

SOLANO COUNTY WATER AGENCY



AGENDA HCP STEERING COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 21, 2008

TIME: 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

PLACE: Solano Irrigation District
508 Elmira Road
Vacaville, CA 95687

MEETING CANCELLED

Recommendation: Next meeting: *March 20, 2008*

If you have any questions please contact Chris Lee at (707-455-1105) or email at clee@scwa2.com.

Note: HCP text, Steering Committee Agenda materials and Meeting Notes can be found on the Agency's Website at www.scwa2.com.


S98M.HCP-Steering.Com-February.2008.agd.doc

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Solano HCP Steering Committee

FROM: Chris Lee, Supervising Environmental Scientist 

DATE: February 14, 2008

SUBJECT: Cancelled February 21st Steering Committee Meeting

The Solano HCP Steering Committee meeting for February 21 is cancelled. While we have been making progress with USFWS and DFG on the Draft Solano HCP, SCWA feels that there is still not enough new information to hold a Steering Committee Meeting this month.

SCWA met with USFWS and the Department of Fish and Game on January 29th. USFWS presented a preliminary list (not having consulted individual experts within USFWS) of species they wanted to remove from the HCP's Covered Species List. They want to remove 22 of the 71 species currently on the list. Most of these are Marsh and brackish water plants. Their preliminary reasoning is that they do not see the impacts to these species to include them or that there is not enough known about some of these species in order for them to make a determination on whether the conservation strategy the HCP proposes will be adequate to protect these plants. SCWA will look at their list and determine if there are real impacts to these species and come up with justification on keeping them on the list.

Some of these species may fall out of the HCP Covered Species list; however, they may still be addressed in the EIR for the HCP. DFG cannot issue a 2081 permit for Species of Concern or List 1A or B plants (which all of the USFWS proposed species to be dropped are); however, they do ask project proponents to discuss them in their CEQA documents. So even if some of the species drop out from the federal standpoint of the HCP, the EIR will still be able to cover them for CEQA purposes, assuming we have the appropriate conservation for those species in detail.

The HCP has had the option of allowing third-party applicants (developers) the ability to not utilize the HCP and try and strike up their own deal with the regulatory agencies if they so chose to. USFWS has objected to this as they feel that some projects would occur outside of their jurisdiction that may ultimately affect the HCP. Their example would be a project that may affect agricultural land, which could potentially affect Swainson's Hawk or Burrowing Owl, which may fall through the cracks of CEQA and affect the Conservation Strategy of the HCP. No other HCP has the option of allowing third-party applicants the ability to make their own deal. The Solano HCP is going to remove this option and require that all projects for third –parties within the jurisdictions of the Plan Participants be required to comply with the HCP.

There was a discussion on Implementation and Funding of the HCP, which largely focused on bringing agency staff up to speed on how we arrived at where we are today. We may need to revisit some of the monitoring and fees as we are now thinking of a 30 year permit instead of a 50 year one.

DFG is going to make a presentation on Goals, Objectives, Measures and Adaptive Management and Monitoring at the next HCP agency meeting on February 20th.

SCWA appreciates the Steering Committee's patience on the cancellation of previous meetings and looks forward to continued collaboration from all of the Stakeholders on the Solano HCP.