

MINUTES
EI DORADO COUNTY
INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN
STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ISAC)
March 4, 2010

Members in Attendance:

Cris Alarcon
Kimberly Beal
Bill Center
Francesca Loftis
Art Marinaccio
Kathye Russell
John Zentner

Fraser Shilling, Ph.D., SEA
Robert Smart, SEA
Peter Maurer, EDC
Beverly Savage, EDC

Members Absent:

David Bolster
Jamie Beutler
Cindy Shaffer

Others in Attendance:

Kris Kiehne, SEA
Jordan Postlewait, SEA
Rick Lind, SEA

Committee Chair John Zentner called the March 4, 2010 meeting to order at 1:07 PM. Bill Center moved for adoption of the Agenda. Francesca Loftis seconded. The Agenda was unanimously adopted.

A. Approval of Minutes – January 7, 2010 and February 4, 2010.

There was discussion regarding general format of meeting minutes. Peter Maurer noted that PAWTAC reformatted their minutes to a bulleted summary of discussion. It was further noted that Brown's Rules of Order defines meeting minutes as a summary of what transpired at the meeting, rather than a summary of what was said. Mr. Maurer stated that staff will continue efforts to capture what was said in the minutes. If Committee members wish to submit corrections to Minutes, they are asked to submit specific revisions via e-mail prior to the meeting. Another alternative is for Committee members to submit written comments or opinions to the Board of Supervisors (BOS), in the form of a Report to the Board.

The Minutes of the January 7, 2010 meeting were moved for approval by Ms. Loftis, seconded by Cris Alarcon, and approved unanimously. The Minutes of the February 4, 2010 meeting were moved for approval by Mr. Alarcon, seconded by Ms. Loftis and unanimously approved.

B. Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

C. INRMP

Jordan Postlewait presented an overview of discussion topics for the meeting. A handout, "Focus Points for Upcoming ISAC/PAWTAC Meetings," was distributed. Items on the handout, which had changed since the last distribution, appear in *italic*.

Mr. Postlewait explained that 30 minutes of the day's meeting would be devoted to discussion of the Administrative Draft Habitat Inventory Report and Map. The bulk of the day's discussion will be devoted to Indicator vs. Focal Species and indicator species criteria for selection. The meeting will follow a workshop format for this main topic. The remainder of the meeting will be devoted to guiding principles and protocol for meetings.

C. 1. Review and discuss Administrative Draft INRMP Habitat Inventory Map Update and Report

Mr. Postlewait presented on behalf of the SEA team. He asked Committee members to review the Administrative Draft, provide comments today at the meeting or submit via e-mail to Mr. Maurer. The next step for the SEA team will be to incorporate comments from both committees into a report which will be submitted to the BOS and then made available for public review and comment.

Mr. Postlewait referred to the Administrative Draft. Subtask 1.b of the Phase 1 INRMP Scope of Work identifies five elements to be updated and mapped: (1) Habitats that support special-status species; (2) Aquatic environments including lakes, streams, and rivers; (3) Wetland and riparian habitats; (4) Important habitat for migratory deer herds; and, (5) Large expanses of native vegetation. Key definitions developed as Subtask 1.a and pending approval by the BOS, guided the data to be shown on the maps. Data sources are highlighted in the Administrative Draft. Sources considered but not used are listed for informational purposes but are not highlighted. No field verification of data was conducted.

Map 1, "Habitats that support special-status species," was displayed. Mr. Postlewait explained that since the map appeared in the General Plan EIR, it has been updated with current versions of data available from the California Natural diversity Database (CNDBB), USFS Critical Habitat and the Pine Hill Preserve. U.S. Forest Service and Natural Resource Conservation data sources were also newly added in updating the maps.

Art Marinaccio asked the justification for adding the new data sources. Mr. Postlewait explained that the purpose of the mapping is to inventory existing conditions. The

additional data provides more information on existing conditions. Rick Lind added that PAWTAC suggested even more data be included from other sources to map gabbro soils and serpentine rock outcrop occurrences. Mr. Marinaccio feels that the BOS should be consulted before additional source data is added to the maps. In his opinion, the BOS was clear that the mapping of any additional habitats would be addressed in INRMP phase II. Kathye Russell recalled discussion at the last meeting that it would not be possible to produce one map with overlays of all habitat data because the map would be too busy to read. Such a map would more than likely result in virtually no parcel free from habitat and thus developable. Dr. Schilling replied that if the standard for development is that the parcel is free from all habitats, there would be nothing developable. However, that is not the standard. If all data were overlaid on a single map, development would not be excluded. Mr. Alarcon asked for a definition of habitat that included soil. He continued that all definitions for habitat of which he is aware include only flora and fauna. Dr. Schilling will research definitions, adding that flora depends on soil.

Mr. Postlewait concluded the discussion of Map 1, adding that the Administrative Draft includes suggestions for Phase II mapping. A list of all species mapped begins on page 5 of the Administrative Draft. The list includes all animal species identified in the Draft EIR. Some plant species were omitted because they fell outside the study area. Mr. Alarcon questioned the authority of the Draft EIR. County and SEA staff explained the Draft EIR is part of the complete CEQA document, which includes the draft and final EIR, comment letters and responses.

Mr. Marinaccio noted the critical habitat mapped for the red-legged frog is not the current depiction. Mr. Postlewait concurred, explaining that the updated map utilized data from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, which recently proposed changes to the areas of critical habitat for this species.

Mr. Postlewait directed attention to Map 2, "Aquatic Environments including lakes streams and rivers." This map includes perennial streams, bodies of water and man-made water conveyance structures such as canals. Some ephemeral streams are mapped but the list is not comprehensive. The data utilized for this map is the National Hydrography Dataset from the USGS. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is in the process of compiling a large-scale aquatic resource inventory that includes El Dorado County. This data, which will include ephemeral streams, will be mapped when complete. However, the study is not expected to be ready during Phase I of the INRMP.

Mr. Marinaccio questioned the need to map ephemeral streams since, in his opinion they do not support wildlife. He also feels that a definition is needed. Dr. Schilling stated that ephemeral streams support amphibian species. Mr. Marinaccio asked what building setback would be appropriate for ephemeral streams. Ms. Russell asked if buffers were included on the map. Dr. Schilling replied that no buffers are included in Map 2. Map 3,

Wetland and Riparian Habitats, includes buffers of 100 feet for perennial streams and 50 feet for intermittent streams.

Map 3, "Wetland and Riparian Habitats" was discussed. The map update is based on data from the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory database. Seasonal wetland data is not available but will be mapped when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study is complete. Chair Zentner asked if wetlands include streams. Kris Kiehne responded that streams will be included in the Corps of Engineers data.

Map 4, "Important Habitat for Migratory Deer Herds" was discussed. The data used for this map is the best available and is from the CDFG produced in the 1970's. Mr. Marinaccio noted that the updated map looks very different from the map on page 93 of the General Plan EIR. Mr. Alarcon agreed. Dr. Schilling agreed that the current map utilized the most recent data from the CDFG.

Dr. Schilling presented Map 5, "Large Expanses of Native Vegetation." Two indicators of disturbance were utilized, parcel size and road density. Data containing road density and parcel size were combined to represent levels of disturbance. Roads were weighted based on their class, number of lanes and surface. Parcel size data was weighted with larger acreages assigned lower numbers to be consistent with the road density layer. The two layers were added together to create a combined disturbance layer. Large expanses of native vegetation can be determined for a selected species from the above disturbance layer by overlaying vegetation data from CalVeg.

Mr. Alarcon asked if vineyards are considered developed areas or undeveloped areas. Ms. Kiehne replied that CWHR data mapped vineyards and agricultural areas such as Apple Hill separately. Mr. Marinaccio feels that El Dorado County farming tracts are not habitats. They differ from areas, for instance, in Santa Barbara where several thousand acres are planted and fenced and become separate habitats. Agricultural districts in El Dorado County fall into a separate category, in Mr. Marinaccio's opinion, and may not be worth the effort in mapping. Ms. Russell added that when agricultural districts are studied as habitats in this area, we are looking at a change in habitat. Some species, such as birds, benefit from agriculture.

Ms. Kiehne reminded the group that the subject of the map is large expanses of native vegetation, not habitats. Mr. Marinaccio does not see Map 4 as a native vegetation map. Rather, it maps areas of less disturbance. Dr. Schilling replied that the map displayed shows only step one of the process. Step two will overlay vegetation types. Mr. Marinaccio feels that areas planned for development, such as Marble Valley, should also be mapped. Ms. Russell agreed that planned development should be added to the map. Dr. Schilling replied that the purpose of the map is to illustrate existing conditions along with native vegetation in order to arrive at mitigation measures for Phase II. Ms. Kiehne added that the maps are to be updated every five years to show existing conditions. Mr. Marinaccio expressed that the point of mapping is to locate large expanses of wildlands

that are reasonably undisturbed and likely not to be disturbed. Chair Zentner asked Mr. Marinaccio if he had a specific suggestion. Mr. Marinaccio stated that the goal is to identify lands that will provide long-term habitats, to map those areas that are likely to remain in order to determine whether additional lands need to be set aside.

Bill Center stated his opinion that the purpose of mapping and ultimately the purpose of mitigation measures is to look towards the future and consider if there is a way to implement General Plan policies while minimizing disruption to migration corridors and minimizing interruption to connectivity. Mr. Center mentioned by example an area of land north of the American River that in the General Plan will be divided into parcels of less than five acres. If areas planned for development are mapped and excluded from designation as large expanses of native vegetation, they will also be excluded from mitigation measures. Mr. Center feels it is inappropriate to exempt all planned development from all mitigation measures. Ms. Russell stated that in considering mitigation measures, planned development and status within the development projects must be considered.

Mr. Center added that administrative parcels need to be considered. Dr. Schilling asked Mr. Maurer if there is a way to highlight the administrative parcels on a map. Mr. Maurer replied that there is not an easy way. They need to be looked at individually. Mr. Maurer added that he is not sure to what degree the administrative parcels will affect the mapping.

Chair Zentner asked if the Committee was required to make final recommendations regarding the maps at today's meeting. Mr. Maurer replied that the maps will be presented at the April meeting for final recommendation.

Mr. Alarcon stated there was discussion at the last meeting regarding whether the criteria for developed areas should be five-acre or 10-acre parcel divisions. Mr. Alarcon does not recall that a decision was made but notes that the Administrative Draft refers to five-acre parcels as developed. Mr. Alarcon also feels that development agreements need to be included on the maps. Mr. Center replied that he does not object to development agreements being identified on the maps. He objects to agreements being exempt from mitigation measures. Mr. Marinaccio stated that he does not disagree. However, he does object to areas slated for development appearing on a map within a large expanse of native vegetation, which implies that the area is slated for mitigation/preservation. Mr. Marinaccio continued that if an area in the middle of Marble Valley turns out to be covered in red-legged frogs, there is a problem that will need to be addressed. Mr. Center stated that Marble Valley is slated for five-acre average development. The ultimate arrangement of those parcels is yet to be determined. If the area is mapped as part of a large expanse of native vegetation and particularly if connectivity is involved, the placement of those parcels would be impacted. Mr. Center continued that the goal is to preserve the current fabric while respecting the rights of development.

Ms. Russell asked how IBC's are being handled. Mr. Maurer referred to a zoning map. IBC's will be addressed in the last phase of the INRMP. We are currently in Phase I.

Mr. Postlewait concluded discussion of Habitat Inventory Mapping and asked for comments from the Committee within one week. Comments should be sent to Mr. Maurer who will forward them to the SEA team.

C. 2. Discussion of indicator vs. focal species and

C. 3. Review and discuss proposed criteria and approach for selection of indicator species

Dr. Schilling presented on behalf of the SEA team. The Scope of Work for this phase of the INRMP includes selection of indicator species. The outcome of the morning PAWTAC meeting was that a clear definition was needed and that a fair amount of overlap exists between indicator species and focal species. Dr. Schilling asked the Committee for their opinions regarding the two terms. He displayed definitions on an overhead presentation.

Ms. Russell recalled that the BOS wrestled with this topic and chose indicator species, specifically mammals requiring specific corridors of connectivity. Mr. Marinaccio agreed in part but felt the BOS's intent was narrower. The discussion at the BOS, as Mr. Marinaccio recalls, related to what species, if any, require a North-South connector. If the BOS is to determine whether a North-South corridor is necessary, it first must be determined if any species rely on such connectivity. Ms. Loftis asked how a single species could be selected if it is not known whether any species requires a North-South connector. Dr. Schilling stated that the Scope of Work called for a suite of species rather than one indicator species.

Dr. Shilling referred to a list of questions on the overhead slide: "What are they needed for?" Mr. Marinaccio feels another slide is needed listing species for which significant data is available. He continued that this process will not include field monitoring of the species. Dr. Shilling added that the category could be added to the selection criteria and would be called "feasibility criteria."

Dr. Schilling referred to the "Criteria" slide and asked the Committee for feedback on the specific selection criteria. Ms. Russell asked if the presentation along with the reference documents cited could be provided to the members. Staff will provide the information. Dr. Schilling also requested suggestions for species and species groups (assemblages) to serve as indicator species.

(Kimberly Beal arrived at this point in the meeting, 2:43 PM.)

Mr. Alarcon asked why an indicator species was needed. The data, in his opinion, is contained in the RFP. Mr. Marinaccio feels the data in the RFP should be considered

first, then a species should be selected. Ms. Russell asked if the question is, do we want data to prove that we need a North-South corridor or do we want to select and monitor an indicator species in order to prove whether we need a North-South corridor. Mr. Marinaccio shared this concern.

Mr. Alarcon referred to Dr. Schilling's slide, "What are they needed for?" Mr. Alarcon feels that the need for indicator species is much narrower than the reasons listed on the slide. In his opinion, indicator species should be used to monitor core habitat areas and linkages. Mr. Center suggested looking closely at the list on the slide, pointing out that all items listed are spatially oriented and encompass Mr. Alarcon's suggestions.

Discussion continued and centered on field studies. Mr. Center used the analogy of studying indicator species for which there already is data as similar to looking for lost keys only under a light post. The Committee consensus was that field studies would be very valuable. Mr. Lind added that field studies might be suggested as part of Phase II.

Ms. Russell added that it is important to consider not where the keys were lost but if the keys were lost, continuing that she does not have a sense of what we think we need that is missing. Mr. Maurer replied that the General Plan indicated that we have lost or will lose our keys in many areas as a result of development if there are no mitigation measures. Mr. Marinaccio commented that Greenwood conducted a study on a North-South corridor. Their study did not answer if such a corridor was needed. However, the BOS said that before such a corridor was created, its need must be established.

Mr. Center noted that discussion has been focused on a North-South corridor. What if a serious proposal was raised for a four-lane, 100-foot-wide Green Valley Road connected to a four-lane Lotus Road? How would the County reply if connectivity has not been addressed? Continuing, Mr. Center asked if the County knew in 1960 what is known today, would we have constructed Highway 50 differently?

Dr. Schilling reminded the Committee that feedback regarding the choice of terms (indicator species versus focal species), selection criteria and species selection should be submitted to Mr. Maurer by March 11. Mr. Maurer will forward comments to the SEA team. Chair Zentner requested source data used in Dr. Schilling's slide presentations. This information will be supplied to the Committee. Mr. Marinaccio is still not certain how the map depicting disturbed and less disturbed areas will illustrate large expanses (Map 5). The SEA team will prepare at least one more version of this map with vegetation overlay.

(Ms. Loftis left the meeting at this point, 3:07 PM.)

C.4. Re-visit guiding principles and adopt protocol for review of work products

Mr. Lind presented this item on behalf of the SEA team. He suggested to the Committee that a procedure for hearing public comment on agenda items be documented. After discussion among members, the following Motion was made by Mr. Marinaccio: Members of the public are allowed three minutes to speak on each item. The Chair has discretion to reduce this time allotment, in the interest of time, if many members of the public are present and wish to speak.

Chair Zentner amended the Motion: If numerous members of the public are present, invite one member to speak on agenda item. After he/she speaks for three minutes, poll others present (by show of hands). If all concur with the position stated, move forward without further public comment. Two minutes will be allowed for each dissenting testimony.

The amended Motion was seconded by Mr. Center and unanimously carried.

F. Committee member comments; next meeting agenda items.

The next meeting will be April 1, 1:00 PM. The meeting adjourned at 3:20 PM.