSES										
A. Centralized Data Warehouse										
1. Develop process to input and maintain the regional databases.										
2. Develop QA/QC protocols and assign QA/QC responsibilities.										
3. Input existing monitoring data (BIOS).										
4. Establish guidelines for submittal of annual data, including data forms/digital files and digital or hard copy maps.										
5. Maintain archive (hard copy, electronic) of field notes, data forms,									Yes	

Proposed EMP RHC 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
maps, etc.										
6. Provide maps, as needed, for management and monitoring efforts.										
B. Data Analysis and Reporting										
1. Determine how data will be analyzed.	Wildlife Agencies									
2. Review and analyze data both at the preserve-level and the regional level.										
3. Establish guidelines for data access.										
4. Compare relative costs of designs and how designs differ in spatial coverage, revisits over time, and over sampling to estimate error rates and make recommendations.										
5. Compile annual monitoring summaries from jurisdictions in a consistent format.										
6. Prepare 3-yr monitoring summaries.	Wildlife Agencies									
C. San Diego Region Conservation Website										
1. Develop Regional web site.										
2. Manage and update website.										
3. Annual report summaries, including updated conserved land and preserve assembly maps, monitoring results, and management actions made available on website.										
V. LAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM										
A. Management Plan Preparation									Yes	
1. Develop guidelines for preparing subarea framework and area-specific management plans.	Wildlife Agencies									
2. Develop and standardize preserve level monitoring guidelines to direct area-specific management plans.	Wildlife Agencies									
3. Identify responsible agency(s) for management and monitoring of each preserve area.	Jurisdictions									
4. Identify conserved lands lacking baseline surveys.	Jurisdictions, Wildlife Agencies									
5. Identify conserved lands lacking habitat management plans.	Jurisdictions, Wildlife Agencies									
6. Identify conserved lands lacking habitat managers.	Jurisdictions, Wildlife Agencies									

Proposed EMP RHCF 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
7. Conduct baseline surveys and prepare area-specific management directives for conserved lands.	Jurisdictions, Wildlife Agencies								Partially	
8. Incorporate baseline survey information into regional databases.										
9. Identify and implement measures to monitor use of conserved lands (eg. #'s of hikers, bikes, horses, # miles of trails, etc.) to direct area-specific management plans.										
10. Conduct compatibility studies to determine appropriate uses for each unit of the conserved lands.										
B. Adaptive Management Coordination										
1. Identify potential causes of species declines and appropriate management responses.									Yes	
2. Identify preserve level priorities for monitoring and management.									Yes	
3. Coordinate regional priorities among jurisdictions.									Yes	
4. Prioritize equipment needs and coordinate among jurisdictions.									Yes	
5. Identify/train biological monitors.									Yes	
6. Identify critical data gaps and prioritize them for funding.									Yes	
7. Coordinate monitoring roles and priorities with land managers.									Yes	
8. Summarize preserve-specific management actions in annual reports.									No	
9. Compile and summarize jurisdictional management summaries into a regional report.									Yes	
C. Management Plan Implementation										
1. Fund on-site land managers and law enforcement.	Jurisdictions	\$750k							Partially	
2. Manage trails if approved and designated.										
3. Control exotic and domestic species, both plant and animal.										
4. Control erosion.										
5. Fund preserve level monitoring.										
6. Establish and maintain protective barriers (e.g. fencing).										
7. Identify and install necessary signage.										
8. Restore/enhance native habitats.										
9. Prevent and clean up illegal dumping.										
10. Address off-site impacts to conserved lands.										
VI. LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM										
									Yes	

Proposed EMP RHCF 5-Year Funding Strategy
(continued)

TASKS	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY(S)	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11+	Regional Funding Responsibility	NOTES
1. Determine land acquisition needs.										
2. Develop land acquisition priority criteria.										
3. Identify key acquisition sites for transportation mitigation and habitat conservation fund.										
4. Develop criteria for determining parcels available for mitigation, conservation, acquisition, etc.										
5. Develop a database of parcels available for mitigation and conservation.										
6. Identify available acquisition opportunities and recommend purchase to decisions makers.										
7. Identify land manager, purchase land, convey land										
VII. PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH									Partially	
1. Identify and fund educational opportunities.										
2. Install educational signs, kiosks, interpretive centers.										

D-R-A-F-T
5-YEAR BUDGET FOR REGIONAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING
 (does not include budget for preserve-level management and monitoring)

TASK	YR-1	Matching \$	YR-2	YR-3	YR-4	YR-5
REGIONAL MANAGEMENT						
1. Regional Coordination*						
Management Coordinator	\$150,000		\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Develop strategic plan to address invasive plants and animals						
Develop strategic plan to address habitat restoration						
Establish a Task Force of "experts"						
Coordinate with Ex.Com. for the SD County Weed Management Area						
Manage Contracts to Implement plans						
2. Regional Management Implementation						
Implement invasives control and removal	\$600,000		\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Implement habitat restoration	\$0		\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Other management needs tbd	\$0		\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000
Subtotal Regional Management	\$750,000		\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
REGIONAL MONITORING						
1. Regional Coordination*						
Program Developer	\$150,000		\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Executive Director	\$0		\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Monitoring Coordinator	\$150,000	FWS/CDFG - 2	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
GIS Specialist	\$0	FTE	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Administrative Assistant	\$0		\$0	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000
Biologist	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
Database Specialist	\$0		\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
GIS/Database Technician	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$130,000
2. Regional Data Bases						
HabiTrak Conserved Lands Data Base	\$0	SANDAG/FWS/P	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
HabiTrak Application	\$0	ermitees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Conserved Lands (Transnet FY05-06)	\$0	CDFG - \$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Habitat Preserve Planning Area	\$0	CDFG	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ownership Database	\$0	SANDAG	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Species Databases	\$0	USFWS	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Vegetation database	\$150,000	CDFG in-kind	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$0
BIOS	\$50,000	CDFG/USGS	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Data Mining	\$0	CDFG/USGS - \$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

D-R-A-F-T
5-YEAR BUDGET FOR REGIONAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING
 (does not include budget for preserve-level management and monitoring)

TASK	YR-1	Matching \$	YR-2	YR-3	YR-4	YR-5
3. Protocols Development						
Pilot testing and refinement of protocols (SDSU)		\$0 CDFG - \$165,000	\$145,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Plant monitoring plan revisions (USGS)		\$50,000 CDFG - \$116,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$0
Animal monitoring plan revisions (USFWS)		\$0 CDFG - \$168,000	CDFG	\$50,000	\$0	\$0
Protocol training/establishment of monitoring sites		\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
4. Regional Monitoring Implementation						
Gnatcatcher monitoring		\$300,000	X	X	X	X
Post-fire monitoring		\$400,000	X	X	X	X
Other regional monitoring--tbd		\$1,305,000	\$1,360,000	\$1,460,000	\$1,460,000	\$1,330,000
Vernal Pools (plants/animals/morphology)						
Rare Plants						
Cactus wren monitoring						
Herp Arrays						
Grassland Raptor (BurrowingOwl) Surveys						
Arroyo Toad Surveys						
Corridor monitoring (species/technique tbd)						
Habitat monitoring						
Lagoon monitoring						
Upland and riparian avian community monitoring						
Mammal monitoring						
Subtotal Regional Monitoring	\$1,250,000		\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
TOTAL REGIONAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING	\$2,000,000		\$4,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
TransNet Funding Available	\$2,000,000		\$4,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Other Funding Sources**	X		X	X	X	X

*Note that as the number of positions and therefore funding for Regional Coordination increase, funding for Regional Data Bases, Protocols Development, and Implementation decreases, because it is assumed that the Regional Coordination staff is performing these functions.

**USFWS, CDFG, USGS, jurisdictions, private foundations, etc.