

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee**

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 4, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Via Zoom

13225 Cajalco Road

Perris, CA 92570

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Harry Sandoval, Chairperson, and continued as follows:

1. Roll Call – Self-Introductions

Name	Agency/Reserve
Alex Marks	MWD
Ken Keitzer	California State Parks
Jarin Valencia	City of Riverside, Parks/Sycamore Canyon
Harry Sandoval	RCHCA /Lake Mathews Reserve
Brian Shomo	RCHCA /Lake Mathews Reserve
Riana Fisher	RCHCA Administration
Princess Hester	RCHCA Administration
Joe Sherrock	SWMSR
Joe Messin	UCR/Motte Rimrock
Amanda Swaller	USFWS
James Gannon	BLM
Kristen Lalumiere	BLM
Chelsea Collins	BLM
Cindy Daverin	Mariposa Biology/EI Sobrante Landfill
Stefan Awender	CDFW
Ken Halama	UCR/Motte Rimrock

2. Approval of Minutes from November 5, 2020

The minutes of November 5, 2020, meeting was presented for approval.

MOTION to approve the minutes as presented: James Gannon

SECOND: Jarin Valencia

Motion Approved

3. Public Comment

No comments were offered.

4. RMCC Workshop/Orientation

Harry Sandoval presented a workshop about the RMCC, how and why it was established, what it and its members roles and responsibilities are within the RMCC. Riana Fisher went over the additional services offered through the RMCC to its members, including the endowment funds available to reserve managers. Harry elaborated on the GIS tools available, databases and equipment.

5. SKR Habitat Management Impact on Other Species and Habitats

Brian Shomo discussed a topic that came up during the SKR Management and Monitoring Plan conversation, which is addressing habitat fragmentation using corridors or habitat thinning as a potential research project. SD Zoo is proposing a thinning experiment where you can thin a corridor of riversidian sagescrub to make the habitat more suitable to SKR. While beneficial for SKR, this experiment will affect other species.

James Gannon said that this is already being done by the degradation of the sagescrub habitat itself, and that wildfires do open corridors naturally. Brian mentioned this would be for areas this is not already occurring, perhaps in smaller patches. James voiced his concern that this would affect other species, such as California Gnatcatcher.

Amanda Swaller brought up similar thinning projects within the wash plan area with SBKR, which resulted in increased gnatcatcher use and had good results. The biggest concern is not the habitat, but the substrate. James added that it involved thinning the thatch mostly and has a prescribed burn to see how that will affect the vegetation.

Cindy Daverin and Joe Sherrock mentioned that existing roads serve as effective dispersal corridors for SKR but there may be a few opportunities for more corridors in isolated patches. Joe's concerns were distance between patches and width of thinning break and factors such as terrain, soil conditions, hydrology of the corridor in regards to SKR suitable habitat. Cal Fire does shaded fuel breaks, perhaps this could dovetail with that for SKR dispersal opportunities.

Brian discussed that thinning might be a useful tool in areas where degraded sagescrub recovers to the point of affecting suitable SKR habitat. Brian said that if the group decides this is a useful tool, a proposal can be drafted to identify details and did a roundtable for consideration.

Ken Halama brought up that there are multiple studies about connectivity with rodents, and how if populations increase, they will disperse from non-preferential habitat anyway. Since these studies are not specific to SKR and populations may not increase enough for this to occur naturally, Brian recommended it would still be a useful tool to increase occupied land. Ken Keitzer agreed its worth looking into, and its important to look at this from a holistic perspective. Next steps are to perform a literature search, reach out to experts and ask Debra Shier with SD Zoo to write a proposal.

Future RMCC Meeting Items and Direction

Harry opened a discussion on what the group would like to see in future RMCC meetings to make them more engaging, such as more workshops or research presentations. Amanda Swaller brought up that she wanted to know if the group wanted clarification of permits and agreements. Brian added that if Amanda knows about new regulatory policies, it would be helpful to include that at the meetings. Amanda said she will keep the group abreast of items that affect the species. She mentioned all HCPs are on hold for 60 days currently.

James Gannon would like to see information and opportunities about SKR genetics.

6. Roundtable / Reserve Manager Reports

a. MWD

Alex Marks: No updates.

b. UCR Motte

Ken Halama: Ditto with what Joe is working on.

c. El Sobrante Landfill

Cindy Daverin: Looking to get into a VMP and do some burning. Hydroseeding and Dudleya transplanting now.

d. BLM

James Gannon: Working on the SKR Rangewide Management and Monitoring Plan and will start vegetation management treatments soon. They burned 9 acres at Lake Mathews in preparation for the CalFire training course scheduled for May. Had some thatchwork done over the winter and will revisit as needed. Also will focus on Stinknet when it pops up. Future work coming up in the Potrero ACEC at Canyon Lake and Steele Peak.

Kristen Lalumiere: Recently joined BLM from Joshua National Park.

Chelsea Collins: No updates.

e. RCHCA Administration

Riana Fisher: No updates.

f. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Amanda Swaller: If anyone needs help with HCP, to contact her. Reinforces the idea of holistic management.

g. Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve

Joe Sherrock: Nothing much this quarter, still working on VMP with CalFire. Trying to get environmental checklist pushed through.

h. Lake Mathews / Estelle Mountain

Harry Sandoval: In a holding pattern. Waiting for the rain, has new herbicides that UCR recommended for Stinknet and for seeding. Also did some mowing on MWD side. Planning on SKR monitoring later in the year, at least 10 grids at LM and hopefully Sycamore Canyon.

i. CDFW

Stefan Awender: No updates.

k. California State Parks

Ken Keitzer: Planning ahead for spring with vegetation management and if a prescribed burn is appropriate.

7. Next RMCC Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 27, 2021.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14am.