

**MINUTES of the  
PLANT AND WILDLIFE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(PAWTAC)  
February 4, 2010**

**Members in Attendance:**

Sue Britting  
Jim Brunello, Chair  
Dan Corcoran  
Jim Davies  
Bill Frost  
Ray Griffiths  
Craig Thomas  
Mahala Young  
Valerie Zentner

**Others in Attendance:**

Kris Kiehne, SEA  
Ethan Koenigs, SEA  
Rick Lind, SEA  
Art Marinaccio  
Jordan Postlewait, SEA  
Fraser Shilling, SEA  
Robert Smart, SEA  
Peter Maurer, EDC  
Char Tim, EDC

**Members Absent:**

Elena DeLacy  
Todd Gardner  
Jeremiah Karuzas

The February 4, 2010, meeting was called to order by staff Peter Maurer at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Maurer announced that he had received resignations from the following members: James Gibson and Dan Hinrichs.

**A. Approval of Minutes**

Peter Maurer distributed an e-mail from Mr. Karuzas expressing concern that the January 12, 2010, meeting minutes did not reflect the in-depth discussion on Indicator Species and Focal Species. Mr. Maurer reminded the group that it is difficult for a lay person to grasp all of technical aspects that this meeting covers and strongly encouraged them to thoroughly review the minutes for any omissions or discrepancies prior to the meeting.

Mr. Corcoran agreed with Mr. Karuzas' comments in the e-mail and suggested that it be made as an attachment to the minutes and to include a sentence on Page 3 of the minutes, at the end of the discussion paragraph, referencing the attachment.

**Motion: Ms. Britting moved, seconded by Mr. Griffiths, and unanimously carried, to approve the January 12, 2010, meeting minutes as amended: (a) Add Mr. Karuzas' comments as an attachment with a sentence being added to Page 3 referencing the attachment.**

## **B. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **C. INRMP**

Jordan Postlewait gave a brief overview of the four points that were to be covered today and what specific feedback/direction they were looking for on each item (i.e., is correct source being used, what type of extraction information wanted). He indicated that it was the intent to receive a recommendation from the group on the three proposed definitions, which will then be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors along with SEA's presentation. Mr. Postelwait stated that if any member was not in agreement with the majority vote, they were encouraged to submit a comment letter which would be forwarded to the Board along with the other documents.

### **1. Committee position on key definitions**

Kris Kiehne presented the item and distributed a handout titled "Attachment to Key Term Definitions". The group proceeded to discuss and vote on each of the three definitions presented.

#### *Native Vegetation Definition*

The following comments and discussion points were provided on the proposed definition as listed in the handout titled "Key Term Definitions – Administrative Draft", dated January 25, 2010:

- Focus on the concept of natural vegetation as it is more fitting to the intent;
- Include special status of natural communities (i.e., Serpentine Chaparral and Northern Gabbro Mid-Chaparral) in the mapping process, but definition did not need to be amended as it is a subset of Native Vegetation;
- Review General Plan for definition of Natural Communities (Glossary, page 245) as it could be adapted;
- Suggested it may be helpful to add "natural communities" to the last sentence of definition which refers to synonymous terms in order to clarify the EIR;
- Discussion on the necessity of including Additional Comment #1 ;
- Clear definitions will be needed by the Board (i.e., how consistent or inconsistent with the Board's intention);
- Discrepancies should be provided to the Board for their consideration;
- Definition includes "annual grasslands" which is consistent with EIR;
- Argument could be made that annual grasslands are dominated by non-natives and by this definition it means they are no longer a native community as opposed to a highly native community; and
- Annual grasslands could be moved to "Important Habitat" definition.

**Motion: Mr. Griffiths moved, seconded by Ms. Britting, and carried by a majority (Brunello dissenting), to approve the proposed Native Vegetation definition as written.**

### Important Habitat Definition

The following comments and discussion points were provided on the proposed definition as listed in the handout titled “Key Term Definitions – Administrative Draft”, dated January 25, 2010:

- EIR definition was used for the proposed definition;
- Definition includes types of important habitat, but when mapped, it will show it as just important habitat;
- Not required to map important habitats;
- IBC will be mapped and with proposed definition, the majority of the County will be identified as that;
- May be easier to identify what is unimportant;
- Definition was not adopted but instead was considered in the Roadway-Constraint and Environmentally-Constraint Alternatives;
- General Plan Policy 7.4.2.8.A.1-5 shows that the definition did not make the cut into the adopted General Plan;
- Term was defined in the Alternatives and carried over to the adopted Plan, but no definition accompanied it;
- This is an “umbrella” definition and within it there are five types that would be mapped out;
- Suggested to add a note to clarify that even if something is listed, it doesn’t necessarily mean it is automatically an important habitat;
- Definition of Important Habitat is not consistent throughout other documents;
- Definition should have the broadest sense of goals;
- Discussion is going back and forth between what is the technical, scientific definition and what is the modified version;
- Suggested to amend the last sentence of Additional Comment #1 to clearly articulate that currently Policy 7.4.1.6 does not apply;
- Additional Comments #1 and #2 captured last meeting’s dialogue, so why is the original definition being proposed;
- Specificity of the EIR is more limiting; and
- Connectivity and association is important and have linkage in the General Plan.

**Motion: Ms. Britting moved, seconded by Mr. Griffiths, and carried by a majority (Brunello dissenting), to approve the proposed Important Habitat definition as amended: (a) Add the following language as the final sentence: “Degree or extent of importance will vary depending on proximity or connectivity to other areas of same or similar habitat that support (the) same flora and fauna. Higher density of such habitats will have greater conservation value than those isolated from same or similar habitats.”**

After the motion, Ms. Britting stated that Additional Comment #1 should be revised to reflect that the definition currently does not apply to Policy 7.4.1.6.

### Large Expanses Definition

The following comments and discussion points were provided on the proposed definition as listed in the handout titled “Key Term Definitions – Administrative Draft”, dated January 25, 2010:

- No specific definition was found so input from advisory committee was used to create proposed definition; and
- Change the word “land” to “habitat”, which is referenced twice in definition.

**Motion: Ms. Young moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, and unanimously carried, to approve the proposed Large Expanses definition as amended: (a) Change the word “land” to “habitat”.**

## **2. Discussion of data sources for Inventory Map update**

Ethan Koenigs presented the item and requested guidance from the group and concurrence on the proposed method that would be used. The following vegetation data sources were shown as options: 2005 Cal Veg Data [SEA is proposing to use this one]; USGS Land/Fire; 2005 NAIP Aerial Photo; and 2009 CWHR-N. Sierra Foothills. Mr. Koenigs explained that although their preference was to use the 2009 CWHR data source, it was currently not available for the entire County and would not be completed in time for their use. Ms. Britting suggested that it could still be used for adding refinement to the 2005 Cal Veg Data.

Significant discussion ensued on which various layers to utilize, with the following comments and discussion points provided:

- Road density layer would show areas of disturbance and can identify the use of the road (i.e., heavily traveled);
- County road map is very accurate and also identifies private roads;
- Parcel size can be utilized to show disturbed areas and can be blended with road density;
- If parcel size is used, then the focus should be on the developed areas as it provides existing conditions;
- Several years ago there had been significant discussion already on what species should be included;
- Special status species of animals listed in EIR table should be associated with the labels from the classification to identify clusters to help focus which habitat has values for which species;
- What would be a viable unit for the patch size road density fragmentation index;
- Shouldn't narrowly define as Board will determine the attributes that will affect the final work product;
- Back-up data can be provided to support a road density that is more realistic for a cut-off;
- Two-tiered screening system in relation to road usage should be used;
- Preference is to see a step-wise narrative analysis of what the process will be; and
- Many suggestions being given today have already been done and the maps located in the original PAWTAC files should be reviewed.

**No action taken.**

### **3. Introduction to indicator species criteria for selection**

Fraser Shilling presented the item and stated that this is the initial discussion on this subject. At the March meeting, in-depth criteria and alternatives will be discussed, with the intent that a working draft would be provided at the April meeting.

*[Clerk's Note: Chair Brunello left the meeting at 11:05am.]*

Significant discussion ensued on what the indicators would be needed for and the following comments and discussion points were provided:

- Different size of organisms have different requirements for connectivity, with plants having their own strategy for movement;
- Need to identify what the group wants the focal species for;
- Habitat relations needs to be good;
- Select species that has existing data;
- Migratory animals (i.e., deer) are important to El Dorado County residents; and
- Current information available on deer migration is 20-30 years old.

**No action taken.**

### **4. Guiding principles for Phase I INRMP actions and recommendations**

Rick Lind provided a list of statements/values/goals to keep in mind while the group goes through this process. These will assist them in ensuring that they are capturing everything, moving in the right direction and that General Plan Policy 7.4.1.2.8 is being fulfilled.

**No action taken.**

### **D. Committee member comments; Next meeting agenda items**

The next meeting will be on March 4, 2010. There will be a mapping process discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 a.m.