

EACCS Landowner Information Meeting
Wednesday, June 18, 2008
Hosted by the Conservation Partnership
Presented and Moderated by Jim Robins

The following questions and statements were derived from the participants during the evening.

The participants want the information shared with other landowners.

Questions about EACCS and the planning process for the Steering Committee :

1. Where is the 'Scientific Review' in the EACCS process? Learn from the Bay Area Open Space Council's Upland Goals Project, which utilizes Technical Peer Review in an advisory role. This will be key for not only developing the baseline bio info, but for developing appropriate management tools for conservation.
2. Can we use the same Technical Review team approach for EACCS?
3. How are mitigation projects chosen now (i.e. how does each agency on the Steering Committee currently choose mitigation sites and get them approved)?
4. How will long-term management and monitoring of mitigation sites be addressed? How will it be considered in the plan?
5. Some Landowners may be willing to share technical information about their specific parcels as part of the process to "ground truth" Jones and Stokes data. Would this be helpful?
6. Endowments: What do mitigation easement endowments look like (i.e. how are they going to be derived)? Who will manage the endowments?
7. Easements: Who holds them? Who monitors them?
8. Concern that there be adequate easement holders and monitoring capacity planned for in EACCS so implementation can move smoothly and provide confidence to landowners.
9. How do we value/manage/address existing on-property encumbrances (e.g. power lines, pipelines, right of ways, zoning restrictions) when conservation values are there, too?
10. What is impact of commercial/industrial zoning in rural/buffer areas, when there are conservation values on the property?
11. Will EACCS force mitigation to stay in the county? If so, will there be specific language in EACCS that makes this goal explicit? How is it enforced?
12. How might implementation of EACCS affect land prices? Will "proximity" to impact site affect price/value? What about size of parcel, and other variables?
13. Will other "non-biological" variables such as supporting local agricultural operations (i.e. keeping family ranches and farms in business) be weighed into the ranking/valuation of easement properties?
14. Will EACCS help leverage other funds for conservation?
15. What does EACCS mean and not mean to landowners who don't want to sell easements?

Landowners' Goals and Objectives for the EACCS

1. Mitigation should be required to stay in the County.
2. EACCS can fund PLCS for sustainability and consistency
3. Landowners should form their own Ad Hoc Committee to:
 - o Determine and communicate landowner interests/concerns with a unified voice
 - o Inform other landowners of what's going on
 - o Advocate for rural landowners and equitable implementation of EACCS
4. EACCS should work with USFWS to live up to California Rangeland Conservation Coalition (CRCC) objectives (<http://www.carangeland.org/index.html>) and apply it here – which also supports the County's and public's will (Measure D, Vision 2010) to support ag.
5. EACCS should also be a forum for educating local agencies (steering committee) about CRCC and how it directly relates to EACCS.

6. Critters/habitat should be viewed as a “crop” that landowners can derive value from
7. Develop an “open market” for easement holders
8. EACCS should ensure ‘Ag land’ remains Ag - i.e. does not become primarily parkland
9. EACCS has roles other than mitigation streamlining: Ag viability/support of working landscapes- these are key by-products of an effective implementation and should help keep families on land to maintain long-term ag viability and resource stewardship for public as well as private lands. Make this secondary goal or by-product of EACCS explicit in language on values and implementation
10. EACCS should consider ways to benefit all types of private landowners – commercial, rural residential, parcels of all sizes
11. Provide certainty for private, rural landowners.
12. Landowners want to maintain some control of their land (i.e. easements should be valued over fee-title acquisition).
13. Landowners want free market in easement opportunities
14. EACCS can help “pay” private landowners for the public’s benefits of open space and habitat the public is not otherwise paying for but enjoying the benefits of (landscapes, open space, habitat, critters, ecosystem services)

Landowner Ad Hoc Committee

Purposes:

- o Determine and communicate landowner interests/concerns to Steering Committee, Users Advisory Group, and the community.
- o Develop clear, concise, uniform messages that have been vetted in Ad Hoc.
- o Relate to elected bodies who have staff on steering committee
- o Inform other landowners of what’s going on. i.e. opportunities, community relations
- o Advocate for landowners. Make sure landowners have a voice - unified voice.
- o Attend UAG meetings as ‘official’ representative of landowners. (Appointed ‘landowners’ don’t feel they represent anyone but themselves.)
- o Request support letters

Recruit participants:

- o Recruit a core group and hold open meetings, other communications
- o Reps from all types – commercial, ag, rural, residents, other?
- o Invite the conservation organizations in CA Rangeland Conservation Coalition to participate.
- o Particularly notify PLCS clients, and encourage them to attend UAG meetings.

Communication: Website, email

Regular UAG meetings: 2nd Thursday 2-4 pm. These are open to the public.

Miscellaneous notes:

1. “Letter of intent” or Resolution was proposed by landowners to ask the Steering Committee member councils and boards to explicitly support the concept of using implementation of EACCS to not only address biological issues (the primary driver) but to address a secondary goal of supporting working landscapes and agriculture in the County.
2. Consider developing a landowner cooperative for conservation purposes.
3. CA Rangeland Conservation Coalition goals include:
 - Keeping common species common
 - Protecting whole private ranches and helping ranchers’ viability
 - How do we utilize CRCC here? Speaker at joint steering and UAG?
4. Explain: Difference between conservation and mitigation easements.
5. Stewardship must be a prominent factor in EACCS conservation implementation (i.e. balancing the appropriate level of grazing or other management activities and where on the landscape these tools must be considered to support species conservation.