

STEPHENS' KANGAROO RAT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT



JULY 2007 THROUGH JUNE 2008

**SUBMITTED TO:
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

**PREPARED BY:
RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY**

**STEPHENS' KANGAROO RAT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN
ANNUAL REPORT**

Pursuant to Section III.A.1.e(2) of the Implementation Agreement for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan (SKR HCP), reporting information for the period of July 2007 through June 2008 is provided and set forth in the following attachments:

Attachment A

Indicates the amount of contributions from the Parties toward the total funding requirement, which have been received by the Agency during the previous year and cumulatively since commencement of this Agreement.

Attachment B

Identifies the amount of occupied Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) habitat which has been disturbed within the Core Reserves during the previous year and the amount and location of mitigation which has been provided.

Attachment C

Sets forth the amount and location of suitable habitat and SKR occupied habitat, which has been acquired during the previous year.

Attachment D

Summarizes the activities of the Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee (RMCC) during the previous year, including management activities within each core reserve.

Attachment E

Presents financial information concerning the status of the endowments for Core Reserves that receive financial assistance from the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA). The information includes revenue, expenses, fund balances, management plans, and budgets.

Attachment F

Estimates the current number of acres of SKR occupied habitat contained within the Core Reserves.

Attachment G

Evaluates problems encountered in the implementation of the HCP and corrective measures undertaken or planned to address those problems.

ATTACHMENT A

RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
SKR MITIGATION FEE COLLECTIONS

MEMBER AGENCY	A	B
Corona	\$1,000.00	\$61,215.00
Hemet	\$5,634.00	\$2,854,659.40
Lake Elsinore	\$42,912.00	\$2,720,979.17
Moreno Valley	\$47,450.00	\$2,740,781.15
Murrieta	\$90,260.00	\$2,187,559.95
Perris	\$77,783.00	\$1,960,976.28
Riverside	\$129,401.50	\$7,011,787.89
Temecula	\$57,435.00	\$2,832,607.02
County of Riverside	\$259,360.00	\$28,952,440.26
Audit Adjustment*	\$48,365.50	\$48,365.50
Total	\$759,601.00	\$51,371,371.62

Notes:

Column A = SKR Mitigation Fees collected during FY07/08.

Column B = SKR Mitigation Fees collected since inception of the SKR program (11/89) through June 2008.

No contributions of funds have been received by the RCHCA from other parties, including the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the California Resources Agency or the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG).

* Audit Adjustment accounts for additional funds collected for FY 06/07 that were not realized in our accounting until FY 07/08.

ATTACHMENT B**AMOUNT OF SKR OCCUPIED HABITAT
DISTURBED WITHIN THE CORE RESERVES**

The RCHCA distributed surveys to all parties responsible for managing lands within the SKR reserves in order to assist the RCHCA in providing the most accurate information in the Annual Report. In addition to the RCHCA input, the following were asked to complete surveys: Metropolitan Water District (MWD), CDFG, BLM, University of California at Riverside, State of California Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Riverside Park and Recreation Department, and the Reserve Manager at Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve (SWRCMSR).

In an effort to determine habitat disturbed other than by wildfire, the survey asked for the amount of habitat disturbed, the circumstances surrounding the disturbance, the method of notification and parties notified, and an accounting of any remedial actions that were taken.

Survey responses were received from the following:

- RCHCA for their reserve lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak
- MWD for their reserve lands at Lake Mathews
- Reserve Manager at SWRCMSR
- BLM for their lands at Steele Peak and Potrero ACEC
- California Department of Parks and Recreation for their lands at Lake Perris State Recreation Area

Based on the information provided in the survey responses, there were no reports of disturbance.

ATTACHMENT C

**AMOUNT AND LOCATION OF SUITABLE
SKR OCCUPIED HABITAT ACQUIRED**

No land acquisitions were made by the RCHCA during this reporting period.

San Jacinto/Lake Perris Core Reserve

CDFG exchanged a parcel of land that was a part of the San Jacinto/Lake Perris Core Reserve for land that was located outside of the Reserve. The RCHCA, USFWS and CDFG are working together to refine those management practices that will be most beneficial to the SKR and completing the documentation required under the HCP and Implementation Agreement (IA). The resulting information will be included in the FY 08-09 SKR HCP Annual Report.

ATTACHMENT D**ACTIVITIES OF THE RESERVE MANAGERS
COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

The RMCC met three times during this reporting period. The meeting scheduled for January 24, 2008, was canceled due to scheduling conflicts and lack of attendance. Attendees at the meetings generally included RCHCA staff and representatives from CDFG, USFWS, BLM, Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District (RCRPOSD), Riverside City Parks, SWRCMSR, Motte Rimrock, San Jacinto, Lake Perris, Steele Peak, Potrero, Sycamore Canyon and Lake Mathews reserves. The meeting minutes detail those present at each meeting.

The focus of the RMCC continues to be the implementation component of the SKR HCP as it pertains to data collection, associated mapping, development of reserve management and monitoring plans, and available management tools to assist the reserve managers in efficiently and effectively managing for SKR. The RMCC continues to discuss issues including budgets/funding, current research, monitoring, labor resources available for reserve management, reserve security including signage, illegal dumping, trespass/OHV use and coordinated response by law enforcement, wild fire, and weed abatement. It is anticipated that these items will continue to be agenda items for discussion. The RMCC meetings are the appropriate venue to facilitate discussion among the USFWS, CDFG, RCHCA, and the Reserve Managers.

During the FY 02/03 reporting period, the RMCC membership agreed to participate in a SKR monitoring program developed upon recommendations from San Diego State University. The matter was presented to the RCHCA Board for their consideration and was unanimously supported with the caveat that the USFWS and CDFG would endorse the methodology in writing. The endorsement was received from USFWS and CDFG. Plans progressed toward a monitoring program for SKR that strove for consistency and conformity among monitoring entities. The RCHCA contracted with DUDEK and Associates, Inc., to develop a protocol and to initiate monitoring on RCHCA owned lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak. Following discussion with the RCHCA, in order to achieve consistency and conformity, the RCHCA adjusted the protocol. The protocol anticipated trapping for three nights on each grid, four times per year. The third trapping session conducted by Dudek for the RCHCA was delayed because the permission to allow the permitted consultant to PIT tag was withheld by the USFWS. As a result, the protocol was again adjusted to extend the three nights for each session to five nights. Four sessions of trapping were completed on most of the grids. Unable to reach concurrence on an acceptable protocol, the RCHCA suspended the monitoring program on their lands. They turned their attention to establishing a protocol to monitor for presence/absence across all reserves in order to gain a better understanding of the

habitat areas and amount of land occupied by SKR. Monitoring continued on some of the reserves, but the coordinated reserve-wide effort was abandoned.

The period of this report saw considerable Management Plan activity. The plan adopted by the RCHCA Board of Directors on June 21, 2007, that covered RCHCA owned lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak reserves was shared at the RMCC meeting in July. SWRCMSR is nearing completion of their management plan. BLM is working on the Revision to their South Coast Resource Management Plan. Sycamore Canyon issued a Request for Proposal for the preparation of an update to their management plan. While only Sycamore Canyon, Motte-Rimrock, and the RCHCA for their lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak are managed consistent with adopted management plans, progress is being made in updating existing plans and adopting new ones.

The period of the report also saw an increase in management activity at several reserves. A Natural Resources Manager was hired for Lake Mathews and Steele Peak reserves. While the SKR HCP anticipated that the RCHCA owned lands at Lake Mathews would be turned over to BLM for ownership and management under the consolidated land exchange, because this never came to fruition, the RCHCA Board of Directors adopted a budget to fund management efforts on RCHCA owned lands at these reserves. SWRCMSR completed their Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) which, when approvals are completed, will allow them to undertake management efforts that will include controlled burns. Increased and improved fencing, weed abatement, and mowing are some of the management efforts carried out at the various reserves.

The minutes that follow reflect an accounting as it pertains to SKR reserve management and related issues. The meetings have been structured so that the minutes report the status of SKR management and reflect the information provided regarding each individual reserve.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee

MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 26, 2007
9:00 a.m.

County Administrative Center – CAC
Conference Room 12A
4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, CA 92501

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by Gail Barton (in lieu of Ron Baxter), Chairperson, and continued as follows:

1. Roll Call – Self-Introductions:

Name	Reserve
Edith Allen	UCR
Gail Barton	RCHCA Staff
Mike Bennett	BLM, Palm Springs
Ken Halama	Motte Reserve
Karlene Hernandez	RCHCA Staff
Greg Hill	BLM, Palm Springs
Earl Lauppe	CDFG
Brian Loew	Chairman, Reserve Managers Committee
Joseph Messin	Motte Reserve
Christine Moen	Southwest Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve
Scott Sewell	CDFG
Art Tracey	BLM, Palm Springs

Gail reported that at the last meeting Mark Pavelka made a comment that he would like to see the RMCC meetings be more productive. Gail stated that she agrees with Mark's comment. Therefore, she reviewed the Roles and Responsibilities of the RMCC Committee as outlined in the SKR HCP and distributed copies of the Roles and Responsibilities to those Committee members in attendance. She reviewed the hand-out with the Committee and she stated that it will be her goal to bring this committee back in line with this hand-out to ensure the efficiency of the Committee.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 26, 2007

The minutes of the April 26, 2007, meeting were presented for approval.

MOTION to approve the minutes as presented: Christine Moen

SECOND: Earl Lauppe

Motion Approved

Gail distributed copies of the "Roles and Responsibilities" of the RMCC Committee to all in attendance.

3. Public Comment

No comments were offered.

4. Update on SKR Monitoring Program

▶ **Status of trapping and tagging**

Gail Barton gave an update on the SKR monitoring program. She stated that the RCHCA has completed one full year of trapping at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak Reserves. She also stated that she is not sure, at this time, if the trapping will continue as it has for the past year or if the program will be altered for the next year. Gail will give another update at the next RMCC meeting.

Earl Lauppe stated that trapping is being done at Potrero.

Joseph Messin reported that spring and summer trappings have been done this year at the Motte Reserve. He stated that he tries to do them in conjunction with other trappings that are being done.

5. Motte Reserve Research Proposal

► Presentation by Ken Halama

Ken Halama stated that Edie Allen (from UCR) is proposing a research project at the Motte-Rimrock Reserve that involves habitat restoration and the preservation of habitat.

Ken reported that the Motte-Rimrock Reserve is a 715 acre area, located near Perris.

Ken discussed the invasion of non-native grasses across western Riverside County.

Ken and Edie discussed the Reserve and what is being proposed in order to restore habitat to the Reserve. Edie discussed the forms of control that can be utilized to assist in the restoration of habitat. The method she would like to use, and has used at Johnson Ranch is called "solarization". This is done by scraping the vegetation from the surface of the ground and then moistening the ground. After the ground is moistened, a heavy black plastic is placed down on top of it for a period of six weeks. Solar radiation heats the plastic to approximately 55 degrees Celsius (100+ degrees Fahrenheit), killing everything for several inches under the ground. Then the area is re-seeded and allowed to grow and go through the natural restoration process.

Edie thanked Ken Halama for his support of this project. She stated that she and Ken are pursuing funding for this project. Until funding is secured, they will be doing the project using a minimal amount of money.

Christine Moen suggested that Ken contact Samantha at USFWS for some possible assistance with funding.

Gail Barton asked the Committee members if they support this project.

All members responded "yes". They commended Ken and Edie for taking this project on.

Gail stated that the RCHCA is in support of the project as well.

Christine suggested that they use CDF crews for the mowing and raking of the land.

Edie stated that there will be some pre-treatment monitoring, as well as post-treatment monitoring.

6. Distribution of RCHCA Approved SKR Management Plan for RCHCA Lands in Lake Mathews and Steele Peak Reserves

Gail Barton stated that the RCHCA Board has approved a SKR Management Plan for RCHCA managed lands at the Lake Mathews and Steele Peak Reserves. The plan was developed by DUDEK. Copies of the Plan (on disk) were distributed to all Committee members.

Gail stated that along with approval of the SKR Management Plan for Lake Mathews and Steele Peak, the RCHCA Board has approved a budget for FY 2007-2008 which includes a Natural Resources Manager position, along with fencing for various reserves.

Gail reported that the RCHCA hopes to have a Natural Resources Manager on board by the end of the year.

7. Reserve Manager Reports

Gail Barton stated that she has prepared a survey that she would like each Reserve Manager to complete and return to her at their earliest convenience. Copies of the survey were distributed to each Reserve Manager in attendance. Gail stated that the survey will assist her with completing the RCHCA's Annual Report as it pertains to the RMCC.

- a. **Steele Peak:** Gail Barton stated that from an RCHCA standpoint, we will be installing some new fencing and gates on the Reserve.
- b. **Potrero/San Jacinto:** Scott Sewell reported that a portion of Potrero is still occupied and managed by Lockheed. He also stated that when the Esperanza fire burned through the Reserve, major damage was done to the Reserve's habitat; however, habitat is slowly beginning to return to the Reserve.

Scott stated that they have two game wardens that patrol the Reserve regularly.

The Reserve is still experiencing problems with OHV trespass, etc.

- c. **Sycamore Canyon:** No report was given.
- d. **Lake Mathews:** Earl Lauppe stated that he doesn't feel there is anything new happening at the Lake Mathews Reserve. Because of unscheduled burns earlier this year, Earl stated that it won't be necessary for them to schedule prescribed burns any time in the near future.

Earl stated that the presence of the individual they have patrolling the Reserve at Lake Mathews has made a significant difference on the amount of illegal OHV use and trespass on the Reserve.

- e. **Lake Skinner:** Christine Moen stated that there is not a lot going on at Lake Skinner at this time. Their primary focus right now is the completion of their Management Plan, which they hope to have complete and in place within the next month or two.

Brian Loew stated that they are working on replacing the existing offices on the Reserve. He stated that the project, as a whole, will come in under what they originally estimated the cost to be. He reported that the Reserve Managers Committee (RMC) is working with MWD to acquire a spare modular building that that MWD was planning to surplus. The RMC is working to acquire the building, modify the structure to accommodate a shower, as well as make the building ADA compliant.

Brian stated that Lake Skinner previously had an interpretive program that they had to terminate due to funding issues. However, MWD has offered to step in and provide interpretation using their own staff and volunteers. Brian stated they hope to have this program back up and running this fiscal year.

- f. **Motte Reserve:** Ken Halama reported that Joseph Messin has been doing a great job trapping. He stated that Joseph does the trapping alone, for six consecutive nights. He has been gathering good data from the trappings that have been done.
- g. **San Jacinto:** See "b" above.

h. **Lake Perris:** No report was given.

8. Other Matters

a. **BLM Plan Revision:** Greg Hill stated that he would like to be placed on the next RMCC meeting agenda in order to discuss a “plan revision” the BLM is doing. He stated that the BLM will be updating their South Coast Resource Management Plan. He distributed a hand-out from a PowerPoint presentation that briefly reviews their steps. He stated that the BLM has not yet come out with a “Notice of Intent”. It should be published in the next month or so and will kick off the official start of the planning process and public notification. Greg stated that for the Reserve Managers, the most important thing for them is to think about how their respective agencies, or the RCHCA, might want to participate as they will be inviting agencies to be cooperators in this.

9. Election of Chairperson for next RMCC Meeting

The Committee elected Gail Barton as chairperson for the next meeting.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Karlene Hernandez
Recording Secretary

RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee

MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 25, 2007
9:00 a.m.

County Administrative Center – CAC
Conference Room 12A
4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, CA 92501

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m. by Gail Barton, Chairperson, and continued as follows:

1. Roll Call – Self-Introductions:

Name	Reserve
Gail Barton	RCHCA Staff
Ron Baxter	Riverside County Parks and Open Space District
Ken Halama	Motte Reserve
Karlene Hernandez	RCHCA Staff
Greg Hill	BLM, Palm Springs
Earl Lauppe	CDFG
Carolyn Syms Luna	RCHCA Executive Director
Christine Moen	Southwest Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve
Chris Moorhouse	Sycamore Canyon Reserve

2. Approval of Minutes from July 26, 2007

The minutes of the July 26, 2007, meeting was presented for approval.

MOTION to approve the minutes as presented: Christine Moen

SECOND: Ken Halama

Motion Approved

3. Public Comment

No comments were offered.

4. Update on SKR Monitoring Program

▶ **Status of trapping and tagging**

Gail Barton reported that there is not a lot, from the RCHCA's perspective, to report at this time regarding the status of trapping and tagging. She stated that the program has been suspended at this time. She stated that we are looking at going out and conducting a "presence/absence" type survey, similar to ones that have been done in the past. The first step will be to define the protocol.

Gail Barton stated that the RCHCA has interviewed individuals for the Natural Resources Manager position and has selected an individual whom they think will be a real asset to the RCHCA and the Lake Mathews/Steele Peak reserves. We hope to have the new Manager on board very soon.

5. Presentation by BLM on Update to the South Coast Resource Management Plan

▶ **Presentation by Greg Hill**

Greg Hill distributed copies of the Federal Register Notice of Intent to prepare a Resource Management Plan Revision and Associated Environmental Impact Statement for the South Coast Planning Area. He also distributed a map that shows the South Coast Resource Management Plan Planning Area. He stated that the heavy blue line on the map depicts the planning area and the yellow areas indicate BLM lands.

Greg stated that the BLM will be holding Public Scoping Meetings during the first two weeks of December. Two meetings will be held during the first week of December in San Diego County. During the second week of December, there will be one meeting held in Temecula and one in Santa Clarita.

Greg asked everyone to think about the idea of "cooperative agency status". He stated that the BLM will be sending out letters that will be sent to other government agencies, local government, along with all tribes that will invite participation in the planning process. If an agency, local government, or tribe accepts the invitation that would make them a planning partner.

As an orientation, Greg stated there are two divisions to his office: 1) California Desert Conservation Area, which includes most of Riverside County; 2) South Coast Resource Area. The South Coast Resource Area encompasses approximately 137,000 acres of land. The California Desert Conservation Area encompasses approximately 10 million acres of land.

Greg reported that the original RMP was done in 1994 and covers two types of land: 1) surface acres; and 2) subsurface acres.

BLM will continue with how the plan was originally set up with four management areas. They are: San Diego County, Riverside/San Bernardino Counties, Beauty Mountain, and the Los Angeles/Orange County Management Area.

Greg reported that one of the primary reasons for the update to the South Coast Resource Management Plan is because the Plan anticipated the Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) which had not yet been completed. Now that the HCP's are in place, BLM wants to ensure consistency with local land-use planning.

The emphasis of the updated Plan will be "habitat management".

Greg discussed the timeline of the study and stated that the target date for completion is December 2009.

Greg stated that the cities can begin submitting comments to him regarding the BLM's plan at any time.

6. Reserve Manager Reports

Gail Barton stated that Mark Pavelka recently posed the following question to the RMCC: "What has been done on your land over the past five years in terms of monitoring and our habitat management to benefit the SKR?"

Gail reported that the answer to Mark's questions may be "nothing, that nothing has been done".

- a. **Steele Peak:** Greg Hill reported that to answer Mark's question, no homes have been allowed to be constructed on the lands at Steele Peak and that no real management has been undertaken.

Gail Barton stated that on the RCHCA portion of the Reserve, some monitoring has been done and fencing has been installed.

- b. **Potrero/San Jacinto:** Earl Lauppe reported that some recent monitoring has been going on. CDFG is attempting to control the OHV and other illegal uses on the Reserve. SKR monitoring is currently being done.

Carolyn Syms Luna asked Earl if he would provide her with a copy of the SKR monitoring report.

Greg Hill reported that there has been no real activity recently at Potrero ACEC.

- c. **Sycamore Canyon:** Chris Moorhouse reported that he is not aware of any SKR monitoring going on at Sycamore Canyon Reserve at this time.
- d. **Lake Mathews:** Gail Barton reported that, from the RCHCA's perspective, some current monitoring has been done. She stated that fire (controlled burns, as well as unplanned burns) have helped the SKR population on the Reserve.
- e. **Lake Skinner:** Christine Moen stated that she continues to work on the draft management plan for the Reserve. She also continues to work with CDFG on Vegetation Management Plans (VMP). She reported that in the last six months they have done some mowing in an effort to assist the SKR population on the Reserve.
- f. **Motte Reserve:** Ken Halama reported that they have been monitoring consistently and have been adhering to the Diffendorfer and Deutschman protocol.
- g. **San Jacinto:** Earl Lauppe reported that over the past few years mowing has been done; however, no mowing has been done this year due to the extremely dry conditions at San Jacinto.
- h. **Lake Perris:** No report was given.

7. Schedule of Meetings for 2008

The 2008 meeting schedule was distributed to all.

Gail Barton distributed copies of the RMCC Guidebook to everyone in attendance. The Guidebook was developed as a tool for the Committee members to refer to, when needed.

8. Election of Chairperson for next RMCC Meeting

Ron Baxter volunteered to chair the next meeting.

9. Recommended Agenda items for next RMCC Meeting

Committee members will review the "Committee's Responsibilities and Roles" from the RMCC Guidebook and get back to Gail regarding any agenda items they may have for the next meeting.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

Karlene Hernandez
Recording Secretary

RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee

MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, May 1, 2008
9:00 a.m.

County Administrative Center – CAC
Conference Room 12B
4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, CA 92501

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Ron Baxter, Chairperson, and continued as follows:

1. Roll Call – Self-Introductions:

Name	Reserve
Gail Barton	RCHCA Staff
Ron Baxter	Riverside County Parks and Open Space District
Mike Butler	Sycamore Canyon Reserve
Karlene Hernandez	RCHCA Staff
Greg Hill	BLM, Palm Springs
Ken Kietzer	Lake Perris
Eddy Konno	CDFG
Earl Lauppe	CDFG
Joseph Messin	Motte-Rimrock Reserve
Christine Moen	Southwest Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve
Mark Pavelka	USFWS
Wendy Picht	MWD
Holly Roberts	BLM, Palm Springs
Brian Shomo	RCHCA/Lake Mathews Reserve
Alisa Sramala	Sycamore Canyon Reserve
Art Tracey	BLM

2. Approval of Minutes from October 25, 2007

The minutes of the October 25, 2007, meeting was presented for approval.

Greg Hill stated that on Page 2, 9th paragraph, the target date for completion should be December 2009, rather than 2008.

MOTION to approve the minutes with the above correction: Greg Hill

SECOND: Gail Barton

Motion Approved

3. Public Comment

No comments were offered.

4. Update on SKR Monitoring Program

► **Status of trapping and tagging**

Gail Barton reported that the RCHCA is working with DUDEK in an effort to update its contract for trapping and tagging.

Earl Lauppe reported that he believes some trapping/monitoring is currently being done at Potrero.

Ron Baxter also stated that trapping is being done this week in the Anza area.

Joseph Messin stated that he has been trapping at the Motte Reserve.

Gail stated that some Environmental Programs Department biologists have been fortunate enough to assist Joseph with his trapping at the Motte Reserve.

5. Update on BLM South Coast Resource Management Plan Revision

Greg Hill reported that the BLM has conducted their public scoping meetings. The next step was then to prepare a "scoping report". The report has been prepared and signed. The report can be found on the BLM's website, if anyone would like to review it. The report summarizes everything up to that point; most importantly, it summarizes all of the comments and meetings that were held with other agencies. The report also summarizes the cooperating agency invitations that were sent out to 60+ agencies. There were three agencies that signed on as cooperating agencies (i.e., Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Regional Conservation Authority, and the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy). The next step will be to work on the alternatives, which Greg reported, will be done over the summer months.

Greg reported that there is a new website for the Plan. It is www.blm.gov/ca/palmsprings. On the Home Page, click on the South Coast Plan Revision, and that will take you to the planning page.

Greg also reported that the BLM has special funding for abandoned mine remediation and closure. One of the areas they will be working on is the mines at Steele Peak. The funding is very specific to closing the mines for public safety.

6. SKR Reserve Management Practical Issues for Consideration

Ron Baxter reported that at the last RMCC meeting, it was requested that the reserve managers bring "signs" to this meeting.

Gail Barton reported that in meeting with all of the various groups, when you look at the land management effort, and you look at it from the perspective of Joe Public, would it not benefit us to have some sort of recognition. For example, if you see a sign that is black, white and red, you know that that is conserved land, regardless of who's name is on it. Over time, we will all be changing and/or making new signs. Gail asked if it would be beneficial to move in a direction where there is some form of coordination in the appearance of the various signs. Not necessarily in standardizing the actual sign, but possibly standardizing the color of the signs.

Art Tracey reported that one of the common things he hears when out in the field is someone saying they thought to signs were referring to gas pipe lines (i.e., Do Not Dig Here, etc.), even though the sign clearly states "No Motor Vehicles".

Ron Baxter stated that they often hear people say "What sign?", even though they may be standing relatively close to it.

Gail shared with the Committee the sign that the RCHCA developed for Lake Mathews. She stated that in designing the sign, RCHCA staff looked at the colors that the RCA was using. While the signs do not say exactly the same thing, there is a certain recognition between them.

Gail asked the Committee members if they see any benefit, as we move forward, in standardizing signs. Do they believe there would be a benefit to this?

Joseph Messin reported that in the UC system, the signs are standardized and used state-wide on all UC properties.

Greg Hill reported that the BLM also has standardized signs for use on their lands.

Gail stated that it looks as though getting to a common ground with signage will not happen because each agency has their own restrictions as far as signage goes. Perhaps the best way to go is to standardize signs for each individual reserve.

Gail stated that from the RCHCA's perspective, since we own lands on the various reserves, when it's time to order signs, we will coordinate with the individual reserve to ensure that our signs correspond with signs they are using on the reserve.

Earl Lauppe asked if we have made any progress with enforcement on any of the RCHCA lands?

Brian Shomo stated that he has been coordinating with the R.O.V.E. unit. He stated that the Perris unit has been patrolling the Gavilan Springs (east) side of the Lake Mathews Reserve. Brian stated that the one weekend that he has numbers for, there were 13 citations issued by the R.O.V.E. unit.

Brian stated that he is now working with the Lake Elsinore R.O.V.E. unit to see if they would be willing to patrol the west side of the Reserve. This would give us a presence on both sides of the Lake Mathews Reserve.

Ron Baxter stated that Riverside County Code Enforcement is in the process of hiring several individuals. Their Code Enforcement Officers are patrolling with R.O.V.E. on a consistent basis and issuing citations for illegal trash dumping, etc.

7. SKR Reserve Management Biological/Ecological Issues for Consideration

There was nothing to report at this time.

8. Reserve Manager Reports

- a. **Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain:** Brian Shomo stated that they are trying to increase security on the Reserve. He stated that he has been busy repairing fencing. He is also working with CalFire to do some fire preparedness exercises at Steele Peak, off of Forest Drive. CalFire will also be assisting this summer with the VMP for Lake Mathews. Brian stated that weed abatement has been completed on RCHCA lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak.

Wendy Picht reported that weed abatement on MWD lands at Lake Mathews/SteelePeak has been done.

Ron Baxter reported that Southern California Edison (SCE) installed a substantial gate on the Dawson Canyon end of the SCE road at Estelle Mountain.

- b. **Sycamore Canyon:** Mike Butler stated that the City of Riverside has been looking at and putting up some new signage at Sycamore Canyon Reserve. He stated that Sycamore Canyon has had a large influx of paintballers on the reserve. Those individuals have brought in several truck bed liners and old tires to use for backstops, etc., for their paintballing games. Mike stated that off-road riding has also increased on the reserve.

New City of Riverside Fire Stations 13 and 14 have opened around the Reserve.

Mike stated that Shirley Bennett is getting ready to put out an RFP for updating the Management Plan for the Reserve.

Mike stated that there are approximately 200 acres of land adjacent to the Reserve that the City currently does not own, but is looking into acquiring in the hopes of keeping people from building so close to the Reserve boundaries.

Mike reported that a contractor is doing some test drilling near the Reserve and got carried away and came approximately 500 yards in to Reserve property with their drilling. They will spend approximately 18 months blasting the area east of the Reserve off of Sycamore Canyon Blvd. and a new street that is coming in there behind Reserve property. The area that will be blasted encompasses about 100 acres of land. The blasting will eventually drop the land down approximately 60 feet.

Mike stated that he will be meeting with the Fire Chief this morning to discuss a prescribed burn at Sycamore Canyon.

Gail Barton stated that the City of Riverside partnered with the RCHCA in putting on the Endangered Species Act Day event at Sycamore Canyon on April 24th and 25th. This was a wonderful event that was attended by 250 5th and 6th grade students from Riverside and Perris.

- c. **Steele Peak:** Greg Hill stated that he already discussed the abandoned mines gating that BLM will be doing at Steele Peak. He stated that as part of their Plan revision, they will be conducting an inventory of all the roads and routes on all of the parcels that BLM manages at Steele Peak.
- d. **Motte Rimrock:** Joseph Messin reported that SKR trapping was done in March. Brian Shomo, Michael Richard, and Chad Young from the RCHCA and EPD assisted with the trapping. More trapping will be done in June. Joseph stated that the RCHCA and EPD staff are welcome to assist him with the June trapping, if they choose to.

Joseph stated that CDF will be coming out to the Reserve in the next week or two to begin cutting their fire break. They usually cut down around Lucas Lane and the mobile home park area, and also on the east side near the housing tract.

- e. **San Jacinto/Lake Perris:** Ken Kietzer stated that Lake Perris is relatively quiet at this time. The EIR for the repair of the dam should be released soon. At this point in time, the plan is to repair the dam to the elevation that it has been at.

Ken stated that he has been talking with the maintenance staff in an effort to get some mowing done at Lake Perris within the next few weeks.

Ken stated that he is seeing some Burrowing Owl activity at Lake Perris.

Ken reported that he has been working on scheduling a small prescribed burn at San Jacinto.

Eddy Konno reported that CDFG is in the process of contracting out a management plan for San Jacinto.

Eddy reported that San Jacinto has a new Fish & Wildlife Technician who is looking at doing some mowing in June. No mowing was done last year because of the extremely dry weather conditions we had.

- f. **Potrero ACEC:** Greg Hill stated that he had nothing to report at this time.
- g. **Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve:** Christine Moen reported that they have been very busy on the Reserve. The VMP is now in Sacramento for approval. She stated that they have been doing a lot of weed abatement. They have just completed 58 Quino surveys on the Reserve and cowbird trapping is currently being done.

- h. Potrero Reserve:** Eddy Konno reported that they have been having a problem with “scrappers” on the Reserve. Two to three people have been arrested in the last month for scrapping.

Eddy reported that last year Lockheed stated they had completed their clean-up of unexploded ordinances on the Reserve. However, the company that Lockheed contracted with did not do an exemplary job with the clean-up and Lockheed is now saying there may be additional unexploded ordinances still on the Reserve.

Ron Baxter asked if they are still having a problem with OHV use on the Reserve.

Eddy stated “no”, that over 600 citations were issued to OHV riders over a year ago. That really got the message across to those individuals. There may be an occasional rider on the Reserve, but nothing more than that.

9. Election of Chairperson for next RMCC Meeting

Brian Shomo volunteered to chair the next meeting.

10. Recommended Agenda items for next RMCC Meeting

Ron Baxter suggested that they discuss “grazing” at the next meeting.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Karlene Hernandez
Recording Secretary

ATTACHMENT E

STATUS OF RESERVE ENDOWMENTS

SKR Reserve Endowments

The interest earnings referenced in the fourth column below are now available to finance SKR management activities in the Motte-Rimrock and Sycamore Canyon reserves contingent upon the RCHCA Board of Directors authorizing the funds for expenditure by the reserve managers through the approval of a work program and budget that conforms to an approved management plan. The Executive Director is empowered to authorize expenditures not exceeding \$25,000 as they relate to matters such as needed fencing and requisite repairs.

Core Reserve	Endowment	Fund Balance As Of June 30, 2008	Management Funds Now Available	Dollars Expended FY 07/08	Management Plan
Motte-Rimrock	\$300,600.00 *	\$360,655.07	\$60,055.07	\$0	Yes
Lake Skinner	\$500,000.00 *	\$703,758.99	\$203,758.99	\$0	No
Sycamore Canyon	\$500,000.00 *	\$560,844.02	\$60,844.02	\$0	Yes
Lake Mathews	\$2,500,000.00*	\$3,626,693.00	\$1,126,693.00	\$38,631.00	No
RCHCA lands at Lake Mathews	N/A				Yes

* Denotes non-wasting endowment

As indicated in column six above, management plans have been prepared for two of the four reserves that receive funding from the RCHCA. A management plan has been completed and adopted for the RCHCA owned lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak reserves. A draft management plan is being prepared by the Reserve Manager for the SWRCMSR. It is anticipated that this management plan, if adopted, will sufficiently address SKR management issues at the Lake Skinner Reserve. Similarly, a draft management plan is being contemplated for the MWD owned portion of the Lake Mathews Reserve which is still without a Reserve Manager.

Pursuant to the SKR HCP, the Implementing Agreement for the HCP, and the BLM/RCHCA Assembled Land Exchange Agreement, RCHCA lands in the Lake Mathews Reserve were to be traded to the BLM. Pursuant to the trade, BLM was to assume the management and monitoring obligations for the RCHCA's property at Lake Mathews. Subsequently, the BLM lands were incorporated into the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan as public/quasi-public lands for conservation, making the majority of the RCHCA/BLM land exchange significantly encumbered and the sale of BLM surplus lands ultimately unattainable. Because most of the RCHCA lands at Lake Mathews were not exchanged and BLM did not assume management, the RCHCA is burdened with the unanticipated cost of management in order to maintain the state and federal SKR take permits.

The RCHCA has remained committed to securing the participation of BLM in meeting their obligations under the SKR HCP. During the period of this report, RCHCA staff has participated in the collaborative process being utilized by BLM as they move forward with the revision to the South Coast Resource Management Plan. It is the goal of the RCHCA to insure that the revision allows for the ability of BLM to fulfill their obligations through the transfer of appropriate parcels and consolidation of management efforts. The RCHCA maintains an amicable relationship with the BLM and discussion is ongoing.

On June 21, 2007, along with the RCHCA Board's adoption of the Management Plan for RCHCA owned lands at the Lake Mathews and Steele Peak reserves, the Board directed staff to hire a Natural Resources Manager. In December of 2007 the RCHCA hired a Natural Resources Manager and active management of the lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak reserves began in earnest.

Pursuant to the requirements of the SKR HCP, the RCHCA paid \$2.5 million to MWD. That sum was placed in a non-wasting endowment for the management of habitat in the Lake Mathews MSHCP portion of the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Core Reserve. The funds are managed and invested by MWD which maintains responsibility for financial reporting on the SKR endowment. The RCHCA received a summary from MWD through June 30, 2008. The information is reflected above and provided at the end of this report.

ATTACHMENT F

**NUMBER OF ACRES OF SKR OCCUPIED
HABITAT WITHIN THE CORE RESERVES**

Data resulting from SKR monitoring on the SKR reserves in Riverside County dates back to the 1980's. While monitoring data exists there remain large gaps in our knowledge of population dynamics of SKR.

Following years of effort to achieve an agreed upon protocol for consistent reserve-wide monitoring, a program was begun in July of 2006. Because of the controversy surrounding the protocol and the resulting data and inability to reach concurrence on an acceptable protocol, the RCHCA suspended the monitoring program on their lands. The RCHCA turned their attention to establishing a protocol to monitor for presence/absence across all reserves in order to gain a better understanding of the habitat areas and amount of land occupied by SKR. Monitoring continued on some of the reserves, but the coordinated reserve-wide effort was abandoned.

During the current reporting period, the RCHCA has contracted with DUDEK and Associates, Inc., to craft a protocol for presence/absence monitoring across all reserves. It is anticipated that once a protocol is completed and consensus is achieved, monitoring will begin.

ATTACHMENT G**EVALUATION OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SKR HCP**

Problems encountered in the implementation of the SKR HCP remain consistent with previous years. They are as follows:

1. Adverse impacts resulting from infrequent patrolling

Several of the reserves still have neither a regular patrol operation nor fencing plan. Specifically, an inadequate level of boundary protection poses problems for the reserves at Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain, Steele Peak, Potrero, and the Potrero ACEC. For the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Reserve, the patrol issue is compounded by increased residential development in the immediate area and the inability of the RCHCA to dispose of RCHCA lands in the Estelle Mountain portion of the Reserve to BLM. If transfer had occurred as contemplated, the RCHCA would have been relieved of the management obligations in this reserve. Since this is not the case, the RCHCA continues to bear an unanticipated management liability at the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Reserve.

Patrol at the BLM lands at Steele Peak Reserve and Potrero ACEC is provided by BLM rangers. The terms of the HCP and Implementation Agreement do not require BLM to maintain any specific level of service. It is assumed that the patrol operations currently provided at these sites reflect the amount of financial resources available to BLM for this activity.

2. Illegal Trespass, Vandalism, and Dumping

Illegal access continues to be a concern of the reserve managers as evidenced in the attached RMCC minutes. Solutions include additional patrol, a sting operation to catch illegal trespassers, enhanced coordination with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and fencing/signage strategies.

The RCHCA is working on a comprehensive fencing plan for RCHCA owned lands at Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Reserve. Access points for illegal trespass have been identified with the goal of crafting a plan for enhancing existing fencing and establishing new fencing to minimize the problem. The plan also provides for gates to meet the requirements of Cal Fire in the event they need to access the Reserve in order to address wildfire issues. The RCHCA's Natural Resources Manager has, working with other agencies, made considerable headway in cleaning up dump sites and quelling vandalism. The presence of the manager has deterred incidence of trespass.

3. Preparation of SKR Management Plans

No management plans have been received by the RCHCA for the reserves managed by federal and state agencies. These would include Potrero ACEC, Potrero Reserve, San Jacinto/Lake Perris Reserve, and Steele Peak Reserve.

The SWRCMSR RMC is preparing a management plan that will address SKR management on all the lands within the Reserve. The Lake Mathews portion of the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Core Reserve is managed under the terms and conditions set forth in the Cooperative Management Agreement found in the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, of which the RCHCA is a signatory. The RMC for the Lake Mathews portion of the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Core Reserve is considering the preparation of a reserve management plan that would include the RCHCA held conservation easement on MWD lands. It is anticipated that a completed management plan would address management for SKR on the conservation easement lands.

Management plans have been developed for RCHCA owned lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak, Motte-imrock and Sycamore Canyon reserves,

4. SKR Management Funding from Reserve Endowments

It is anticipated that these funds will be utilized upon approval of the respective management plans, work programs, and budgets for those reserves with an established endowment fund.

5. Invasive Species Control

Reserve managers regularly engage in an invasive species control program as needed within their respective reserves.

**LAKE MATHEWS RESERVE ENDOWMENT INFORMATION
PROVIDED BY METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT THROUGH
JUNE 30, 2008**

Lake Mathews Reserve Account Summary FY 07/08 (7/1/07 - 6/30/08)

Account Summary

* Beginning balance (7/1/07)	\$3,480,110
* Ending balance (6/30/08)	\$3,626,693
* Net activity	+146,582

Income (interest received, amortized) \$ 185,212

* \$44,295	(4/1/07 - 6/30/07)
* \$40,231	(7/1/07 - 9/30/07)
* \$53,874	(10/1/07 - 12/31/07)
* \$46,812	(1/1/08 - 3/31/08)

Expenses (invoices received and paid during the time period) \$38,631

\$ 3,560	(Securitas Security Services, Inc., – nine invoices processed during this time period)
\$ 5,071	(Jones & Stokes – invoices processed for previous authorized work)

Source: Metropolitan Water District

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT
CONSERVATION AGENCY**

**FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF JUNE 2008 FISCAL YEAR END
INCLUDING BUDGETED VERSUS ACTUAL EXPENSES AND REVENUES**

RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
NET STEPHENS' KANGAROO RAT MITIGATION FEE COLLECTIONS BY MEMBER AGENCY
FY 2007/08

	JULY 2007	AUGUST 2007	SEPTEMBER 2007	OCTOBER 2007	NOVEMBER 2007	DECEMBER 2007	JANUARY 2008	FEBRUARY 2008	MARCH 2008	APRIL 2008	MAY 2008	JUNE 2008	TOTALS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
INTERNAL AUDIT ADJUSTMENT:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$48,365.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	48,365.50	
ADJUSTMENT TOTALS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	48,365.50	0	0	\$48,365.50	
CITY OF CORONA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.1%
CITY OF HEMET	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,770.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,345.00	0.00	13,722.00	(18,250.00)	4,047.00	5,634.00	0.8%
CITY OF LAKE ELSINORE	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,460.00	0.00	0.00	2,644.00	0.00	0.00	4,544.00	0.00	31,264.00	42,912.00	6.0%
CITY OF MORENO VALLEY	15,560.00	0.00	0.00	27,945.00	0.00	0.00	1,425.00	0.00	0.00	510.00	0.00	2,010.00	47,450.00	6.7%
CITY OF MURRIETA	11,930.00	3,145.00	0.00	0.00	15,985.00	0.00	0.00	3,210.00	0.00	7,485.00	465.00	48,040.00	90,260.00	12.7%
CITY OF PERRIS	21,288.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,430.00	0.00	7,175.00	0.00	0.00	4,550.00	0.00	33,340.00	77,783.00	10.9%
CITY OF RIVERSIDE	3,098.74	20,895.76	4,848.00	13,485.00	0.00	36,180.00	3,010.00	5,843.00	8,115.00	10,015.00	7,922.00	15,985.00	129,401.50	18.2%
CITY OF TEMECULA	390.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	5,235.00	0.00	2,440.00	37,685.00	0.00	2,185.00	9,006.00	57,435.00	8.1%
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	10,585.00	9,125.00	20,945.00	2,255.00	11,495.00	8,145.00	9,555.00	26,615.00	22,100.00	8,410.00	18,785.00	111,345.00	259,360.00	36.5%
TOTAL FEES COLLECTED	\$62,851.74	\$33,169.76	\$26,043.00	\$50,165.00	\$38,910.00	\$49,560.00	\$23,809.00	\$42,453.00	\$67,900.00	\$146,967.00	\$11,107.00	\$255,031.00	\$741,235.50	100.00%
TOTAL FEES & ADJUSTMENTS	\$62,851.74	\$33,169.76	\$26,043.00	\$50,165.00	\$38,910.00	\$49,560.00	\$23,809.00	\$42,453.00	\$67,900.00	\$195,332.50	\$11,107.00	\$255,031.00	\$759,601.00	