

# San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan Trust

## Meeting Minutes

### June 7, 2021

The meeting convened at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom Online Conference Call.

**TRUSTEES PRESENT:** Mike Callagy (County of San Mateo), Clay Holstine (City of Brisbane), Mike Futrell (City of South San Francisco)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Hannah Ormshaw (SMCP NRM, HCP Habitat Manager), Stephen Stolte (City of Daly City), Nicholas Calderon (SMCP), Brett Jones (fiscal auditor), Sean Correa (SMCP NRM), Evan Cole (SMCP NRM), Rolando Jorquera (SMCP), Austin Lam (SMCP)

#### 1) Public Comments

One written public comment was submitted in advance of the meeting from Craig Carlton Dremann, addressing the following topics:

- “Agenda Item 1B HCP Maintenance Work: Since 1982, how many acres of grassland have been restored back to 95% native cover and also contain HCP-required butterfly food and nectar plants like Lupines, Violets, and Stonecrop plants?”
- “Agenda Item 1C Grant Award from the State Coastal Conservancy: For restoration of San Francisco Lessengia plants, how is this grant award going to be awarded? Would it be to the company that has the largest number of restored Lessengia plants in California over the last decade? If the grant award is for the most plants, then my company, The Reveg Edge in Redwood City, probably holds the world record for restoring Lessengia plants so far. On Fortune Acres in Woodside across from 144 Alta Mesa, six years ago I started with 100 plants and last year they were increased to 300,000 plants, and today there are more than one million plants getting ready to flower.”
- “Agenda Item 4A Grazing Technical Advisory Committee: Who is on that committee, and how do you contact them, and have they posted any data from the permanent transects with the measurement of the before grazing weeds and native plant cover percentages? Has the county filed any CEQA documents regarding this proposed grazing project? How is this project exempt from full CEQA review when exotic animal is a known destroyer of 99.99% of the entire California native grassland ecosystem? Is the county legally required under CEQA to look into any alternatives that can achieve the grassland restoration goals with zero environmental damages, whereas cattle grazing has been the number one guaranteed destroyer of 99.99% of California grasslands since the arrival of the Europeans? For example, consider the alternative of the special line methods I invented that produces 95% or better native cover within 4-5 years,

that you can see at [www.ecoseeds.com](http://www.ecoseeds.com). Has the committee set up permanent transects, and will they be annually running the percentage cover of the weeds and native plants before and after to determine if grazing is actually benefiting of the native plants or could be increasing the weeds? Will that annual percentage cover data be available online somewhere? Has the county posted a bond or put together a huge CEQA mitigation damages contingency fund in case the grazing project damages the native plant resources to pay for the hundreds of thousands of dollars that might be needed to restore the grasslands to their pre-graze conditions? Will this grazing project be testing soil annually to look for changes before and after grazing in soil nutrients and organic matter, and will those annual soil tests be posted somewhere?"

No oral public comments were made during this meeting.

## **2) Action to Set the Agenda and Approve the Consent Agenda Items**

Action: Motion/Second Callagy/Futrell to set the agenda and approve the consented agenda items.

Motion carried 3-0.

## **3) Report Backs\***

### **a) Dedication Status Updates**

- Ms. Ormshaw provided a memo outlining updates on the Toll Brothers property dedication of Parcel 107 (located on the Northeast Ridge) to the City of Brisbane, in conjunction with the development described in the 2008 HCP amendment.
- Communication facilitated by the City of Brisbane has occurred since the prior meeting, leading to a finalized agreement that satisfies the standards for Acceptance of Any Dedicated Lands by the County of San Mateo (in accordance with the SBMHCP).
- Main outstanding issue in the path to dedication was that the site restoration requirements hadn't been met. As a result, Toll Brothers agreed to provide funding to the County in the amount of \$127,500 to complete the remaining necessary habitat restoration work and to address neglected management during the 5 years the dedication process was pending. This restoration work will be overseen by the County of San Mateo Parks Department.
- Both parties have agreed that such work satisfies the requirement for the site, thus meeting the conditions of minimal maintenance necessitated by the standards for accepting dedications.
- The City of Brisbane and the County of San Mateo are currently working with Toll Brothers to obtain a title report for the parcels.

No action required for this item.

**b) Status of Expenditures for Maintenance Work for Parcels 1, 2 & 6 – South San Francisco**

- \$24,216 is the current balance remaining for habitat maintenance work for parcels 1, 2, and 6 (located within the boundaries of the City of South San Francisco). These funds have primarily been used for fennel control, as this invasive plant species is prevalent throughout the three parcels and negatively impacts butterfly habitat and grasslands located within them.
- Contractors procured by County Parks to perform fennel control in the spring of 2020 were unable to complete their work due to weather conditions (specifically high winds) which prevented safe and effective chemical treatment of fennel.
- Goal is to have contractors out spring 2021 to treat fennel in these parcels, but this is again weather dependent.

No action required for this item.

**c) Updates on Grant Awards from the State Coastal Conservancy & Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service**

- County Parks is currently coordinating with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to finalize a supplement agreement to the current Master Funding Agreement between the two entities, which runs through FY 2029-2030. This supplemental agreement would outline the \$137,900 grant award given for the SBMHCP Grazing Pilot Program. Once finalized, it will be sent to County Manager Mike Callagy for execution under the existing Master Funding Agreement.
- In 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also awarded a \$20,000 grant for restoration of the federally-endangered San Francisco Lessingia. Work is underway for the project in coordination with San Bruno Mountain Watch, and it is anticipated the majority of the project work will occur through FY 2021-2022.

No action required for this item.

**4) Review and Approval of San Bruno Mountain HCP Budget**

**a) Review and Update of Planned Expenditures for Habitat Conservation Activities within the San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan area for FY 2021-22\***

- Ms. Ormshaw discussed the proposed changes to the budget for FY 2021-22.
  - A larger portion of funds will be dedicated to grazing management to support the Grazing Pilot Program project, which will be allocated from the Unrestricted Fund balance and provide matching funds to the grant

received from the California State Coastal Conservancy and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

- A separate line in the budget sheet has been created for the grazing management grant funds, which come out to the amount of \$92,000, and this will cover the anticipated expenditures for the project for FY 2021-22.
  - Total project budget for the Grazing Pilot Program is upwards of over \$400,00.
  - There is a listed addition of \$80,000 for fuel reduction, allocated from the Unrestricted Fund balance and approved in the November 2020 meeting, which is to be used for activities under the County Park's Wildfire Fuel Management Program priority project list for fuel reduction at San Bruno Mountain within the HCP area.
  - There is a \$6,000 addition to the budget to be used for other contracts, one being ongoing expenditures for a project with Creekside Science to complete statistical analysis of butterfly monitoring data. The project is still ongoing, and remainder is yet to be invoiced.
  - There is a \$20,000 addition to the budget coming from the grant awarded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for San Francisco Lessingia restoration, to be used for a project with San Bruno Mountain Watch that will conduct restoration on Daly City dunes for this rare plant species.
  - There is a carryover of funding to be used for the management of Parcels 1, 2, and 6.
- Mr. Futrell had two questions after Ms. Ormshaw concluded her discussion of the changes in budget for FY 2021-22.
- The first question was regarding where the Grazing Pilot Program will occur in relation to South San Francisco. Ms. Ormshaw explained the location as being in the very southeast corner of the park and noted that a map will be presented later in the meeting depicting this location. She also stated that thorough public outreach will be performed in advance of the program's implementation to ensure that those in the area are aware of what's happening.
  - Mr. Futrell's second question addressed the location of Parcels 1, 2, and 6 and their adjacency to South San Francisco, which Ms. Ormshaw confirmed.
- Mr. Holstine asked about the timeline on the McKesson and the Toll Brothers' restoration projects.
- Ms. Ormshaw responded that the McKesson restoration is ongoing; a five-year plan had been drafted, which was first implemented in 2018, and there is still a fair amount of funding remaining for the project. The project's restoration plan recommends eucalyptus removals in the McKesson parcels, which will take up a fair proportion of the remaining funds and occur this year. Ms. Ormshaw does not expect to expend all of the remaining McKesson funds this year, as the plan is to phase it

annually and re-treat areas or perform follow up as necessary. In total, she anticipates expenditures of up to \$100,000 to be used for the McKesson parcels in FY 2021-22.

- The Toll Brothers restoration will depend on the progress and timing of the site's dedication, as well as when the funds are received from Toll Brothers, but the intention is to spend the entirety of those funds this year to restore the site in advance of the Grazing Pilot Program project.
- Ms. Ormshaw clarified that the McKesson parcels are currently part of the County Parks system, whereas the Toll Brothers parcel is in the process of being acquired.
- Mr. Callagy asked about the location of the additional fuel reduction projects that will be performed, to which Ms. Ormshaw said she will share a map depicting this later in the meeting.

Action: Motion/Second Futrell/Holstine to approve the budget.

Motion carried 3-0.

#### **5) Review of 2020-2021 Annual Activities Highlights\*\***

- The annual activities report for the SBMHCP has been posted to the San Mateo County Parks website, which contains more thorough information on annual butterfly monitoring results and other habitat management activities.
- A map is presented that shows the habitat enhancement and vegetation management performed for 2019-2020. Management units that saw high levels of management include Serbian Ravine, Olivet Ravine, Southeast Ridge, Hillside, and Buckeye Canyon, and the total treatment area was 485 acres. Work mostly focused on native scrub removal where scrub is encroaching into high-quality butterfly habitat and grassland areas, as well as removal of invasive species such as jubata grass, fennel, broom, radish, gorse, poison hemlock, eucalyptus, and English ivy. Most work was performed by contractors, with some of it also being performed by County Parks staff.
- After February 2020 fire burned a large patch of gorse, County Parks maintenance staff used bulldozers to crush down burned gorse skeletons to flatten them and make it easier for contractors and other crew to come perform an invasive species control follow up and prevent regrowth using herbicides. Maintenance crew also used masticator on an additional patch of gorse adjacent to burned area to perform a full removal of the stand, yielding a total removal area of 12 acres.
- Butterfly monitoring surveys focused on Callippe Silverspot and San Bruno Elfin occurred in 2020; across the mountain, there was an average of 30 Callippe sightings per hour, and throughout all surveys, a total of 1,191 San Bruno Elfin

larvae were found. Data has not yet been analyzed for the 2021 Mission Blue butterfly surveys, as the surveys were completed last week.

- As mentioned in budget, Creekside Science is working on statistical analysis of historic butterfly data. Goal with this is to better inform management decisions and see trends in relation to recovery status.
- San Francisco Lessingia restoration project is being led by San Bruno Mountain Watch, who have stewarded the site for a while. The grant being awarded for the project will be instrumental in identifying effective propagation and seeding methods for the species.
- A Residual Dry Matter and Grassland Productivity Study and a Baseline Biological Resources Assessment have both been completed for the Cattle Grazing Pilot project, and they will be posted to County Parks website soon. A displayed map depicts the two pilot areas, one at Northeast Ridge and one at Southeast Slope. Tasks for this year will involve working on long-term monitoring and reporting plan, grazing management plan, and infrastructure planning.
- Mission Blue translocations are ongoing; this year the San Francisco Parks and Recreation Department have been collecting Mission Blue butterflies and translocating them to Twin Peaks, moving 40 females and 20 males so far.
- Bay checkerspot reintroduction is ongoing this spring. Creekside Science introduced larvae to the Northeast Ridge, which has a high non-native host plant presence and thus strong potential for successful reintroduction of the species.
- Volunteer stewardship and restoration efforts have been restarted recently. Events include weeding around Ranch Road trail area and pulling broom at Northeast Ridge, with plans to continue hosting events in the future.
- Following no questions, Ms. Ormshaw presented a map of the San Bruno Mountain fuel reduction projects. Qualifying areas are ones with invasive species concerns or dense eucalyptus stands in close proximity to other properties or neighborhoods. Fuel breaks will be created near Franciscan Park Community, Crocker Street Entrance, and Alta Vista Avenue. Work will also continue this year with removing gorse along Saddle Loop Trail.

No action required for this update.

## **6) Upcoming & Recent Meetings**

### **a) Grazing TAC**

- Last meeting was in June 2021. TAC meetings will continue be held throughout the year on a quarterly basis.

### **b) Natural Resource Coordination – Quarterly**

- Had spring meeting in May, and next meeting will take place in August.

### **c) Trustees Meeting – May 2022**

- The timing of a May meeting works well for fiscal staff to prepare the budget information and to be able to present budget information to trustees in advance of a new fiscal year.

**7) Window for Public Comment.**

There were none.

Action: Motion/Second Callagy/Futrell to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried 3-0.

\*Oral Report

\*\*PowerPoint presentation