

2017 Year in Review

East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/ Natural Community Conservation Plan

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/ Natural Community Conservation Plan

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan / Natural Community Conservation Plan (the "ECCC HCP/NCCP") gives local jurisdictions control over endangered species permitting.

Under the ECCC HCP/NCCP, project proponents pay a fee or provide their own conservation, conduct limited avoidance measures and receive species permits from their local land use agency. Mitigation fees and grants fund Preserve System acquisitions, management, and restoration.

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (the "Conservancy") implements and ensures compliance with the Plan and oversees assembly and operation of the ECCC HCP/NCCP Preserve System.

Conservancy Board Members

Joel Bryant
City of Brentwood

Diane Burgis
Contra Costa County

Salvatore Evola
City of Pittsburg

Keith Haydon
City of Clayton

Randy Pope
City of Oakley



The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy celebrated 10 years of implementation of the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP. In 2017, streamlined permitting through the ECCC HCP/NCCP provided permit coverage for 17 economic development, infrastructure, and habitat restoration projects. The Conservancy, together with its funding and acquisition partners, acquired four properties totaling 599.2 acres of biologically-rich habitat for the ECCC HCP/NCCP's growing Preserve System. The Conservancy continues to keep conservation ahead of permitted impacts. In 2017, one new restoration project was constructed - the Ang Riparian Restoration Project.



East Contra Costa County
Habitat Conservancy

Project Permitting

The ECCC HCP/NCCP gives local cities and agencies control over state and federal endangered species permitting in their jurisdiction. In 2017, 17 projects received take coverage under the Plan, including 9 urban development projects, 6 rural operations and maintenance projects, and 2 Preserve System activities. These projects total approximately 95.3 acres of permanent impacts and 32.1 acres of temporary impacts on terrestrial land cover types; 1.17 acres of permanent impacts and 3.94 acres of temporary impacts on aquatic habitats; and 60 linear feet of temporary impacts on streams.

The ECCC HCP/NCCP was designed to enable permit streamlining to extend beyond endangered species regulations and include regional permitting under state and federal laws for impacts on jurisdictional wetlands and waters. On May 4, 2012, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued Regional General Permit 1 (RGP) aligned with the ECCC HCP/NCCP. This Permit was reissued on April 12, 2017 and has a five-year duration. The RGP streamlines wetland permitting in the entire Plan Area by aligning the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures in the Plan with the Corps' wetland permitting requirements. To date, 16 covered projects and 2 Conservancy restoration projects have benefitted from coordinated permitting under the RGP.

Permitting Program Highlights:

- **Morgan Territory Slide Repair Project:** The Contra Costa County Public Works Department implemented the Morgan Territory Slide Repair Project. During the 2016/2017 winter season, heavy rains caused a section of hills to slide, rendering a portion of Morgan Territory Road unsafe for public use. The project included the installation of a tieback and soldier pile wall to stabilize the hillside above the road and a stitch pile wall on the downhill side to stabilize the road. Once the walls were in place, the roadway was excavated, compacted, and reconstructed. During the construction phase of the slide repair, local traffic was diverted via a temporary bypass road allowing local residents and business owners access to their homes and businesses during road construction.
- **PG&E Walnut Crossover Rebuild Project:** Pacific Gas and Electric Company increased the operational reliability of gas transmission pipelines 131 and 114, and increased the reliability and flexibility of the Bay Area Loop of gas pipelines, by rebuilding the existing undersized Walnut Crossover station near Los Vaqueros Reservoir in the southeastern corner of the Permit Area. The project included the excavation and modification of the existing facilities at the Walnut Crossover station and construction of new above-ground facilities that replaced the existing undersized facilities.

ACTIVITIES BY THE NUMBERS

Projects Permitted

In 2017: 17
Cumulative: 143

Fees Received

In 2017: \$2,017,170
Cumulative: \$15,896,331

Acres Perm. Impacted

In 2017: 96.4
Cumulative: 627.6

Restoration Projects Constructed

In 2017: 1
Cumulative: 10

Acres Acquired

In 2017: 599.2
Cumulative: 13,137.4

Grant Funds Received

In 2017: \$4,881,931
Cumulative: \$60,518,100

Partnerships

The Conservancy continues to work closely with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) and Save Mount Diablo on land acquisition opportunities, management of Preserve System lands, and habitat restoration projects. The EBRPD has been the Conservancy's primary partner in Preserve System acquisitions in the Plan implementation. These acquisitions total 599.2 acres of newly protected land in 2017.

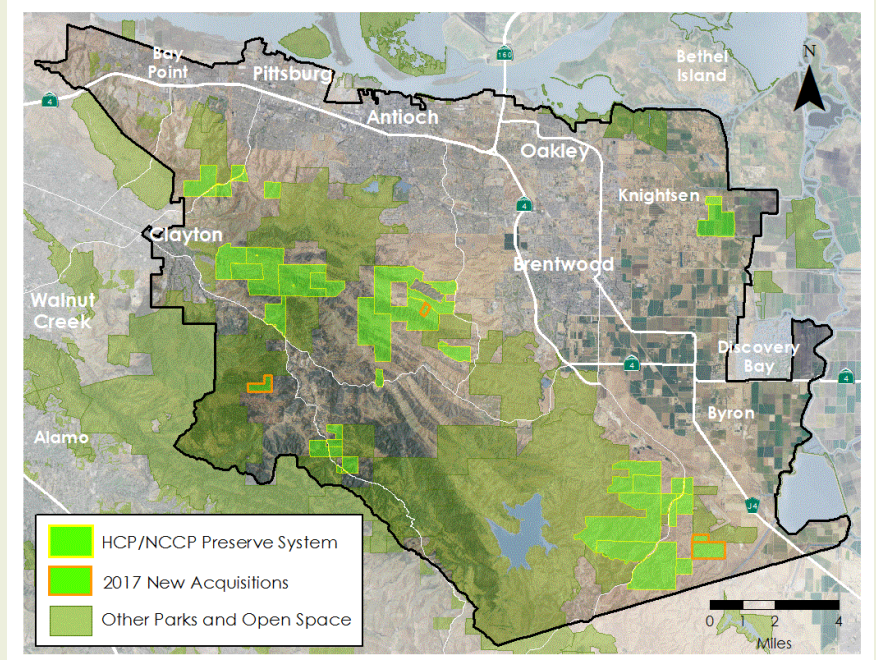
The Conservancy's other partners include State and Federal regulatory and funding agencies, as well as members of the development community, conservation advocates, agricultural representatives and members of the public. The Conservancy will continue to build on these partnerships and expand on collaborative conservation projects and efforts in the HCP/NCCP Plan Area.

Land Acquisition

The Conservancy funds land acquisition from willing sellers to assemble the Preserve System. The Conservancy has made significant progress toward acquisition goals during the first ten years of Plan implementation. In 2017, four properties were acquired, adding 599.2 acres of land to the Preserve System. All but one acquisition to date, totaling 13,137 acres, have been completed in partnership with EBRPD, where EBRPD owns and manages those Preserve System lands. The Viera North Peak property, acquired in 2017 from Save Mount Diablo, is owned by the Conservancy with the anticipation of transferring the property to California State Parks. The Conservancy continues to stay ahead of the average pace necessary to assemble the 30,300-acre Preserve System estimated to be required by Year 30 of the Plan (2037).

Highlights of achievements:

- Over 1/3 of the Preserve System has been assembled by year 10 of Plan implementation.
- The Viera North Peak property was the first acquisition project in acquisition Subzone 4a, and resulted in preservation of 101 acres of chaparral with approximately 95% of the property modeled as Alameda whipsnake suitable core habitat.
- The acquisitions of the Campos and Casey properties in 2017 added an additional 377 acres of grassland to the Byron Hills area.
- Acquisition of the Roddy Home Ranch property eliminated an inholding within the larger Roddy Ranch property.



Habitat Restoration and Creation

The Plan requires stream, wetland and pond restoration and creation to compensate for impacts to these habitat types. The Conservancy has aggressively pursued wetland and pond restoration requirements. To date, ten restoration projects have been constructed. These restoration projects provide a range of benefits to covered species.



Ang Riparian Restoration Project (Photo credit: Save Mt. Diablo)

Conservancy projects are monitored and managed to ensure that they achieve habitat goals. This intensive monitoring and management continues for a minimum of five years. Close monitoring of restoration sites has informed management actions including: reseeding areas, adjusting grazing patterns, and aggressively combating invasive weeds.

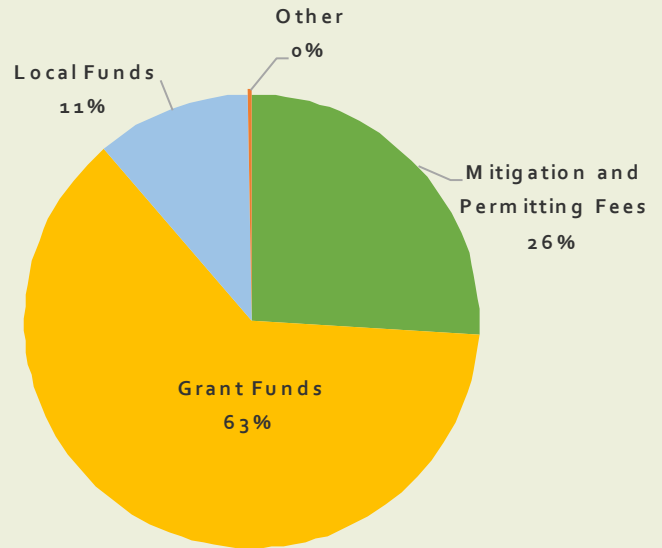
One new restoration project was constructed in 2017. The Ang Riparian Restoration Project. The objective of this project, located on the 462-acre Ang property, is similar to that of the Irish Canyon Riparian Restoration Project: improve riparian woodland habitat for wildlife by filling in gaps in existing vegetation along the banks of Irish Canyon Creek. The restoration plan called for a mix of valley oak, buckeye, and willow across five Riparian Planting Areas totaling 192 individuals.

Funding

The Conservancy receives revenue from the following primary sources: mitigation and permitting fees (development, wetland, and temporary impact fees, administrative/staff time fees, and contributions to recovery payments) and grants. These sources fund Preserve System acquisitions, management, monitoring, and restoration projects.

Conservancy Revenue in 2017

	Amount
Mitigation and Permitting Fees ¹	\$2,022,170
Grant Funds ²	\$4,881,931
Local Funds ³	\$848,188
Other ⁴	\$24,572
Total	\$7,776,861



¹ Development fees, wetland fees, temporary impact fees, administrative/staff time fees, and contributions to recovery.

² These are grants various State and Federal Agencies including CDFW, USFWS, and WCB. The amount shown are grant funds spent/used, not grants awarded.

³ Local funding includes contributions by the East Bay Regional Park District of its own funds or grant funds for joint acquisitions and preserve management.

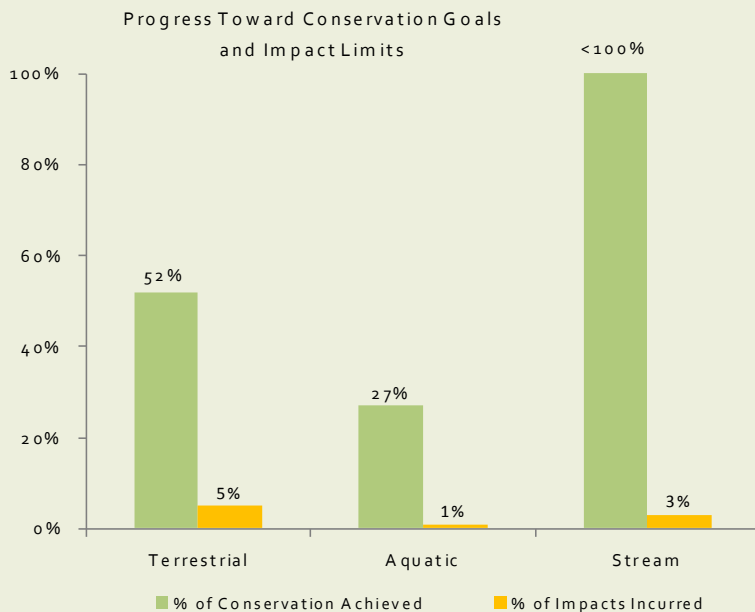
⁴ Other includes interest and miscellaneous.

Staying Ahead

For streamlined permitting to continue under the HCP/NCCP, conservation must stay ahead of impacts. The HCP/NCCP specifies detailed metrics that the Conservancy uses to track progress of Plan implementation.

The summarized data displayed (left) illustrates that all categories of conservation are ahead of the impacts to these habitat types.

A more detailed accounting of conservation, restoration, creation, and impacts is provided in the 2017 Annual Report.



PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING THE HCP/NCCP

- City of Brentwood
- City of Clayton
- City of Oakley
- City of Pittsburg
- Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
- East Bay Regional Park District
- East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Agricultural-Natural Resources Trust
- Building Industry Association of the Bay Area
- Central Valley Farmland Trust
- California Native Plant Society
- Contra Costa County Farm Bureau
- Discovery Builders Inc.
- East Bay Leadership Council
- Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed
- Rural/suburban residents
- Save Mount Diablo

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information about the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy can be found online at www.cocohcp.org.

The HCP/NCCP Overview booklet and the 2017 Annual Report can be both downloaded from the website. To reach the Conservancy, please contact maureen.parkes@dcd.cccounty.us or 925-674-7203.