

Public Advisory Committee

SAN BENITO COUNTY CONSERVATION PLAN

Arielle Goodspeed, County of San Benito
Jennifer Piggott, ICF
August 31, 2022



Agenda

1. Welcome (Jennifer Piggott, ICF)
2. Meeting procedures and ground rules (Jennifer Piggott, ICF)
3. Introductions
4. Project status updates
 - a. Information and data gathering (Aaron Gabbe, ICF)
 - b. Planning agreement (Craig Bailey, California DFW)
 1. PAC Q&A
 - c. HCPs and USFWS' role (Mark Ogonowski, USFWS)
 1. PAC Q&A
5. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document (Aaron Gabbe, ICF)
 - a. Overview of FAQ document purpose and content
 1. PAC Q&A
6. Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Statement of Purpose
 - a. Overview of Statement of Purpose (Arielle Goodspeed, County of San Benito)
 - b. Facilitated Discussion (Jennifer Piggott, ICF)
7. Public comment
8. Next steps



Using Zoom

- If you need help with the Zoom platform, please raise your hand (call-in users press *9)
- To call in to the meeting:
 - Phone number: 1-877-853-5247
 - Meeting ID: 868 0575 0869
 - Password: 897329
- Please close all Apps and programs and limit other streaming or downloads
- All Planning Team and PAC members are participants and can self mute/unmute and turn video on/off
- All non-PAC and public participants are muted. Please hold your questions until the Public Comment portion towards the end of the meeting.



Meeting Objectives

- Update the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) on the status of the San Benito County Conservation Plan (SBCCP).
- Gain common understanding of the purpose and need of the SBCCP and the role of the PAC.



Meeting Ground Rules

- ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE.** Turn video on and share all relevant information and concerns.
- BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND.** Focus on objectives and common vision.
- THINK SYNERGY.** Create cooperation, seek win/win solutions.
- SPEAK ONE AT A TIME.** Raise your hand and be professional and respectful of other people.
- ACTIVELY LISTEN.** Be open minded, first seek to understand, then to be understood.
- AVOID REDUNDANCY.** Focus on the discussion to avoid repeating.
- TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.** Meetings are not recorded verbatim, point out when a statement needs to be recorded.
- BE REASONABLE.** Use examples that can be achieved and be mindful of budget and staffing constraints.
- BE SPECIFIC.** Use examples and explain reasons behind your statements or questions.
- THINK BIG PICTURE.** Understand the difference between word-smithing and re-phrasing for clarity.
- STAY FOCUSED.** Leave non-SBCCP related issues outside the meeting.
- STRATEGIC MOMENTS.** Work together to discover strategic moments.



Why is this a Virtual Meeting?

- Maximize participation
- Give PAC members a one-voice approach.
- PAC members should feel included, equal, and contribute without physical or perceived barriers during the meeting.
- Future meetings will be held virtually or in person. In-person meetings will be determined by the County, in collaboration with the PAC to encourage maximum participation.
 - We encourage attendance on the same platform, when feasible (e.g., all in person, or virtual.)
 - A remote option will always be available, either via Zoom or phone/dial-in.



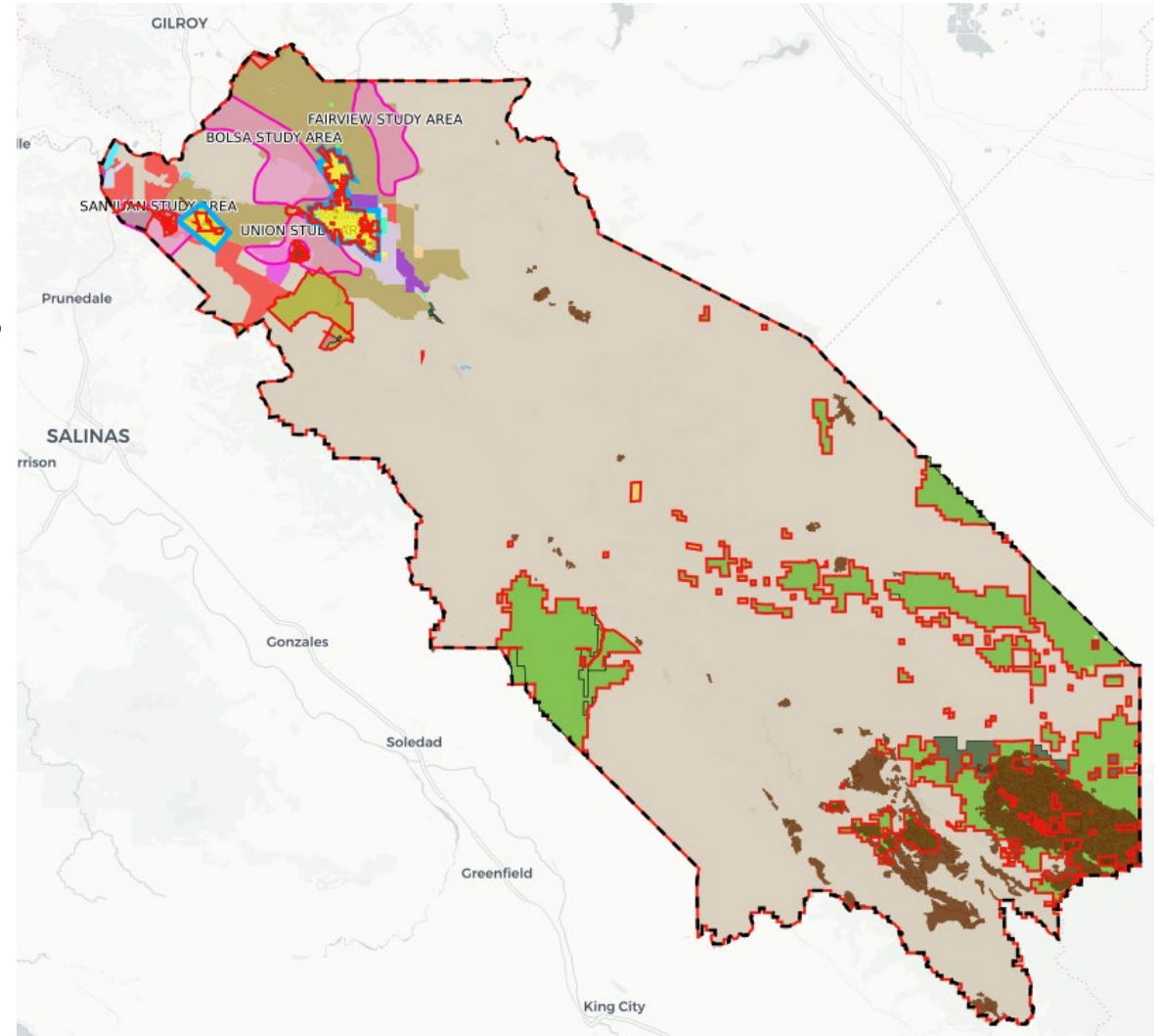
Introductions


- When called on by facilitator, provide 30 second introduction
- Include
 - Name
 - Affiliation
 - Interest in SBCCP and participating in the PAC
- Planning Team introductions
- PAC introductions



Project Updates

- Information and data gathering.
Examples
 - Jurisdiction boundaries
 - Existing protected areas
 - Parks
 - Public lands
 - Community study areas
 - Zoning designations
 - Soils
- Mapping vegetation





Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs)

California Fish and Game Code Chapter 10,
Sections 2800-2835

NCCP Purpose

- Avoid uncoordinated project-by-project permitting and mitigation
- Plan for conservation over a large region

Results in...

- *Conservation of species and natural communities in a large and interconnected reserve system*
- *Streamlined species permitting for compatible development projects*



NCCP Key Features

- Ecosystem approach
- Take of listed (CESA), non-listed, and Fully Protected Species
- Independent scientific input
- Public participation throughout process
- “Rough proportionality” of impacts to conservation
- Provides assurances

Badger is a covered species in only 2 approved NCCPs



Photo by CDFW

NCCP/HCP Process Flowchart and Normative Timelines*

1. Decide to Undertake Plan

2. Gather Preliminary Information

3. Prepare and Sign Planning Agreement

4. Notify Tribes in NCCP Area

Early Planning

5. Solicit Independent Scientific Input

6. Compile and Assess Baseline Data

7. Incorporate Baseline Data and Planning Principles into Draft Plan Chapters

8. Conduct Technical Review of Draft Plan Chapters

9. Revise Baseline Data and Chapters to Produce Administrative Drafts

10. Agree on Plan and Prepare Public Review Draft

Plan Drafts

11. Distribute Public Review Draft Documents

12. Notify Tribes in NCCP Area

13. Revise Based Upon Public Comments

14. Prepare Final Plan Documents

Public Review Process and Final Documents

15. Obtain Local Government Approval

16. Obtain Wildlife Agency Approval and Permits

Approvals and Permits



Ventura
Fish & Wildlife
Office

San Benito County Conservation Plan

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's
Role and Participation*



San Benito County Conservation Plan

The San Benito County Conservation Plan (SBCCP) is a comprehensive strategy to ensure the long-term conservation of federally listed species and their habitats, while working more efficiently and effectively with San Benito County Resource Management Agency to issue needed permits pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act.



San Benito County Conservation Plan (SBCCP)

The SBCCP will:

- Protect listed species and their habitats
- Standardize conservation measures
- Ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act
- Streamline permitting procedures
- Reduce regulatory timelines and costs

The SBCCP will not:

- Approve/deny projects
- Replace or change the County's permitting/planning process
- Add/Reduce permitting requirements
- Weaken existing protections for listed species



SBCCP Ancillary Benefits


- Leverage federal funding
- Support opportunities for conservation
 - Grants
 - Conservation Easements
 - Conservation Banks
- Open space protection
- Recreational opportunities
- Reduce costs
- Save time
- Provide clarity



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- Circulated with meeting agenda and to be available on SBCCP website
- “Living document”
- Two parts
 - General Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) FAQs
 - SBCCP-specific FAQs



A landscape photograph showing a river flowing through a green field. Several large, leafless trees are scattered across the scene, with one particularly large tree in the foreground on the right. The sky is overcast and grey. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Purpose of SBCCP – Reminder

San Benito County is developing the SBCCP to protect and preserve its rich natural resources, including sensitive species and habitats, while supporting the County's agricultural economy and future growth.

Objectives of SBCCP - Reminder

- Develop and implement a **regional approach to habitat conservation**
- **Collaborative partnerships** with landowners, Tribes, conservation organizations and others to protect and enhance County habitats and working lands
- Provide a **programmatic process** for the mitigation of impacts
- Authorize the use of **Incidental Take Permits** for development and other projects that potentially affect sensitive species and their habitats
- Provide **local control to the County** to implement a streamlined endangered species permitting process for activities to be described in the SBCCP



SBCCP Development Roles

- **County** – responsible for development of the SBCCP and submission of the SBCCP (HCP/NCCP) and Incidental Take Permit applications to:
- **USFWS and CDFW** – the federal and state wildlife agencies responsible for reviewing and approving the SBCCP and Incidental Take Permit applications
- **Planning Team** – County, USFWS, CDFW, consultant (ICF). Provides direction, guidance, and assistance in developing the SBCCP
- **Public Advisory Committee (PAC)**- a forum for broad community participation; provides feedback to Planning Team on SBCCP



Role of Public Advisory Committee

- **Overarching goal:** help inform the development of a quality SBCCP that meets San Benito County's biological conservation goals while supporting planned development with a streamlined endangered species permitting process, and that reflects the broadest possible set of community interests and concerns.
- **PAC's function:** serve as a sounding board with the specific charge to review, consider, and comment upon the components that make up the SBCCP document as they are developed and as presented to the PAC for review.



Role of Public Advisory Committee

- Platform to discuss and inform development of the SBCCP.
- Participation on PAC at discretion of the County to ensure balanced and broad representation of diverse constituency.
- PAC members participate collaboratively and respectfully and shall strive in their recommendations to be objective, balanced, and constructive.
- PAC operates by consensus. When consensus cannot be reached, the various positions will be reported to County staff and will be taken under consideration by the Planning Team.
- PAC meetings open to the public to attend and provide comment.



Public Advisory Committee Responsibilities

- Review and provide feedback on SBCCP draft material (e.g., memos, draft chapters).
- Seek to understand the issues presented and perspectives and interests of other PAC members and their constituencies.
- Inform, educate, and involve their constituencies on a regular basis, including providing notification of upcoming PAC meetings and information on how to attend such meetings.
- Synthesize input from their constituencies and effectively represent their viewpoints, interests, and concerns.
- Work cooperatively with other PAC members.
- Commit to attending PAC meetings until completion of the Plan.



Public Comment

- Use raise hand feature in Zoom if you are a member of the public (i.e., not a PAC or Planning Team member) and you wish to provide a comment or ask a question.
- If you called in from a phone, type *9 to raise your hand.
- Please limit comments to 3 minutes per person.
- Comments/questions must address agenda items and/or the SBCCP



Next Steps

- Planning Agreement will be available for public review (~Sept.-Oct. 2022)
 - Meeting will be noticed
 - Planning Agreement will be available on SBCCP website:
<https://www.cosb.us/departments/resource-management-agency/planning-and-land-use-division/san-benito-county-conservation-plan-sbccp>
- Q4 Public Advisory Meeting on Wednesday November 30, 4:00 pm
- For more information, please contact Arielle Goodspeed, Principal Planner, County of San Benito Resource Management Agency
 - Agoodspeed@cosb.us

