

North San Luis Obispo County Habitat Conservation Strategy (NSLOC)

Welcome



Community Meeting
March 30, 2011

Introduction | Planning Team

- San Luis Obispo County – Trevor Keith, Project Manager
- City of Paso Robles – Susan DeCarli
- Wildlife Agencies
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Julie Vanderwier
 - California Dept. of Fish and Game – Deborah Hillyard
- Consultants
 - Dudek – Mike Howard, Project Manager
 - RRM Design Group – Erik Justesen, Facilitator



Introduction | Meeting Overview

- Background
 - What is a Habitat Conservation Plan / Natural Community Conservation Plan?
 - Why is a plan being prepared?
- Case Studies
 - How conservation plans work and what it means to you
- Plan Area Description
- Work Plan Overview
- Status Report and Schedule
- Next Steps
- Questions & Answers

Background | What is an HCP/NCCP?

- Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)
 - A regional planning process involving local agencies, wildlife agencies, and stakeholders to conserve natural resources in conjunction with economic growth and regional development
 - Provides incidental “take permits” under the federal and California Endangered Species Acts for impacts to species and communities from “covered activities”

Sources:

CDFG (California Department of Fish and Game. 2011. “Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP).” Accessed March 14, 2011 at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/nccp/>

USFWS (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). 2009. “Habitat Conservation Plans Under the Endangered Species Act.” July 2009. Accessed March 14, 2011 at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/hcp.pdf>

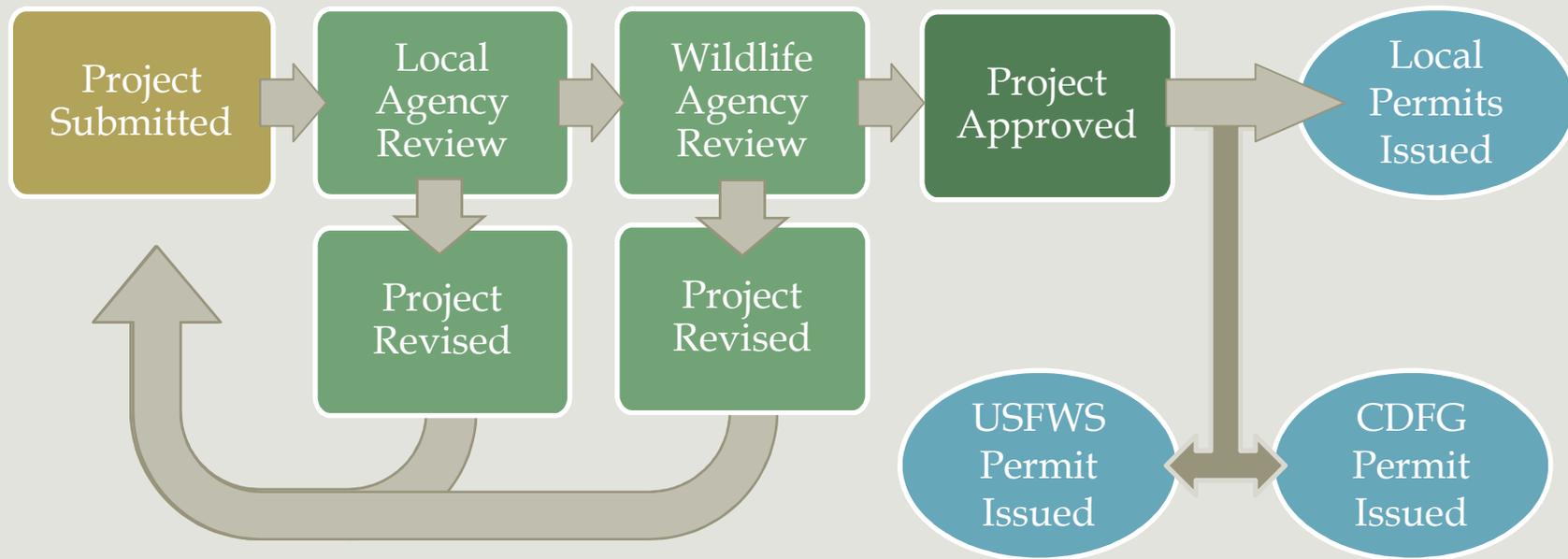
Background | Why is a plan being prepared?

- Conserve regionally important natural resources
 - Rare species
 - Natural communities
 - Wildlife movement and ecological processes
- Allow for continued growth and economic development
 - Provide certainty and consistency
 - Streamline the approval process
 - Protect private property rights



Background | Why is a plan being prepared?

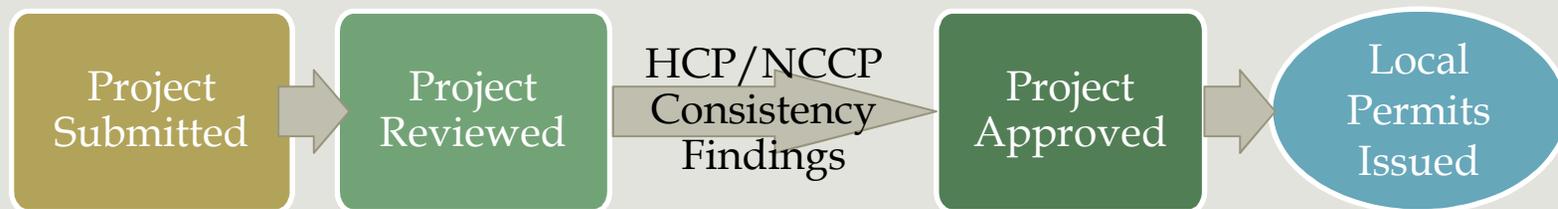
Conventional Project Permitting Process



- *Numerous review cycles*
- *Lengthy and uncertain approval process*
- *Piecemeal, ineffective mitigation*

Background | Why is a plan being prepared?

Project Permitting Process under an HCP/NCCP



- *Streamlined , local permitting process*
- *Coordinated conservation and mitigation strategy*

Background | Plan vs. No Plan

Plan

- More effective conservation
- Integrates with local land use processes
- Adds predictability and streamlines approvals
- Greater flexibility for mitigation
- Creates economies of scale
- Greater benefits when integrated with other regulatory processes

No Plan

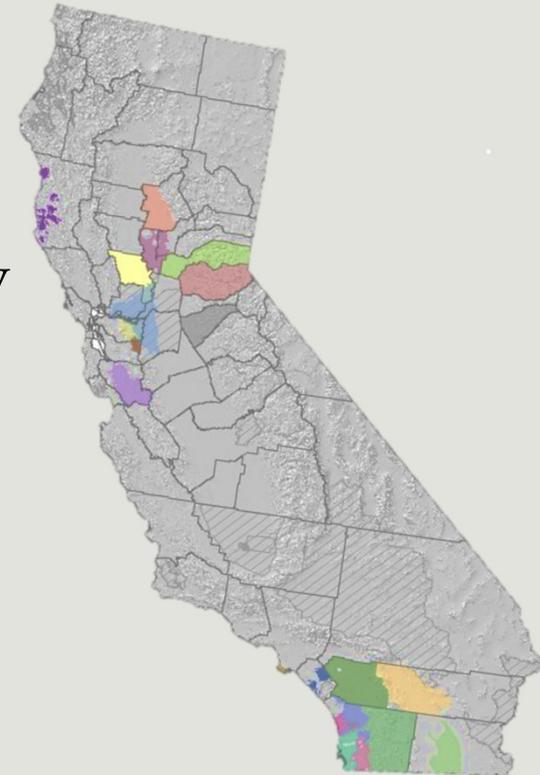
- Project-by-project planning for development and conservation
- Applicant responsible for negotiating agency permits requirements and mitigation
- Higher applicant costs
- Longer approval process
- More uncertainties for the applicant, local jurisdictions, and wildlife agencies

Source:

Cylinder, P., K. Bogden, D. Zippin. 2004. Understanding the Habitat Conservation Planning Process in California: A Guidebook for Project and Regional Conservation Planning. Institute for Public Self Government.

Case Studies | How HCP/NCCPs work

- 24 Regional HCP/NCCPs in planning or implementation statewide
- Unique approaches in each plan to key elements
 - Plan Areas
 - Covered Species
 - Inclusive vs. focused list
 - Covered Activities
 - Spectrum of permitted actions
 - Conservation Strategy
 - Map-based, process-based, or hybrid



*Regional HCP/NCCPs
in California*

Case Studies | What does it mean to you?

Landowners

Case Study: *San Joaquin County MSHCOSP*

- Purely a process-based plan
- Acquisition goals reached exclusively from voluntary participation of willing sellers
- Includes neighboring lands provisions

Developers

Case Study: *Western Riverside County MSHCP*

- Established a coordinated, predictable project permitting process across 1.25 million acres, including 14 cities and the county
- Regional Conservation Authority provides coordinated preserve assembly and conservation implementation

Source:

http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/water/HCP/archive/final-hcp-rev/final_hcp_nccp.html

<http://www.rctlma.org/mshcp/>

Case Studies | What does it mean to you?

Farmers, vintners, and ranchers

- Case Study: *East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP*
 - Does not cover existing operations
 - Does not cover expanding operations, unless discretionary approval required for expansion
 - Offers new income sources from conservation actions
 - Incorporates conservation easements on cultivated croplands and grazing leases in preserve areas
- Case Study: *Western Riverside MSHCP*
 - Covers existing operations through voluntary certificates of inclusion
 - Covers limited agricultural expansion up to a maximum

Source:

http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/water/HCP/archive/final-hcp-rev/final_hcp_nccp.html

<http://www.rctlma.org/mshcp/>

Case Studies | What does it mean to you?

Environmental Groups

- Case Study: *Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan*
 - Incorporates independent scientific input
 - Establishes landscape-based, community-based, and species-based goals and objectives
 - Establishes mechanisms for the assembly of a regional, interconnected habitat preserve system
 - Creates transparent regional analysis of take and conservation
 - Provides a framework and funding mechanisms for long-term management and monitoring

Source:

http://www.scv-habitatplan.org/www/site/alias_default/341/public_draft_habitat_plan.aspx

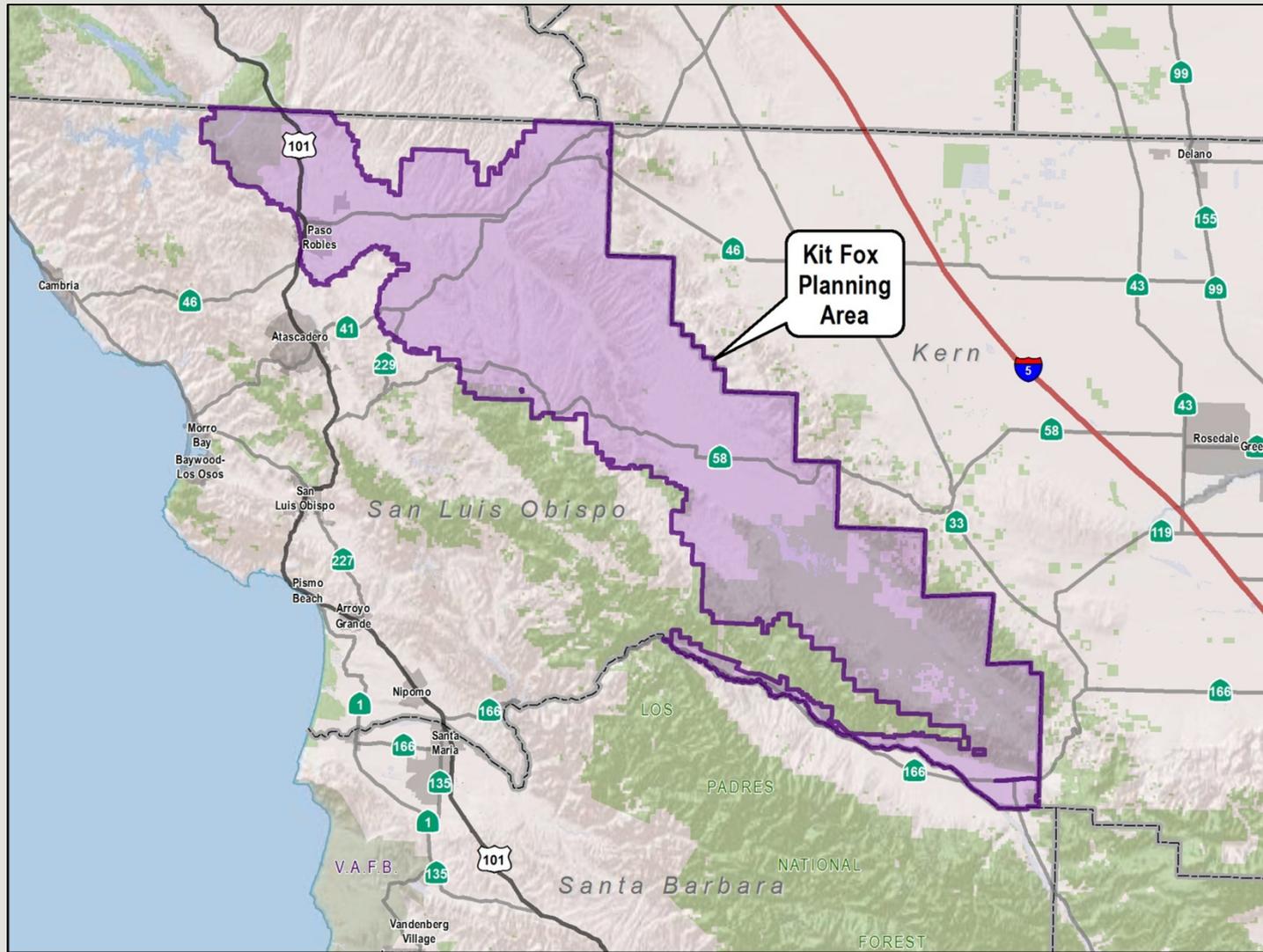
Plan Area Description

Overview

- Preliminary planning boundary
 - Based on the San Joaquin kit fox mitigation area
 - Total acreage – 845,246 acres
- Natural Communities
 - Grassland and Herb-dominated, Scrub, Forest and Woodland, Riparian, and Wetland and Marsh
- Example species of planning concern
 - San Joaquin kit fox, least Bell's vireo, California red-legged frog, and vernal pool invertebrates
- Land Uses
 - Cultivated croplands and ranching
 - Residential and commercial development
 - Designated resource management areas



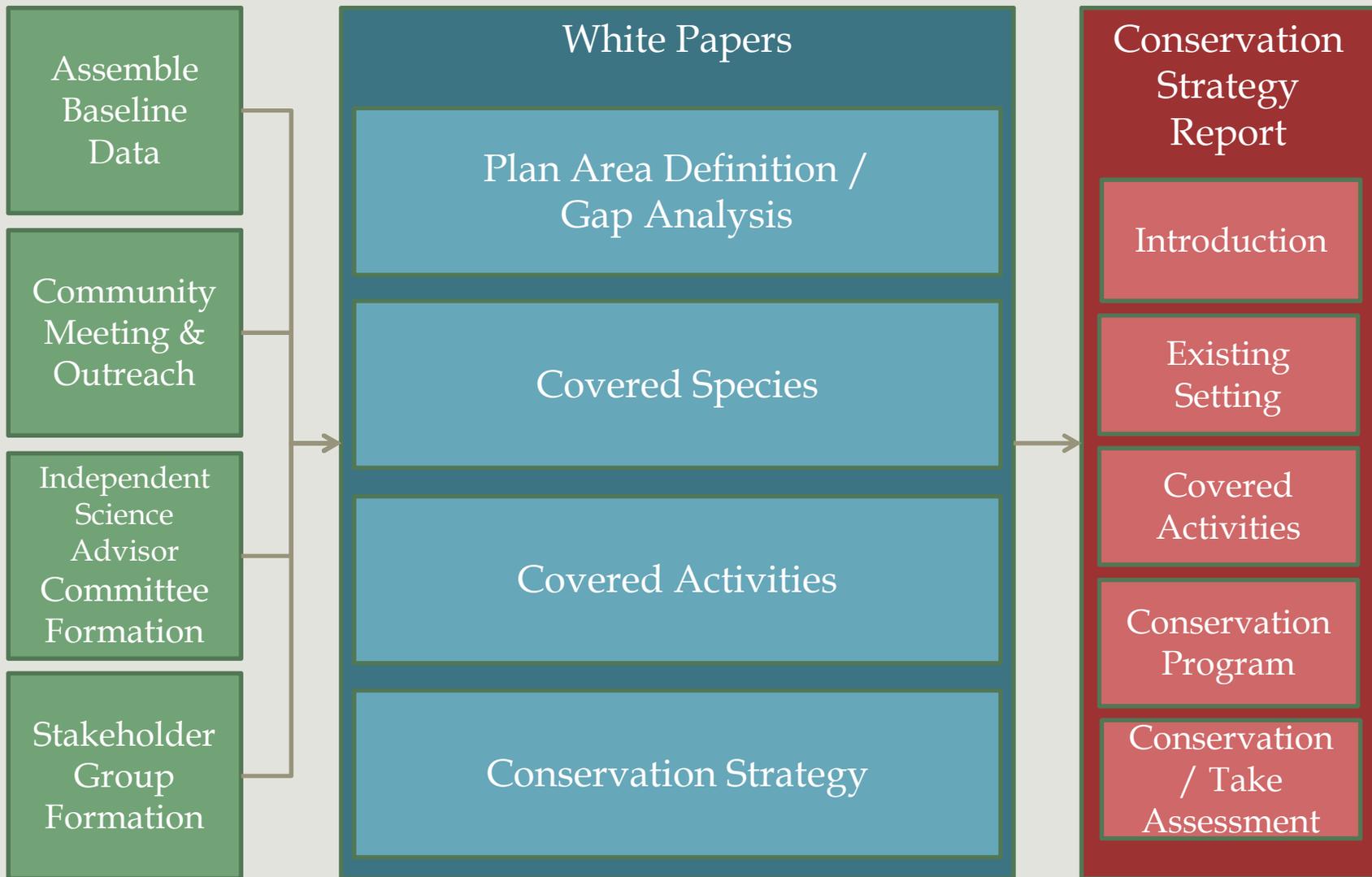
Plan Area Description | Map



Work Program | Phases & Tasks

- Phase 1 – Conservation Strategy
 - Task 1. Assemble Baseline Data/Report
 - Task 2. Scoping/Community Meetings
 - Task 3. Independent Scientific Advisory Committee
 - Task 4. Stakeholder Group Meetings
 - Task 5. Interim Work Products/White Papers
 - Subtask 5.1 Plan Area Definition/Gap Analysis
 - Subtask 5.2 Covered Species
 - Subtask 5.3 Covered Activities
 - Subtask 5.4 Conservation Strategy
 - Task 6. Draft Conservation Program Documentation
- Phase 2 – Permitting and Implementation

Work Program | Process



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Work Program | Schedule

- Phase 1
 - Project initiation and database development: Jan – Mar 2011
 - Assemble Baseline Data ✓
 - Stakeholder Group Formation ✓
 - ISA Committee Formation *Ongoing*
 - Public Scoping ✓
 - Conservation Strategy Development: Mar – Oct 2011
 - Issue-specific White Papers
 - ISA meeting and Stakeholder meetings *Ongoing*
 - Conservation Strategy Documentation: Oct – Dec 2011
- Phase 2
 - Obtain HCP/NCCP funding: June 2011-June 2012
 - HCP/NCCP development and permitting
- Phase 3
 - Implementation

Work Program | Next Steps

- Preparation of preliminary baseline conditions information
 - To be used to brief the ISA and form baseline for plan
- Independent Science Advisory (ISA) Committee Formation
 - Select ISA chair/lead scientist
 - ISA Committee formation
 - ISA Committee meeting and review
 - ISA recommendations report
- Stakeholder Meeting #2
 - Review baseline data
 - Consider Plan Area boundary

Contact Information

- Contact

- Trevor Keith, Project Manager, San Luis Obispo County at (805) 781-1431 or by email at tkeith@co.slo.ca.us
- Susan DeCarli, Planning Manager, at (805) 237-3970 or by email at sdecarli@prcity.com

- Additional information available at:

- http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/environmental/Biological_Resources/NSLOC.htm
- <http://www.prcity.com/government/departments/commdev/planning/nsloc.asp>

Questions & Answers



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