

**MINUTES of the
EI DORADO COUNTY
INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN
STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ISAC)
May 6, 2010**

Members in Attendance:

Chris Alarcon
Jamie Beutler
Bill Center
Art Marinaccio
Kathye Russell
Cindy Shaffer
John Zentner

Rick Lind, SEA
Fraser Shilling, Ph.D., SEA
Robert Smart, SEA
Peter Maurer, EDC
Beverly Savage, EDC
Sue Taylor, Public

Others in Attendance:

Ethan Koenigs
Jordan Postlewait, SEA

Members Absent:

Kimberly Beal*
David Bolster
Francesca Loftis

*arrived late

Chair John Zentner called the May 6, 2010 meeting to order at 1:06 PM.

A. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the March meeting were approved with change of "February" to "March" in the heading. There was no quorum at the April meeting. Minutes will be retitled to "Discussion Notes" and are submitted as a summary of discussion. Comments/revisions to the Discussion Notes can be sent to Beverly Savage and/or Peter Maurer.

B. Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

C. INRMP

Jordan Postlewait, SEA, presented an INRMP schedule update. Two of the four main components of the Scope of Work appear on the agenda for May: Habitat Inventory Report and Map and Indicator Species Report. The team will present a progress update to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) along with these reports possibly on May 25 or June 8.

C. 1. Discussion of Administrative Draft Indicator Species Report

(The Agenda was reordered with Indicator Species Report discussion moved before Habitat Inventory Report.) Frasier Schilling, Ph.D., SEA, led the discussion. The list of species presented in the Administrative Draft is minimal given the extent and diversity of species in western El Dorado County. Art Marinaccio feels that the BOS will strive to minimize the list of species. In response to a question, Dr. Schilling replied that 39 species are currently contained on the list of indicator species. Bill Center asked if the original 130 species that were discussed are listed in the report. Dr. Schilling replied that the original species are listed on a table within the report.

Dr. Schilling noted two areas of special interest to this region: connectivity and riparian zones. The connectivity issue relates primarily to north-south connectivity across Highway 50. These issues are specifically addressed in the Report.

Mr. Center asked how much area is required by a species. For instance, is the space between Highway 50 and Highway 80 adequate for species? At what point should we be considered about barriers? Dr. Schilling replied that we should be concerned about all barriers. Kathye Russell asked what area size would be considered large enough to support a healthy gene pool. Dr. Schilling replied that the answer is species-dependent. However, the risk of extinction to all populations dramatically increases as the size of the population decreases.

Mr. Center added that the foothill triangle of Folsom Reservoir, Highway 50 and Highway 80 should be studied. The Highway 50 north-south corridor is just one component of fragmentation. Other areas in the County that connect to large expanses should be monitored. Additionally, if significant climate changes occur in the next 30 to 50 years, this impact on habitat movement will also be an issue. Mr. Marinaccio agreed, stating that the BOS asked what species would use a north-south connector and why they would need it. Dr. Frasier replied that no species will thrive if Highway 50 and development present a barrier across the foothills.

Chris Alarcon asked if road width and traffic data will be provided. Jamie Beutler expressed that traffic is not the issue. The issue is that roads present barriers to many species. Dr. Schilling replied that both types of data can be provided and will be used when addressing connectivity.

Dr. Schilling explained that one issue relating to indicator species is the cost to monitor the species and the question was raised at PAWTAC regarding whether a species should be excluded because it will be costly to monitor. Ongoing monitoring exists for a number of the proposed indicator species. Ms. Russell asked if the County would be required to conduct additional monitoring. Dr. Schilling replied that this would be a County decision. He recommended taking advantage of existing monitoring programs, with additional funds for the existing monitoring program if further investigation were

needed for the County's purposes. This approach would be economical. In response to Mr. Alarcon's question, Dr. Schilling replied that approximately half of the 29 proposed species are currently being monitored.

Ms. Russell asked if monitoring options will be presented to the BOS along with indicator species recommendations. She suggested bulleted options along with each species with notations regarding monitoring activities already occurring. Mr. Marinaccio added that monitoring does not necessarily mean the creation of original data.

Dr. Schilling mentioned that at the PAWTAC meeting, the question arose regarding what question is attempting to be answered with the monitoring. Ms. Russell suggested that we are trying determine what species are actually seeking to cross Highway 50. Dr. Schilling added that we should also consider which species are avoiding Highway 50. Ms. Russell feels that the current situation, with the Highway 50 barrier, should be compared with a habitat containing no barriers, in order to study the impact of Highway 50 on species. Mr. Marinaccio recalled that cameras were installed at Highway 50 crossings but the data was not being analyzed. In Mr. Marinaccio's opinion, the BOS will require specific data regarding which species require an undercrossing of Highway 50 at Weber Creek before they will approve a project. Dr. Schilling noted that Highway 50 is not the only concern. Highway 49 and Green Valley Road should also be studied.

Sue Taylor, member of the public, stated that an acquaintance living on Newtown Road has totaled three cars hitting deer on that road. She asked if deer use specific trails. Could locations of deer crossings be identified and saved through mitigation? Frasier replied that deer will use multiple trails and will not adhere to designated crossing areas.

Ms. Beutler expressed that she cannot form an opinion on connectivity because she does not have enough information. For instance, she requires information on how many individuals would be needed to maintain adequate gene pools, or will our oak trees become extinct if mitigation measures are not enacted. Dr. Schilling reminded the Committee that the task at hand is to recommend indicator species. Connectivity will be addressed in a future task.

Mr. Center was surprised at the location of the western boundary of the black bear habitat. He lives substantially further west of the line and took a photo of three black bears in a tree. Ethan Koenigs, SEA, responded that the black bear habitat came from CWHR data. If a policy decision is made regarding mitigation, the line will be studied more closely. Mr. Marinaccio feels that no mitigation decisions will be made regarding black bear habitat.

Dr. Schilling requested comments/suggestions regarding the Administrative Draft be submitted within the next two weeks. Comments may be sent to Peter Maurer for forwarding to the SEA team.

C.2. Discussion of Administrative Draft Habitat Inventory Report and Map

Mr. Koenigs, SEA, led the discussion. Revisions were made to the maps based on input from the committees. Unpaved roads were highlighted in yellow. Conifer and hardwood trees were combined. Chaparral categories have been combined. Data is still separated in the database. Other data sources were included to show special-status species, including CRLF data on the red-legged frog and USFWS vernal pool data. Regulatory and administrative boundaries are also included, such as Pine Hill Preserve, USFWS Gabbro-endemic plan recovery area, Oak Woodland Management Plan, Priority Conservation Areas and others.

Mr. Alarcon asked if chaparral, conifers and grasslands habitats are what SEA proposed to add to the already approved maps. Mr. Marinaccio expressed the opinion that the BOS asked what should be added to the existing maps and why it should be added. The proposal from SEA is to replace the existing map. Mr. Marinaccio feels this will lead to substantial BOS discussion. Mr. Marinaccio sees no compelling reason to add any of the proposed additions to the existing map, with the possible exception of grasslands. He continued that the BOS has already addressed oaks. The BOS, in Mr. Marinaccio's opinion, was clear that gabbro/serpentine areas are covered under another study.

Mr. Alarcon asked, since it was agreed that grasses are not native, why the map contains the green areas identified as native vegetation. Dr. Schilling replied that the BOS rejected the definitions, at this point, but all authorities agree that grasslands are a habitat type. Rick Lind, SEA, reminded the Committee that the Scope of Work included identification of large expanses of native vegetation. Mr. Center added that conclusions cannot be made regarding risks to native expanses until native expanses are identified.

Mr. Marinaccio feels in order for the BOS to make determinations regarding mitigation, they need a map which shows public lands and Williamson Act lands that are already protected. Ms. Russell asked if the intention is to present a map showing areas that are currently being protected and not subject to development so the BOS can see what lands are subject to development and may require mitigation measures to protect. She agrees with Mr. Marinaccio that the BOS needs the additional information in order to enact mitigation measures that will prevent fragmentation. Mr. Postlewait replied that the map does not illustrate lands which need protection but is an inventory. Mr. Marinaccio disagreed, stating that the map does not satisfy General Plan policy 7.4.2.8. Rather, he continued, the map is an inventory of vegetation, not a map of large expanses of native vegetation.

Mr. Center commented that information, such as the map, is being presented to the Committee as informational. However, the Committee is interpreting the information as decisional. The BOS will determine policy based on information provided. The task of

the Committee and consultant is to provide the information and verify that General Plan requirements are being met.

There was general Committee discussion regarding the appropriateness of the title, Large Expanses of Native Vegetation, for the map. Some members feel the title of the map could lead to decisions regarding mitigation measures.

A Motion was made by Ms. Shaffer that ISAC recommend the map to the BOS and recommend the BOS rename the map, "Larger Expanses of Less-Disturbed Vegetation." Chair Zentner amended the Motion, adding "from which important habitat can be defined by overlaying public lands, natural resources and open spaces."

Ms. Russell seconded the Motion for discussion. After Committee discussion, the Motion failed: 4 votes in favor and 4 opposed.

A Motion was made by Mr. Center to recommend the proposed map to the BOS and include a table showing the percentage of each vegetation type currently located in protected areas, including public lands, natural resources areas and open spaces.

Chair Zentner suggested that the percentages would have no real value since each of the vegetation-type categories has multiple locations on the map.

Mr. Center amended his motion to recommend the proposed map to the BOS with an accompanying overlay map shading protected areas, including public lands, protected natural resource areas and open spaces, in a cross-hatched pattern and including data on the percentage of the total value for each vegetation-type that is located in protected areas. The motion was seconded by Ms. Russell.

Mr. Alarcon stated that he cannot vote in favor of the motion since, in his opinion, it asks the consultant to prepare irrelevant information. Mr. Marinaccio feels that the BOS need this information. Mr. Lind replied that SEA will provide the information at no additional charge to the County.

The Motion failed: 4 votes in favor, 4 opposed.

A Motion was made by Ms. Russell to recommend the proposed map to the BOS, without a name, and with an accompanying overlay map shading protected areas, including public lands, protected natural resource areas and open spaces, in a cross-hatched pattern and including data on the percentage of the total value for each vegetation-type that is located in protected areas. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Marinaccio.

Chair Zentner amended the Motion to communicate to the BOS that ISAC could not reach consensus on the name of the map and asked the consultant to include this

additional information to further clarify the map. The amendment to the Motion was accepted.

The Motion passed: 7 in favor, one opposed (Mr. Alarcon dissenting).

F. Committee member comments; next meeting agenda items.

The next meeting, June 3 at 1:00 p.m., will introduce connectivity and corridor study. Chair Zentner requested that members arrive promptly. Members asked to notify Mr. Maurer if they will not be able to attend or if they will be arriving late.

Meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.