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MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

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

Tuesday, July 9, 2013

1 to 3 p.m.

SANDAG, 7th Floor Conference Room
 401 B Street
 San Diego, CA 92101-4231

Staff Contact: Keith Greer
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AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- **TransNet ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2014 FUNDING ALLOCATION**
- **TransNet ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2014 ECONOMIC BENEFIT FUNDING FOR LAND ACQUISITION**
- **MOUNTAIN LION CONNECTIVITY STUDY**

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ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

Tuesday, July 9, 2013

ITEM #		RECOMMENDATION
1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Chair Carrie Downey)	Estimated Start Time: 1:00 – 1:05
+2.	SUMMARY OF MAY 14, 2013, MEETING Review and approve the meeting summary of the May 14, 2013, meeting.	APPROVE Estimated Start Time: 1:05 – 1:10
3.	PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group (EMPWG) on any issue within the jurisdiction of SANDAG that is not on this agenda. Anyone desiring to speak shall reserve time by completing a "Request to Speak" form and giving it to the EMPWG coordinator prior to speaking. Public speakers should notify the EMPWG coordinator if they have a handout for distribution to EMPWG members. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. EMPWG members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.	COMMENT Estimated Start Time: 1:10 – 1:15
+4.	<i>TransNet</i> ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2014 FUNDING ALLOCATION (Susan Wynn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) At the May 14, 2013, meeting of the EMPWG, an ad hoc committee was formed to develop a recommendation for the allocation of Fiscal Year 2014 funding for regional management and monitoring as well as land acquisition. Ms. Susan Wynn will present the ad hoc committee's recommendation for consideration by the EMPWG.	DISCUSSION/ RECOMMENDATION Estimated Start Time: 1:15 – 1:45
+5.	<i>TransNet</i> ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2014 ECONOMIC BENEFIT FUNDING FOR LAND ACQUISITION (Keith Greer, SANDAG) On April 26, 2013, the SANDAG Board of Directors (Board) approved the execution of an amendment to the 2008 Memorandum of Agreement with state and federal agencies on the implementation of the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) to allow for the release of economic benefit funds. The SANDAG Board also directed staff to develop a competitive grant program for land acquisition using economic benefit funds for future consideration by the Board. Keith Greer, SANDAG, will present information on the application and evaluation criteria being developed for consideration by the SANDAG Board.	INFORMATION Estimated Start Time: 1:45 – 2:10
6.	MOUNTAIN LION CONNECTIVITY STUDY (Dr. Winston Vickers, U.C. Davis) Dr. Winston Vickers of the University of California Davis – Wildlife Health Center will be discussing his study to look at functional connectivity of mountain lions in western San Diego County. This work, funded under the <i>TransNet</i> EMP, is designed to look at movement and potential impediments to mountain lions – a large mammal species requiring a large territory. This study implements one of the first objectives of the Connective Strategic Plan.	INFORMATION Estimated Start Time: 2:10 – 2:50

7. NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting of the EMPWG is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10, 2013, from 1 to 3 p.m.

INFORMATION

Estimated Start Time:
2:50 – 2:55

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment

San Diego Association of Governments
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP

July 9, 2013

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **2**

Action Requested: APPROVE

SUMMARY OF MAY 14, 2013, MEETING

Members in Attendance:

Carrie Downey (Chair)
Anne Harvey, San Diego Conservation Network
Bill Tippets, The Nature Conservancy
Bobbie Stephenson, County of San Diego
Bruce April, Caltrans
David Mayer, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Emily Young, The San Diego Foundation
Glen Laube, Chula Vista, South County
James Whalen, Alliance for Habitat Conservation
Jeanne Krosch, City of San Diego
Mike Grim, City of Carlsbad (Vice Chair)
Richard Van Sant, Army Corps of Engineers
Robert Fisher, USGS
Susan Wynn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Others in Attendance:

Ann Van Leer, LCB
Anne Fege, Partners in Biodiversity
Barbara Kus, USGS
Brenna Vredevelde, Tierra Data Inc.
Brent Eastty, SDG&E
Cathy Chadwick, EDI
Dallas Pugh, ESA
Dan Marcshalek, SDSU
David Hogan, Chaparral Lands Conservancy
Derek Langford
Diane Nygaard, Preserve Calavera
Doug Deutschman, SDSU
Gabe Buhr, Coastal Commission
Jane Lederman, UCLA Urban Planning PhD Student
Jeff Lincer, RICA
Jill Terp, SDNWR
Kim Smith, Caltrans
Kris Preston, SDMMP

LeAnn Carmichael, County DPW
Margaret Bornyasz, ECORP Consulting
Mark Recht, member of the public
Mary Ann Hawke, ICF
Mary Niez, County of San Diego
Megan Hamilton, San Diego County Parks and Recreation
Michelle Mattson, ICF
Rebecca Lewison, SDSU
Ron Rempel, SDMMMP
Sarah Krejca, San Diego Habitat Conservancy
Scott Flurry, ICF
Scott Gressard, ECORP
Shelby Howard, HELIX Environmental
Spring Strahm, SDSU
Tom Oberbauer, AECOM
Tracy Nelson, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Yvonne Moore, SDMMMP

SANDAG Staff in Attendance:

Keith Greer, SANDAG
Sarah McCutcheon, SANDAG

ITEM #1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Carrie Downey called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Susan Wynn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced that the Carlsbad USFWS office moved to: Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, 2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250 Carlsbad, California 92008.

Dr. Robert Fisher, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), informed the Working Group that the USGS is looking to hire a data manager for the San Diego Management and Monitoring Project (SDMMMP) team. He also announced that the first phase of the study on badgers in western San Diego County has been completed as part of the Connectivity Strategic Plan. Dr. Fisher added that he will give the digital link to the study to Keith Greer, SANDAG, so that interested parties can download the study. The last update Dr. Fisher gave was on the Fire and Strategic Planning Workshop that occurred in the middle of March that brought in different elements of wildfire research. The next steps are to move forward from what was learned and tie that information into a fire element in the Management Strategic Plan. All of the videos of the presentations are now on YouTube and the PowerPoint presentations also can be viewed. The agenda of the workshop with the titles of the presentations and links to those presentations will be sent out shortly.

Chair Downey thanked everyone from the Working Group for coming to the many SANDAG meetings where the policy points for economic benefit were addressed.

Mr. Greer announced the Regional Plan workshops at Caltrans. He explained that the workshops would be a time to give input on the topics of energy, climate change, healthy environments, and healthy communities. He added that if people knew of others that have not been engaged in the

Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group (EMPWG) to let him know so that the workshop can have a turnout with more people than the usual.

ITEM #2: SUMMARY OF MARCH 12, 2013, MEETING

Diane Nygaard, Preserve Calavera, presented edits for the March meeting summary. Mike Grim, City of Carlsbad, motioned to approve the meeting minutes, and Bill Tippetts, The Nature Conservancy, seconded the motion. The motion carried without opposition.

ITEM #3: PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Nygaard shared that she had recently been given an email survey asking questions about Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCP) and barriers. She explained that it was difficult to answer the questions, since it has been nine years since the last NCCP was adopted, and it seems that San Diego has lost momentum. She thinks that it is a challenge for everyone to think about how the unfinished plans will get finished. California now has a \$4 billion tax surplus, which Ms. Nygaard believes makes this the time to talk about a *TransNet* sales tax measure for managing habitat. She is concerned that without the public education and outreach there will not be the momentum for that tax measure to go forward.

ITEM #4: *TransNet* ECONOMIC BENEFIT NEXT STEPS AND REQUEST FOR FORMATION OF AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014 FUNDING (Keith Greer, SANDAG)

The Transportation Committee (TC), the Regional Planning Committee (RPC), the Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee (ITOC), and the SANDAG Board of Directors (Board) all approved the *TransNet* Economic Benefit policy points. Mr. Greer presented a one-page handout that showed the next steps for economic benefit. The amended Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will have provisions detailing the release of economic benefit funds. The Working Group would make a recommendation via an ad hoc committee to the RPC on how much funding should be set aside for acquisition, management, and monitoring as part of the normal annual allocation process as approved by the SANDAG Board. Part of the funds will go towards management and monitoring, and the remaining funds will go towards a competitive Call-for-Projects for land acquisition proposals. The details are not yet finalized, but it is hoped that by the end of May the amended MOA will be executed between the signatory agencies.

Mr. Greer asked for an ad hoc committee to be formed for allocation of the annual funding for management and monitoring, and to determine how to allocate the economic benefit funding. Mr. Greer also indicated that he will be convening a meeting of the agencies identified in the MOA policy points (USFW, USGS, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Caltrans) to discuss what will be in the competitive Call-for-Projects for land acquisition proposals. Outside opinions will be asked from Joe Quintero (Caltrans Right-of-Way) and David Means (Wildlife Conservation Board) to work out the details.

The details will help the project be more successful when it goes to the Board for consideration. Distribution and fairness is very important for the land acquisition grants, since people want to know where and what money is being spent on. Mr. Greer hopes the ad hoc committee and the Call-for-Projects committee will meet in June to discuss the funding and application requirements.

It is proposed that the land acquisition grants will go to the joint TC/RPC meeting on July 9, 2013. The issue will then go to ITOC in September and then the Board on September 27, 2013.

Jim Whalen, Alliance for Habitat Conservation, asked how the funding will be decided, and if it would be based on projects received in the past. Mr. Whalen added that there is roughly \$20 million in *TransNet* funding this year, but every year it will be a different amount.

Mr. Greer informed that the ad hoc committee will decide how much money goes to land management and monitoring, and how much money will go to land acquisitions based on the economic benefit to date. The \$20 million figure is from all projects that have received permits to date. The economic benefit funding will be part of the plan of finance and thus embedded into the regular annual budget process.

Ms. Wynn asked if State Route 76 (Mission to I-15) will be completed in time to pay into the economic benefit fund. Bruce April, Caltrans, voiced that he hopes that the permits will be in by summer and completed by 2014.

David Mayer, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), asked if that means you will have to reevaluate the five-year spending plan.

Mr. Greer answered that every year the amount to spend on management and monitoring (\$4 million) is calculated. That amount is in addition to the amount decided for economic benefit.

Mr. Whalen informed that the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board approved the new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems permit even though there is no money for it. He feels that they do not have any experience working with groups. He shared that he told David Gibson (Executive Director) that he should look at the EMPWG as a model if he wants the San Diego Water Board's plan to be a success. Mr. Whalen suggested that some of the funding be saved for the purpose of a framework water quality improvement program.

Chair Downey commented that it took the water board a long time to place a representative on the Energy Working Group, but it may be worth them attending the EMPWG meetings.

Mr. Greer requested that Chair Downey empanel an ad hoc committee for the annual management and monitoring funding. Bill Tippets, Emily Young, Susan Wynn, Robert Fisher, Richard Van Sant, Jim Whalen, Bruce April, David Mayer, and Mike Grim nominated themselves.

Tom Oberbauer, AECOM, asked if the money could be spent on regional water quality control board issues. Mr. Greer informed that the money could not be used for those issues and can only be used for habitat management. Dr. Fisher explained that there is overlap between water quality issues and habitat management.

Michelle Matteson, ICF, explained that there are other things in the permit that encourages stream restoration and enhancement as a water quality control measure that could fall into habitat management requirement.

Chair Downey added that we may want to put more focus on those dual focus issues. Also keep in mind that water issues scored high with the public in the most recent survey and should be kept in mind.

ITEM #5: SOUTH COUNTY COMMUNITY OUTREACH PILOT PROJECT (Cathy Chadwick, Earth Discovery Institute)

Cathy Chadwick, Earth Discovery Institute (EDI), shared that this past year EDI has had help from the EMP and presented the South County Outreach Pilot Project. She shared with the Working Group EDI's mission, which is to bring community members and students together with environmental education. She also shared the EDI education service learning model that was started in 2001. The three points of that model are Explore, to get kids out in the land, Discover, teaching science and building a love of science, and Inform/Invest, students implementing what they have learned in a way that is beneficial to their community. EDI integrates state science standards into their model and works with the land managers to get the children helping with work that is defined in the habitat management plans and is meaningful in San Diego County. The program is driven by Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP)-type planning. Students are encouraged to do something beneficial in their community such as a community garden, a recycling program, etc. EDI serves about 3,000 kids annually, and the EDI grant recommended this year will serve approximately 1,000 students.

In 2009, EDI launched a community outreach program for South County that was continued through EMP funding. Ms. Chadwick explained the importance of partnerships to EDI and its mission. It is one of EDI's commitments to make sure that partner groups are doing something to make a difference in San Diego County. EDI works with government agencies and non-governmental organizations. EDI wants to identify issues from the public agencies and increase the public's knowledge and action.

EDI has worked with Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) on labor intensive seed cleaning events. Many volunteers have helped with the seed collecting and cleaning as well as removing trash from conserved lands such as CDFW's Proctor Valley property and USFWS's Hidden Valley property. Volunteers also have helped the efforts of USFWS to remove weeds from vernal pools. Volunteers help land managers meet conservation goals, increase the efficiency of staff efforts, and create community conservation support.

EDI hosts events such as hikes, discussions, and interpretive events to build knowledge about specific species or habitat types and conservation topics. Ultimately, these events increase people's appreciation for nature. In 2012, with support from the Environmental Mitigation Program, EDI coordinated 11 interpretive events and 565 partnerships. All volunteer efforts that EDI facilitates include interpretive elements to build conservation knowledge and appreciation.

One-time events focus large groups quickly and introduce basic conservation concepts. Examples of one-time events hosted by EDI are: clearing weeds, installing burrowing owl burrows, riparian restoration, trail building, interpretive features (kiosks), etc. Volunteer hours from one-time events last year totaled 1,052 hours and were valued at over \$25,000.

EDI hosts repeating events where a group of greater skilled volunteers can be built. The events are engaging for those who want to keep learning and allow volunteers to participate in more complex projects. Examples of repeating events are weekly volunteer events and weekly patrol efforts. EDI also has coordinated weekly volunteer crews at Proctor Valley in Jamul and at the Crestridge Ecological Reserve. Volunteer hours last year totaled 228 hours which is approximately \$12,600 worth of labor.

Reserve Rangers are a volunteer patrol group that report what they see on the land, good or bad, to land managers. In 2012, 26 of the 49 incident reports at Crestridge were reported by the Reserve Rangers. There are currently 28 Reserve Rangers at Crestridge, and if the funding is approved for the coming year, they are going to start a ranger patrol program at San Diego National Wildlife Refuge (SDNWR) as well.

EDI would like to improve the communication between land managers and law enforcement. Communication would hopefully solve the most common issues at reserves, such as illegal use of vehicles, vandalism, homeless encampments, dogs off leash, dumping, and camp fires. Communication is a large aspect of community outreach and to improve that, EDI creates signage, brochures, and kiosks. EDI has struggled some with vandalism of trail signage, especially for re-routes. Initially traditional signs were used that told people to stay out, but that did not work well. When kid's artwork was used on the trail signs, people began to comply and there has not been a single sign torn down since.

Ms. Chadwick shared that EDI created a "dogs on leash" brochure and an EDI newsletter. There is also an immediate mailing annually to people living near the preserve on how to protect themselves from fires and the agencies to get in touch with.

Partnerships are beneficial since the small staff at EDI cannot be experts on everything and people involved like to hear from the partner agencies' biologists. Relationships with the neighbors around the reserve are important. Recently some neighbors spotted an unknown plant. They called Ms. Chadwick and she contacted a CBI botanist who went out to the sight and identified the plant as *Dittrichia graveolens*. She gave the property owners recommendations for dealing with the plant and everyone took care of it on their own property. Environmental Health Coalition and CBI then devised a strategy for removal of the invasive plant.

Another partnership that EDI has is with CalFire who takes regular physical training hikes in Crestridge. The crew has previously helped EDI when they found a homeless encampment and cleared the site.

EDI leveraged funds were shared for the benefit of Crestridge ecological reserve in 2012. There was a total of \$124,000 from sources such as grants, students helping with grassland, one-time event volunteers, and reserve rangers.

Jill Terp, SDNWR, shared her praise for EDI and all of the great work that is done with such a small staff.

Dr. Emily Young, the San Diego Foundation, commented that she thought the idea for the interpretive signs was great, since keeping signs up is always a great challenge. Dr. Young asked if Ms. Chadwick knew of informal trends of change at the reserves with the increase in volunteers on the ground.

Ms. Chadwick informed that as interpretive elements were added, people seemed more engaged. There are fewer dogs off leash and people are picking up after their dogs more. At Rancho Jamul, a native garden was created with the help of volunteers and help from state staff. It helps to get people interested in what is going on.

Tracy Nelson, CDFW, voiced that the signs seemed to work on two levels. One, people are more likely to respect the effort of a kid in an organized setting. The second is more community-based. Connecting with parents based on their child's involvement helps education.

ITEM #6: PRESERVE MANAGEMNT STANDARDIZATION PLAN (Dr. Rebecca Lewison and Dr. Douglas Deutschman, San Diego State University)

Dr. Rebecca Lewison, San Diego State University, presented on the Preserve Management Standardization Plan. She gave an overview of the Management Plan Standardization's mandate, criteria, format, content, and chapter highlights. Dr. Lewison shared that it is expected that stakeholders will have an opportunity to review the document soon, but she and Dr. Douglas Deutschman wanted to give the Working Group an overview. Drs. Lewison and Deutschman received help from a steering committee to develop a final product.

The Mandate: To create a document that serves as a standard "cookbook" for preserves developing and implementing management and monitoring plans.

The Vision: A management plan template that allows and includes a description of the adaptive management process, management and monitoring components, and builds on the work that they were tasked to do with the grant received.

General Criteria for Document:

- Cover relevant material
- Easy to navigate
- Accessible and clear language
- Science-based
- Do not duplicate general adaptive management templates already written

This "cookbook" is different than other similar plans in that while it does cover similar topics and materials, it also provides concrete examples, guidance, and a how to format.

Format: The plan does not have a one-size fits all approach. Each chapter has the same format with a guidance figure, a table of contents, an introduction, main text, summary, and checklist. The guidance figure identifies the step or stage of the process, shows the upstream/downstream links, and reinforces the iterative process.

The chapters are broken into interactive phases that reinforce the importance of a sidewise process. The plan is designed to focus on alignment and concordance between management questions and answers. The format of the plan helps preserve adaptive management at the different phases.

The chapter guides ensure that the reader has the context for the chapter and knows what it is about. The text in the plan is concise, jargon-free, and science-based. The chapter summary emphasizes the key information and what the take-home message from the chapter is.

Dr. Deutschman walked through a chapter of the plan with the Working Group so that members could determine if the plan is something that they would want to read more of and use. He gave an overview of a decision tree, which moves from broad objectives/goals, to specific objectives and information needs, to field methods and protocols, to metrics, data analysis, and interpretation. As the tree moves through those steps, it also moves horizontally from simple to more complex. It is important that a question be identified prior to using the decision tree so that it can be navigated effectively.

Conceptual models: Conceptual models provide a blueprint for what land managers want to monitor and why they want to monitor it based on the current understanding. There are guidelines to ensure that there is appropriate alignment between questions, methods, and resources. The flowcharts and cost benefits matrices are that set of alignments. Then there is the checklist which asks various questions: have you identified goals and objectives and are they aligned? Are the key objectives and your current understanding of the system documented in the conceptual model? Have minimum data needs been identified? Have resources and expertise been evaluated to confirm that the proposed monitoring is feasible? Is there a timeline and plan for data entry and statistical analysis?

Dr. Young asked if the methods that were so problematic that they should not be employed were highlighted.

Dr. Deutschman introduced the long-term management as it is addressed in the plan. The most common problem is not having a clear objective, and the second most common problem is no alignment between what land managers are doing and what they said they would do.

Mr. Tippets asked for more information on the conceptual models.

Dr. Lewison explained that conceptual models are in chapter four and are only a simple way that land managers record the assumption of how a system works. In that chapter, they walk through the conceptual model process and demonstrate the utility. It does not say avoid method "X," but it will ask why method "X" was chosen over another method to see if there is an alignment issue.

Dr. Deutschman informed the Working Group that adaptive management loop is important and chapter two is the initial evaluation as a set-up phase for land managers to decide where to start. The later chapters in the document turn recommendations into outlines and check lists. Land managers need to look at the framework to see what they have done or need to do. The process will facilitate peer review and increase transparency.

Mr. Oberbauer asked if the plan addresses the management and monitoring of vernal pools.

Dr. Lewison informed that the plan does not address vernal pools.

Ms. Young asked where water quality issues and watershed management in relation to habitat population monitoring enter into the process.

Dr. Deutschman voiced that typically documents start with a covered species list and habitat. Documents typically do not address air and water quality and erosion for most species. The Preserve Management Standardization Plan is mostly focused on covered species and the linked ecosystem habitat pieces. He informed that the same template idea works just as well in resource management for water and air quality since the questions are identical.

Dr. Lewison shared that the target is to release the plan for internal review by the end of the month. Sections of the plan were sent for external review outside of the MSCP area. The sections sent out for peer review will help validate the approach and methods. Feedback received in time may be included in the plan after the final revisions.

Mr. Grim asked if there can be internal review for Habitat Conservation Plan stakeholders too.

Dr. Deutschman answered yes.

Mr. Whalen asked if the mechanisms in the document are to be applied across the board to the whole region, and if they will be applied to subsequent management plans.

Dr. Deutschman answered yes, as long as preserve managers have the same objectives.

Mr. Whalen praised Mr. Grim's coordination program in Carlsbad and asked Mr. Grim how he saw standardization plan nesting with that since a majority of Carlsbad land is subject to management plans.

Mr. Grim commented that Mr. Whalen's made a good point. The issue is what does he do for compliance and what does he do to address the land management questions.

Ms. Wynn commented that as plans need updating, the thought process should be applied and will evolve overtime.

Mr. Whalen expressed his worry that the process would become too costly.

Dr. Deutschman emphasized that the process should not be more costly. If the process is followed and partway through it seems that money is running short, then goals and objectives should be reevaluated.

A member of the public complimented the Preserve Management Standardization Plan and the resulting increased efficiency and transparency.

ITEM# 7: NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting of the EMPWG is scheduled for Tuesday, July 9, 2013, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Tentative topics include Fiscal Year 2014 Funding Recommendations and Proposed Request for Proposal for Economic Benefit Land Acquisitions.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m. by Chair Downey.

San Diego Association of Governments
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP

July 9, 2013

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **4**

Action Requested: RECOMMEND

TransNet ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
FISCAL YEAR 2014 FUNDING ALLOCATION

File Number 1200201

Introduction

The *TransNet* Extension Ordinance and Expenditure Plan, approved by the voters in November 2004, includes the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) which provides funding to mitigate habitat impacts from regional and local transportation projects, and provides funding for regional land management and biological monitoring. The EMP is a unique component of the *TransNet* Extension Ordinance in that it goes beyond traditional mitigation for transportation projects by including a funding allocation for habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities to help implement the regional habitat conservation plans. This funding allocation is tied to mitigation requirements and the environmental clearance approval process for projects outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Each year, the SANDAG Board of Directors allocates \$4 million toward implementation of regional land management and biological monitoring pursuant to Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with state and federal agencies on the implementation of the EMP. The purpose of this report is to present to the Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group (EMPWG) a proposal developed by an ad hoc committee of the EMPWG for the allocation of Fiscal Year 2014 (FY 2014) funding for management and monitoring.

Discussion

On February 22, 2008, the Board of Directors entered into a MOA with state and federal agencies on the implementation of the EMP. A provision of the MOA allocates \$4 million annually for 10 years to implement regional habitat management and monitoring efforts to help maintain the region's biological integrity, thus avoiding the future listing of endangered species. Allocation of the \$4 million is done on an annual basis by the SANDAG Board of Directors pursuant to a Five-Year Funding Strategy (original approved on December 15, 2006, and last updated by the Board of Directors on December 21, 2012). The Five-Year Funding Strategy is designed to strategically allocate funding for land management and monitoring activities under the EMP as approved annually by the SANDAG Board of Directors.

At their May 14, 2013, meeting, the EMPWG established an ad hoc committee to develop a proposal for FY 2014 funding for consideration by the full committee in July. The ad hoc committee included the following members: Bill Tippetts, David Mayer, Robert Fisher, Bruce April, Richard Van Sant, Mike Grim, James Whalen, Emily Young, and was chaired by Susan Wynn. Members of SANDAG

staff and the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program (SDMMP) were in attendance to provide information.

In previous years, SANDAG staff has asked the EMPWG to recommend updates and/or revisions to the Five-Year Funding Strategy. This Fiscal Year, SANDAG staff is working with its consultants at the SDMMP to develop a Management Strategic Plan, which will identify key regional management activities and prioritize them with available funding sources. A final draft will be completed in the fall of 2013 for review by the EMPWG and the Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee. The Five-Year Funding will be significantly revised by the Management Strategic Plan during 2014. As such, no revisions are proposed to the Five-Year Funding Strategy and the current recommendation is focused on the proposed FY 2014 funding.

For FY 2014, no new tasks are being proposed. In the development of the proposed FY 2014 funding, the ad hoc committee considered past funding allocated by the SANDAG Board of Directors, but unencumbered (i.e., still available) during the discussion of the proposed allocations for FY 2014. The ad hoc committee's recommendations and comments to the EMPWG are shown in Attachment 1 to this report.

In addition to the \$4 million of regional management and monitoring funding, the SANDAG Board of Directors approved execution of an amendment to the 2008 MOA, which would allow for the release of \$20 million of funding of economic benefit funding. The funds can be used for land acquisition, land management and/or regional biological monitoring. The ad hoc committee is recommending that all of the \$20 million be directed towards land acquisition for FY 2014.

Next Steps

The recommendation of the EMPWG will be provided to the Regional Planning Committee in September for their consideration in their recommendation to the SANDAG Board of Directors.

Attachments: 1. Ad Hoc Committee Recommendation: Fiscal Year 2014 Funding

Key Staff Contact: Keith Greer, (619) 699-7390, keith.greer@sandag.org

**EMPGW AD HOC COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDED FY 14 ALLOCATIONS**

Task #		A	B	C	D	E
		Prior Years	Available Funding	Five-Year Funding Strategy	Ad Hoc Recommendation	Comments from Ad Hoc Committee
REGIONAL COORDINATION		FY 06-13		FY 14		
1	Program Developer/Administrator	\$900,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$220,000	Current funding allows for a half-time Program Developer. Increase funding to allow for hiring of a full-time administrator after current contract expires in September 2014.
2	Management & Monitoring Coordinator	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	No change
3	Biologist	\$300,000	\$4,034	\$150,000	\$215,000	Fully fund actual cost as contracted with USGS. This cost includes fully loaded position.
4	GIS Support	\$450,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	No change. Will cover actual cost as contracted with USGS.
5	Database Development and Support	\$480,000	\$47,652	\$130,000	\$130,000	No change. Will cover actual cost as contracted with USGS.
6	Administrative & Science Support	\$275,000	\$0	\$90,000	\$60,000	Reduce administrative cost to support regional coordination since majority of positions with USGS are funded with overhead.
Subtotal Regional Coordination		\$3,605,000	\$51,686	\$820,000	\$925,000	
REGIONAL MANAGEMENT						
7	Conserved Lands Database Management	\$225,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	No Change. Cost will diminish in future years.
8	Land Management Implementation	\$13,315,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,740,000	\$975,000	Existing and proposed funding should go towards implementation of Management Strategic Plan using various contracting methods including competitive grants.
9	Emergency Land Management Fund	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	No Change. Provide annual funding until fund reaches \$500K as indicated in Five-Year Funding Strategy.
10	Invasive Plant Species Management	\$375,000	\$173,406	\$0	\$200,000	Existing and proposed funding should go towards implementation of Invasive Plant Strategic plan. No more than 25% should go towards administrative costs.
11	Invasive Animal Species Management	\$270,000	\$0	\$125,000	\$600,000	Funding should go towards matching funds to assist with the larger regional feral pig eradication effort, existing predator control in Mission Bay, and recovery effort for southwestern pond turtle.

12	Updated Vegetation Mapping	\$850,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	No Change.
13	Enforcement	\$370,000	\$41,132	\$150,000	\$150,000	No Change.
14	Preserve level management plan standardization	\$300,000	\$75,000	\$0	\$150,000	Provide incentive funding to develop 2-3 operational plans for preserve management using recently developed framework management plan standards.
15	Pro-active Wildfire Planning and Management	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$100,000	Existing and proposed funding should be used to implement pro-active wildfire management recommendations that will come out in September from USGS once vetted.
Subtotal Regional Management		\$16,055,000	\$2,639,538	\$2,115,000	\$2,275,000	
REGIONAL MONITORING						
16	Post Fire Monitoring and Recovery	\$2,300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	No Change.
17	Vegetation and Landscape Monitoring	\$645,000	\$150,136	\$165,000	\$0	Review monitoring protocols prior to funding future projects.
18	Rare and Endemic Plant Monitoring and Recovery	\$515,000	\$193,423	\$150,000	\$0	Task under contract for this fiscal year. No additional funding needed.
19	Vertebrate Monitoring and Recovery	\$150,000	\$182,211	\$300,000	\$400,000	Increase funding to address cactus wren, golden eagles and arroyo toads.
20	Invertebrate Monitoring and Recovery	\$100,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$200,000	Provide funding for Hermes copper butterfly recovery and Dun's skipper baseline studies.
21	Wildlife Corridor and Linkages Monitoring (including genetic studies)	\$945,000	\$238,894	\$150,000	\$200,000	Continue to funding implementation of wildlife connectivity strategic plan.
22	Other Species Monitoring (e.g., priority 2 species)	\$490,000	\$380,000	\$150,000	\$0	No additional funding needed for this Task.
Subtotal Regional Monitoring		\$7,340,000	\$1,144,664	\$1,065,000	\$800,000	
TOTAL FUNDING STRATEGY		\$27,000,000	\$3,835,888	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	

23	Economic Benefit Land Acquisition
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\$20,000,000	Funding should be directed towards land acquisition in this Fiscal Year.
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San Diego Association of Governments
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
WORKING GROUP

July 9, 2013

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **5**

Action Requested: INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

TransNet ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM
FISCAL YEAR 2014 ECONOMIC BENEFIT FUNDING
FOR LAND ACQUISITION

File Number 1200201

Introduction

The *TransNet* Extension Ordinance Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) includes a funding allocation for "economic benefit." The concept is described as the "*estimated economic benefits 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.*"¹

On April 26, 2013, the SANDAG Board of Directors approved the execution of an amendment to the 2008 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with state and federal agencies on the implementation of the EMP to allow for the release of economic benefit funds. The SANDAG Board of Directors also directed staff to develop a competitive grant program for land acquisition using economic benefit funds for future consideration by the Board.

This report describes the proposed competitive grant program that will be presented to the SANDAG policy committees and Board in September 2013.

Discussion

On February 22, 2008, the Board of Directors entered into a MOA with state and federal agencies on the implementation of the EMP. On April 26, 2013, the SANDAG Board of Directors adopted 11 policy points to clarify the economic benefit provision of the *TransNet* Ordinance, and directed staff to execute and amended the MOA with the state and federal agencies. The provisions of the amended MOA would release \$20 million of economic benefit for land acquisition, land management and/or biological monitoring. For Fiscal Year 2014, an ad hoc committee of the Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group (EMPWG) up has recommended all of the funding be directed towards land acquisition (see Item 4 of this agenda).

¹ *TransNet* Extension Ordinance (2004) Environmental Mitigation Program Principle #4

Pursuant to the amended MOA, a committee comprised of representatives from SANDAG, Caltrans, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the U.S. Geological Survey would evaluate all proposals resulting from a Call-for-Projects for land acquisitions and provide their recommendation to the SANDAG Board of Directors. On June 5, 2013, SANDAG staff met with these agencies to discuss the development of the Call-for-Projects. EMPWG member David Means of the Wildlife Conservation Board was also in attendance to provide insight in the state's land acquisition process.

The Call-for-Projects would follow the existing SANDAG process used for the *TransNet* Environmental Mitigation Program Land Management grants. Applicants would be required to fill out an application form (Attachment 1). All applications would be evaluated for eligibility and evaluated using the criteria in Attachment 2² by the evaluation committee. The top ranked projects totaling up to \$20 million would be appraised by SANDAG. The following is an estimated timeline that would be included in the Call-for-Projects.

Initiate Call-for-Projects	October 2013 – December 2013	90 days (required by Board Policy)
Review of Applications by evaluation committee	January 2014	30 days
Appraisal of top ranked projects	February 2014 – April 2014	90 days
Informational report to EMPWG, ITOC, RPC, and TC	May 2014	30 days (required by Board Policy)
Recommendation by RPC and TC	June 2014	30 days
Approval by Board of Directors	June 2013 – July 2014	30 days
Escrow	July 2014 – August 2014	45 days
Conservation Easement and Management Agreement Provided to SANDAG	By September 2014	--

Next Steps

SANDAG staff would like to receive any individual input on the Grant Application (Attachment 1). Staff will revise the application material in collaboration with the other evaluation committee members and provide to the Regional Planning Committee in September for their recommendation to the SANDAG Board of Directors.

- Attachments:
1. Grant Application Form – Working Draft
 2. Economic Benefit Land Acquisition and Evaluation Criteria

Key Staff Contact: Keith Greer, (619) 699-7390, keith.greer@sandag.org

² The eligibility and evaluation criteria (Attachment 2) were recommended for approval to the Regional Planning Committee by the EMPWG on November 13, 2012.



Grant Application Form

**For Consideration for *TransNet* Environmental Mitigation Program
 Fiscal Year 2014 Economic Benefit Funds for Land Acquisition
 (Applications cannot exceed ten [10] pages, not including attachments.)**

Applicant Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and Email Address: _____

Name of Property: _____

General Location: _____

Jurisdiction: _____

Land Use Designation: _____

Total Acres: _____

A.P.N.s: _____

Estimated Acres Requiring
Management: _____

Owner(s) of Property: _____

Long-term Management Entity¹: _____

Financial Manager¹: _____

Brief Project Summary that includes location of property (200-word maximum) _____

¹ Attach Statement of Qualifications to Application

Funding Needs Summary

1. Please indicate how much funding is being requested from SANDAG and any matching funding proposed:

Budget Item	Requested Funding Amount	Proposed Matching Funds*	Description
Estimated Acquisition Cost	\$	\$	Include all estimated closing costs
Personnel Administrative Expenses	\$	\$	Include all staff time to administer the goal
One-time Management Costs	\$	\$	Include one-time cost to secure and/or restore property
Ongoing Management Costs	\$	\$	Include total cost for long-term management
Other Costs*	\$	\$	Describe costs
Totals	\$	\$	

*if applicable

Explain how the acquisition cost was determined (200-word maximum). _____

Explain how the management cost was determined (200-word maximum). _____

2. Are there matching funds available? If yes, how are the matching funds assured (200-word maximum)?

Yes No

Explain how matching funds are assured. _____

PROJECT PROPOSAL

(Maps and/or graphics can be referenced and pasted at the end of this Word document or attached as a separate digital file.)

The proposal will include the location of the acquisition property(ies), the proposed strategy for acquisition, identification of matching funds, discussion of both short-term and long-term land management, and the method to assure financial accountability of management funds.

A. Project Purpose

Address the following in the proposal.

1. Describe how the property will contribute to the success of the San Diego regional Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) by acquiring and restoring unique habitat areas, key populations of endangered species, lands adjacent to existing conserved habitat lands, and/or promoting wildlife linkages. Describe the location of the property in relation to the regional open space plans (e.g., Multiple Species Conservation Plan South, Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan, Multiple Species Plan North, etc.) and existing or proposed conserved lands. **PROVIDE A MAP** as an attachment.
2. Describe the designation of the property in the local jurisdiction's long-range land use and transportation plans, and discuss any conflicts. If the use of the site as habitat conservation/open space is not consistent, a letter from the City Council or their designee will be required indicating that the jurisdiction does not object to the site being purchased for habitat conservation/open space. **PROVIDE LETTER** as an attachment.
3. Describe how the property will provide benefit federal and/or state listed species and/or unlisted sensitive species. Identify all known federal or state listed endangered species, species that are candidate for listing, or unlisted sensitive species (e.g., County of San Diego's Sensitive Plant List, California Department of Fish and Wildlife list of species of special concern), and the source of the information. Discuss to the extent known, if there are any core populations of listed or sensitive species on or near the property. **PROVIDE A MAP** of species on property if available.
4. Describe how the property's benefit to ecosystem functions and services. Describe the existing biotic and abiotic condition of the property in relation to its disturbance and need for management. Discuss the level of required management need to (1) restore and (2) maintain the abiotic, biotic, and ecological processes of the property when considered in context of the surrounding landscape.
5. Include a discussion of how the acquisition of the property would contribute to overall open space connectivity throughout the region and how this acquisition could fill a void in the in the matrix of protected open space lands.
6. Describe how the acquisition of the property removes or minimizes threats on the species identified in number 2 above. Examples of threats/stressors include fragmentation; edge effects; loss of habitat from proposed development, conversion to agriculture, or lack of or inappropriate management.
7. Describe the likelihood that the land targeted for acquisition will be converted from natural habitat in the near-term. Explain why.
8. Describe how the land proposed for acquisition will increase the likelihood that species and their habitats will be able to respond/adapt to climate changes (e.g., temperature and precipitation), or remove potential impediments to response to climate change.

9. Describe who would own the title of the property and who would manage the property. Describe the qualification of the land manager. Describe how the management cost, both one-time and ongoing, have been determined. Discuss the proposed funding strategy for long-term management including who would fund management and where funds would be held. Describe the experience of the financial manager and assurances of the long-term funding.
10. Describe the approach for the development of a long-term management plan for the property.
11. Describe any special considerations of the proposed acquisition. Special considerations may include but are not limited to: percentage of matching funds; cost per acre for acquisition and/or management; significantly facilitates broader management goals beyond the targeted parcel boundaries; ancillary benefits (e.g., supports water quality, flood control, or wildfire management needs); completes or significantly benefits a local or regional acquisition strategy/opportunity.

NOTICE REGARDING PREVAILING WAGES

SANDAG’s Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) Land Management Grants are funded with *TransNet* revenues consistent with the *TransNet* Extension Ordinance and Expenditure Plan adopted by the voters in November 2004 (Commission Ordinance 04-01). While SANDAG does not require grantees to pay prevailing wages, recent California appellate court opinions (*Reliable Tree Experts v. Baker*, 200 Cal. App. 4th 785 [2011]; *Reclamation Dist. No. 684 v. Department of Industrial Relations*, 125 Cal. App. 4th 1000 [2005]) and Department of Industrial Relations advisory opinions strongly suggest that many EMP Land Management Grant-eligible projects, especially those involving habitat restoration and maintenance or environmental remediation, will be subject to prevailing wage law. Grant applicants are encouraged to review the provisions of Labor Code §§ 1720 and 1771, and California Code of Regulations, title 8, § 16000. These outline activities constituting public works for purposes of prevailing wage law. Grant applicants are further encouraged to seek advice from an attorney to determine the applicability of the aforementioned statutory provisions and regulation to their proposed grant-funded projects. If awarded an EMP Land Management Grant, the grant agreement between SANDAG and the grantee requires grantee’s compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and ordinances applicable to the agreement.

REQUIRED STATEMENTS FROM GRANTEE

- Yes No The owner of the property is a willing seller and a letter of interest, purchase agreement or similar commitment from the owner has been attached to this application.
- Yes No The site is consistent with the local jurisdiction’s land use plan as habitat conservation/open space, or the local jurisdiction does not object to the site being acquired for habitat conservation/open space and a letter has been included with this application.
- Yes No A preliminary title report to the property(ies) has been included with the application.
- Yes No If the property is selected for consideration to be acquired, the grantee understands that SANDAG will conduct through its proxies an appraisal consistent with the Uniformed Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) by a Member of the Appraisal Institute (MAI). SANDAG will use this appraisal to determine the value of the property for its highest and best use. The grantee understands that SANDAG, at the sole discretion of the SANDAG Board of Directors, will only offer the appraised value of the property.

- Yes No The grantee agrees to use an escrow account and instructions acceptable by SANDAG.
- Yes No The grantee understands that upon review of the title report, hazardous waste assessments of the property, or any other real property document, SANDAG may choose to not pursue acquisition of the property at its sole discretion.
- Yes No The grantee agrees to provide a conservation easement, deed restriction, or similar restrictive covenant that will run with the title of the property and be binding on the grantee, heirs, successors, lessees, representatives, and other occupiers of the property.
- Yes No The grantee understands SANDAG would need to accept the identified land manager and the financial manager for management funds as part of the acquisition grant.
- Yes No The grantee agrees to enter into a Management Agreement with SANDAG for the perpetual stewardship and biological management of the property.
- Yes No The grantee agrees to complete a resource management plan within one year of the acquisition of the property for review by the state and federal wildlife agencies.
- Yes No The grantee agrees to comply with SANDAG’s Board Policy No. 035 “Competitive Grant Program Procedures,” which outlines “Use-it-or-lose-it” project milestone and completion deadlines. Board Policy No. 035 is included in the standardized agreement, and also is on SANDAG’s website at the following link: http://www.sandag.org/organization/about/pubs/policy_035.pdf.
- Yes No The grantee understands that only the SANDAG Board of Directors can authorize any funding, and costs borne by the grantee prior to SANDAG Board of Director approval will be at the risk of the grantee and may not be reimbursed.
- Yes No The grantee understands that this grant is an opportunistic purchase by SANDAG and the SANDAG Board of Directors may at its sole discretion choose to fund all, part, or none of the proposal.

I have the authorization to submit this grant on behalf of my organization.

Grantee Name/Title (print or type)

Grantee Signature

mm/dd/yy

Date

ECONOMIC BENEFIT LAND ACQUISITION ELIGIBILITY AND EVALUATION CRITERIA**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project Title _____

Jurisdiction _____

Acreage of land acquisition (break down acreage by parcel if more than one parcel is proposed for acquisition) _____

Estimated total cost of land acquisition _____

Estimated total cost of management _____

Proposed land manager _____

Percent of cost to be borne by partners (list by entity and % of cost) _____

Project Submitted by: _____

Submittal Date: _____

PART 1:

SANDAG will utilize the following Findings for potential acquisition opportunities to determine their *eligibility*:

- a. Promotes Natural Community Conservation Planning: The proposed acquisition will contribute to the success of the San Diego regional Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) by acquiring and restoring unique habitat areas, key populations of endangered species, lands adjacent to existing conserved habitat lands, and/or promoting wildlife linkages.
- b. Jurisdictional Land Use Plans: Use of the site as habitat conservation/open space is consistent with the long-range land use and transportation policies of one or more local jurisdictions. If the use of the site as habitat conservation/open space is not consistent, the jurisdiction(s) does not object to the site being purchased for habitat conservation/open space.
- c. Willing Seller: Owner of the property is a willing seller with clear title to the property and any hazardous material identified in a Phase I environmental site assessment has been evaluated and addressed to the satisfaction of SANDAG.
- d. Appraisal: The property must be appraised by a qualified licensed appraiser in accordance with established acquisition and appraisal standards, and reviewed independently by an appraisal specialist working for SANDAG. The first written offer will reflect the fair market value of the property.
- e. Owner/Manager: Perpetual ownership of the land has been identified as well as a qualified land manager. The identified owner is a public agency or nonprofit organization willing to provide a conservation easement or deed restriction to SANDAG or mutually agreed-upon third party. SANDAG and the land manager have agreed upon the annual cost to manage the land and the method for funding the annual management costs.

PART 2:

If a potential acquisition opportunity is deemed eligible, then the following Evaluation Criteria will be used to evaluate and prioritize the grant project:

SPECIES BENEFITS:

The purpose of this section is to evaluate how beneficial the land acquisition will be for listed and unlisted species.

Listed Species

1. Acquisitions that benefit more listed, proposed, or candidate species will score higher.

Score: Number of state and federally listed, proposed, or candidate species (a species that is both state and federally listed only counts as 1) that will benefit from the land acquisition. (10 points maximum)

- _____ 0 species (0 pts.) - Skip to Question 3
- _____ 1 species (1 pt.)
- _____ 2-5 species (4 pts.)
- _____ 6-10 species (8 pts.)
- _____ 11+ species (10 pts.)

2. Acquisitions that provide greater benefit to listed species will score higher. The benefits to the listed species will be considered **major** if, through the acquisition, the majority of the species' range-wide habitat or an essential piece (e.g., core or linkage) of habitat is protected, a major/critical/significant population necessary for recovery is protected, or major threats to the species are eliminated. The benefits to the listed species will be considered **minor** if, through the acquisition, only a small percentage of the species' range-wide habitat is protected, etc.

Score: Magnitude of benefits for listed species that will result from the land acquisition. (10 points maximum)

Score: Magnitude of species benefits for unlisted species. (10 points maximum)

- _____ Mostly minor benefits will result for the listed species (1 pt.)
- _____ A combination of major and minor benefits will result for listed species (6 pts.)
- _____ Mostly major benefits will result for the listed species (10 pts.)

Unlisted Species

3. Acquisitions that benefit more unlisted sensitive (e.g., on the County of San Diego's Sensitive Plant List, California Department of Fish and Wildlife's list of species of special concern) species will score higher. Unlisted species do not include species listed by the state or federal governments as listed as threatened or endangered or that are proposed or candidates for listing.

Score: Number of unlisted, proposed, and candidate species that will benefit from the land acquisition. (10 points maximum)

_____ 0 species (0 pts.) - Skip to Question 5

_____ 1-5 species (3 pts.)

_____ 6-10 species (6 pts.)

_____ 11+ species (10 pts.)

4. Acquisitions that provide greater benefit to unlisted species will score higher. The benefits to the species will be considered **major** if, through the acquisition, the majority of the species' range-wide habitat is protected, an essential piece of the habitat is protected, a major population necessary for conservation is protected, or major threats to the species are eliminated. The benefits to the species will be considered **minor** if, through the acquisition, only a small percentage of the species' range-wide habitat is protected, etc.

Score: Magnitude of species benefits for unlisted species. (10 points maximum)

_____ Mostly minor benefits will result for the unlisted species (1 pt.)

_____ A combination of major and minor benefits will result for unlisted species (6 pts.)

_____ Mostly major benefits will result for the unlisted species (10 pts.)

ECOSYSTEM BENEFITS

The purpose of this section is to evaluate how beneficial the land acquisition will be for the identified ecosystem function and services.

5. Lands that require little or no management or significant restoration to provide benefits for the identified species will score higher in this evaluation factor. This habitat can include occupied or suitable, unoccupied habitat. The level of management and/or restoration expected to be necessary is based on an evaluation of the biotic and abiotic components and ecological processes and known or anticipated threats. Biotic factors include the structure and composition of plant and animal communities. Abiotic factors include soil, hydrology, natural topography, and salinity gradients. Ecological processes include succession, trophic energy flows, and disturbance regimes.

Score: When considered in the context of the surrounding landscape, what is the anticipated need for management and/or restoration to maintain the ecological processes necessary to maintain a fully functioning ecosystem? (15 points maximum)

Continued management and/or restoration to maintain ecosystem functions

___ Significant (0 pts.)

___ Moderate (10 pts.)

___ Little to None (15 pts.)

6. Land acquisitions that fill in critical components for land protection will score higher (e.g., lands that link two preserves together to reduce habitat fragmentation).

Score: Do the lands proposed for acquisition fill a critical void in the matrix of protected lands, such as a connection between protected areas or protection of a core population area? (15 points maximum)

___ To some degree for at least one identified listed species (5 pts.)

___ To a great degree for one identified listed species and some degree for one or more identified listed or unlisted species (10 pts.)

___ To a great degree for more than two identified listed species (15 pts.)

THREATS

This section includes consideration of how the acquisition removes or minimizes threats/stressors on the species identified above.

7. Acquisitions that address an imminent threat will score higher. Examples of threats/stressors include fragmentation; edge effects; loss of habitat from proposed development, conversion to agriculture, or lack of or inappropriate management. (15 points maximum)

Score: What is the lands likelihood that the land targeted for acquisition will be converted from natural habitat in the near-term (2 years).

___ Not likely (0 pt.)

___ Possible (e.g., land owner has been pursuing development permits, infrastructure is in, prime agricultural land adjacent to the site) (10 pts.)

___ Highly likely (e.g., property has an approved development plan, identified species habitat is degrading due to lack of or current management practices) (15 pts.)

8. Land acquisition projects with a focus on climate change adaptation should be addressed here to identify the conservation benefits to be derived through acquisition of the property in support of the identified species. (15 points maximum)

Score: Do the lands proposed for acquisition increase the likelihood that species and their habitats will be able to respond/adapt to climate changes (e.g., temperature and precipitation) or remove potential impediments to those responses?

___ Not likely (0 pts.)

___ Possible (8 pts.)

___ Highly likely (15 pts.)

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS (5 points maximum)

This section documents special considerations that are not addressed in the above point scoring sections. Special considerations may include but are not limited to: percentage of matching funds, cost per acre for acquisition and/or management, significantly facilitates broader management goals beyond the targeted parcel boundaries, ancillary benefits (e.g., supports water quality, flood control or wildfire management needs), completes or significantly benefits a local or regional acquisition strategy/opportunity, etc.

Acquisition Project Evaluation Criteria	Point Range		Maximum Score Possible	Total Score
SPECIES BENEFIT				
Listed Species				
Number of Listed Species	0-10		10	
Magnitude of Benefit	1-10		10	
Unlisted Species				
Number of Unlisted Species	0-10		10	
Magnitude of Benefit	1-10		10	
ECOSYSTEM BENEFIT				
Landscape Context	0-15		15	
Missing Linkage or Gap in Protection	5-15		15	
THREATS				
Land Under Imminent Threat	0-15		15	
Necessary for Climate Change Adaptation	0-15		15	
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS	0-5		5	
Total			105	

Total points score _____ (Maximum available = 105)