

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

YOLO HABITAT CONSERVANCY

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TIME: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 13, 2017

PLACE: Yolo County Administration Building
625 Court St., Woodland, CA 95695
Atrium Training Room (in the basement)

INFORMATION: Contact Susan Garbini at 530-723-5909 or susan@yolohabitatconservancy.org

NOTICE: If requested, this agenda can be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Federal Rules and Regulations adopted in implementation thereof. Persons seeking an alternative format should contact Susan Garbini for further information. In addition, a person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in a public meeting, should contact Susan Garbini at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Call meeting to order and introductions
2. Approve agenda order
3. Approve November 7, 2016, draft meeting summary; review status of Action Items:
 - Send comments on FAQs to Susan by December 1
 - Send thoughts for report to YHC Board Meeting (12/12/16) to Chad Roberts
 - Chad and Steve to send out paper from Natural Areas Conference
4. Update on Local Conservation Plan/Regional Conservation Investment Strategy – Chris Alford, Ellen Berryman (ICF)
5. HCP/NCCP Plan Update; plans for Public Meetings (EIR/EIS and Plan Public Comment) – Chris Alford
6. Advisory Committee Membership and Role – Susan Garbini
7. Announcements and updates: Advisory Committee members
 - Letter to wildlife agencies
8. Adjournment to next meeting date: Monday, March 13, 4-6 pm, Atrium Training Room, Yolo County Administration Building

Regional Conservation Investment Strategy/ Local Conservation Plan Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction (all additions to LCP highlighted)

- 1.1. Overview
- 1.2. Background
- 1.3. Conservation Purpose and Need
- 1.4. Planning Process
 - 1.4.1. Sponsoring Public Agency
 - 1.4.2. Steering Committee
 - 1.4.3. Advisory Committee
 - 1.4.4. Stakeholders
- 1.5. Regional Planning Environment
 - 1.5.1. Yolo HCP/NCCP
 - 1.5.2. Other Regional Plans and Strategies
 - 1.5.3. Species Recovery Plans
 - 1.5.4. Relevant Planning Documents
 - 1.5.4.1. General Plans
 - 1.5.4.2. Transportation Plans
 - 1.5.4.3. Capital Improvement Programs
 - 1.5.5. Key Infrastructure or Development Projects
- 1.6. Approach
- 1.7. Scope of the Regional Conservation Plan
 - 1.7.1. Strategy/Plan Area
 - 1.7.2. Term of Strategy
 - 1.7.3. Natural Communities
 - 1.7.4. Focal Species
 - 1.7.5. Planning Species
 - 1.7.6. Conservation Framework
- 1.8. Organization of this Document

Chapter 2. Environmental Setting and the Built Environment

- 2.1. Introduction
- 2.2. Data Sources, Resources, and Literature Reviewed
- 2.3. Local Government Planning Boundaries in the Strategy/Plan Area

2.4. Cities in the Strategy/Plan Area

2.5. Major Infrastructure in the Strategy/Plan Area

2.6. Physical Characteristics

2.6.1. Climate

2.6.2. Topography

2.6.3. Hydrology

2.6.4. Soils and Geology

2.6.5. Watersheds

2.7. Land Cover Mapping

2.7.1. Natural Community, Vegetation, and Other Land Cover Classification

2.7.2. Mapping Methods

2.8. Protected Lands

2.9. Ecoregions

2.10. Natural Communities and Associated Plant and Wildlife Species

2.10.1. Cultivated Land

2.10.2. California Prairie

2.10.3. Serpentine Natural Community

2.10.4. Chaparral

2.10.5. Woodland and Forest

2.10.6. Riparian and Wetland

2.11. Other Land Cover Types

2.11.1. Other Agricultural Land

2.11.2. Semiagricultural and Incidental to Agriculture

2.11.3. Eucalyptus

2.11.4. Anthropogenic Barren

2.11.5. Developed

2.12. Focal Species

2.13. Habitat Connectivity and Linkages

2.14. Working Landscapes

2.15. Other Unique Biological Resources

Chapter 3. Stressors and Pressures on Conservation Elements

3.1. Natural and Agricultural Land Conversion

3.2. Climate Change

3.3. Non-Native Species and Disease

3.4. Existing and Future Loss of Habitat Connectivity

3.5. Other Stressors and Pressures

Chapter 4. Conservation Strategy

- 4.1. Overview
 - 4.1.1. Conservation Purposes
- 4.2. Geographic Units of Conservation
 - 4.2.1.1. Methods for Determining Geographic Units
 - 4.2.1.2. Description of Geographic Units
- 4.3. Conservation Gaps Analysis
 - 4.3.1. Methods
 - 4.3.2. Results
 - 4.3.2.1. Natural Communities
 - 4.3.2.2. Focal Species
- 4.4. Conservation Goals and Objectives
 - 4.4.1. Structure of Goals and Objectives
 - 4.4.2. Landscape-level Goals and Objectives
 - 4.4.3. Natural Community-level Goals and Objectives
 - 4.4.4. Focal Species-level Goals and Objectives
 - 4.4.5. Opportunities to Enhance Resiliency to Climate Change
 - 4.4.6. Opportunities to Adapt to Effects of Climate Change
- 4.5. Conservation Actions
 - 4.5.1. Methods for Determining Conservation Actions
 - 4.5.2. Land Preservation
 - 4.5.3. Restoration and Establishment
 - 4.5.4. Management and Enhancement
 - 4.5.5. Monitoring
 - 4.5.6. Scientific Research
- 4.6. Conservation Priorities
 - 4.6.1. Methods for Identifying Priorities
 - 4.6.2. General Priorities
 - 4.6.3. Natural Community Priorities
 - 4.6.3.1. Protection
 - 4.6.3.2. Restoration
 - 4.6.4. Focal Species Priorities
- 4.7. Monitoring and Adaptive Management
- 4.8. Consistency with Existing Conservation Plans

Chapter 5. Adaptive Management and Monitoring Strategy

Chapter 6. Implementation

- 6.1. Overview
- 6.2. Implementation Goals
- 6.3. Implementation Structure
 - 6.3.1. Implementation Sponsor
 - 6.3.2. Implementation Committee (optional)
- 6.4. How to Use the RCIS/LCP
 - 6.4.1. Use of the RCIS/LCP for Conservation Investments
 - 6.4.2. Use of the RCIS/LCP to Inform Mitigation
 - 6.4.3. Advance Mitigation Planning
 - 6.4.3.1. Conservation or Mitigation Banks
 - 6.4.3.2. Developing Mitigation Credit Agreements
- 6.5. Implementation Structure
 - 6.5.1. Implementation Committee
 - 6.5.2. Public Advisory Committee
 - 6.5.3. Annual Meeting
 - 6.5.4. Data Tracking and Reporting
- 6.6. Stewardship Programs and Plans
 - 6.6.1. Existing Stewardship Programs and Plans
 - 6.6.2. New Stewardship Programs and Tools
- 6.7. Amending the RCIS/LCP

Chapter 7. References

Appendices

The following are examples of appendices that RCIS preparers may want to include to provide information or context to the reader.

- Glossary of terms [see the Guideline *Standard Terminology* for suggested terms to use]
- Summary of laws and regulations that may affect mitigation needs
- Templates for documents used in the regulatory process
- Material provided during public outreach during RCIS preparation
- List of plans and policies reviewed during RCIS preparation
- Crosswalk of all rare and vulnerable species in the strategy area with conservation goals and objectives.

The YHC Advisory Committee: Transition to HCP/NCCP Implementation

[Draft proposal 2/13/17]

1. Pre-implementation Advisory Committee (see attached excerpt: “Role of the Advisory Committee”)
2. Transition: April 2017-April 2018:
 - Current terms expire on April 20, 2017
 - Staff propose that membership for all current (willing) members be extended until April 30, 2018.
 - Chair position also to be extended if current chair agrees to serve.
3. Post-Implementation Advisory Committee [excerpted from Yolo HCP/NCCP draft 8/16]
 - The Conservancy will continue the Advisory Committee as a stakeholder group throughout the implementation process (see Fig 7-1, “YHC Organization Structure”).
 - Membership will continue to be voluntary.
 - The AC will continue to consist of a range of individuals and entities with an interest in HCP/NCCP-related matters.
 - Members of the Committee may include, but will not be limited to:
 - land developers and others who are seeking use of the Permits under the Yolo HCP/NCCP
 - conservation interests
 - agricultural interests
 - landowner representatives
 - other stakeholders whose assistance will increase the likelihood of the success of HCP/NCCP implementation

The Advisory Committee will also include non-voting liaisons from the USFWS, CDFW, and each of the Permittees (Yolo County, City of Davis, City of West Sacramento, City of Winters, and City of Woodland).

The Conservancy will organize, help convene, and provide support for the Advisory Committee and its proceedings. The Conservancy will convene the Committee at least twice a year, and also as needed to exchange information and discuss current issues, such as updates on HCP/NCCP implementation. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to inquire about implementation matters and make recommendations concerning pending decisions. All Committee meetings will be open to the public.

Proposed Membership Selection Process

- Vacancies for public membership will be announced in public media and through other public announcements and mailing lists.
- Candidates for specific categories of membership will be solicited through appropriate communications with appropriate organizations.
- Applicants will be recommended by the Executive Director for approval by the YHC Board.
- Membership terms of service to be on a 1-year basis with opportunities for renewal or replacement as deemed appropriate by the Board.
- Other duties and responsibilities to be determined by the new Advisory Committee:
 - Attendance requirements
 - Election of chair
 - Sub-committees and working groups
 - Other?

December 27, 2016

Paul Souza
Director, Pacific Southwest Region
U.S Fish & Wildlife Service
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Charlton Bonham
Director, California Department of Fish & Wildlife
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Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Souza and Mr. Bonham,

While the Yolo Habitat Conservancy Advisory Committee generally understands the concerns and constraints of the state and federal wildlife agencies, members are also concerned about the current delays in reviewing the Yolo HCP/NCCP plan documents. Committee members generally agree on several points:

- The success of the Yolo HCP/NCCP will provide a precedent and template for developing successful HCPs and NCCPs in the agricultural counties in the Central Valley; an inability to reach a successful conclusion for this plan will adversely affect the development of further conservation plans in the Central Valley.
- We strongly endorse an approach to conservation plan development that embraces an understanding that complex plans, particularly those with long time frames, require adaptability and collaborative approaches, but the Committee believes that the results are worth the effort.
- The lengthy development process of the current HCP/NCCP is resulting in lost conservation opportunities, because landowners always have other options. Not being able to enter into conservation agreements with interested landowners in a timely way frustrates rational conservation planning, especially when near-term commitments to alternative land uses may remove important properties from possible conservation uses for decades.
- Long delays in plan approval are also frustrating for local agencies who are anticipating the plan's availability for meeting their own needs.
- All agencies need to be more concerned about the overall conservation focus of the plan and less concerned about resolving every future contingency prior to approval and implementation. Any plan will certainly require modifications as time passes, since it is

unlikely that current plan documents can anticipate all of the changed circumstances that will occur in the next five decades. The Yolo HCP/NCCP ensures enough flexibility to allow adaptive solutions to future changes.

- The wildlife agencies need to place more trust in the YHC and local agencies to assure overall safeguards for plan implementation rather than trying to work out every possible future contingency in advance. The agencies' focus should be on the broader conservation issues and strategies; not on minor details subject to change over the next 50 years.
- The plan-development process needs more accountability on the part of the wildlife agencies for meeting commitments made in the preparation process. Failure to meet commitments has consequences for local agencies, which then propagate through the local communities in the plan area and affect the good will and support of citizens and local agencies. Ongoing delays and their consequences can adversely affect the ability of the YHC and local agencies to achieve conservation goals.

The Advisory Committee also discussed the status of the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS; AB 2087) in combination with the Local Conservation Plan (LCP). The Advisory Committee strongly endorses the RCIS project. Some Committee members have minor concerns about a potential de-emphasis of local conservation in the LCP/RCIS as a result of the expanded development focus, but overall the RCIS significantly advances the Committee's goals for local conservation in the LCP, and the Committee supports the proposed plan's development.

Respectfully submitted by the members of the Yolo Habitat Conservancy Advisory Committee:



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**Yolo Habitat Conservancy
Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
February 13, 2017**

ACTION ITEMS

- Add AC member (Chad Roberts) to the RCIS/LCP Steering Committee.
- Review “The YHC Advisory Committee: Transition to HCP/NCCP Implementation” for discussion at upcoming AC meetings.
- Staff to contact members regarding willingness to renew memberships to April 30, 2018. Then seek approval from YHC Board.

1. Call meeting to order and introductions

The meeting was called to order by Advisory Committee Chair, **John Hopkins**, at 4:10 p.m. All those present introduced themselves.

Attendees:

Advisory Committee Members, Liaisons, and Alternates

John Hopkins, IEH
Michelle Acevedo, Ridge Capital, Inc.
Steve Greco, UC Davis
Glen Holstein, CNPS
Chad Roberts, Davis resident
Charles Tyson, Yolo County resident and landowner
Jeanette Wrysinski, Yolo County Resource Conservation District

Member Agency Staff and Liaisons

Ken Hiatt, City of Woodland

GUESTS

Michael Perrone, California Department of Water Resources
Catherine Portman, Burrowing Owl Preservation Society
Ellen Berryman, consultant, ICF

Conservancy Staff

Chris Alford, Deputy Director
Susan Garbini, Research Associate

2. Approve Agenda Order

Agenda order was approved.

3. Approve November 7, 2016 draft meeting summary; review status of Action Items.

The draft Meeting Summary for 11/7/16 was approved with the following changes:

- Chad Roberts (again!) requested his affiliation be changed to “Davis resident”.

Action Items

- Send comments on FAQs to Susan by December 1
 - Comments were received and integrated into next draft FAQs, which will be provided with other outreach material at next AC meeting.
- Send thoughts for report to YHC Board Meeting (12/12/16) to Chad Roberts
 - Chad Roberts presented an AC update at the YHC Board meeting on 12/12/16.
- Chad and Steve to send out their presentation from Natural Areas Conference (Oct 19, 2016)
 - **“Connectivity Underpins Climate Change Adaptation Strategies in Northwestern California Landscapes”** by Steven Greco and Chad Roberts, was distributed to AC members via e-mail from staff on 11/9/16.

4. Update on Local Conservation Plan/Regional Conservation Investment Strategy:

Chris Alford and Ellen Berryman

CHRIS ALFORD: Today was the first meeting of the RCIS Steering Committee. A draft Table of Contents/Outline has been prepared and is provided today that Ellen will walk the group through. A highlighted version will be mailed out electronically. The highlighted sections indicate new information to be added.

ELLEN BERRYMAN: The Local Conservation Plan is the basis of the RCIS. We will be adding information about what the RCIS is and how it relates to the LCP. Some sections of the current draft come directly from the LCP while others need to be added to meet the criteria for an RCIS.

Section 1.5: Regional Planning Environment: We are required by statute to have information on any other relevant plans or strategies in the region: species recovery plans, transportation plans, capital improvement plans.

JEANETTE WRYSINSKI: What about other types of plans, e.g. water management, invasive species management?

ELLEN: We have to look at all plans, e.g. flood bypass management, Cache Creek Management Plan. Anything that relates to conservation of natural resources. We need to go to the sources of these documents and are looking for help in finding them.

STEVE GRECO: Oak woodland management?

CHRIS: Yes, anything already mentioned in the LCP is already included. Please email me if you know of other documents that should be referenced that weren't previously mentioned.

MICHELLE ACEVEDO: Are the different plans complementary or are they conflicting in some cases. Do developers have to comply with all of them? These could be overwhelming.

ELLEN: That isn't the purpose. The intent of referencing existing documents is to lay out what has already been developed and to make sure that we aren't conflicting with existing plans. They are used to prioritize conservation strategies.

JOHN HOPKINS: This is not a document for telling developers what they have to do – it is a voluntary plan. It has no mandates.

MICHELLE: Everything starts out as “voluntary”, but over time becomes the basis for eventual regulation.

CHAD ROBERTS: The commitment has been made that it won't be a substitute for the HCP/NCCPs. It will be voluntary. The real thrust is to look at conservation priorities on a large scale, to focus on concerns. The benefit is that now you'll know where to mitigate or conserve.

CHRIS: The RCIS/LCP doesn't look at the development side at all. For all these species, the purpose to identify areas for habitat protection, so that consensus can be reached about where it is best to mitigate and focus conservation efforts in the region.

MICHELLE: Do the plans get updated?

ELLEN: The RCIS lasts for 10 years, but can be renewed. The LCP has no expiration date.

1.7.4: Focal Species: Group 1 (goals and objectives will be developed for these). Species covered in the HCP/NCCP are also in the RCIS (Planning Species). This is a voluntary expansion. Fish are also being added.

1.7.6: Conservation Framework: Landscape, natural community, species level – this is not a requirement for the RCIS, but will be retained.

4.5: Conservation Actions: These are actions required to achieve the Goals and Objectives (this will be combined with conservation priorities)

We decided to eliminate Chapter 5 (*Adaptive Management and Monitoring Strategy*), because it is covered in 4.7 – it was just a framework (not a management plan).

Chapter 6: Implementation: There is a brief implementation section in the LCP. We will flesh it out. Will also have to have a section on how the RCIS is implemented.

CHAD: CalTrans has been looking for ways to develop advanced mitigation planning on a regional basis. They felt if they could get a plan, it would be easier to develop a mitigation strategy in a region. They are looking for an advanced mitigation framework.

JEANETTE: Will other agencies use this?

CHAD: Maybe the Army Corps of Engineers

ELLEN: Maybe the Department of Water Resources and the Sacramento Flood Control Agency.

JOHN: From the viewpoint of the Local Conservation Plan, the idea was that we would use the plan to help get funding to implement these conservation strategies and that it would be complementary to the HCP/NCCP. How does the timing of this fit with the HCP/NCCP?

CHRIS: The time frame corresponds well with our process. We will probably have a draft LCP/RCIS by the end of the calendar year, which is around the time we intend to finalize the HCP/NCCP. ICF is going to develop a schedule.

We'll be asking for substantive input from the Advisory Committee as we move forward with this. This forum can be part of the "public meeting" requirement.

STEVE: Is our approach the same or different than the other HCPs that are involved in the RCIS program (Santa Clara Valley, Antelope, and East Contra Costa County)?

ELLEN: They are ahead of us in the RCIS component. But we are the only one with an already-started process (the LCP).

JOHN: Who is on the Steering Committee?

CHRIS: The Steering Committee includes: the Yolo Habitat Conservancy (Petrea), ICF (Ellen), the Natural Resources Agency, the Department of Water Resources, Yolo County (Phil Pogledich), American Rivers, and the Environmental Defense Fund. Also attending this meeting was GEI (a consulting firm for DWR) and Graham Chisolm, who works for Conservation Strategies Group and is being paid by Windward fund to help coordinate among the four pilot RCIS planning efforts and the CDFW.

JOHN: Does it bother anyone else that American Rivers and EDF are involved? Who is in charge?

CHAD: I'm not surprised.

JEANETTE: How heavy is their influence on the Steering Committee? It seems like a really selective group? It seems odd to have NGOs that aren't involved locally. Also it is disconcerting and an opaque process to have them involved without local groups also being invited to participate.

CHAD: I see this entire approach as being led by Graham Chisholm. He was involved in the legislation.

MICHAEL PERRONE: I too was troubled at the meeting. I think it was odd that the Steering Committee was put together from the RCIS perspective only. But if they don't come through us, the organizations represented here would say no to it. About half of it is LCP; the other half is RCIS. In my point of view, the LCP is the heart of the matter. It's up to ICF to bring as much LCP information into this as possible.

ELLEN: It's starting out as our LCP.

CHRIS: The Conservancy is at the table as a way we can have some influence. The process has just started so if there is interest in having an active participant from this group, we can certainly ask for that to happen.

CHAD: What happens if a plan is produced that does not pass local muster?

ELLEN: We will pay a lot of attention – it has to obtain local approval.

STEVE: That's a good point. That's why I asked about the 10-year renewal aspect. It would be hard to know what parts are the LCP and what parts are the RCIS. It sounds like there are some sections that could be identified that would not be relevant to us. Other parts are value-added.

ELLEN: I think the part of the RCIS that gathers information about other plans in the region is added value. This is relevant information even after the 10 years. Information on linkages would be relevant.

STEVE: It would be better to codify the sections that are important to us.

CHRIS: Regarding the timeline, the likely scenario is that it will still be a useful document, but would not qualify for advanced mitigation credits after the 10-year RCIS term, unless it is renewed for that purpose. It could still identify areas for conservation purposes.

There will likely be a big focus on the Yolo Bypass. But they have no intention of taking away from other areas that the LCP is concerned about. This is an opportunity to look at other plans, including state plans. It can help with planning in Yolo County by sharing information across programs and plans to help us avoid stepping on each other's toes.

JOHN: When this bill was in development this summer, there was a lot of concern about undermining NCCPs. Language was added to avoid this and to ensure consistency with NCCPs.

ELLEN: Would we want to recommend some other participant? Somebody from this group?

CHAD: I'm interested in participating. How often will the Steering Committee meet?

ELLEN: Total of 6 meetings (today was first meeting).

JOHN: I make a motion to ask that Chad be invited to participate in the Steering Committee meetings.

[The AC voted "Yes" by consensus.]

MICHELLE: Can we get an update on the working draft document?

ELLEN: Yes, although it currently is the same version as what was previously distributed. We'll send out updated draft versions once there are updates to share.

KEN HIATT: Are we now subject to the timeline of the RCIS? Will that change this group's timeline?

CHRIS: Because we have funding, the LCP will move faster with the RCIS than it would without it.

5. HCP/NCCP Plan Update; plans for public meetings (EIR/EIS and Plan) – Chris Alford

We're still having meetings at higher levels to solve outstanding issues. It has helped to resolve sticking points that have hindered progress. There is a liaison meeting today.

We have a rapid schedule over the next few weeks to get everything (HCP/NCCP, EIR/EIS, Implementation Agreement, draft templates) finalized at the Sacramento level by February 28. Then all goes to regional review.

The goal is to release everything for public review/FEDERAL REGISTER by March 31. The public comment period will be April-June.

We are planning public comment/outreach meetings for April/May/June.

The YHC is responsible for addressing the Public Comments for CEQA; the US Fish & Wildlife Service for NEPA. All public meetings will be in Yolo County. Also we are planning presentations at County and City meetings. Then active outreach to other groups.

For the Plan, the timeline is: responding to comments; preparing final documents by the end of the year; obtaining approval by local officials. Ordinances have to be adopted locally. Then permits issued by the agencies. We hope to have Permits in early 2018.

JEANETTE: What can we do?

CHRIS: Your feedback on draft versions of the brochures, FAQ sheet, and other information that can be disseminated is really helpful. Also, as the public comment period starts everyone can help with communicating to individuals and groups that you interact with about what the HCP/NCCP is and isn't. To the extent you hear any negative feedback it would be really helpful if you can let us know so we can be proactive about addressing it. We're pushing hard to ensure meeting the deadlines we have set.

6. Discuss Advisory Committee Membership and Role in Transition to Implementation – Susan Garbini

Terms for the current Advisory Committee members will expire on April 30, 2017. We would like to recommend that current membership in the Advisory Committee be extended for 1 year (to April 30, 2018). By then, we expect to be in the implementation phase and the AC will have a different role. Membership on the committee will continue to consist of a range of individuals and entities with an interest in HCP/NCCP-related matters, but may have a slightly different composition (see hand-out "The YHC Advisory Committee: Transition to HCP/NCCP Implementation"). The future role and composition of the AC will be discussed at future

meetings. Extension of service to April 2018 is voluntary and members are free to withdraw. Susan will contact each member to find out their wishes regarding renewing their membership.

CHAD: I will volunteer to stay on through next April. There needs to be some kind of continuity and tracking of the Local Conservation Plan.

For implementation, the HCP/NCCP needs to a different emphasis than the LCP/RCIS. Maybe there needs to be a subcommittee or working group in the future.

JOHN: It is important to have a strong support from the Advisory Committee after implementation.

KEN: We're collaborating about creating an environmental education center in Woodland Regional Park. Hopefully that could be a headquarters for ongoing public interest in the YHC.

JOHN: Perhaps Michael Perrone could represent the Yolo Audubon Society on the advisory committee.

7. Announcements and updates

- Letter to wildlife agencies

CHAD: At the YHC Board meeting on December 12, 2016, Board Chair, Jim Provenza, suggested that the Advisory Committee communicate its concerns about the schedule for approving and releasing the HCP/NCCP to the heads of the wildlife agencies: Paul Souza (USFWS) and Chuck Bonham (CDFW). The letter was drafted and commented on by AC members and sent out on December 27. All members signed.

Discussion

- We lost our champions over time due to changes in political climate.
- I liked the letter, but agencies have behaved this way for years. The easement template has been going back and forth for years.
- Because of delays, we lost potential easement purchases.
- Regarding easements, it has been very difficult to move the agencies to language that would work for agriculture.
- We are concerned about the RCIS overshadowing the LCP and HCP/NCCP processes.

Announcements

JOHN: The NCCPP annual meeting, dinner, and field trip will be held in Santa Clara Valley (Morgan Hill), April 26, 2017. The field trip will be to the Coyote Ridge area (serpentine grasslands). Hopefully it won't be raining.

SUSAN: Update on Steve Thompson. All present expressed desire to send him greetings and best wishes for recovery.

8. Adjourn to next meeting date: Monday, March 13, 4-6 pm; Atrium Training Room, Yolo County Administration Building

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 pm.