

**Yolo Natural Heritage Program
Steering Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
April 19, 2010**

Note: *“The policy in preparing meeting summaries is to produce a record of discussion by all participants. Statements do not necessarily reflect the views of the YNHP Steering Advisory Committee or the JPA Board of Directors.”*

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by John Hopkins

2. Introductions and Welcome

All those present introduced themselves. Attendees were:

Steering Committee Members

Keith Fichtner, Development
Vinton Hawkins, Sierra Holdings
Steve Greco, UC Davis
Glen Holstein, California Native Plant Society
John Hopkins, Institute for Ecological Health
Yvonne LeMaitre, Yolo County Farm Bureau
Stefan Lorenzato, Yolo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District
Chad Roberts, Yolo Audubon Society
Jeannette Wrynski, Yolo Resource Conservation District

JPA Member Agency Staff and Liaisons

Bruce Boyd, City of Davis
Warren Westrup, Yolo County Parks and Resources
Sandra White, City of West Sacramento

JPA Staff

Maria Wong, Executive Director
Kate Montieth, Assistant to the Director

Consultant Team

Dan Airola
Pete Rawlings
Jim Estep

Interested Parties

Craig Denisoff, Westervelt Ecological Services
Chris Lee, Yolo Board of Supervisors, District Two
Emily Reeves, Yocha Dehe
Charles Tyson, Yolo County landowner
Kathryn Tyson, Yolo County landowner

3. Approval of agenda order

Approved as presented.

4. Approve Steering Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting Summary – March 8, 2010

Approved as presented.

5. Recap and Discussion of the March 8th Stakeholder Preference Exercise

Stakeholders' Preferences maps from the exercise at the February 22nd meeting were posted for review. The four maps of Yolo County were marked with dots representing themes developed in the first Riparian Workshop: landowner interest, invasive species, restoration opportunity, and funding. Based on the placement of dots, landowner interest appears to be high and although interest was spread over a wide area of the county. Several areas, including the Clarksburg areas, were not identified as important in the exercise, indicating a possible need for further contact with stakeholders in this area. These maps and a summary of the exercise will be placed on the website.

6. Presentation and Discussion regarding Riparian Conservation Strategy “straw proposal”

Staff consultants Dan Airola and Pete Rawlings presented a PowerPoint summary of the proposal.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS:

The proposal does not identify all of the plans of other entities within the county.

After some discussion it was decided that the word *matrix* needs to be clearly defined and correctly used in the context of this proposal. Stakeholders will email suggested definitions to Kate.

The focus of the strategy on woody riparian vegetation is too limited by failing to include herbaceous riparian vegetation types.

The small streams and channels on the valley floor need to be identified by name and included in the Descriptions and Quantification of Existing Conditions of Yolo County Watercourses and Associated Riparian Communities, so that there is a clear image of where they are located.

Use of certain words such as *monitor*, *intervention* and *permits* may create landowner concerns. Based on their general understanding, these and other words may unintentionally create apprehension in landowners and others. More precise terms should be used in the plan, or such terms should be carefully defined in the Glossary so that landowners and others understand their specific intent now and over the life of the plan. An interim Glossary is available on the website, but should be augmented with terminology used in the conservation strategies.

The plan needs to focus more on riparian functions rather than mostly vegetation.

Catchment and distributor riparian habitats have different functions that need to be recognized, particular as they affect mitigation and restoration efforts.

Correct referent to conserving “full range of riparian habitat conditions” since we do not want to conserve non-native riparian veg types.

Conservation Measure R-2 needs language to address connections between wetter riparian areas and drier upland natural habitat areas (e.g., Grasslands Park).

The straw proposal indicates bias toward major riparian systems. Riparian areas along smaller streams and canals should receive greater attention.

Need to ensure that this permit also serves to cover permitting needs for restoration work (i.e., DFG streambed alteration permit)

The recent observation of singing least Bell's vireos in the bypass, after a long absence from Yolo County and the rest of the Central Valley, was noted as an example of a desirable positive outcome of riparian conservation. The presence of this federally and state listed species suggests it be reconsidered as a covered species in the plan.

The plan targets have too much emphasis on acreage and not on other values that need to be achieved. Riparian corridor values need to be clearly addressed and defined.

The proposal's expectations re: tree ordinances may be too extensive. The County's intent in the General Plan was to focus on the oak management plan and protection of isolated trees and stands, not necessarily all riparian species.

The plan should preclude landowners and agencies from engaging in normal flood control maintenance practices.

Corridor values of riparian habitat need to be clarified: who they serve and don't serve. Also, conditions of riparian habitat, especially choking with vegetation due to lack of natural disturbance, should be recognized and addressed through management.

7. Summary and Next Steps

Despite stated concerns, there was general support for the straw proposal. However it was not felt that the plan is ready to formally present to the Steering Committee and requested a further review of the Proposal after suggested modifications made. Comments regarding modifications can be emailed to Kate, who will forward them to Dan Airola and Pete Rowling. These comments need to be in as soon as possible in order to be incorporated before the May 10th meeting.

The next meeting will be Monday, April 26 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the DESS building. The topic will be review of the draft Upland Landscape conservation strategy

8. SAC Announcements and Updates

Stefan Lorenzato announced that requests for bids for construction on the Capay Dam will be out in the next few weeks. Project will be completed this year (?)

Maria Wong announced that the JPA was not selected to receive one of this year's Section 6 grants. Only three were awarded in California. The application for next year is under way.

Maria Wong announced that EIR/EIS contracts are in place and work is proceeding, although the schedule has slipped somewhat due to FWS being unable to review submitted material by the end of the year.

Maria Wong assured everyone that the cutbacks in personnel experienced by the county will not affect our process.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.