

**SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY TEAM
MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2007**

Attendees: Bill Shaw, Marit Alanen, Kerry Baldwin, Sherry Barrett, Maeveen, Behan, Carolyn Campbell, Neva Connolly, Locana de Souza, Doug Duncan, Aaron Flesch, Trevor Hare, Andy Hubbard, Kathleen Kennedy, Natasha Kline, Cheryl McIntyre, Jenny Neeley, Brian Powell, John Regan, Sherry Ruther, Linwood Smith, John Sullivan, Frances Werner, Lori Woods, and Annette Plicato

Absent: Rick Brusca, Mima Falk, George Ruyle, Cecil Schwalbe, Bob Steidl, and Tom Van Devender

Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chairman Shaw called the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m.

Approval of December 14, 2006 STAT Minutes

The minutes were approved as written.

MSCP Update

Maeveen Behan summarized the County Administrator's Memorandum dated January 24, 2007. Pima County recently submitted a grant proposal for Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund assistance. These funds would be used to hire staff to develop a monitoring plan for Pima County's Multi-Species Conservation Plan. The memo also included a timeline beginning in September 2007 to December 2008 when the MSCP Section 10 application would be submitted.

Biological Monitoring Phase 1 Report

The Chairman explained that the Biological Monitoring Plan was different than the Multi-Species Conservation Plan. Brian Powell thanked everyone who has worked with him in putting this plan together. He reviewed the goal, philosophies, and development of the plan.

The goal is to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act, through a Section 10 permit, and to aid preservation of the full spectrum of plants and animals indigenous to Pima County.

The philosophies include monitoring parameters that influence covered species, cost efficiency, spatial application beyond permit area, and developing partnerships.

The development will be broken into three phases. Phase 1 is planning phase. In Phase 2, conceptual models will be developed, parameters will be further evaluated, partnerships will be formed, and the MSCP application will be submitted. In Phase 3, a protocol will be developed and the monitoring will begin.

Brian also discussed the timeline for the Section 6 Grant. The grant application was submitted this month. Notification of awards will be in July and the funds will become available in November.

Dr. Shaw and staff from RECON agreed that to accurately reflect the purpose of this plan, the name will be changed to the Ecological Effectiveness Plan.

The deadline for comments to Brian Powell on this plan is March 2, 2007. Brian will send Sherry Barrett a copy of the comments.

The next steps proposed in the monitoring plan development (April-November 2007) are to create oversight committees (local experts; national experts; and a Pima County Monitoring and Adaptive Management Advisory Team); and to prepare for the Phase II plan, which includes gathering background materials, making preliminary cost estimates, and to begin discussion with potential partners.

Peer Review

The Chairman explained that it is crucial to keep the motivation going while we are waiting for funding to be approved. Experts and peers will be brought in to review our process during Phase 1. Community feedback is important to help fine tune the plan. These same experts and peers will be brought back during Phase 2 to guarantee that we are on the correct path.

Natasha Kline began a discussion on the development of an adaptive management plan. Dr. Shaw indicated that the experts and peers we bring in will be able to advise us on when an adaptive management plan should be developed.

Additional Expertise Needed for Monitoring Committee?

The Ecological Monitoring Phase 1 Report contains a suggestion of names to add to the STAT monitoring subcommittee. STAT members should review this list and consider appropriate additions to the monitoring subcommittee group before the next STAT meeting.

Announcements

Information was distributed on the Central Arizona Phoenix Long-Term Ecological Research Program. The CAPLTER is in its 9th year of research in the Phoenix area. Members of the monitoring committee propose to send a copy of our report to them to determine if there is any interest and opportunities to collaborate.

Pima County will apply to become a partner with the Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit. The DSCESU provides collaborative research, education and technical assistance addressing desert ecosystem resource issues at local, regional, national and international levels. The application deadline is February 28, 2007. As a partner with the DSCESU, Pima County proposes to use the network to contract with various partners for studies of interest to the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

Next STAT Meeting

The next STAT meeting was not discussed at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Plicato