



COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development/Resource Agency

Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director

PLANNING

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Michael J. Johnson, AICP
CDRA Director

DATE: May 12, 2009

SUBJECT: Resolution Supporting Goals and Objectives of the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition

ACTION REQUESTED:

The Planning Department recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve a resolution supporting the goals and objectives of the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition (CHCPC).

BACKGROUND:

The California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition is the result of a Fall 2008 meeting of a small number of key Habitat Conservation Planning (HCP) and Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) organizations representing government interests and non-profit organizations. The purpose of the coalition is to increase the effectiveness and promote conservation plans in California. The main interest of the coalition is county and sub-county scale conservation plans led by local governments. The Placer County Conservation Plan is one such planning effort. However, the also recognize the importance of new types of conservation plans focused on infrastructure and on renewable energy that may be sponsored by a special district or transportation planning agency.

The coalition's goals are to increase funding for the preparation and implementation of habitat conservation plans, improve coordination of habitat conservation plans with other resource protection and permitting programs, facilitate the development and effectiveness of habitat conservation plans, and strengthen support for habitat conservation plans throughout California. Federal, state and local government entities, non-profit organizations, business organizations and others are being encouraged to join the coalition.

The Placer County Board of Supervisors has approved resolutions of support for the Northern California Conservation Planning Partners with similar conservation objectives but with a smaller geographic scope. By the Board's adoption of the attached resolution, Placer County will be a member of the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition. County staff is coordinating our efforts, as a part of this coalition, with Holland & Knight, the County's federal lobbyist. Members of the Board met with members of the coalition during their Washington D.C. lobbying trip in early March and initial feedback has been very positive.

585

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Federal Section 6 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, supporting habitat conservation planning in the United States, may be increased if the coalition is successful. Attachment 2 is a brochure that accompanied the Board during their federal advocacy trip to Washington D.C. in early March. This brochure describes how funding for this program has been decreasing since 2001 while the need has increased substantially. The coalition is seeking a \$50 million dollar increase for the Federal Fiscal Year 2010 for a total of \$125 million. Because California receives a majority of these funds an overall increase in federal spending on this program has the potential to benefit Placer County when the Placer County Conservation Plan is implemented.

Respectfully submitted,



MICHAEL J. JOHNSON, AICP
Community Development / Resource Agency Director

Attached to this report for the Board's information/consideration are:

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Resolution

Attachment 2: Brochure: Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition (March 2009)

cc: Rich Gold, Holland & Knight
John Hopkins, Institute for Ecological Health
Suneil Thomas, The Nature Conservancy

Before the Board of Supervisors County of Placer, State of California

In the matter of:

A Resolution Supporting the Goals of
the California Habitat Conservation
Planning Coalition

Resolution No.: _____
FIRST READING: _____

The following Resolution was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of
Placer at a regular meeting held _____, by the following vote on
roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Attest:

Clerk of said Board

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Clerk of the Board Signature

Chairman Signature

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF PLACER,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, California supports the greatest variety of species and natural communities in
the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, California has 375 species of plants and animal listed as endangered or
threatened under Federal or State Endangered Species Acts; and

WHEREAS, the number of species that are listed as endangered or threatened is
expected to increase unless proactive steps are taken now; and

587

WHEREAS, many of these species and communities occur in areas undergoing substantial development; and

WHEREAS, Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) and Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) are effective mechanisms to conserve and recover imperiled animals and plants as well as protect natural communities; and

WHEREAS, many entities throughout California are preparing or implementing large scale, landscape level NCCPs and/or HCPs; and

WHEREAS, NCCPs and HCPs provide permit streamlining, regulatory certainty and other benefits to development projects, infrastructure improvements and land use planning; and

WHEREAS, the permit streamlining and regulatory certainty conferred by NCCPs and HCPs is beneficial to local and state economies; and

WHEREAS, NCCPs and HCPs provide regulatory efficiency that can jumpstart economic growth which provides jobs and a prosperous economy; and

WHEREAS, NCCPs and HCPs contribute to state and local goals that preserve and enhance agriculture, open space and recreation in addition to providing critical species benefits; and

WHEREAS, additional financial support and policy direction can make NCCPs and HCPs more effective; and

WHEREAS, NCCPs and landscape scale HCPs are critical to achieving the public trust responsibilities of the Wildlife Agencies for natural resource conservation, protection, and management.

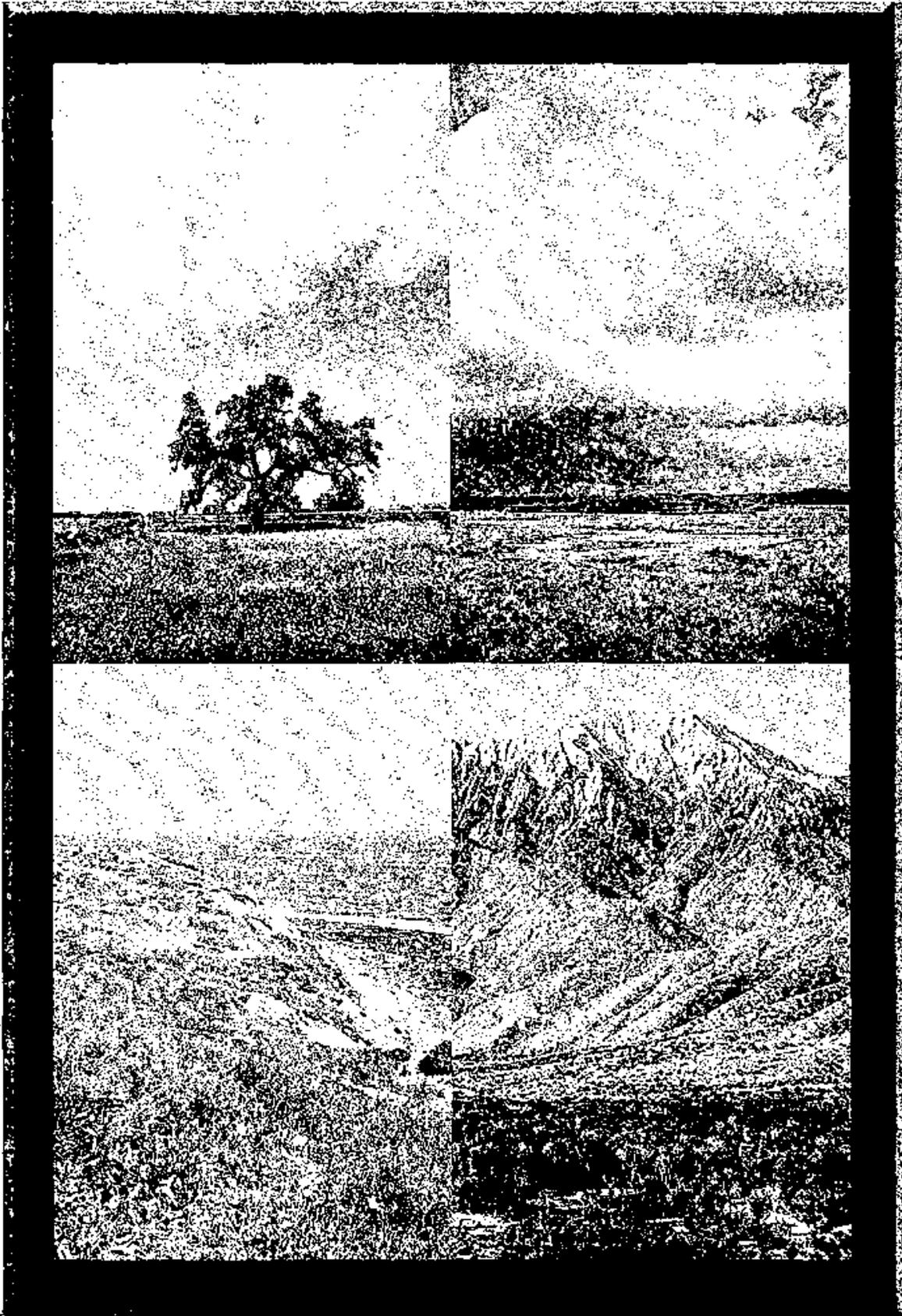
NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Placer County Board of Supervisors support the goals of:

- Securing adequate federal, state and local funding to assist preparation and implementation of NCCPs and HCPs;
- Coordinating NCCPs and HCPs with other federal, state and regional natural resource protection and permitting programs, including programs for adaptation to climate change;
- Facilitating the development and improving the effectiveness of NCCPs and HCPs; and
- Strengthening understanding of, and support for, NCCPs and HCPs among decision makers, stakeholders and the public.

California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund:
Fiscal Year 2010 Funding Request



589

March 2009

Attachment 2

REQUEST

The California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition requests that funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (the "Fund") increase from the \$73.8 million Fiscal Year 2008 level to \$125 million in Fiscal Year 2010. This will restore the Fund to approximately its fiscal 2001 level, adjusted for inflation, and provide much needed support to regional Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) in California and nationally. The California Habitat Planning Coalition consists of local agencies, conservation organizations and business organizations supporting regional Habitat Conservation Plans.

SUPPORTED BY

Local Agencies:

California State Association of Counties
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
Contra Costa County
East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
Placer County
Riverside County
Sacramento County
San Diego County
San Diego Association of Governments
San Joaquin County Council of Governments
Santa Clara County
Solano County Water Agency
Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
Yolo County

Conservation Organizations:

California Land Conservancy
Endangered Habitats League
Institute for Ecological Health
The Nature Conservancy

Business/Infrastructure:

Building Industry Association of San Diego County
California Natural Resources Group
PG&E Corporation
The Sauls Company

CALIFORNIA HCPs

Key Regional HCPs:

Yuba- Sutter HCP/NCCP
Yolo Natural Heritage Program
Western Riverside County MSHCP/NCCP
South Sacramento HCP
Solano HCP
Santa Clara Valley HCP/NCCP
San Joaquin County Multi-Species Conservation and Open Space Plan
San Diego North County MSCP / NCCP
San Diego MSCP - County Sub Area Plan
San Diego County Multiple Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (NCCP)
Placer County Conservation Plan
Natomas / Metro Air Park HCPs
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP
Coachella Valley MSHCP/NCCP
Butte Regional Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)



THE VALUE OF HCPs AND THE COOPERATIVE ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

HCPs Benefit Business and the Environment:

Regional Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) establish a coordinated process for permitting and mitigating the incidental take of endangered species. This process creates an alternative to the project-by-project approach. Rather than individually surveying, negotiating, and securing mitigation and permit coverage, proponents of public and private projects are covered by an umbrella regional permit. Habitat preservation, restoration and stewardship are conducted in a coordinated way by a local conservancy. Some benefits of regional HCPs are:

- Purchase, restore, and permanently protect large, interconnected and biologically rich blocks of habitat.
- Redirect money away from the process of permitting and toward the protection of resources.
- Improve regulatory certainty and permitting efficiency for local jurisdictions and the development community.
- Provide fair compensation to willing landowners for permanent protection of their land.

Federal Funds Spur Substantial State and Local Investments: The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Fund) provides grants to states for land acquisition consistent with approved HCPs, for assistance with preparation of HCPs and for other projects that help endangered species to recover. Funds for HCP land acquisition are by far the largest component. In California, the funds are subsequently granted to local agencies.

Major advantages of the Fund are that it leverages federal dollars and promotes regional HCPs. Grants from the Fund typically require a substantial non-federal match. The potential for grants from the Fund provides a key incentive for state and local agencies to develop and implement HCPs for the benefit of federally protected species.



Scott Hein

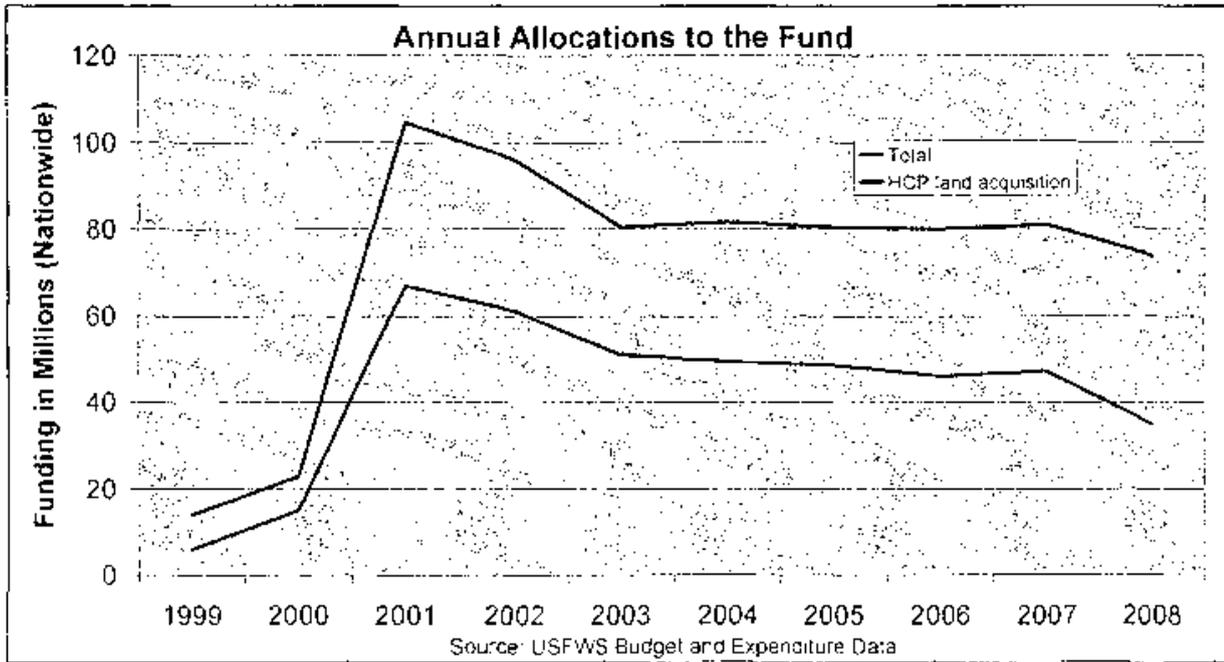


591

WHY THE FUND ALLOCATION NEEDS TO INCREASE

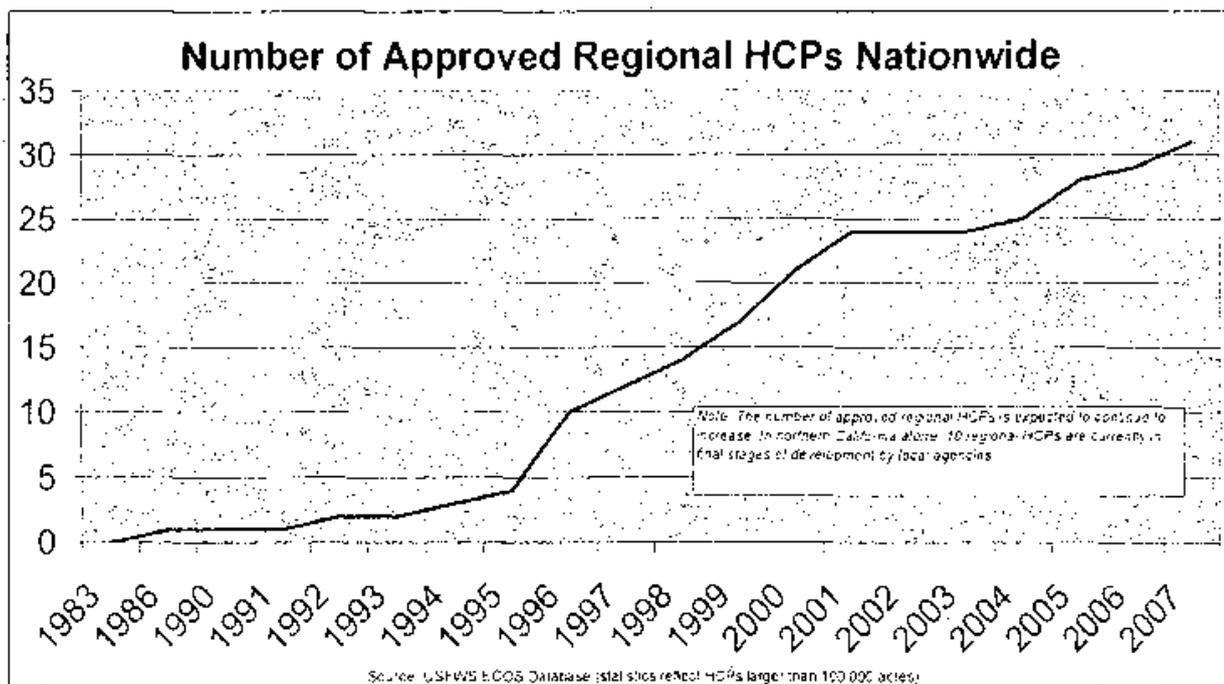
A) Funding Levels Have Declined In Recent Years

Allocations for the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund have steadily declined since FY2001, down to \$73.8 million in FY08 from a high of \$104.7 million, a decrease of 30%.



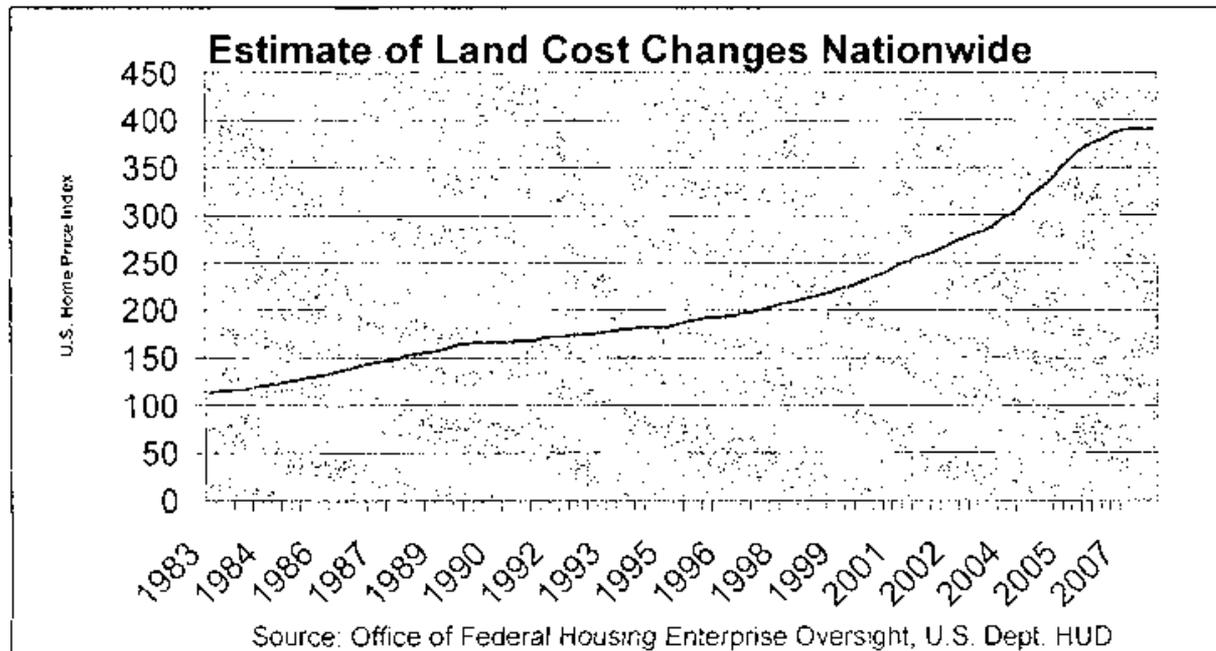
B) The number of Approved HCPs Continues to Grow

While funding has declined, the number of approved HCPs that need such funds has increased dramatically. The number of approved, large-scale HCPs in the country has grown from one in 1983 to more than 30 in 2008.



C) Land Conservation Costs Have Grown

While funding has declined, the costs of preparing and implementing HCPs have steadily increased. For example, land acquisition costs for many HCPs have almost doubled between 1997 - 2007.



INCREASING THE FUND TO \$125 MILLION IN FY 2010

The California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition proposes increasing the Fund to \$125 Million in FY 2010 in order to restore it to 2001 levels and adjust for inflation. To attempt to keep pace with the actual funding needs and the prolific growth in the number of regional HCPs, the Fund needs to increase more substantially in future years when Federal funds are less constrained. In FY 2008, grant applications from California alone eclipsed the total value of the Fund. Demand will multiply rapidly in the near future. Approximately ten regional HCPs are in the final stages of preparation in California and more are on the way in other states.



Scott Heil

CONSERVATION BENEFITS OF CALIFORNIA HCPs

Regional HCPs in California are a primary mechanism for the conservation of land and species in some of the fastest growing areas of the state. Collectively, regional HCPs in California will conserve almost 1.5 million acres of land. Conserved land will be restored, enhanced and managed for the benefit of the widest array of species found in the United States. Conserved land will also provide valuable open space to residents and visitors, protecting the natural beauty of these regions and providing numerous recreational opportunities.

Plan Name	Covered Species	Acres To Be Conserved*
Butte Regional Conservation Plan	41	n/a
Coachella Valley MSHCP/NCCP	27	240,000
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP	28	30,000
Natomas / Metro Air Park HCPs	22	9,000
Placer County Conservation Plan	33	60,000
San Diego County Multiple Habitat Conservation Open Space Plan NCCP	263	158,000
San Diego MSCP - County Sub Area Plan	85	98,000
San Diego North County MSCP / NCCP	63	107,000
San Joaquin County Multi-species Conservation and Open Space Plan	97	101,000
Santa Clara Valley HCP/NCCP	30	45,000
Solano HCP	36	30,000
South Sacramento HCP	40	58,000
Western Riverside County MSHCP/NCCP	146	500,000
Yolo Natural Heritage Program	64	n/a
TOTAL		1,436,000

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF CALIFORNIA HCPs

Regional HCPs in California provide coordinated, regional permits for public infrastructure and private development projects. These regional umbrella permits last 30 to 75 years, transfer authority to local government, and improve certainty of the permit process for project proponents. Regional HCPs in California are expected to permit projects with a cumulative value of \$1.6 trillion.



Plan Name	Regional Permits* Thru...	Est. Value of Covered Activities**
Butte Regional Conservation Plan	2041	n/a
Coachella Valley MSHCP/NCCP	2083	\$300 billion
East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP	2037	\$12 billion
Natomas / Metro Air Park HCPs	2053	\$18 billion
Placer County Conservation Plan	2061	\$115 billion
San Diego County Multiple Habitat Conservation Open Space Plan NCCP	2061	\$228 billion
San Diego MSCP - County Sub Area Plan	2047	\$118 billion
San Diego North County MSCP / NCCP	2060	\$104 billion
San Joaquin County Multi-species Conservation and Open Space Plan	2051	\$109 billion
Santa Clara Valley	2060	\$25 billion
Solano HCP	2040	\$12 billion
South Sacramento HCP	2061	\$45 billion
Western Riverside County MSHCP/NCCP	2079	\$500 billion
Yolo Natural Heritage Program	2041	n/a
TOTAL		\$1.6 trillion

* The term of regional permits is estimated for those HCPs in preparation.
 ** Assumes a value of \$1 million per acre for every acre of development that may be covered under the HCP.

EARLY SUCCESS IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY

The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund has been and will continue to be an important component of the implementation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) in Riverside County in southern California. Land conservation under the CVMSHCP is based on a partnership among local, state, and federal agencies and non-profit organizations. Nearly 65,000 acres has been acquired through this acquisition partnership since 1996 when the CVMSHCP was initiated. The Fund has played an important role in the acquisition of the 65,000 acres, having been part of the acquisition of 1,920 acres. Local, state, other federal and non-profit funds account for the acquisition of the other 63,080 acres to date. There remain approximately 163,340 acres to acquire under the CVMSHCP. Some of the completed acquisition projects supported by the Fund are briefly described below.

Preserving the Sand Dune Ecosystem: In two separate purchases, \$5,542,000 from the Fund were matched with \$5,558,680 in state and local funds to acquire 1,560 acres adjacent to existing preserves for the Coachella Valley Fringe Toed Lizard, helping to conserve the remaining active desert dunes in the Coachella Valley.



Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Recovery: \$1,896,485 from the Fund were matched with \$1,343,515 in state and local funds to acquire 100 acres of Peninsular Big Horn Sheep habitat adjacent to an approved development on the alluvial fans of the Santa Rosa Mountains in the City of La Quinta. The cooperative acquisition opened the door to additional conservation nearby.



Whitewater Canyon: The 260-acre Mackenzie Ranch property along the Whitewater River was acquired with \$535,000 from the Fund and \$2,196,000 in state and non-profit organization funds. The property contains the most extensive cottonwood-willow riparian forest in the CVMSHCP area and provides habitat for arroyo toad, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and desert tortoise.





California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition

A coalition of local agencies, conservation organizations and business organizations supporting regional Habitat Conservation Plans.

Contacts:

Institute for Ecological Health

409 Jardin Place
Davis, California 95616
Phone: 530-756-6455
Email: ieh@cal.net
Contact: John Hopkins

Holland and Knight

2099 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
Phone: 202-955-3000
Email: Michael.Galano@hklaw.com
Contact: Mike Galano

The Nature Conservancy

201 Mission Street, #400
San Francisco, California 94105
Phone: 415-608-1608
Email: Suneil_Thomas@TNC.org
Contact: Suneil Thomas