



JOHN BENCOMO  
DIRECTOR

# County of Yolo

## PLANNING AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

292 West Beamer Street Woodland, CA 95695-2598 (530) 666-8775 FAX (530) 666-8728  
www.yolocounty.org

### Cache Creek Technical Advisory Committee Summary Minutes March 7, 2005

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- Members in Attendance:** Kevin O'Dea, Jeff Hart, and Geoff Schladow
- County Staff:** Linda Fiack, Dimitrios Georges, Petrea Marchand, and Brett Williams
- Others in Attendance:** John Watson, Barry Cavanna, Jack White, Jenny Drewitz, Jeanette Wrynski, Bob Schneider, Dave Pratt, Chad Roberts, Max Stevenson, Tyler Chatriand, Supervisor Duane Chamberlain, Mark Hirzy.
- Members Absent:** None
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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting commenced at 10:03 AM

#### 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

#### 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 7, 2005 meeting were adopted as presented.

#### 4. STAFF UPDATE

Presentation to The Yolo County Board Of Supervisors Regarding the Cache Creek Area Plan: PowerPoint presentation was made to the Yolo County Board of Supervisor's on 2-15-05 by Parks & Resources Staff, TAC Chair O'Dea, and Jan Lowrey, Executive Director of the Conservancy on the history, projects, and management of the areas managed under the CCAP.

Status of Annual Gravel Mining Report to the State Department Of Conservation: Staff will be updating the Yolo County Planning commission at it's March 10, 2005 mtg regarding the status of the gravel mining operations for compliance with the development agreements and the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA).

Status of Wild and Scenic Legislation: Linda Fiack advised that Assemblywoman Lois Wolk has introduced legislation which seeks to designate portions of Cache Creek within both Lake and Yolo County's as a State Wild, Scenic & Recreational River.

Status of "Landowners' Guide to Streambank Management on Cache Creek": Staff reported that Ann Brice will be completing the handbook in late March in time for a public workshop on Thursday, April 7, 2005 to introduce and release the handbook.

Cache Creek Conservancy Project Updates: John Watson, Project Coordinator with the Conservancy reported that the County and the Conservancy will be finalizing the April Handbook workshop agenda, and encouraged everyone to return the sign up form as soon as possible.

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None

## **6. REGULAR AGENDA**

Presentation by Maria Wong, Project Manager: Yolo County Habitat Joint Powers Authority (JPA) regarding Yolo County Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP):

Maria introduced the JPA (formed in 2002), with the mission of acquiring habitat conservation easements and serve as lead agency for the preparation of a NCCP/HCP for nearly 400,000 acres of a planning area that provides habitat for 28 species (including fishes) within 5 natural communities (attachment A was handed out at the meeting and is attached to these minutes).

A steering committee has been established to provide guidance to the JPA and meets once a month. Steering committee members include farmers, politicians, habitat restoration specialists, government agency employees, and the general public. Maria advised that the steering committee has openings for more public members, especially residents from the area of Clarksburg and Esparto.

She advised that Swainson's Hawk habitat is a very visible and driving force for the HCP on farmland because most of the habitat for this species of hawk is located on farmland. The JPA is in the process of working with willing landowners to acquire conservation easements on farmland throughout the County for Swainson's Hawk habitat.

Linda Fiack advised that Brett Williams, (County) Resources Coordinator serves on the JPA Swainson's Hawk technical advisory committee.

Chair O' Dea asked Maria what the JPA's planning process and schedule is for future projects. Maria advised that the JPA has a goal of completing a habitat assessment and EIR/EIS by late 2006. She said that the research, data, and other information available from the Cache Creek Resources Management Plan and other assessments completed throughout the County will be valuable tools in the process.

Petrea Marchand asked if the NCCP/HCP is being coordinated with the State Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP), and will information be shared. Maria stated that it is a Federal requirement that the efforts of the JPA be coordinated with other planning efforts similar to the IRWMP. The process for both the NCCP/HCP and planning efforts like the IRWMP can be strengthened through collaboration, especially through joint ventures for grant applications.

Bob Schneider stated that the NCCP/HCP should be coordinated with the County's General Plan update and the Parks masterplan. He felt that the current JPA efforts are more comprehensive than in the past. Maria responded that forming partnerships with groups is a required part of the NCCP/HCP process and necessary for success. She said that the JPA is even involved at a congressional level in order to obtain funding for local projects that will benefit this area.

Jeff Hart asked how the JPA coordinates with other groups. Maria advised that the JPA coordinates through the steering committee outreach via an e-mail tree, presentations to groups such as the TAC, and coordination with other planning efforts as previously mentioned.

Maria finished up her discussion by stressing that the JPA functions as a “three legged stool” with biology, politics, and funding being the three critical legs. The JPA can only function effectively if all three “legs” continue to be strengthened. Recent efforts to strengthen the “legs” include the hiring of a consultant to prepare the NCCP/HCP, continued efforts to strengthen the steering committee and educate politicians on the efforts/needs of the JPA, and continued efforts to apply for grants to underwrite the costs of the NCCP/HCP.

Lower Cache Creek Water Quality Testing: August 11, 2004 “Pesticide/Herbicide Application Period” Report, and December 9, 2004 “First Flush” Report:

Geoff Schladow stated that the new format recommended by the TAC late last year was much better than the previous format. Geoff asked why the results under “Total Mercury” and “Dissolved Mercury” were so low on the 12/9/04 report, and why the “Total Mercury” was lower than the “Dissolved Mercury” on the 8/11/04 report. Geoff said that these findings may be conflicting; he wondered if the problem may be just a data entry error.

Petrea Marchand asked if the report was based on drinking water standards.

Bob Schneider asked if the results that exceed the water quality objectives could be printed in bold so that it would be more noticeable and easier to find in the report.

Geoff pointed out that one of the water quality objective sources labeled, as “d” was not listed in the key at the end of the report.

Dimitrios advised that he would discuss these comments with Foothill Associates and report back at the next TAC mtg.

Review of Test 3 Presentation made at February 7, 2005 TAC meeting:

Chair O’Dea stated that he felt the presentation by Robert MacArthur at the February TAC mtg was very thorough, and succinct. Geoff Schladow said that the presentation was a good, informative review. Jeff Hart agreed with both comments. Linda Fiack stated that Robert MacArthur will be coordinating with staff to bring additional information to the TAC.

Finalize Cache Creek Walk Dates:

Chair O’Dea advised attendees that the annual creek walk is held in May when the flows are relatively low and the irrigation releases are not yet at full capacity. He directed staff to coordinate with the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (YCFWCWD) as to the future irrigation schedule. Chair O’Dea suggested two weekdays for the walk: May 16 & May 18. Both Geoff Schladow and Jeff Hart did not see a conflict in their schedules.

Linda Fiack suggested that the TAC should spend more time during the walk at some of the sites such as Harrison’s. She suggested that staff prepare a list for further review by the TAC.

There were no comments or objections from the public attending the meeting regarding the proposed tentative May 16 & 18 creek walk dates.

Continue Review of Letter Submitted by Chad Roberts (submitted to the County on 4-21-04):

Chair O’Dea continued discussion on section #5 (gravel), of the letter and stated that there are some remnant areas formerly mined that were pre CCRMP mining operations. Low elevation terraces inside the creek channel are good for the establishment of riparian habitat, but the

availability of soil in these areas is a restriction to colonization by native vegetation. Jeff Hart concurred, and stated that former agricultural sites are the best suited for the establishment of riparian vegetation.

Chad Roberts asked if the management of the creek to the Test 3 boundary was the best plan for the CCRMP, and if the County should be looking at habitat restoration opportunities outside the CCRMP and/or the Test 3 boundary.

Chair O'Dea stated that the CCRMP does not preclude or discourage habitat restoration away from the creek boundary.

Linda Fiack stated that the cooperation of landowners along the creek is a key component of the management of the creek, and plays a vital role in the establishment of riparian habitat outside of the Test 3 boundary.

Dimitrios Georges added that the removal of invasives by the Cache Creek Conservancy has played an important role in the re-establishment of native vegetation along the creek. As the invasives are removed, natives re-colonize the sites once dominated by invasives. He said the Resource Conservation District has recently applied for a grant through the Wildlife Conservation Board to remove invasives in the sections of the creek above the Capay Dam (in partnership with the Conservancy, the County, and local landowners) which may eventually contribute to further increases in riparian vegetation.

Supervisor Chamberlain stated that a watershed approach should be taken to any management of the creek as the city of Woodland is in a floodplain and a floodwall is not feasible.

## 7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2005. 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

NOTE: After the conclusion of the meeting staff advised the public present at the meeting that copies of the *Technical Studies and Recommendations for the Lower Cache Creek Resource Management Plan* were now available on compact disc (CD) through the County Parks & Resources Management Division.

## ATTACHEMENT A

### NATURAL COMMUNITIES CONSERVATION PLAN/HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (NCCP/HCP)

The Yolo County Habitat Conservation Joint Powers Agency (JPA) was formed in August 2002 for the purposes of acquiring habitat conservation easements and to serve as the lead agency for the preparation of a Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for all of Yolo County. The JPA governing Board is composed of representatives from member Agencies, which include two members of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors, one member each from the City Councils of Davis, Woodland, West Sacramento and Winters, and one ex-officio member from UC Davis.

As a local government agency, the JPA has two primary roles:

- Facilitate mitigation for impacts to the foraging habitat of the Swainson's hawk by assisting in the acquisition of conservation easements. The Swainson's hawk forages in open areas, followed lands, and throughout various row crops and agricultural fields. Supported by the collection of impact fees by its member agencies, the JPA is responsible for identifying and acquiring conservation easements in partnership with the Yolo Land Trust. The Yolo Land Trust will hold the easements under a cooperative arrangement with the JPA.
- Assist in the planning, preparation and subsequent administration of a County-wide Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for the nearly 400,000 acre planning area that provides habitat for 28 species occurring within five dominant habitats/natural communities. The NCCP/HCP will describe the measures that local agencies will perform in order to conserve the biological resources, obtain permits for urban growth and public infrastructure projects, and continue to maintain the rich agricultural heritage and productivity of Yolo County.

The Yolo Habitat JPA has reached several important milestones, including executing a Planning Agreement with the Department of Fish and Game and retaining the consultant team of HT Harvey & Associates and Ebbin Moser + Skaggs to prepare the NCCP/HCP. Public outreach and input meetings are planned for late spring and summer, 2005.

There are many conservation efforts throughout Yolo County, both past and present, which have specific purposes. These conservation efforts cover a range of activities and organizations for the protection and preservation of farmland, creeks, watershed areas, riparian corridors, water quality, flood control, and habitat for various plant and animal specie. The Yolo Habitat NCCP/HCP will further contribute to these efforts.

Questions regarding the Yolo County Habitat NCCP/HCP should be directed to John Bencomo, Interim Executive Director, at (530) 666-8045.

*(This contents of this attachment was provided courtesy of Maria Wong, Project Manager of the NCCP/HCP- JPA)*