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# Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency

*City of Corona* ◇ *City of Hemet* ◇ *City of Lake Elsinore* ◇ *City of Moreno Valley*  
*City of Murrieta* ◇ *City of Perris* ◇ *City of Riverside* ◇ *City of Temecula* ◇ *County of Riverside*

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## MINUTES

Thursday, November 16, 2006 - 9:00 a.m.

Riverside County Administrative Center  
4080 Lemon Street  
Board Hearing Room – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Riverside, CA 92501

**PRESENT:** Bill Batey, City of Moreno Valley  
Mr. Dom Betro, City of Riverside  
Mr. Steve Brown, City of Temecula  
Supervisor Bob Buster, County of Riverside  
Mr. Eugene Montanez, City of Corona  
Mr. Bob Schiffner, City of Lake Elsinore  
Mr. Kelly Seyarto, City of Murrieta  
Mr. Mark Yarbrough, Acting Chair, City of Perris

**ABSENT:** Ms. Robin Lowe, City of Hemet

**STAFF:** Carolyn Syms Luna, RCHCA  
Gail Barton, RCHCA  
Kristi Lovelady, RCHCA  
Karin Watts-Bazan, County Counsel

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mark Yarbrough called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m.

### 2. ROLL CALL

Roll call of the RCHCA Board of Directors showed eight member agencies present with the City of Hemet absent.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were offered.

**4. BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Kelly Seyarto stated that it has been a pleasure working with this Board and its members. He stated this has been the longest running Board he has served on during his time with the Murrieta City Council. He thanked his fellow Board members for their hard work over the years in an effort to make the RCHCA successful. He also thanked the RCHCA staff for all their work, as everything that's accomplished by this Agency couldn't be done without them.

**5. ADDITIONS/REVISIONS**

There were no additions/revisions to the agenda.

**6. CONSENT CALENDAR:** Presented for Block Approval. Board Members have the option of excluding discussion items from a master motion.

**6.1 Minutes from the August 17, 2006, Meeting**

The minutes from the August 17, 2006, meeting were presented for approval.

**6.2 Status of Mitigation Fee Transfers from Member Agencies through September 2006**

The Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Mitigation Fee Collection report for FY 2006/2007 was presented for review.

**6.3 RCHCA Financial Report through September 2006**

The fund balance as of September 30, 2006, is \$13,100,313.95.

**MOTION for approval of items 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3: Dom Betro**

**SECOND: Eugene Montanez**

**Motion Approved  
Ayes—8  
None Opposed**

**7. POLICY CALENDAR:**

**7.1 Verbal Report on Status of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan**

Carolyn Syms Luna reported that the CVMSHCP is presently being revised. Because Desert Hot Springs has elected not to participate in the Plan, the Plan had to be returned to the CVAG Executive Committee for revision. A public release document should be out in January 2007.

**7.2 Report Concerning Meeting with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Federal Commitment to the SKR HCP**

Carolyn Syms Luna reported that Chairperson Lowe, along with a few RCHCA staff members, met with the BLM Director (Steven Bourchard) recently. This was a very

positive meeting. Mr. Bourchard understands the commitments under the Plan and both staffs (BLM and RCHCA) have been tasked to work together to develop alternatives that will meet with federal commitments that were made to the RCHCA under the Plan. Mr. Bourchard also understands that there is a bit of a dilemma in that the BLM exchange lands were ultimately designated by the MSHCP as PQP; however, he is willing to work with the RCHCA to find a resolution to the issue, and understands the BLM's obligation under the SKR HCP.

**7.3 Consideration of Agreement to Officially Designate the RCHCA's Purchasing Agent and Adopt Purchasing Policies**

Kristi Lovelady reported that the RCHCA has had a very long and productive relationship with the County Purchasing Department. RCHCA staff would like to formalize the agreement that has been provided to the Board in their meeting packets. The Agreement outlines four basic principles, as well as adopts the County's Purchasing Policies as their own. The policies are very extensive, thorough, and provide considerable protection under the local and state laws. They also provide us with an industry standard. The Agreement itself formally designates the County Purchasing Department as the RCHCA's Purchasing Agent. It adopts the Purchasing Manual, as well as stipulates that the RCHCA Board is the decision-making body when a Board decision is required. Lastly, it provides for reimbursement consistent with our existing Management Services contract between the RCHCA and the County.

Ms. Lovelady requested that the Board authorize the RCHCA Executive Director to execute the Agreement between the RCHCA and the County Purchasing Department.

**MOTION to direct the RCHCA Executive Director to execute the Agreement between the RCHCA and the County Purchasing Department: Eugene Montanez**

**SECOND: Bob Buster**

**Motion Approved**

**Ayes-8**

**None Opposed**

**7.4 Status Report Concerning the Prospective Wildlife Conservation Board Grant for Sycamore Canyon Reserve**

Kristi Lovelady reported that at the last RCHCA Board meeting, RCHCA staff presented a grant proposal that will be submitted to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). She stated that we will be partnering with the City of Riverside in order to conduct some habitat restoration at Sycamore Canyon Reserve. The grant application, however, requires a letter of support from the Fish and Game Director. Therefore, we are working with Fish and Game staff to ensure that they can support the grant proposal.

Ms. Lovelady stated that one comment from Fish and Game was that they would prefer the grant not focus so much on mustard eradication, but focus more on habitat restoration, which meets with WCB's policies. RCHCA staff has made that change to the grant proposal. We have also noted that the mustard, as well as other non-native grasses will be eliminated through the treatment that we will propose.

Supervisor Buster stated he feels this is a reasonable request by Fish and Game. He asked when we can anticipate hearing from WCB regarding whether or not the RCHCA/City of Riverside will be awarded the grant.

Ms. Lovelady stated that WCB could review the grant proposal as early as their meeting in May 2007. This timeframe is dependent on the local Fish and Game staff developing a position of support for the proposal. It won't be until after the WCB Board meeting that we will be notified of whether or not we are awarded the grant. RCHCA staff will report back to this Board at its May meeting regarding the status of the grant proposal.

Ms. Lovelady stated that the City of Riverside will most likely be the lead agency for this grant application because of their management responsibilities and land holdings. Therefore, the City would then be responsible for implementing the grant.

**7.5 Status Report Concerning the SKR Management Plan for RCHCA Lands at Lake Mathews and Steele Peak Reserves**

Gail Barton reported that in October 2005, the RCHCA executed a contract with DUDEK and Associates to complete a SKR Management Plan, a Fire Management Plan, and institute a monitoring program for RCHCA owned lands at the Lake Mathews and Steele Peak Reserves. Draft plans have been reviewed and commented on. However, due to the high demands on the California Department of Forestry (CDF) during this fire season, the most current draft of the Fire Management Plan is lacking necessary input from CDF. We anticipate that the Fire Management Plan will be ready for this Board's review at the February 2007 RCHCA Board meeting.

**7.6 Report on Reserve Management Committees for the Southwest Riverside County Multiple Species Reserve and the Lake Mathews Reserve**

Gail Barton reported that at the last RCHCA Board meeting, the Board directed staff to formulate action plans to effectively complete the Management Plan for the Southwest Riverside County Multiple Species Reserve (SWRCMSR). Staff was also directed to identify potential sites on RCHCA land for a replacement Reserve Management Facility and secure cost estimates for the facility.

Ms. Barton stated that staff met with Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) staff in order to partner with them in evaluating and determining a course of action to resolve the issues identified by the Board.

Ms. Barton stated that RCHCA staff prepared a draft Table of Contents that identified gaps and framed the available information in a format that would provide the structure for a management plan to be used by a reserve manager to effectively and efficiently manage the Reserve consistent with the defined commitments.

The SWRCMSR Reserve Management Committee (RMC) approved the draft Table of Contents and a deadline has been set for early February 2007 for the production of a draft Management Plan.

The RMC determined that the existing site is the most efficient location for a replacement facility for the reserve manager. It is felt that a new facility is the best solution and that funding is available without compromising the budget. Therefore, we are continuing down that path and determining how procurement will be done.

With regard to the Lake Mathews Reserve RMC, Ms. Barton stated that past documents and data were reviewed which may lead to the development of a new Management Plan for the MWD owned RCHCA easement lands.

**7.7 Proposal to Manage Vegetation for Stephens' Kangaroo Rat and Burrowing Owl at the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve**

Gail Barton reported that at the October meeting of the SWRCMSR RMC, the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) proposed a vegetation management plan to expand the available suitable habitat for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) and Burrowing Owl. The RCHCA has concerns that need to be addressed, as follows:

- The RCHCA is charged with maintaining SKR populations;
- It is difficult to determine the impact to SKR if the Burrowing Owl does populate the habitat.

Therefore, the RCA will prepare an agreement that will ensure the following:

- The SKR populations will be monitored;
- If the SKR population is negatively affected, habitat will be replaced by enhancement on RCHCA lands;
- If the results of the effort are positive, this will be established as one of the core reserves for Burrowing Owl.

Ms. Barton stated that when the agreement with the RCA is completed, RCHCA staff will bring it back to this Board for their approval.

**8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Carolyn Syms Luna presented Kelly Seyarto with a plaque for his service on the RCHCA Board. She thanked him for his years of service and reminded him that he will be sorely missed by all.

**9. CLOSED SESSION**

No items were scheduled for closed session.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 a.m. The next meeting will be held on February 15, 2007.