

8/3/2016

Executive Director's Report

Board of Directors Meeting

The Natomas Basin Conservancy



ON THE CAPITOL & ECONOMY BY ALLEN YOUNG



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BEHIND THE SCENES

Amazon could boost growth at airport

BUSIER AIRPORT COULD ATTRACT NEW COMPANIES

Economic development officials say Amazon's arrival to Metro Air Park is an integral piece of a business development strategy anchored by Sacramento International Airport.

"Amazon validates what we have been saying all along: We need to build an economic strategy around our airport," said Barry Broome, CEO of the Greater Sacramento Area Economic Council.

Broome has explored ways to bring in more flights to Sacramento International Airport because the number of nonstop flights is a key factor for businesses considering locating to a new area.

He has inquired in the past whether debt from the massive renovation of the airport's Terminal B could be restructured in order to entice airlines to bring more service to Sacramento. The Terminal B project, completed in 2011, was the biggest capital improvement project in county history.

The \$1 billion renovation was financed partly with fees charged to airlines, caus-



SACRAMENTO COUNTY

A preliminary rendering submitted to Sacramento County shows what the Amazon facility at Metro Air Park could look like.

ing some to pull service.

Amazon may push that conversation forward by placing a large welcome mat over at Metro Air Park, an undeveloped industrial area on land east of Sacramento International, Broome said in a recent interview.

"Companies like Salesforce and Tesla want to be near an airport, and on a cor-

ridor where they can create their own look and feel," he said.

More businesses at Metro Air Park could mean more business for the airport.

That in turn provides incentive to airlines to add direct flights. And with more direct flights, the region could become more attractive to other businesses from



outside the region.

This cycle could bring some growing pains, however. And those could include more difficult air travel.

Fleets of heavy trucks carrying Amazon goods on Interstate 80 could mean more traffic, greater pollution and road deterioration, said Jock O'Connell, a Sacramento-based international trade adviser with Beacon Economics.

"As a passenger, I'm worried always about making my flight," he said.





ECOS Comments on Natomas North Precinct Master Plan Notice of Preparation, May 2016

On May 31, 2016, the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS), Habitat 2020 and the Sierra Club Sacramento Group submitted a comment letter on the Natomas North Precinct Master Plan Notice of Preparation. You can read the letter in text below, or view the PDF by clicking [here](#) or the image of the letter at the bottom of this page.

May 31, 2016

Catherine Hack, Environmental Coordinator

SENT VIA EMAIL TO [hackc\[at\]saccounty\[dot\]net](mailto:hackc[at]saccounty[dot]net)

Department of Community Development Planning and Environmental Review
Division

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Upcoming Events

JUN

1

Wed

(http://www.ecosacramento.net/get-involved/calendar/action~oneday/exact_date~6-1-2016/)

10:00 am

CNPS:
Nursery
work day
(http://www.ecosacramento.net/event/cnps-nursery-work-day-2/?instance_id=711060)

5:00 pm

Call for
Climate
Solutions @
Conference
call
(http://www.ecosacramento.net/event/call-for-climate-solutions/?instance_id=712392)

6:00 pm

827 7th Street, Room 225, Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT FOR THE NATOMAS NORTH PRECINCT MASTER PLAN
(CONTROL NUMBER: PLNP2014-00172)

Dear Ms. Hack:

These are comments from the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS), with dozens of individual members and organizational members in the tens of thousands. ECOS has a history of over 4 decades of advocacy to limit sprawl, preserve agriculture, habitat and open space, and improve the quality of life while supporting growth with a vibrant and equitable economy. These comments relate to all the requested entitlements, and the Project Objectives found on NOP, pages 3-4, Objectives 1-6, except where noted.

Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality, Climate Change

The proposed Master Plan is obviously inconsistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and with the Regional Air Quality Attainment Plan. The DEIR must include a full analysis and discussion of the project's inconsistency with the MTP/SCS and the Regional Air Quality Attainment Plan. How this inconsistency will be mitigated (e.g., with strict project phasing) must also be addressed.

Since the proposed project is inconsistent with the MTP/SCS and the State's mandates under SB 375 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the project must also, by definition, be inconsistent with the County's Climate Action Plan. If this plan is to have any value, this inconsistency must also be addressed and mitigated.

The above inconsistencies are critically important since the project, as proposed, is a totally auto-oriented community. Regional Transit will not have the ability for many years, if ever, to provide service to this area at the proposed densities. Therefore it is critically important to establish a Transportation Services District, similar to what exists in North Natomas and portions of the Southeast County, to provide funding for transit service, connectivity and other transportation-related services.

It is important that the EIR, as a tool in assessing impacts, provide information which allows all interested parties and decision-makers to ascertain the level/degree of consistency/inconsistency with critical land use policies. The EIR must fully evaluate consistency with Sacramento County General Plan Policy LU-127. Any finding of inconsistency must be explained and where appropriate quantified, particularly with respect to the crucial finding pertaining to available holding capacity.

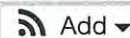
In addition to analysis of the "No Project" alternative, there should also be an examination of the alternative that 55,000 people will, indeed, move to Sacramento County, but will choose to reside elsewhere, say, in the northern and central portions of the City of Sacramento, choosing infill locations that are

Organize
Sacramento
Community
Mixer
(http://www.ecosacramento.net/event/organize-sacramento-community-mixer/?instance_id=712550)

JUN
2
Thu
(<http://www.ecosacramento.net/get-involved/calendar/action-one-day/event-6-2-2016/>)

10:00 am
Urban
Agriculture
coalition:
mee...
(http://www.ecosacramento.net/event/urban-agriculture-coalition-meeting-55/?instance_id=711777)

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already zoned for residential development of the same or higher density as that proposed in this project. It is widely reported that modern homebuyers are preferentially seeking more compact, urban locations than large-lot, suburban locations. The continuing demand for compact, urban housing is further bolstered by the history of the recent foreclosure crisis: while homes in Elk Grove and Natomas literally could not be given away, homes in the central city lost very little value, and recovered these losses (and then some) before any other locations did. While such an alternative may not be the preference of these developers, neither is the “No Project” alternative. But the “No Project” alternative ignores the reality that more people are, indeed, choosing to live in this region. In practical terms, if these developers end up with “No Project,” that alone will not halt the population increase. Rather, the new arrivals will live somewhere already zoned for the type of residential development they prefer. That is the comparison that should be made with the project as proposed.

The proposed project includes substantial employment and higher density residential development in order to meet General Plan policy criteria for new development at the urban fringe. The EIR must evaluate the increase in impact, particularly with respect to VMT and CO2 air quality emissions, if the development were to build out at lower, traditional levels of suburban development. The EIR must consider mitigation measures, including but not limited to phasing requirements and development moratoriums, to prevent occurrence of those adverse impacts.

There are already enough flawed assumptions in the feasibility analysis for the regional hospital to conclude that such a facility is extremely unlikely to materialize. The nation has spent the past six decades trying to reduce the ratio of hospital beds per thousand population, not increase it. Therefore, in order to properly assess the range of possible impacts of the proposed project, the EIR must include at least one alternative that does not include a regional hospital.

Water

The EIR must consider the adequacy of water to supply the development. A conclusion that the “project will be supplied by surface water supplemented with groundwater withdrawals” is inadequate. State Water Board approval of Natomas Central Mutual Water Company surface water rights from agricultural to municipal/industrial (M/I) use should not be counted upon as a given outcome. All potential sources of surface water, constraints and obstacles to obtaining them, the timing of water delivery, the potential for delivery curtailment in dry years, and overall feasibility of supplemental surface water supplies must all be thoroughly vetted.

The project is outside of the Urban Services Boundary (USB). M/I development was not assumed as part of the studies and assumptions underlying the Water Forum Agreement. The EIR must include a comprehensive analysis of the North American River Sub-basin, taking into account the buildout of approved and planned projects in Sutter and Placer Counties. The EIR analysis must

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[ECOS Comments on Natomas North Precinct Master Plan Notice of Preparation, May 2016](#)
[ECOS Comments on North Natomas Panhandle Annexation NOP, May 2016](#)
[ECOS Comments on Yamanee](#)

complement and support sustainable groundwater planning undertaken to implement the California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

The EIR must include legally enforceable mitigation measures, including but not limited to phasing requirements and moratoriums, if assumed supplemental surface water supplies are not available sufficiently in advance to forestall groundwater overdraft.

As part of this analysis, the EIR must assess groundwater quality, including the presence of chromium, manganese, iron and arsenic, and its feasibility for domestic consumption. Assessment of infrastructure costs must consider the additional cost of water treatment to remove potentially harmful levels of these and other elements in groundwater supplies.

We are aware of the drainage studies performed under the auspices of the County and others over the past two decades. We believe the drainage problems are even more complex because of additional development that has occurred or been approved since the completion of these drainage studies, including those in Sutter County. The EIR must be extremely detailed as to how adequate drainage will be achieved for this project, as well as how these drainage solutions affect the project's ability to mitigate for any proposed take of endangered species.

Growth-inducing Effects

The EIR must evaluate growth inducing impact of extending the USB to the County Line. The analysis should include speculative land price increases in the region and the resulting impact on implementing the Natomas Basin HCP, Sacramento County's relationship to that HCP notwithstanding. The analysis should also include the regional growth-inducing impact of this, the most populous jurisdiction in the region, acting in violation of its own general plan to expand the region's footprint in a manner inconsistent with regional plans.

Biological Resources

As proposed, this project conflicts with the [Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan \(NBHCP\)](#). While the County declined to become a signatory to the Plan in 2003, nonetheless the proposed development would remove vital agriculture that provides habitat and foraging for at least two endangered species. Without this acreage, mitigation for this project could be rendered inconceivable, especially since other development in the area has already been approved. Those previous approvals have not yet resulted in construction, nor have their approved mitigations been implemented. When they are, the availability of mitigation acreage for this project is nil. The EIR must be explicit about the precise acreage, timing and location of mitigation land, and must demonstrate beyond doubt how compatibility with the NBHCP and already-approved mitigation for already-entitled projects will be achieved.

Specifically, the EIR needs to analyze the impact of this proposed project on

the implemented Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan, including, but not limited to the following:

- Analysis of impact on conservation strategy implementation in the NBHCP.
- Analysis of impact on effectiveness of mitigations in the NBHCP. As an example, the NBHCP stipulates a 1:1/2 acre mitigation for terrestrial non wetland habitat loss, but this was predicated on no additional development beyond that covered in the NBHCP within the basin.
- Analysis of the impact on “feasibility for acquisition” for the lands needed within the available inventory for the NBHCP within the basin given that over 5600 additional acres are proposed to be removed from the inventory, and at least that amount, if not substantially more, will be needed to mitigate for the proposed development.
- Analysis of the impact of potentially increased acquisition costs for acquiring mitigation lands for the NBHCP because of the increased demand resulting from trying to mitigate for this project in the same geography as the NBHCP.
- EIR needs to provide substantive evidence that the loss of so much more habitat than was contemplated and covered in the NBHCP in the basin will not result in jeopardy for the Swainson’s hawk and the giant garter snake.
- Analysis of the impact of removing more than 5600 acres of important habitat for the giant garter snake needs to be included. Cumulative effects need to be analyzed for the giant garter snake in this context as well.
- Analysis of the impact of removing more than 5600 acres of important habitat for the Swainson’s hawk needs to be included. Cumulative effects to the Swainson’s hawk need to be analyzed in this context as well.
- The EIR needs to provide all appropriate and feasible mitigations for impacts to species so that their efficacy can be analyzed, and not kick the can down the road with the deferred mitigation of indicating that such details will be worked out later with the regulatory agencies after entitlements are granted.

Financing

The environmental challenges of this project represent astounding obstacles, of a scale rarely seen in this region. The EIR must be very sound in its demonstration of how the provision of public infrastructure and services to this project can be achieved while maintaining a “neutral-to-positive fiscal impact” to the County (see NOP, page 4, Objective #8).

Infrastructure costs for internal drainage, SAFCA flood control assessments, roads and other essential services will be extensive. Parallel evaluation of these costs is essential to the EIR process. The EIR must show that mitigation measures attached to the project, particularly those that rely on developer funded implementation—and in particular those that are related to habitat mitigation requirements—will, when combined with the burden of infrastructure costs, be financially feasible.

Bonding of mitigation measures must be evaluated as part of the mitigation and

monitoring program. This evaluation must be part of the draft EIR process and available for public review well before final project approvals.

Conclusion

ECOS agrees with the assumption that the population of the region and the county will grow. The purpose of the General Plan is to control future development such that it meets the stated needs of the county. Applicant must demonstrate how the proposal will help the county meet these needs, consistent with the existing General Plan, MTP/SCS, Regional Air Quality Attainment Plan, Climate Action Plan, Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the NBHCP, and, of course, CEQA. Any requested departure from these requirements must demonstrate unequivocal and unique circumstances that outweigh the considerable constraints of those existing requirements. To the extent that one considers the provision of public infrastructure and services, themselves, as mitigation for the environmental impacts of the project, their feasibility, adequacy and their own inherent impacts must be explicated fully and compared to alternatives that do not require amendments to the General Plan, various specific plans (listed in the NOP as "Requested Entitlements"), or new annexations to the Sanitation District and Sewer District.

The region, and the county, specifically, already have countless alternatives to meet future growth within the above requirements (well beyond the 55,000 people subsumed by this proposal). In fact, the existing General Plan subsumes much more growth than is projected by SACOG. It is incumbent on the applicant, therefore, to demonstrate how the proposal comports with the alternatives already available under the General Plan, MTP/SCS, etc. A simple "No Project" alternative that also assumes no growth anywhere else in the region, or one that fails to relate the project to at least one of these alternatives, is simply not good enough to support rational decision-making.

Sincerely,

Brandon Rose, President, Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS)

Robert C. Burness, Co-Chair, [Habitat 2020](#)

Barbara Leary, Executive Committee Chair, [Sierra Club Sacramento Group](#)



ECOS
ENVIRONMENTAL
• COUNCIL •
OF SACRAMENTO



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May 31, 2016

Catherine Hack, Environmental Coordinator
Department of Community Development
Planning and Environmental Review Division
827 7th Street, Room 225, Sacramento, CA 95814

SENT VIA EMAIL TO hackc@saccounty.net

**SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
REPORT FOR THE NATOMAS NORTH PRECINCT MASTER PLAN (CONTROL
NUMBER: PLNP2014-00172)**

Dear Ms. Hack:

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Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality, Climate Change

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← **ECOS Comments on North Natomas...**

From: Sheya, Tanya@Wildlife Tanya.Sheya@wildlife.ca.gov 
Subject: Comments on the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Natomas North Precinct Master Plan (SCH#2016042079)
Date: May 24, 2016 at 3:32 PM
To: Hack, Catherine (hackc@saccounty.net) hackc@saccounty.net
Cc: Kennedy, Amy@Wildlife Amy.Kennedy@wildlife.ca.gov, Baer, Isabel@Wildlife Isabel.Baer@wildlife.ca.gov, smithtodd@saccounty.net, John Roberts (jroberts@natomasbasin.org) jroberts@natomasbasin.org, Kellie_Berry@fws.gov, Rick Kuyper (richard_kuyper@fws.gov) richard_kuyper@fws.gov

ST

Dear Ms. Hack:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has reviewed the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the **Natomas North Precinct Master Plan** (SCH#2016042079) .

As a trustee for California's fish and wildlife resources, CDFW has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (Fish & G. Code, § 1802). CDFW may also act as a Responsible Agency (Cal. Code Regs., § 21069) for a project where it has discretionary approval power under the California Endangered Species Act (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) and the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.). CDFW also administers the Native Plant Protection Act, Natural Community Conservation Program, and other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to California's fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW offers the following comments and recommendations for this project in our role as a trustee and responsible agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

The Natomas North Precinct Master Plan (proposed project) is a ±5,699-acre mixed use project located within the Natomas community of the unincorporated northwestern Sacramento County, south of Sutter County and southwest of Placer County, east of Highway 99, and north of the City of Sacramento. The proposed project includes moving the Urban Service Boundary and the Urban Policy Area within Sacramento County to allow for urban development. It would require amendments to the Sacramento General Plan Land Use Diagram and the Sacramento County Zoning Diagram.

The project description should include the whole action as defined in the California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15000 et seq. (CEQA Guidelines) section 15378 and should include appropriate detailed exhibits disclosing the project area including temporary impacted areas such as access roads and staging areas.

As required by section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR should include appropriate range of reasonable and feasible alternatives that would attain most of the basic project objectives and avoid or minimize significant impacts to resources under CDFW's jurisdiction.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

CDFW recommends that the EIR includes a complete assessment of the existing biological conditions within the project area including but not limited to the type, quantity and locations of the habitats, flora and fauna. Adequate mapping and information regarding the survey efforts should be included within the EIR. All surveys as well as the environmental analysis should be completed by qualified personnel with sufficient experience in the work performed for the project.

To identify a correct environmental baseline, the EIR should include a complete and current analysis of endangered, threatened, candidate, and locally unique species. CEQA guidelines section 15125, subdivision (c) requires lead agencies to provide special emphasis to sensitive habitats and any biological resources that are rare or unique to the area. This includes, but is not limited to vernal pools, streambeds, riparian habitats, and open grasslands that are known to be present within the project boundaries or its vicinity.

CDFW recommends that the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), as well as previous studies performed in the area, be consulted to assess the potential presence of sensitive species and habitats. Recent surveys for the different species that have the potential to be present within the project limits and its vicinity shall be included within the EIR. Additional information regarding survey protocols can be obtained by contacting CDFW.

Species-specific surveys should be conducted in order to ascertain the presence of species with the potential to be present within the project vicinity. CDFW recommends that the lead agency use survey protocols previously approved by CDFW and that an assessment for rare plants and rare natural communities follow CDFW's 2009 Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities. The guidance document is available here: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/protocols_for_surveying_and_evaluating_impacts.pdf.

IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The EIR should clearly identify and describe all short-term, long-term, permanent, or temporary impacts to biological resources under CDFW's jurisdiction, including all direct and foreseeable indirect impacts caused by the proposed project.

The EIR should define the threshold of significance for each impact and describe the criteria used to determine each threshold (CEQA Guidelines, § 15064, subd. (f).) The EIR must demonstrate that the significant environmental impacts of the project were adequately investigated and discussed and it must permit the significant effects of the project to be considered in the full environmental context.

CDFW recommends the use of survey and monitoring protocols and guidelines available at: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/nongame/survey_monitor.html. CDFW also recommends that the environmental documentation provide scientifically supported discussion and adequate avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures to address the project's impact upon fish and wildlife and their habitat. CDFW recommends that the environmental documentation identify natural habitats and provide a discussion of how the proposed project will affect their function and value.

The EIR should incorporate mitigation performance standards that would ensure that significant impacts are reduced as expected. Mitigation measures proposed in the EIR should be made a condition of approval of the project. Please note that obtaining a permit from CDFW by itself with no other mitigation proposal may constitute mitigation deferral.

Conservation Planning

The proposed project is located within the limits the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP). The EIR should provide a detailed analysis of how the proposed project will be consistent with all applicable policies, procedures, and goals of the NBHCP. The NBHCP requires that any additional urban development within the Natomas Basin that occurs outside of the current Permitted Areas, with the exception of the Metro Air Park development, including any development with Sacramento County

the exception of the Metro Air Park development, including any development within Sacramento County or within the jurisdiction of another Potential Permittee, would constitute a significant departure from the NBHCP's Operating Conservation Program and would trigger a new effects analysis, a new conservation strategy, and issuance of Incidental Take Permits to the Potential Permittee for that additional urban development. CDFW recommends that as part of the effects analysis, the full impact of the development on the efficacy of the NBHCP's carefully designed conservation strategy to minimize and mitigate the impacts of take of the Covered Species associated with a maximum of 17,500 acres of development within the Natomas Basin be thoroughly analyzed and a conservation strategy that adequately addresses the increased impacts to the Covered Species resulting from additional loss of the limited habitat remaining in the basin is prepared prior to authorization of any additional take. This effects analysis would need to evaluate if baseline conditions and assumptions used in the original analysis are still accurate.

Furthermore, on September 7, 2005 Judge Levy issued a decision in the Federal NBHCP litigation, which cautioned in footnote 13 of that decision that "the Service and those seeking an ITP in the future will face an uphill battle if they attempt to argue that additional development in the Basin beyond the 17,500 acres will not result in jeopardy" to giant garter snake or Swainson's hawk. Judge Levy's opinion considered the effects of the current trend of following rice agriculture lands in the basin to facilitate potential further urban development.

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate Species

If during the environmental analysis for the project, it is determined that the project may have the potential to result in "take", as defined in the Fish and Game Code, section 86, of a State-listed species, the EIR shall disclose an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) or a consistency determination (Fish & G. Code, §§ 2080.1 & 2081) may be required prior to starting construction activities. The EIR must include all avoidance and minimization to reduce the impacts to a less than significant level. If impacts to listed species are expected to occur even with the implementation of these measures, mitigation measures shall be proposed to fully mitigate the impacts to State-listed species (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2, subd.(a)(8)).

Rare Plants

CDFW recommends that analysis of potential habitat for special status plants is conducted for the proposed project. If it is determined that the site contains habitat for any special status plant species, protocol level surveys should be conducted. The timing and number of visits necessary to conduct a floristic survey should be determined by geographic location, the natural communities present and the weather patterns of the year, with the understanding that more than one field visit or field season may be necessary to accurately survey the floristic diversity of a site and detect the presence of special status plant taxa.

The CDFW recommends that:

- Botanical surveys are floristic in nature (every plant taxon that occurs on a site is identified to the taxonomic level necessary to determine rarity and listing status);
- Surveys are conducted in the field at the time of year when target plant taxa are both evident and identifiable (usually during flowering or fruiting), and multiple visits to a site be made (e.g. in early, mid, and late-season) to accurately survey the floristic diversity of the site and detect the presence of all special status plant taxa that are evident and identifiable; and

- Nearby reference populations are visited whenever possible to determine if known special status plant populations are evident and identifiable this year, and to obtain a visual image of the target species, associated habitat, and associated natural community. Reference populations may be particularly important this year to ensure that the timing of surveys is appropriate and to help substantiate negative findings in adverse conditions caused by drought.

More information on surveying for special status plant taxa can be found in CDFW's Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities. Again, additional field seasons of surveys may be necessary to accurately survey the floristic diversity of a site and substantiate negative findings. This may be particularly true when surveying for annual or short-lived perennial plant taxa where an evident and identifiable reference population could not be referenced.

If any special status plants are found within the project area, measures should be taken to prevent disturbance to the species. Exclusion zones should be established around any identified special-status plants. In consultation with a qualified biologist, it should first be attempted to avoid effects of project implementation on rare plants and protect their occurrences/populations. In the event that a special-status plant occurrence cannot be avoided by construction activities, consultation with the Department, and/or other regulatory agencies, as applicable depending on the species regulatory status, should be conducted in order to establish appropriate mitigation measures. If sacrifice seed collection or transplantation are selected as appropriate mitigations, then the following measures should apply: a) collect any mature seeds from the affected plants and store them at an appropriate native plant nursery or comparable facility; b) upon the completion of work, redistribution of the seeds within the original location of the occurrence; c) establish performance standards for survivorship, monitor and document the success rate of the transplanted individuals for three consecutive growing seasons; d) if performance standards are not met, corrective measures should be implemented and monitoring and adaptive management continued until success criteria are met. If, through consultation, it is determined that Ferris' milk-vetch plants cannot be avoided or protected, then an attempt should be made to relocate all Ferris' milk-vetch individuals. Plants that cannot be avoided during construction should be relocated to nearby suitable habitat. If relocation is unsuccessful, consultation should occur again with the Department in order to determine the cause of relocation failure and to establish appropriate corrective remedial measures.

CDFW encourages early coordination to determine appropriate measures to offset project impacts and facilitate future permitting processes and to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to coordinate specific measures if federally-listed species are present within the project limits.

Jurisdictional Delineation and Wetlands

The EIR should identify all the areas under CDFW's jurisdiction per section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code. These areas include all perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral rivers, streams, and lakes in the State and any habitats supported by these features such as wetlands and riparian habitats. If these jurisdictional features are found within the project limits or its vicinity, the EIR should identify any potential impacts to these resources. The EIR should include a delineation of lakes, streams, and associated habitat that will be temporarily and/or permanently impacted by the proposed project including an estimate of impact to each habitat type. Please note that the CDFW definition of wetlands as well as extent of the jurisdictional areas differ from other agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers or the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The EIR should identify the different jurisdictional areas present within the project limits under each agency.

If it is determined that the project would impact areas under CDFW's jurisdiction the EIR must propose mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to these resources.

Migratory Birds and Birds of Prey

Migratory nongame native bird species are protected by international treaty under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S.C., §§ 703-712). CDFW implemented the MBTA by adopting the Fish and Game Code section 3513. Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3800 provide additional protection to nongame birds, birds of prey, their nests and eggs. Potential habitat for nesting birds and birds of prey is present within the project area. The proposed project should disclose all potential activities that may incur a direct or indirect take to nongame nesting birds within the project footprint and its close vicinity. Appropriate avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures to avoid take must be included in the EIR. Measures to avoid the impacts should include species specific work windows, biological monitoring, installation of noise attenuation barriers, etc.

GENERAL

The proposed project may have an impact to fish and/or wildlife habitat and should be evaluated in such a manner to reduce its impacts to biological resources. Assessment of fees under Public Resources Code §21089 and as defined by FGC §711.4 is necessary. Fees are payable by the project applicant upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the lead agency.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code §21092 and §21092.2, the Department requests written notification of proposed actions and pending decisions regarding the proposed project. Written notifications shall be directed to: California Department of Fish and Wildlife Region 2, 1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670.

Thank you for considering our concerns for the proposed project and providing the opportunity to comment. I am available for consultation regarding biological resources and strategies to minimize impacts. If you have questions please contact me by e-mail at Tanya.Sheya@wildlife.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 358-2953.

Sincerely,

Tanya Sheya
Environmental Scientist



North Central Region | Habitat Conservation
1701 Nimbus Road | Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Phone 916.358.2953 | Fax 916.358.2912
Tanya.Sheya@wildlife.ca.gov

Every Californian should conserve water. Find out how at:

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SCOPING MEETING FOR THE
PANHANDLE ANNEXATION AND PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT**

COMMENT PERIOD

April 27, 2016 to May 27, 2016

INTRODUCTION

The City of Sacramento ("City") is the Lead Agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed reorganization (annexation and related detachments) of the Panhandle project area and establishment of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for a portion of the project area (proposed project). Written comments regarding the issues that should be covered in the EIR, including potential alternatives to the proposed project and the scope of the analysis are invited. The EIR for the proposed project is being prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Under CEQA, upon deciding to prepare an EIR, the City of Sacramento as Lead Agency must issue a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform trustee and responsible agencies, as well as the public, of its decision to prepare an EIR. The purpose of the NOP is to provide information describing the project and its potential environmental effects to those who may wish to comment regarding the scope and content of information to be included in the EIR. Agencies should comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The project description, location, and environmental issues that may be affected by development of the project are set forth below. The EIR will evaluate the project-specific and cumulative impacts, identify mitigation measures that may be feasible to lessen or avoid such impacts, and identify alternatives to the proposed project.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS

Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR for the proposed project should be directed to the environmental project manager at the following address by 5:00 p.m. on May 27, 2016. Please include the contact person's full name and address in order for staff to respond appropriately:

Dana Mahaffey
City of Sacramento Community Development Department
Environmental Planning Services
300 Richards Blvd., Third Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811
Telephone: (916) 808-2762
E-mail: dmahaffey@cityofsacramento.org

SCOPING MEETING

A public scoping meeting will be held May 9, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the following location:

Sacramento City Hall
915 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Room CH 1217, 1st Floor

Responsible agencies and members of the public are invited to attend and provide input on the scope of the EIR. The scoping meeting will be conducted in an open house format, so participants can attend at any point during this two-hour window. Written comments regarding relevant issues may be submitted at the meeting.

PROJECT LOCATION/SETTING

The project area comprises 589.3 acres in unincorporated Sacramento County between West Elkhorn Boulevard on the north, a segment of E. Levee Road that adjoins the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal and Sorrento Road on the east, Interstate 80 (I-80) to the south, and residential development on the west (Figure 1). The project area is within the City of Sacramento's Sphere of Influence (SOI) in the North Natomas Community Plan (NNCP) planning area. The Northern Portion is primarily vacant grassland with the exception of the East Natomas Education Complex currently under construction. The area to the south of Del Paso Road, between Del Paso and I-80, Northgate Boulevard and Gateway Park Boulevard, comprising approximately 835 acres, will also be considered for annexation. However, this area is nearly built out with light industrial, warehousing, office and commercial uses and the project does not propose any development in this area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Northern Portion of the proposed annexation area would consist of a PUD for a planned community consisting of residential, commercial, elementary school, and park uses on approximately 367 acres north of Del Paso Road. The remaining approximately 168 acres between the proposed PUD project area and extending north to West Elkhorn Boulevard ("Panhandle North") would remain designated as Planned Development (PD) to accommodate residential uses and the East Natomas Education Complex. The proposed land use map is shown in Figure 2. The table in Figure 2 provides a summary of the proposed land uses in the Northern Portion. The land use plan includes the potential for approximately 2,270 residential units in the entire Northern Portion; however, the EIR will consider the potential for those units plus an additional 10 percent to provide flexibility in the future and account for changes in market conditions that could occur over buildout of the project. No land use changes are proposed for the Southern Portion.

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

The proposed project includes an amendment to the City of Sacramento 2035 General Plan; Pre-zoning to reflect the specific land use designations in the Northern Portion: Tentative Master Parcel Map; establishment of the Panhandle Planned Unit Development (PUD) Guidelines and Schematic Plan for the Northern Portion; Bikeway Master Plan Amendment; Development Agreement.

Review of the proposed project by the Planning and Design Commission would be conducted as part of the EIR review and entitlements process. The project entitlements would ultimately require approval by the City Council.

The proposed project would require annexation of the sphere of influence in project area from Sacramento County into the City of Sacramento. Approval by the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), a responsible agency under CEQA, would be required for the proposed reorganization, (annexation and related detachments) Property Tax Exchange agreement between the City and County.

Additional information and materials relating to the proposed project are available on the City's website <http://portal.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Development/Planning/Environmental/Impact-Reports.aspx>

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

The EIR will analyze potentially significant impacts that could result from construction and operation of the proposed project. Pursuant to Section 15063(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study has not been prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate the full range of environmental issues contemplated for consideration under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The environmental factors that the City has determined could potentially be affected by the proposed project include:

- Agricultural Resources
- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Noise
- Public Services and Utilities
- Traffic/Transportation

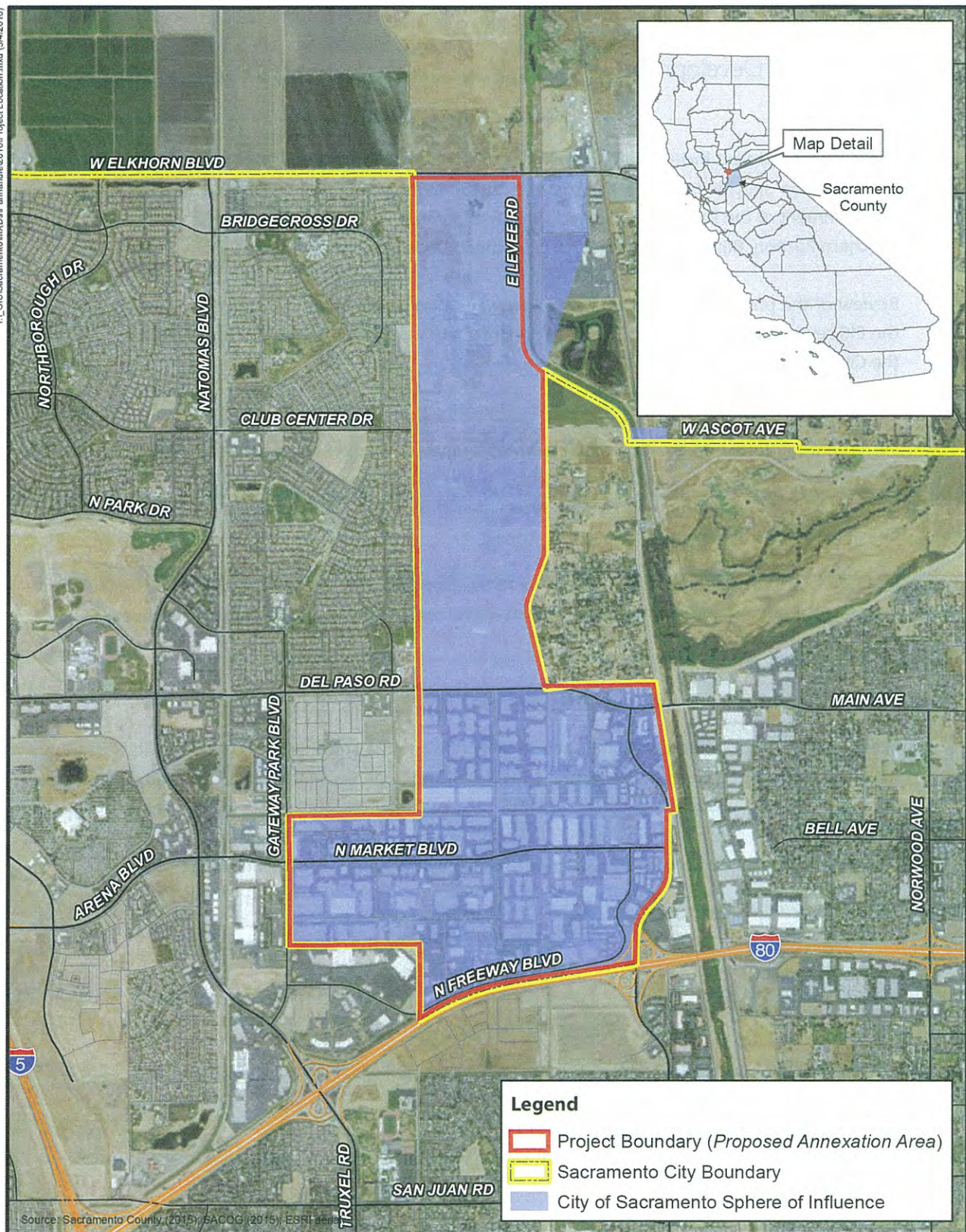
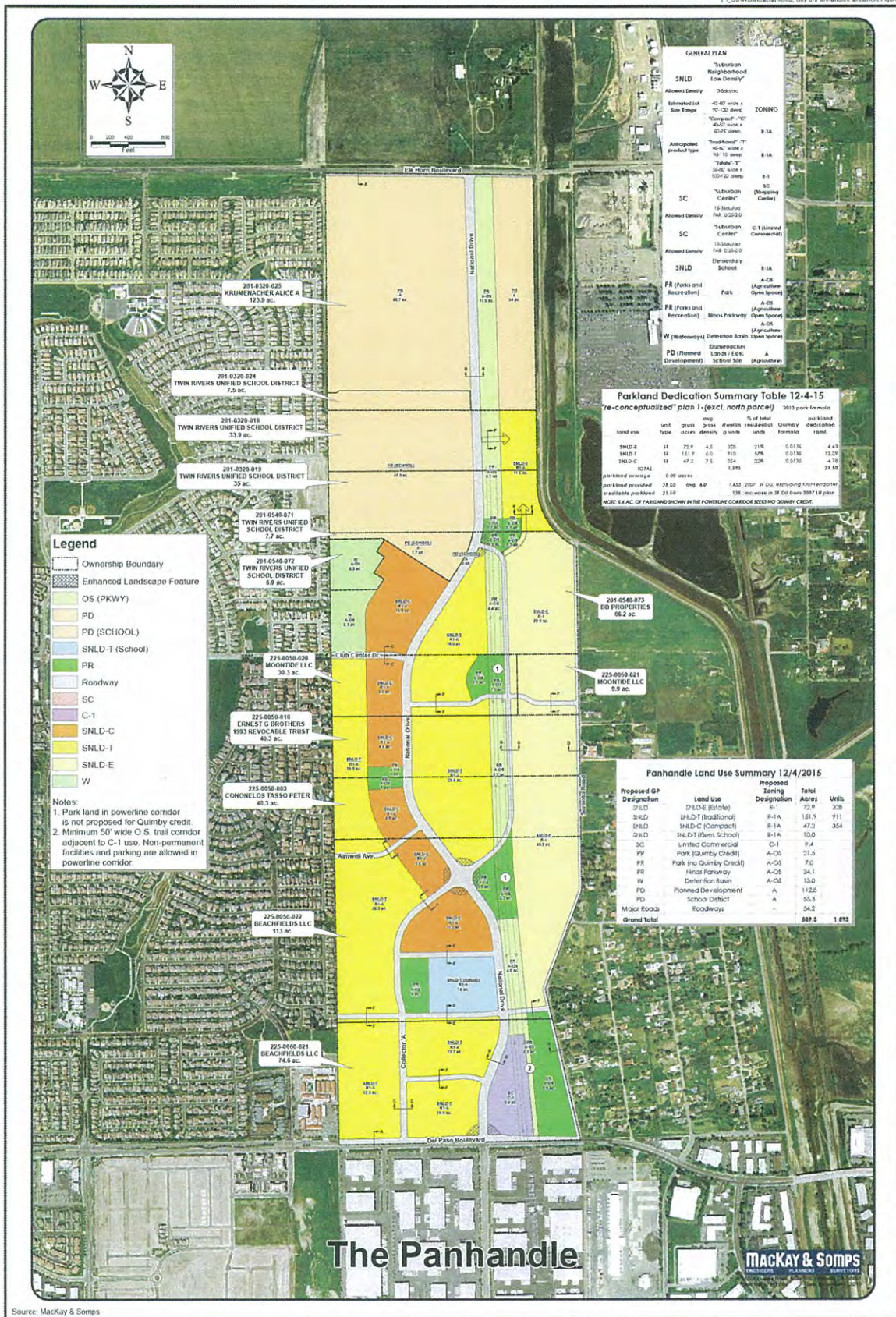


FIGURE 1
Project Location



Source: Mackay & Somps

FIGURE 2
Proposed Land Uses in Northern Portion

From: Kuyper, Richard richard_kuyper@fws.gov
Subject: NOP of the EIR for the Natomas North Precinct Master Plan
Date: May 25, 2016 at 2:08 PM
To: hackc@saccounty.net
Cc: Kellie Berry kellie_berry@fws.gov, Mike Thomas mike_thomas@fws.gov, John Roberts jroberts@natomasbasin.org, Danelle Stylos dstylos@co.sutter.ca.us, Lindsey Alagozian LAlagozian@cityofsacramento.org, Dana Mahaffey DMahaffey@cityofsacramento.org, Stacia Cosgrove scosgrove@cityofsacramento.org, Smith, Todd smithtodd@saccounty.net, Isabel Baer Isabel.baer@wildlife.ca.gov, Tanya Sheya tanya.sheya@wildlife.ca.gov

KR

Hi Catherine,

Due to our high volume of workload we have not been able to sufficiently review the Notice of Preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the **Natomas North Precinct Master Plan** (SCH#2016042079), pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). At this time we have not met with the project proponents but plan to do so in the future. We can offer the following general comments at this time and will continue to work closely with Sacramento County as the North Precinct project moves forward.

We concur with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) May 24, 2016, **comments regarding the potential impact of the North Precinct project on the existing Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP)**. CDFW stated that "the EIR should provide a detailed analysis of how the proposed project will be consistent with all applicable policies, procedures, and goals of the NBHCP. The NBHCP requires that any additional urban development within the Natomas Basin that occurs outside of the current Permitted Areas, with the exception of the Metro Air Park development, including any development with Sacramento County or within the jurisdiction of another Potential Permittee, would constitute a significant departure from the NBHCP's Operating Conservation Program and would trigger a new effects analysis, a new conservation strategy, and issuance of Incidental Take Permits to the Potential Permittee for that additional urban development. CDFW recommends that as part of the effects analysis, the full impact of the development on the efficacy of the NBHCP's carefully designed conservation strategy to minimize and mitigate the impacts of take of the Covered Species associated with a maximum of 17,500 acres of development within the Natomas Basin be thoroughly analyzed and a conservation strategy that adequately addresses the increased impacts to the Covered Species resulting from additional loss of the limited habitat remaining in the basin is prepared prior to authorization of any additional take. This effects analysis would need to evaluate if baseline conditions and assumptions used in the original analysis are still accurate."

In addition, the FWS believes that the effects analysis prepared by the project proponent should be reviewed and approved by the FWS and CDFW. During this review process, FWS will work closely with the project proponent, Sacramento County, CDFW, and the NBHCP permittees (Sutter County, the City of Sacramento, and the **Natomas Basin Habitat Conservancy**) to ensure that the effects analysis provided by the project proponents adequately addresses our concerns regarding the ability of the NBHCP to be successfully implemented in the future.

Finally, we believe that the EIR should be prepared jointly with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document (such as an environmental impact statement). The joint NEPA/CEQA document would be prepared in conjunction with the lead federal agency. Staff reports prepared by Sacramento County indicate that the project proponent plans to pursue a section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permit pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, which requires the preparation of a habitat conservation plan (HCP). Issuance of this permit will likely lead to the FWS being the lead federal agency under NEPA. We believe it is logical that the CEQA and NEPA documents are prepared jointly because the project, as proposed under the EIR, could change dramatically during development of the HCP, which would require the project proponents to amend the CEQA document in the future to match the project description in the potential future HCP.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Rick Kuyper
Senior Biologist
Conservation Planning Division
Endangered Species Program
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
(916) 414-6649

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SCOPING MEETING FOR THE
PANHANDLE ANNEXATION AND PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT**

EXTENSION OF TIME: COMMENT PERIOD

The comment period for the Notice of Preparation of the Environmental Impact Report for the
Panhandle Annexation and Planned Unit Development has been extended to the following:

April 27, 2016 to ~~May 27, 2016~~ June 13, 2016.

Written comments regarding the Notice of Preparation should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m.
June 13, 2016 to:

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