

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

MINUTES
May 2, 2016



MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority was called to order by Chairman Montanez at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, May 2, 2016, in the Board Room of the Riverside County Administrative Center, 4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, California, 92501.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Member Hewitt led the RCA Board Members and meeting attendees in a flag salute.

3. ROLL CALL - Taken by Rose Esparza, RCA Administrative Manager.

Board Members Present

Board Members Absent

<p>George Moyer, <i>City of Banning</i> Brenda Knight, <i>City of Beaumont*</i> Jeffrey Hewitt, <i>City of Calimesa</i> Tim Brown, <i>City of Canyon Lake</i> Eugene Montanez, <i>City of Corona</i> Clint Lorimore, <i>City of Eastvale*</i> Linda Krupa, <i>City of Hemet</i> Verne Lauritzen, <i>City of Jurupa Valley</i> Natasha Johnson, <i>City of Lake Elsinore</i> D. LaDonna Jempson, <i>City of Moreno Valley</i> Jonathan Ingram, <i>City of Murrieta</i> Kevin Bash, <i>City of Norco</i> David Starr Rabb, <i>City of Perris</i> Andy Melendrez, <i>City of Riverside</i> Crystal Ruiz, <i>City of San Jacinto</i> Maryann Edwards, <i>City of Temecula</i> Ben Benoit, <i>City of Wildomar</i> Kevin Jeffries, <i>Riverside County District I</i> Chuck Washington, <i>Riverside County District III</i> Ella Zanowic, <i>Riverside County District V (Alt. **)</i></p>	<p>Matt Liesemeyer, <i>City of Menifee</i> John Tavaglione, <i>Riverside County District II</i> John Benoit, <i>Riverside County District IV</i></p>
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* Arrived during roll call

**Alt. – Alternate Board Member

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4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Montanez called for public comments on items not listed on the agenda. There were no public comments.

5. BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Montanez called for any Board Member announcements. There were no announcements.

6. ADDITIONS/REVISIONS

There were no additions or revisions to the agenda.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 4, 2016

M/S/C (KRUPA/EDWARDS) to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2016 meeting of the RCA Board of Directors.

Ayes 19, Nays 0, Abstain 1 (ZANOWIC).

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

M/S/C (EDWARDS/INGRAM) to approve the Consent Calendar Agenda Item Nos. 8.1 and 8.2.

Ayes 20, Nays 0, Abstain 0

8.1 WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (MSHCP) LOCAL DEVELOPMENT MITIGATION FEE (LDMF) COLLECTION AND CIVIC/INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTION REPORT FOR MARCH 2016

Overview

This item is for the RCA Board of Directors to receive and file the Western Riverside County MSHCP LDMF Collection and Civic/Infrastructure Contribution Report for March 2016.

8.2 RESOLUTION NO. 2016-009 RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FOR ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY

Overview

This item is for the RCA Board of Directors to adopt Resolution No. 2016-009, *Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Authorizing the Acceptance of Grant Funds for Acquisition of Real Property*. The approval shall be conditional upon the Board's approval, in closed session, of the proposed purchase.

9. RESOLUTION NO. 2016-008, RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ADOPTING THE FISCAL YEAR 2017 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET

Overview

This item is for the RCA Board of Directors to adopt Resolution No. 2016-008, *Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Adopting the Fiscal Year 2017 Operating and Capital Budget*.

Honey Bernas, Director of Administrative Services, reported that Fiscal Year 2017 is RCA's thirteenth full year of operations and the proposed reflects conservative revenue estimates and limited appropriations in order to meet current commitments and obligations under the MSHCP.

Honey Bernas made reference to the "no surprises" rule in the MSHCP which is RCA's assurance from the Wildlife Agencies that there will not be any unpleasant surprises. RCA fiscal staff likes "surprises" so they adopted their own internal rule and aim for only "pleasant surprises" when it comes the budget and financial reports.

She presented an overall summary of the proposed FY 2017, showing comparisons to the FY 2015 actual revenue and appropriations, the FY 2016 adjusted budget and year-end projections estimated by staff, and the dollar and percentage change from the FY 2016 adjusted budget to the proposed FY2017 Budget. Although the FY 2016 Adjusted budget reflected an overall draw on the fund balance of \$680 thousand, the current projections indicate that the year will end with a surplus of

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\$524 thousand. She commended the RCA fiscal staff for the great job that they have done in consistently meeting the budget each and every year.

Total proposed revenue sources of \$27.8 million included Federal and State funds of \$3.5 million and \$2.6 million to fund four acquisitions. It also includes Development Mitigation Fees of \$11 million which represents a 2% increase over the Fiscal Year 2016 adjusted budget. The 2% increase is the CPI adjustment that the Board approved and will be in effect July 1, 2016. Measure A funds of \$3 million will be received next fiscal year. The proposed budget includes 12 land donations and one conservation easement with an approximate value of \$3.2 million.

The budget includes tipping fees from the County of Riverside in the amount of \$2.4 million and one contribution from Southern California Edison for a PSE project. Other proposed revenue sources include Flood Control fees of \$750 thousand dollars and Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee contributions of \$600 thousand.

Interest at \$130 thousand is estimated at 0.66% which is the current average rate. Also budgeted are infrastructure contributions of \$100 thousand and civic contributions of \$50 thousand.

The proposed budget reflects a 2% decrease in total appropriations, from \$28.3 million in FY2016 to \$27.8 million in FY2017.

The RCA has three programs: Operations, Land Management and Monitoring; and Land Acquisition Program. The proposed budget was prepared using the cost allocation assumptions endorsed by the RCA Board in 2007. RCA uses project accounting; therefore, all of the expenditures are charged directly to the project that is applicable to each of the three programs. She gave an example of timesheets and vendor invoices which are specifically coded to the project which benefited from the services.

General office expenditures that are not directly attributed to a project are allocated among the three programs based on Appendix B-5 of the Western Riverside County MSHCP, which outlines the overall funding program for the MSHCP for the first 25 years which is the acquisition period. The Plan anticipated that the acreage acquired at this time would be greater than the acreage acquired to date, as it did not account for inflation or the recession. Therefore, the cost allocations are based on the actual number of acres acquired to date. For FY2017, general offices expenses are being allocated as: 3% for Operations, 15% for Land Management and Monitoring and 82% for Land Acquisition. There is approximately \$700 thousand in the budget allocated using this approach, which represents only 2.5% of total appropriations.

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Salaries and Benefits reflect a 14% increase from FY2016. RCA is requesting the addition of two positions. The new positions include a Senior Real Property Agent and an Ecological Resources Specialist. Salaries also include regular step increases for those staff members that are not topped out in their current classification. Pay increases are allowed based on merit. There are no cost of living adjustments included in the budget. There is an \$86 thousand increase in budgeted benefits and a \$6 thousand reduction in leave buy down payouts.

The RCA has always maintained a small staff. Most of the services have been contracted out so that RCA can adjust as needed by reducing contracts rather than cutting staff. Management believes it would benefit RCA to have these two additional positions for three reasons: cost savings, a succession plan, and increased workloads. Honey Bernas reviewed the salary ranges for each new position and the cost savings that could be generated by RCA. She further explained the benefits of having in-house staff with the increased workload and providing expedited services to the public and Member Agencies that RCA serves. Next year's budgeted contract services are being reduced by \$150 thousand dollars to help offset the cost of the new positions based on anticipated savings from the new positions. Staff anticipates savings may be greater in future years, but allowed for some overlap for the recruitment and selection process and training.

Other appropriations are Land Purchases and Improvements of \$20.6 million that includes 20 properties: three previously committed land acquisitions, four federal and state funded acquisitions; and 13 potential acquisitions.

Honey Bernas continued with the summation of the summary. Staff is proposing \$27.8 million in revenue sources and appropriations. This is a balanced budget with no draw on fund balance. The budget includes \$2 million in contingency which is about 7% of total appropriations. There is \$500 thousand contingency for legal expenditures, and \$1.5 million contingency for potential property acquisitions. Staff projects \$30.6 million fund balance as of June 30, 2016 to carry forward into 2017. Of this amount, \$17.7 million is unrestricted general funds and \$12.9 million is restricted fund balance for capital acquisition purposes.

Honey Bernas then reviewed Exhibit A-2, Operating and Capital Budget by Program. The General Fund is comprised of the Operations and Land Management and Monitoring Programs. The Capital Project Fund is the Land Acquisition Program.

This presentation resembles the audited financial statement presentation in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Honey Bernas then reviewed Exhibit A-3, Contract Detailed-Appropriations by Category. Explaining that the FY2016 budget amount is displayed for comparison

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purposes and the contracts are appropriated and recorded in various expenditure categories as reflected in the exhibit. She explained that for legal services there is no requested increase for Best Best & Krieger. Their budget is \$770 thousand, plus a \$500 thousand contingency. Legal handles litigation, acquisitions, purchase and sale agreements, conservation easements, escrow and title issues, fee policies, audit reports, general policies, certificates of inclusion, and MSHCP interpretation. Capital Alliance Consulting, which is the governmental affairs contract, reflects an increase of \$2,500 dollars for FY2017. RCA's consultant took a 10% reduction in 2009 to help RCA weather the recession. All of RCA's other contractor are back up to their rates prior to that time with the exception of this contractor. The consultant advised that their rates will increase 3.7% increase, which is still 5% below the rate they charged in RCA in 2008. The contract amount for Real Property services was decreased by 15% due to the potential savings of \$100 thousand from the new position. Public outreach services reflect a small savings of \$180. RCA intended to bid the contract in 2016; however, the website updates and improvements provided in 2016 still required work and staff suggested extending the contract for one additional year. There is \$30 thousand decrease for the Federal Loan Program Expense Reimbursement contract which was not renewed. The proposed budget includes \$100 thousand for a possible nexus study update. That contract will be brought back should RCA decide to go forth with the study. Reserve Management increased by \$65 thousand as a result rate increases by at least \$33 thousand, including benefits, for eight Park Rangers. Additionally, the Natural Resources Manager has been dedicated to RCA for 75% of the time, and to the County for 25%. It has been RCA's goal that this position be dedicated 100% to RCA as the services are desperately needed and the workload will only continue to increase as the reserve is assembled. The Parks Department has agreed that this position will be dedicated 100% to RCA. The additional allocation will cost the RCA approximately \$32 thousand at the current rate. Billable rates for Park Rangers range from \$35-\$72/hour. Services for the Biological Monitoring Program reflect a \$12 thousand dollar (1%) increase as a result of a \$100 monthly increase to health benefits. This increases the health benefit to \$600 per month. Billable hourly rates for biologists range from \$18-\$54 per hour. Staff considered going out to bid for biological monitoring services in FY2017; however, in the spring it was learned that the Monitoring Program Administrator was leaving to take a job out of state. Changing the manager and the umbrella company in one year would be a lot to undertake in one year so staff recommends extending the contract for one more year before going out to bid. The \$3,000 increase for external auditors is a result of a 3% increase in hourly rates in accordance with the initial contract. This is the last year of a 5-year contract to perform annual financial audit and agreed-upon procedures. The contract for these services will be competitively bid in FY2017.

Honey Bernas concluded stating that the RCA Executive Committee and staff recommend that the RCA Board of Directors adopt Resolution No. 2016-008,

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Adopting the Fiscal Year 2017 Operating and Capital Budget, and offered to answer any questions.

Board Member Jempson asked how many current staff members are at RCA. Honey Bernas answered 11. She further asked if the cost of two positions that are being requested will be offset by any reduction in consultant or contractor services. Honey Bernas answered yes. Chairman Montanez said that was the goal and one of the questions asked by the Executive Committee when the increase in salaries was requested. He further stated that outsourcing is not always cost-effective and the control is not there. These two positions will be brought in house and will hopefully result in future savings of at least what is being expended on consultant services. Honey Bernas added that RCA will still need the services of the contractors, but the budget amounts will be lower. It is hoped that during times of recession, contracts could be reduced further and still retain the new positions.

Board Member Brown stated if asked if the amounts given were the base salaries of the two positions and what is the overhead associated. Honey Bernas responded yes and that the overhead is 39%. Board Member Brown stated it appears Dudek provides RCA with 300 hours per year based on the budgeted amount, and a full time person works over 2,000 per year. He asked if this is a bureaucracy creep or if RCA is just increasing staffing behind the guise, is RCA really going to use a staff person for 2,000 hours as opposed to replacing Dudek for the 300 hours they provided. With the new person coming onboard, RCA still has \$400 thousand allocated to Dudek, he thinks it would be critical to make this happen as soon as possible and try to avoid those additional expensive dollars. Board Member Brown asked for comments and an answer to his question regarding the bureaucracy creep and the extra hours that RCA is placing into the budget. Charlie Landry, Executive Director, stated that RCA staff has been kept at a minimal level. The new positions is being proposed after taking a very hard look at costs and services because RCA has weathered economic downturns by cutting contracts. The increase in hours is because this person is needed in-house full time. Board Member Brown asked if this person going to be strictly replacing the services that Dudek has been providing. Honey Bernas answered that they will also provide assistance to Laurie Correa, who is the Director of Reserve Management and Monitoring, and will help administer both of those programs. They will also be learning Laurie's job for succession. She stated, for clarification, that staff anticipates Dudek will provide 1,800 hours of service for FY2016 at a rate between \$80 and \$200 per hour. Board Member Brown said he did not think the math works; \$400 thousand divided by \$150 comes to between 200 and 300 hours. Dolores Reyna, Administrative Manager, commented that in 2015 Dudek's contract was \$400 thousand, but they were only paid \$205 thousand, so there were savings in 2015 from Dudek. Board Member Brown said that just magnified his question regarding the difference between the offset in hours between the two services. Dolores Reyna further stated that the new position is not

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going to do 100% of the work that Dudek is contracted to do, but they will partially take some of the work in the first year, and RCA's goal for future years is for that position to take more work and hopefully eliminating Dudek's contract. Board Member Brown said what he sees is 200 hours going to 2,000 hours, and he can't explain the delta. He said that he was not objecting, but he would just like to see RCA make the case that it needs the position. He's not objecting to the person, he's objecting to the math. Charlie Landry stated that there is a missing piece that this position will provide. RCA is not able to do all the things it would like to do, particularly biological analysis. RCA has been reluctant to have Dudek perform this type of work because it would be costly. There are additional internal requirements this position will fulfill. Management is aware that bureaucracy "creep" is a concern which is why RCA has not proposed increases previously. Honey Bernas stated that in 2015 Dudek provided 1,200 hours of work and for 2016 the projection is 1,800 hours of work. Board Member Brown said \$400 thousand divided by \$150 is about that. Honey Bernas said the new position, maximum pay, topped out, including benefits is \$120 thousand a year and last year RCA paid \$205 thousand. Board Member Brown said he is not objecting to savings, he just wants to make sure RCA does not want to have a person hired without a clear statement of work to perform that is useful to RCA. Honey Bernas stated that this new position will be very useful to RCA and will perform Joint Project Review, which will result in lower costs for property owners going through the process.

Board Member Jeffries said it does not surprise him that the first two to three comments are about hiring additional staff as that is always a little controversial. Most of his questions were answered. He figured Dudek at 1,200 hours for the year and that is only 23 hours a week that they are working for RCA, and the proposal is for a full-time employee to replace someone who is working 23 hours a week. He stated that only government will do that. He understood the future growing needs of RCA. Honey Bernas assured the Board that RCA has the work to keep a staff person busy full-time. Board Member Jeffries stated that he really appreciated RCA staff presenting a balanced budget. Board Member Jeffries said his concern was that RCA is going to see some short-term savings by changing out consultants, which he understands, but will assume long-term pension debt which is not being recognized. He stated that seldom is that calculation put into the burden calculation. Staff offered a burden of 39% on top of their hourly rate as employees. Once the long-term pension debts are calculated, it changes the number. With the pension obligation in California increasing at 20-30% over a handful of years, it's hard to see how this going be beneficial for RCA in the long run. He understands that it will be beneficial in the short run, which is his only heartburn. He further stated that he is not advocating staying with the Economic Development Agency's Real Estate division at their rates. He understood RCA's need to explore other avenues. He asked where RCA is at in terms of Information Technology (IT) and the programs that RCA utilizes. He noted that the County Hospital and LAFCO are, for the most

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part, removing themselves from the IT system. The Workforce Investment Board is also considering getting out of the County IT system someday. He asked if RCA is still tied to County IT or is RCA independent. Honey Bernas answered that RCA is somewhat tied in and somewhat pulling away. Roy Henderson has been exploring other options. Board Member Jeffries said that Roy Henderson has a really good understanding on how this all works. Roy Henderson, Chief of Technical Information, stated that the majority of RCA's services are currently provided by County IT. Since coming to RCA, Roy has significantly reduced its IT budget. Board Member Jeffries asked what the impact to RCA was when County IT reorganized its rates. He asked if RCA was one of the winners or the losers on the overall rate. Roy Henderson answered that RCA was a huge winner. Board Member Jeffries advised RCA to enjoy that moment. He further stated that he usually has heartburn over hiring more employers, but understands where RCA is going with this. He would prefer to still contract out so RCA could realize savings, but understands the challenge. Chairman Montanez said RCA would if the County was more affordable.

Board Member Melendrez asked how RCA determines whether an individual is a consultant or a contract will be put to bid through an RFP. He stated that even though the same consultant or contractor may be successful, he believes it is important that contracts are competitively bid on a regular basis. He stated that he is unclear of RCA's current policy regarding this, and suggested that clarification to the Board would be helpful.

M/S/C (INGRAM/RUIZ) to approve Resolution No. 2016-008, *Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Adopting the Fiscal Year 2017 Operating and Capital Budget.*

Ayes 19, Nays 1 (BROWN), Abstain 0

10. RECURRING CONTRACTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Overview

- 1) This item is for the RCA Board of Directors to approve the Recurring Contracts for Fiscal Year 2017; and
- 2) Authorize the RCA Executive Director, upon legal counsel review and approval, to execute said agreements on behalf of the RCA.

Honey Bernas, Director of Administrative Services, presented this item and indicated that the contracts were also discussed in the budget presentation. The Executive Committee and staff recommend seven recurring contracts for FY2017 totaling

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\$1.75 million, which represents an approximate 1.8% percent decrease from last fiscal year.

Board Member Melendrez suggested that staff place the contracts on a future agenda item for discussion. Charlie Landry suggested agendizing the matter for discussion mid-year. Board Member Melendrez concurred.

Board Member Brown reiterated his concern that \$350 thousand was still budgeted for contract services even with a new position. He hoped that the employee would be hired and trained as soon as possible so that the \$350 thousand budgeted for contract services would not be expended.

Chairman Montanez suggested that from a procedural standpoint, contracts should be agendized the meeting before the budget is presented as opposed to after the budget. The mid-year presentation will provide an opportunity to address any concerns.

M/S/C (EDWARDS/MOYER) to approve Recurring Contracts for Fiscal Year 2017.

Ayes 20, Nays 0, Abstain 0

11. BIOLOGICAL MONITORING PROGRAM WORK PLAN AND COST ESTIMATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Overview

This item is for the RCA Board of Directors to approve the Biological Monitoring Program Work Plan and Cost Estimate for Fiscal Year 2016-17.

Laurie Dobson Correa, Director of Reserve Management and Monitoring, presented this item. She explained that the MSHCP requires that a work plan and budget for the Monitoring Program be adopted annually.

The Plan requires monitoring of all 146 Covered Species at least once every 8 years, and a handful of species must be monitored more frequently. The MSHCP differs from most HCPs in that each species has an objective, both for conservation and for monitoring. The monitoring objectives are intended to document species locations in specific named Core Areas and, in some cases, density and reproduction. Monitoring program staff consists of an administrator, database manager, GIS technician, and lead and field biologists provided by the Santa Ana Watershed Association. In addition to surveying for all Covered species, the

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program is responsible for developing and adjusting survey protocols, developing survey design, training of staff, collecting, cataloging, checking and recording all species data and producing reports every year. Staff must be trained for covered species as a specific permit requirement. Currently there are 12 full years of species occurrence data on all conserved lands, which includes national forest, public quasi/public lands and all the land that RCA has acquired. The data collection is a big job in and of itself and that data is disseminated to the State of California Bios Program and to other reserve managers such as the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and State Wildlife Area land managers. Since RCA does surveys on their land, it is important the data gets back to them so that they may use it for their own management efforts.

SAWA proposes to increase MSHCP staff health benefits by \$100 per month, from \$500 to \$600, which so that all SAWA employees receive the same benefit. Since the new director came onboard about two years ago, he has been concerned about the equity between the two groups. There are two very distinct groups, and they have two different sets of benefits, job descriptions and pay rates. The total budget would be \$1,086,334, which is an increase of \$14,519 from last year.

Laurie Dobson Correa reviewed the surveys proposed for FY 2017. She reminded the Board that surveys are usually done on a calendar basis. They start in the spring and go through the fall. The surveys cross fiscal years, so it may appear that the surveys are repeats from last year, but they are actually a continuation of that survey. The surveys proposed FY2017 are Quino checkerspot butterfly and Delhi sands flower-loving fly which are required annually because their distribution is extremely limited and not enough is known about where the species actually are every year. Also surveyed will be the California gnatcatcher and riparian bids, which are federally listed species, along with raptors. RCA must document reproduction for all raptors that are covered. RCA is still trying to document turkey vulture reproduction and golden eagle. There are two golden eagle nests in conservation, and one sort of on the edge that the field manager collects incidentally. Burrowing owl monitoring is done every year in support of meeting the high objectives on burrowing owl breeding pairs in the core areas. The goal is 120 pairs and 22,000 and 21,000 thousand of the primary and secondary habitat before the objective is met and surveys can be suspended. The survey area is very large and many people are involved. It is RCA's goal to be able to suspend those surveys. Also included are hard to find reptiles, which RCA tends to add every year because they are hard to find. The two mountain king snakes tend to be secretive and difficult to find so monitoring staff look for them every year. Staff is hoping that the new Bautista acquisition will have both of those species. The previous property owner said that they are there, so biologists will be looking for them on the 2,800 acres. Staff will also survey for stream and pond associated species – arroyo toad, spadefoot toad and pond turtle. The small mammal trapping is done almost every year because the

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Plan covers five different small mammals over different core areas. Carnivore trapping is primarily done by remote cameras. The locations are rotated each year. This year the cameras have been in Calimesa. This is the first year that a mountain lion was seen on a wildlife camera. It was on the Kramer property in Calimesa, and staff is very happy about that. There are vegetation related surveys. Staff surveys for a large group of rare plants every year. The Plan covers 76 rare plants. The water dependent species are hard to do with low rainfall. Staff has tried to do fairy shrimp surveys for the last four years, but there has not been enough rainfall that allows the water to stand long enough for the cysts to hatch. Staff will repeat the effort again and hope for more rain this year. The Engelmann, which only occur in the Santa Rosa Plateau and a small number in the southwest multi-species reserve, will be surveyed for. There will also be some overall vegetation community monitoring, which gives biologist ways to track whether the communities are changing; whether they are degrading or improving provides a baseline for staff to measure habitat quality. She asked if there were any questions.

Board Member Edwards asked if field biologists change locations for security and monitoring. Laurie Correa answered that biologist cover travel all over the reserve. Sometimes the biologists will go back to locations where they previously found species, and will sometimes expand on a survey area or include new areas. The biologists are basically all over the western Riverside County. RCA relies on other agencies for some areas. For the San Bernardino National Forest, RCA relies on U.S.G.S survey work because they are already out there. For the San Jacinto River, SAWA's non-MSHCP group is very heavily involved in Least Bells vireo monitoring. The Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District is very involved in Santa Ana sucker work. RCA relies on those entities to report their data so RCA does not need crews out in those areas. Monitoring staff rotates over most of western Riverside County.

M/S/C (ZANOWIC/EDWARDS) to approve Biological Monitoring Program Work Plan and Cost Estimate for Fiscal Year 2017.

Ayes 20, Nays 0, Abstain 0

12. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

12.1 Loan Program

Charles Landry, Executive Director, expressed staff's appreciation and thanks to the Riverside Monday Morning Group who met with the Congressional delegation, Department of Interior, and others in Washington, D.C, regarding issues that affect Riverside County and RCA. Those issues included the loan program and RCA's Section 6 request for the upcoming year. RCA is requesting \$2 million, which is the

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maximum that can be requested. The Congressional delegation was asked to re-introduce the Stand-alone loan bill. RCA is also trying to include loan language within the new version of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), which Congress is looking at now. Additionally, RCA received a letter from Congressman Calvert to Dan Ashe, Director of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in support of RCA's Section 6 request. Charlie Landry expressed his appreciation for Congressman Calvert's assistance.

12.2 Update on Fee Credit and Waiver Policy

Charles Landry, Executive Director, stated that after receiving the Board's direction at the April meeting, staff began rewriting the policy. Staff received a lot of feedback from the RCA Board, Executive Committee, Jonathan Ingram and the Cities of Hemet and Murrieta. Staff is following the guidance received from the Board and simplifying the policy so that it is easily understood, yet provides adequate guidance for Member Agencies. This policy will be taken back to the Executive Committee in two weeks and to the Board of Directors thereafter.

11. LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

Charlie Landry, Executive Director, reported that at the last RCA Board of Directors meeting, reserve acreage was reported at 52,955 acres. Since that time, RCA acquired two additional properties, the Soboba Donation Phase 2 and a Flood Control easement in Temecula Creek. The properties totaled approximately 140 acres, bringing the reserve to 53,095 acres. The Soboba donation was interesting because the Soboba tribe was moving forward with their fee to trust action in the vicinity of the City of San Jacinto. As they went through that action, RCA contacted the tribe to inform them that their fee to trust action would create a hole in the MSHCP. Through much consultation with the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians Tribe and Department of Interior, an agreement was reached wherein the tribe would donate 125 acres to RCA, which would make the MSHCP whole. Board Member Edwards asked how RCA found out about the possibility that there would be a void caused by the fee to trust action. Charlie Landry said that RCA learned about the fee to trust action due to the publicity and the City of San Jacinto also informed RCA of this action. RCA and the Soboba tribe immediately began consultation and involved the Department of Interior to solve the issue. Board Member Edwards commented that part of RCA's challenge has been finding out when these type of actions are taking place, instead of after the fact when it's too late, and RCA has to try to go back and make up for the deficit.

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12. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Chairman Montanez asked if any Board Members had items for next meeting. Board Member Brown requested a copy of the land use policy for lands that are owned by RCA. He requested that a discussion on the Vinci property be placed on the June agenda. He would like to know RCA's position on what is being proposed and where RCA thinks this might go. Chairman Montanez asked if there was a link to the land use policy on RCA's website. Staff was unsure and Chairman Montanez said that RCA staff will get back to him on that request. Chairman Montanez stated that he was not familiar with the property Board Member Brown was referring to. He asked what the item was and how it related to RCA. Board Member Brown deferred to Charlie Landry. Charlie Landry advised that it is property that is located in the sphere of influence of the City of Lake Elsinore. The property is adjoining the City of Canyon Lake. He believes the City of Lake Elsinore took action regarding the property last month. Chairman Montanez asked if it would be proper to bring the matter to the RCA and asked if RCA has an issue with the matter. Charlie Landry answered that there is no project yet, so nothing has come to RCA. Chairman Montanez asked if it is closed or open session item. Charlie Landry deferred that question to General Counsel. Steve DeBaun, General Counsel, replied that he had not reviewed the item and, therefore, could not make a determination. He recommended that he be given the information regarding the property, and then he will determine if it is appropriate to agendize the matter. Charlie Landry stated that it's a proposed annexation. Chairman Montanez asked Board Member Brown to meet with legal counsel and staff after the meeting so they are aware of what the subject is. Board Member Brown reiterated that he would like this issue brought forward next month to at least to state where RCA stands on the matter officially. Chairman Montanez said his question is whether the item is a closed or open session matter.

13. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS:

13.1 CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8

Negotiating Parties: RCA – Executive Director of Designee

Under Negotiation: Price/Terms

Item	Assessor Parcel No.	Property Owners
1	413-480-001 413-480-002 413-480-003 413-480-004 413-480-005	Live Oak Canyon (Thomas Arthur Hudson, Redlands Conservancy, Riverside Land Conservancy)

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2	900-060-013 900-060-016 900-060-032 900-060-033	Southwest Mesa Partners, LLC
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After Closed Session, the meeting was reconvened. There were no announcements from Closed Session.

16. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other items before the RCA Board, Chairman Montanez adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m. The next meeting of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday, June 6, 2016, at 12:30 p.m., at the County of Riverside Administrative Center, Board Room, 4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, California

Prepared by:



Rose Esparza
Administrative Manager

Respectfully submitted:



Honey Bernas
Clerk of the Board