

## Draft Western Placer County Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan

### *Questions and Answers*



#### 1. What is a habitat conservation plan (HCP)?

An HCP is a planning document that is required as part of an application for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It describes the anticipated effects of the proposed taking of a listed species, how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated, and how the HCP will be funded.

HCPs can apply to both listed and non-listed species, including those that are candidates or have been proposed for listing. Conserving species before they are in danger of extinction or are likely to become so can provide early benefits and prevent the need for listing.

#### 2. How can people submit their comments?

The 60-day comment period ends August 20, 2019. Any time before that deadline, people can submit their comments by U.S. Mail, fax or at public meetings.

Mike Thomas  
Conservation Planning Division  
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605  
Sacramento, California 95825  
Fax: 916-414-6713

#### Public Meetings

DATE: August 1, 2019  
TIME: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
Placer County Planning Commission  
Planning Commission Chambers  
3091 County Center Drive  
Auburn, CA 95603

DATE: August 15, 2019  
TIME: 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
City of Lincoln Planning Commission  
Lincoln City Hall  
600 Sixth Street  
Lincoln, CA 95648

#### 3. Who are the applicants?

Placer County, City of Lincoln, Placer County Water Agency, South Placer Regional Transportation Authority and Placer Conservation Authority collectively prepared the draft Western Placer County

Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan and applied for a 50-year incidental take permit.

**4. How much land does the draft Western Placer Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan cover, and what counties will be affected?**

The geographic scope of the draft plan encompasses approximately 260,000 acres in western Placer County and a small portion of Sutter County.

**5. Will any private lands be affected by this habitat conservation plan?**

Habitat conservation plans are for non-federal entities, and most of the projects proposed under the Western Placer HCP are private development projects. The applicants in the regional plans are applying for a permit on behalf of private landowners, so private landowners do not all have to apply to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (or the state) individually.

**6. Why is the incidental take permit period 50 years?**

The initial permit term is proposed to be 50 years, which corresponds to the county's long-range growth projection scenario. This length of time allows for the full and successful implementation of the covered activities, the conservation strategy, the monitoring and adaptive management program, and the funding plan.

**7. What species are covered by the habitat conservation plan?**

There are 14 proposed covered species—some of which are federally listed as threatened or endangered.

Federally Listed Species

1. [Valley elderberry longhorn beetle](#) (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)—threatened
2. [Conservancy fairy shrimp](#) (*Branchinecta conservatio*) – endangered
3. [Vernal pool fairy shrimp](#) (*Branchinecta lynchi*) – threatened
4. [Vernal pool tadpole shrimp](#) (*Lepidurus packardii*) – endangered
5. [Central Valley steelhead](#) – Distinct Population Segment (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)– threatened
6. [California red-legged frog](#) (*Rana draytonii*) – threatened
7. [Giant garter snake](#) (*Thamnophis gigas*)—threatened

Non-listed Species

8. [Central Valley fall/late fall-run Chinook salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit](#) (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
9. [Foothill yellow-legged frog](#) (*Rana boylei*)
10. [Western pond turtle](#) (*Actinemys marmorata*)
11. [Tricolored blackbird](#) (*Agelaius tricolor*)
12. [Western burrowing owl](#) (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*)
13. [California black rail](#) (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. Coturniculus*)
14. [Swainson's hawk](#) (*Buteo swainsoni*)

**8. What will Placer County and the city of Lincoln do to offset the harm to these species?**

The applicants developed the draft Western Placer HCP and Natural Community Conservation Plan, as required under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act, to offset impacts to the covered species associated with implementing activities covered in the plan. All covered activities under the draft HCP would incorporate avoidance and minimization measures to help reduce impacts to covered species. In addition, the draft HCP would establish a reserve system in western Placer County (based on willing sellers), comprised of approximately 47,000 acres that would be protected, managed and enhanced for the benefit of the covered species.

**9. How will residents of Placer County be affected?**

The Western Placer HCP will not affect most residents of Placer County. The HCP covers urban, suburban and rural development and infrastructure (utilities, water, transportation, etc.) projects. It also covers conservation and restoration actions. Although the HCP does not authorize these individual activities, those projects would be authorized under the same discretion and authority of the local (city or county) land-use jurisdictions as they are currently. Some of the land conserved through the HCP will be open to the general public for certain recreational activities; however, privately held conserved land under conservation easement for the HCP would remain private, under the continued control of the landowner, and not open to the general public for recreation or other purposes.