



RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY

**Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Board of Directors**

AGENDA

**Thursday, August 10, 2023
11:30 AM**

**Perris City Hall
Council Chambers
101 North D Street
Perris, California 92570**

**Perris City Council Chambers
101 North D Street
Perris, California 92570**

Remote Locations:

**WRCOG
3390 University Avenue, Suite 200
Citrus Conference Room
Riverside, CA 92501**

**City of Murrieta City Hall
1 Town Square
Murrieta, CA 92562**

**City of Calimesa City Hall
908 Park Ave
Calimesa, Ca 92320**

**Temecula City Hall
Mayor Pro Tem's Office – Third Floor
41000 Main Street
Temecula, Ca 92590**

Board members are asked to attend this meeting in person unless remote accommodations have previously been requested and noted on the agenda. The below Zoom link is provided for the convenience of members of the public, presenters, and support staff.

[Public Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 817 4891 9217

Passcode: 423051

Dial in: (669) 900 9128 U.S.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in the RCHCA Board of Directors meeting, please contact WRCOG at (951) 405-6702. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting. In compliance with Government Code Section 54957.5, agenda materials distributed within 72 hours prior to the meeting which are public records relating to an open session agenda item will be available for inspection by members of the public prior to the meeting at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA, 92501.

In addition to commenting at the Board meeting, members of the public may also submit written comments before or during the meeting, prior to the close of public comment to jleonard@wrcog.us.

Any member of the public requiring a reasonable accommodation to participate in this meeting in light of this announcement shall contact Janis Leonard 72 hours prior to the meeting at (951) 405-6702 or jleonard@wrcog.us. Later requests will be accommodated to the extent feasible.

The Board may take any action on any item listed on the agenda, regardless of the Requested Action.

1. CALL TO ORDER ~ *Lesa DeForest, Chair*

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this time members of the public can address the Board regarding any items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board that are not separately listed on this agenda. Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak on agenda items at the time the item is called for discussion. No action may be taken on items not listed on the agenda unless authorized by law. Whenever possible, lengthy testimony should be presented to the Board in writing and only pertinent points presented orally.

5. CONSENT AND POLICY CALENDAR

All items listed under the Consent and Policy Calendar may be enacted by one motion. Prior to the motion to consider any action by the Board, any public comments on any of the Consent and Policy Items will be heard. There will be no separate action unless members of the Board request specific items be removed from the Consent and Policy Calendar.

A. Summary Minutes from the May 11, 2023, Joint Meeting of the RCHCA Board of Directors and Riverside Communities Partnership Project

Requested Action(s): 1. Approve the Summary Minutes from the May 11, 2023, Joint Meeting of the RCHCA Board of Directors and Riverside Communities Partnership Project.

B. Status Report on the Attendance Roster

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

C. Status of Mitigation Fee Transfers from Member Agencies Through June 30, 2023

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

D. Financial Report Through June 30, 2023

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and File.

E. Contracts and Grants Status Updates

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

F. Single Signature Authority Report

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

G. Status Report Concerning Reserve Management Committee for the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve and the Lake Mathews Reserve

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

H. Status Report Concerning Reserve Management Coordinating Committee

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

I. Fiscal Year 2022/2023 4th Quarter Budget Amendment

Requested Action(s): 1. Approve the 4th Quarter Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year 2022/2023.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak on agendized items at the time the item is called for discussion.

A. Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Annual Review and Financial Analysis

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

B. Status Update on Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Recovery Efforts

Requested Action(s): 1. Authorize the Executive Director to accept the grant funding available under the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Funding Opportunity Announcement L23AS00286, 15.228 California Fuels Management and Community Fire Assistance Program,

Application Titled: Fuels Management for SKR Reserve System and execute all associated documents to comply with the issuance of the grant.

C. Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Reserve Management and Monitoring Efforts Activities Update

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

D. Educational Outreach Program Activities Update

Requested Action(s): 1. Receive and file.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr. Kurt Wilson

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS ~ *Members*

Members are invited to suggest additional items to be brought forward for discussion at future Board of Directors meetings.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ *Members*

Members are invited to announce items / activities which may be of general interest to the Board of Directors.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 11:30 a.m., in WRCOG's office at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the RCHCA Board of Directors was called to order by Chair Lisa DeForest at 11:30 a.m., on May 11, 2023, at City of Murrieta City Hall, 1 Town Square, Murrieta, and on the Zoom platform.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair DeForest led the Board members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

- City of Corona - Tom Richins
- City of Hemet - Jackie Peterson
- City of Lake Elsinore - Steve Manos*
- City of Menifee - Lesa Sobek
- City of Murrieta - Lisa DeForest (Chair)
- City of Perris - Michael Vargas
- City of Temecula - Stew Stewart
- City of Wildomar - Joseph Morabito
- County of Riverside, District 5 - Yxstian Gutierrez

* Arrived after Roll Call

Members absent:

- City of Moreno Valley
- City of Riverside

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT AND POLICY CALENDAR

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Temecula
SECONDER:	Menifee
AYES:	Corona, Hemet, Menifee, Murrieta, Perris, Temecula, Wildomar, County of Riverside

A. Summary Minutes from the February 9, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting

Action:

1. Approved the Summary Minutes from the February 9, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting.

B. Summary Minutes from the May 19, 2022, Riverside Communities Partnership Project Meeting

Action:

1. Approved the Summary Minutes from the May 19, 2022, Riverside Communities Partnership Project meeting.

C. Status Report on the Attendance Roster

Action:

1. Received and filed.

D. Status of Mitigation Fee Transfers from Member Agencies Through March 31, 2023

Action:

1. Received and filed.

E. Financial Report Through March 31, 2023

Action:

1. Received and filed.

F. Contracts and Grants Status Updates

Action:

1. Received and filed.

G. Status Report Concerning Reserve Management Committees for the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve and the Lake Mathews Reserve

Action:

1. Received and filed.

H. Status Report Concerning Reserve Management Coordinating Committee

Action:

1. Received and filed.

I. Approval of Agreement between the RCHCA and the Metropolitan Water District for Lake Mathews Reserve Management

Actions:

1. Approved the Professional Services Agreement between the RCHCA and the Metropolitan Water District for Lake Mathews Management.

2. Authorized the General Manager to execute and administer the terms of the Agreement.
3. Authorized the General Manager to execute any future amendments to the Agreements, if necessary, so long as such amendments do not result in an overall monetary increase, and as long as such amendments are approved as to form by counsel.

J. Approval of Mitigation Strategy Between RCHCA and the Department of Water Resources for the Perris Dam Emergency Release Project

Item 5.J was pulled by staff for discussion. Riana Fisher, RCHCA Program Manager, stated that the California Department of Water Resources is proposing to implement the Perris Dam Emergency Release Facility Project to modify the existing release structure and construct a water conveyance facility that would control a reservoir release in the event of an emergency. Part of the Project falls within SKR HCP Core Reserve lands, which means that the sponsoring agency mitigates on a 1:1 basis for all SKR occupied habitat disturbed as a result of the project.

Actions:

1. Approved the Mitigation Strategy between the RCHCA and the Department of Water Resources regarding the Perris Dam Emergency Release Facilities Project.
2. Authorized the General Manager to execute and sign the Certificate of Inclusion.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

A. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget

Riana Fisher, RCHCA Program Manager, reported that RCHCA is proposing a conservative budget of \$1.67M. Mitigation Fee Revenue has been down while interest revenues are higher than expected and make up 20% of the Agency's revenue. Staff anticipate contracting with the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance for SKR genetics research and have allotted \$50k. The Lake Mathews Reserve office is at the end of its useful life; staff are recommending exploring options to replace the current office, and have allotted \$10k for a design and consulting team.

Board member Lesa Sobek asked if the sale of the surplus land going to be put in the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget.

Mrs. Fisher responded that it was included in the current Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget, but the funds will rollover to the Lake Mathews Budget in the endowment fund. This is separate from the RCHCA General Operations Budget.

Board member Stew Stewart asked what the endowment fund is and who was it funded by.

Mrs. Fisher replied that the original endowments were set up when the SKR Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was created to support management and monitoring activities for the RCHCA.

Brian Shomo, Director of RCHCA, added that the HCP required RCHCA to set up the endowment. Revenue was placed into separate funds within the RCHCA on specific reserves to support ongoing land management and monitoring of SKR within those reserve systems.

Action:

1. Adopted Resolution Number 2023-01; A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Adopting the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Agency Budget.

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Temecula
SECONDER:	Perris
AYES:	Corona, Hemet, Menifee, Murrieta, Perris, Temecula, Wildomar, County of Riverside

Action:

1. Received and filed.

B. Status Update on Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Recovery Efforts

Brian Shomo, Director of RCHCA, reported that RCHCA began collecting range-wide SKR data from 76 sample cells throughout the historic range of the species last fall. This fall, another 76 sample cells will be surveyed, consisting of 50 repeated sample sites from last year and 26 new sample cells. The mix of old and new samples expedites the statistical analysis for determining SKR recovery status.

Staff has proposed to contract with the San Diego Zoo's Wildlife Alliance to develop a genetic protocol using hair samples. This will allow staff to identify genetic variations and develop a translocation project to redistribute SKR populations across the landscape to prevent inbreeding. By the next meeting, there should be some preliminary data to track population.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

C. Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Reserve Management and Monitoring Efforts Activities Update

Harry Sandoval, RCHCA Natural Resources Manager, reported that winter and spring rains, almost one inch above average, resulted in a great bloom of native wildflower species as well as non-native invasive species. This affects the SKR habitat, as they prefer a mix of 50% vegetation and 50% bare soil. Sheep were brought in to graze approximately 2,000 acres of grassland habitat within the Lake Mathews / Estelle Mountain Reserve. Staff will continue to mow and treat grasses and other non-native species.

Rain filled temporary pools that have not been filled in many years. Ten of the 11 pools contained western spadefoot toads, which are currently being considered as an endangered species. These toads rely on the pools for reproduction. California Gnatcatchers surveys are being conducted for the Southern California Metropolitan Water District to check the status of the species.

Some volunteer events were held. Local Eagle Scout Troop 523 from Corona helped restore artificial burrows for burrowing owls. On Earth Day, a volunteer clean up event took place at the Lake Mathews Reserve, which removed 80 cubic yards from Reserve lands.

Board member Joseph Morabito asked how the burrowing owls are encouraged to live in the Reserve.

Mr. Sandoval stated that the artificial burrow provides housing in the Reserve, as they can be found in

odd places when not in the reserve.

Board member Morabito commented on the illegal dumping, and it should be something that Sacramento puts effort into resolving.

Mr. Sandoval added that unfortunately, the land is prone to that kind of activity, but he is grateful to the Sheriff's Department for taking an interest and helping with the issue.

Board member Lesa Sobek commented on the invasive species, stinknet. It seems to have spread greatly throughout Riverside County. She asked if this was still a concern, and if there is an effort to educate the public about stinkweed and how to remove / prevent it.

Mr. Sandoval stated that stinknet is still a great concern, as it creates a monoculture and takes over an area. RCHCA is working with various entities, such as UCR, and have doubled the efforts to try to control it. There has been some advocacy in the past, and will continue to work with partners to combat it.

Board member Sobek suggested having a way to spread the message to Home Owners Associations and Public Works Departments to make the public aware of the invasiveness of stinknet.

Mr. Shomo stated there is a simplified brochure that will be distributed to the Board to share with the public.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

D. Educational Outreach Program Activities Update

Riana Fisher, RCHCA Program Manager, reported that RCHCA resumed its Educational Outreach Program in October and November 2022 to celebrate the importance of the Endangered Species Act, and hosted approximately 200 fifth grade students from Western Center Academy in the City of Hemet and Good Hope Elementary in the City of Perris. The students participated in an art contest and created drawings inspired by what they learned during their visit, and awards were distributed to students whose artwork captured the theme and meaning of the event. Staff from WRCOG judged the artwork and selected winners for the Grand Prize, Runner Up, Most Original, and Most Creative, and the awards were presented to the students in April 2023.

Educational outreach events will be held again in October and November 2023, and RCHCA will select different schools to participate.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

E. Status Update on the Disposition of Surplus Land

Brian Shomo, Director of RCHCA, reported that the RCHCA and Ecosystem Investment Partners (EIP) finalized the sale of the Lakeview-Nuevo surplus parcels and closed escrow on April 21, 2023. This generated over \$1.8M net gross of revenue. RCHCA staff thanked EIP for a smooth transaction and

looks forward to seeing the conservation and restoration efforts that will help mitigate the region's impacts to sensitive resources.

Board member Stew Stewart asked why the land was being disposed of, and what the new owners are going to do with it.

Mr. Shomo explained that when the SKR HCP was adopted in 1996, it was unknown exactly where SKR were located, and the previous Agency Director was instructed to purchase land thought to contain SKR. The RCHCA was supposed to consolidate conserved lands at Lake Mathews and turn it over to the Bureau of Land Management to be managed in perpetuity. The Bureau backed out for a number of reasons, so RCHCA had to manage and monitor it. The extra parcels were supposed to be sold once it was determined what land was needed, and the funding was going to be used to fund additional acquisitions of property. However, once it was time to sell, no one was interested in buying because the land is practically undevelopable due to the location in FEMA flood zone and MSHCP requirements for conservation, among other factors. EIP is going to add these lands to its Riverpark mitigation bank to offset the riparian habitats affected by development. The Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Agency also receives credit towards MSHCP goals and objectives for the special species that inhabit that area.

Board member Stewart asked how many acres were disposed of, and if it was all riparian.

Mr. Shomo stated that 74 acres were sold, and is now considered ag-land but was historically riparian. The flood plane was right along the San Jacinto River, which would flood periodically. Flood Control channeled it to prevent flooding; now EIP will attempt to restore some of that hydrology so it will naturally flood.

Board member Yxstian Gutierrez asked if RCHCA is still purchasing property, and how many acres does it currently have.

Mr. Shomo stated that acquisitions were completed in 2006, and currently have influence over the management of 46,000 acres. RCHCA is required to have 15,000 acres of occupied habitat within that 46,000 acres.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

F. Report on Remote Public Meeting Requirements

Dr. Kurt Wilson, RCHCA General Manager, reviewed the requirements for public meetings with regard to the changes following the adoption of AB 2449. The Brown Act still applies to the RCHCA Board of Directors. AB 361 allowed remote participation without the constraints of the Brown Act, such as public access. AB 2449 allows remote participation provided that some onerous conditions are followed, including having "just cause" or an emergency, and places limitations on the number of times a member can utilize this provision.

The language in AB 2449 is not particularly clear, and is interpreted differently by different agency legal counsels.

RCHCA legal counsel Mr. Gettis stated that the Board has been provided with some frequently asked questions and answers in the agenda, but encouraged the Board to reach out to him with any specific questions.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

G. Update on Riverside Communities Partnership Project Non-Profit Status and Activities

Riana Fisher, RCHCA Program Manager, reported that the Riverside Communities Partnership Project (RCPP) has used AmeriCorps teams to help with community projects in the past. AmeriCorps teams require housing for approximately 16 people, and projects can last three to six months.

RCPP obtained tax-exempt status as a non-profit in October 2021, but the program activities have been on hold due to the inability to find housing for the AmeriCorps teams. For Fiscal Year 2023/2024, there is no anticipated revenue or expenditures while staff continues to search for suitable housing.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

7. REPORT FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Dr. Kurt Wilson, General Manager, commended the RCHCA team for the work that they do, from disposing of property, to DNA sampling for a protected species. He encouraged new Board members to reach out to Mr. Shomo to see the work firsthand.

He reminded Board members to submit their Form 700s, which were due in April. Any questions regarding Form 700s can be directed to Janis Leonard.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no general announcements.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 11:30 a.m., in the City of Perris.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Board of Directors was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Status Report on the Attendance Roster
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide a record of attendance at Board of Directors meetings.

Background:

The Joint Powers Agreement requires the RCHCA Board of Directors to hold at least four meetings per year.

Attached is the Board Meeting Attendance Roster as of May 2023.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment 1 - Attendance Roster](#)

RCHCA BOARD MEETING Attendance Roster

MEMBER JURISDICTIONS	2023			
	February	May	August	December
Corona	X	X		
Hemet	X	X		
Lake Elsinore	X	X		
Menifee	X	X		
Moreno Valley	X			
Murrieta	X	X		
Perris	X	X		
Riverside	X			
Temecula	X	X		
Wildomar	X	X		
County of Riverside	X	X		

“X” Denotes member / alternate member present at meeting.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Status of Mitigation Fee Transfers from Member Agencies Through June 30, 2023
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on the status of Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) fee collections for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 as of June 30, 2023.

Background:

Member agencies impose a mitigation fee on certain types of development within their jurisdiction for the SKR. All SKR mitigation fees collected are forwarded to RCHCA before April 30, for the period January 1 through March 31; before July 31, for the period of April 1 through June 30; before October 31, for the period of July 1 through September 30; and before January 31, for the period of October 1 through December 31.

Revenues, such as mitigation fees, are allocated in RCHCA's Agency Budget and are programmed annually. Staff monitors mitigation fees on a quarterly basis and makes budget amendments as necessary.

The attachment shows the status of fee collections for Quarter Four of Fiscal Year 2022/2023, as of June 30, 2023.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment - SKR mitigation fee transfers as of 063023](#)

FISCAL YEAR 2022/2023
RIVERSIDE COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION AGENCY
NET STEPHENS' KANGAROO RAT MITIGATION FEE COLLECTIONS BY MEMBER AGENCY
AS OF JUNE 30, 2023

	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL
	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	FISCAL YTD
CITY OF CORONA													0
CITY OF HEMET													0
CITY OF LAKE ELSINORE			7,575			90			895			1,290	9,850
CITY OF MENIFEE	140		1,865						500	11,400		750	14,655
CITY OF MORENO VALLEY			11,565			19,670			22,915			5,400	59,550
CITY OF MURRIETA		290		7,344	250		1,500		500		1,520	5,025	16,429
CITY OF PERRIS		13,625				19,300	19,233		6,130			22,880	81,168
CITY OF RIVERSIDE								68,413				4,750	73,163
CITY OF TEMECULA													0
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE *			59,445			22,230			7,750			39,225	128,650
CITY OF WILDOMAR													0
TOTALS	140	13,915	80,450	7,344	250	61,290	20,733	68,413	38,690	11,400	1,520	79,320	383,466

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Financial Report Through June 30, 2023
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and File.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to present information concerning the status of the wasting and non-wasting endowments and updated information on revenues collected, as well as expenditures and fund balances for the Agency.

Background:

Attached is the Financial Report summary through June 30, 2023, however these numbers are still preliminary, as they will not be finalized for another several weeks as the books are being closed for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022/2023. Through the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2022/2023, RCHCA received revenues totaling \$2,965,228 against \$1,546,816 in expenditures. Total Agency revenue sources include SKR mitigation fee transfers from member agencies, which are assessed on development projects within the SKR fee area, interest earned, endowments, and other general revenue earned by contractual agreements. RCHCA received \$1.4M from the surplus land sale, \$565k from bank interest earned, \$392k in revenue from mitigation fee transfers, and \$163k from contractual agreements.

Total agency expenditures amount to \$1,546,816, which include administrative salary and benefits, general operations, land management for RCHCA-owned lands, and educational outreach and program improvements that are not covered by endowment funds. Expenditures included \$816k in salary and benefits, \$302K in overhead expenses, \$258k in consulting labor, and \$54k for insurance.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed the report through March 31, 2023.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment - Financial Report as of 6.30.23](#)



Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Preliminary Budget to Actuals
For the Month Ending June 30, 2023

	Actual	Budget	Variance
	6/30/2023	6/30/2023	6/30/2023
Total Agency			
Revenues and Transfers in			
RCHCA Revenue	\$ 391,606	\$ 320,000	\$ (71,606)
Interest Revenue - Banks	564,819	350,000	(214,819)
Net Proceeds from Sale of Land	1,485,202	1,490,000	4,798
RCHCA - Contracted Services	48,886	170,000	121,114
Lake Matthews - Contracted Services	114,068	110,000	(4,068)
Lake Mathews Fund Drawdown	360,647	405,377	44,730
Total Revenues	\$ 2,965,228	\$ 2,845,877	\$ (119,351)
Expenses			
RCHCA Salaries & Wages	\$ 601,409	\$ 606,108	\$ 4,699
Fringe Benefits	214,212	204,563	(9,649)
General Legal Services	15,105	20,000	4,895
Audit Svcs - Professional Fees	13,000	20,000	7,000
Commissioners Per Diem	4,700	6,500	1,800
Vehicle Maintenance Expense	8,125	10,000	1,875
Program/Office Supplies	6,840	18,000	11,160
Computer Equipment/Supplies	3,563	2,500	(1,063)
Computer Software	2,494	1,000	(1,494)
Rent/Lease Equipment	3,795	4,500	705
Membership Dues	3,899	2,500	(1,399)
Subscriptions/Publications	677	1,000	323
Postage	-	250	250
Other Household Exp (Gas & janitorial)	21,788	25,000	3,212
Printing Services	1,408	5,000	3,592
Uniforms and Replacement Clothing	2,049	3,000	951
Small Tools & Instruments	910	10,000	9,090
Communications - Cellular Phones	4,450	4,500	50
Equipment Maintenance - General	1,846	3,500	1,654
Insurance - Gen/Busi Liab/Auto	54,216	50,000	(4,216)
License & Permits	417	1,000	583
Seminars/Conferences	959	1,000	41
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	338	500	162
Travel - Ground Transportation	-	1,500	1,500
Special Program Expense	20,549	20,000	(549)
Weed Abatement	-	15,000	15,000
Staff Education Reimbursement	117	2,500	2,383
Consulting Labor	257,691	299,000	41,309
Motor Vehicles Purchased	-	50,000	50,000
Operating Transfer Out (overhead)	302,261	302,261	-
Total Expenses	\$ 1,546,816	\$ 1,690,682	\$ 143,866



**Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Preliminary Budget to Actuals
For the Month Ending June 30, 2023**

	Actual 6/30/2023	Budget 6/30/2023	Variance 6/30/2023
Program: Administration			
Revenues and Transfers in			
RCHCA Revenue	\$ 391,606	\$ 320,000	\$ (71,606)
Interest Revenue - Banks	564,819	350,000	(214,819)
RCHCA - Deposit Based Fee Draws	-	500	500
Net Proceeds from Sale of Land	1,485,202	1,490,000	4,798
RCHCA - Revenue for Contracted Services	48,886	170,000	121,114
Total Revenues	\$ 2,490,513	\$ 2,330,500	\$ (160,013)
Expenses			
RCHCA Salaries & Wages	\$ 259,869	\$ 230,521	\$ (29,348)
Fringe Benefits	88,399	99,773	11,374
General Legal Services	15,105	20,000	4,895
Audit Svcs - Professional Fees	13,000	20,000	7,000
Commissioners Per Diem	4,700	6,500	1,800
Vehicle Maintenance Expense	8,125	10,000	1,875
Program/Office Supplies	2,477	3,000	523
Computer Equipment/Supplies	3,563	2,500	(1,063)
Computer Software	2,494	1,000	(1,494)
Rent/Lease Equipment	3,795	4,500	705
Membership Dues	3,899	2,500	(1,399)
Subscriptions/Publications	677	1,000	323
Postage	-	250	250
Other Household Exp (Gas)	21,788	25,000	3,212
Printing Services	1,408	5,000	3,592
Uniforms and Replacement Clothing	2,049	3,000	951
Small Tools & Instruments	910	10,000	9,090
Communications - Cellular Phones	4,450	4,500	50
Equipment Maintenance - General	1,846	3,500	1,654
Insurance - Gen/Busi Liab/Auto	54,216	50,000	(4,216)
License & Permits	417	1,000	583
Seminars/Conferences	959	1,000	41
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	338	500	162
Travel - Ground Transportation	-	1,500	1,500
Special Program Expense	20,549	20,000	(549)
Weed Abatement	-	15,000	15,000
Staff Education Reimbursement	117	2,500	2,383
Consulting Labor	254,691	279,000	24,309
Motor Vehicles Purchased	-	50,000	50,000
Operating Transfer Out (overhead)	302,261	302,261	-
Total Expenses	\$ 1,072,101	\$ 1,175,305	\$ 103,204



Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Preliminary Budget to Actuals
For the Month Ending June 30, 2023

	Actual 6/30/2023		Budget 6/30/2023		Variance 6/30/2023
Program: Lake Mathews Reserve					
Revenues					
Lake Matthews - Contracted Services	114,068	\$	110,000	\$	(4,068)
Lake Mathews Fund Drawdown	360,647		405,377		44,730
Total Revenues	\$ 474,715	\$	515,377	\$	40,662
Expenses					
Salaries & Wages - Fulltime	\$ 341,539	\$	375,587	\$	34,048
Fringe Benefits	125,813		104,790		(21,023)
Reserve Program Supplies	4,362		15,000		10,638
Consulting Labor	3,000		20,000		17,000
Total Expenses	\$ 474,715	\$	515,377	\$	40,662

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Contracts and Grants Status Updates
Contact: Brian Shomo, Director of RCHCA, bshomo@wrcog.us, (951) 840-8070
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide a status update on the various tasks associated with RCHCA-contracted land management activities.

Background:

RCHCA contracts with various entities to provide environmental land management services for protecting and enhancing threatened and endangered species and their habitats throughout Western Riverside County. Because RCHCA is a leader in innovative yet cost effective land management and monitoring techniques, other outside agencies and organizations often solicit RCHCA for help in managing their lands or mitigation projects. RCHCA then uses this contract revenue to support staff salaries and other projects outside the purview of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) Fee revenue. The following report provides a brief summary of the current RCHCA contracts and grants.

Conservation Biology Institute (CBI): SKR Range-wide Management & Monitoring Plan. RCHCA received a CBI invoice for the following deliverables:

Task 1: Establish and Facilitate Coordination Groups and Communications

- Meetings and communications with USFWS and BLM partners regarding military base SKR monitoring data.
- Bi-weekly meetings with the Project Team to plan next steps.
- Maintained and updated the 2022 SKR Range-wide Monitoring Plan Data Basin Gallery, a public website for providing completed maps, data, and documents to the SKR stakeholders.

Task 2: Design Range-wide Monitoring Strategy

- Set up the data layers and a Field Maps form for and supported vetting of the new Sampling Cells for 2023 monitoring season.
- Documentation of the Sampling Frame decision-making process.

Task 3: Design and Implement Data Management System

- Meetings with Cyrenea Millberry and USFWS EcoSphere to compare designs and get advice about the SKR Field Maps app and data management system.

Task 4: Design and Implement SKR Habitat, Occupancy, and Population Status and Trends Updates

- Meetings and statistical analysis needed to determine repeat and additional sampling cells for the 2023 monitoring season.
 - Total contract: \$243,000
 - Total amount invoiced this period: \$22,443
 - Total amount invoiced this contract period: \$159,221

Douglas Deutschman: Provide biological statistics to support SKR Range-wide Monitoring Plan.

- SKR Research, Statistical Design, Analysis and Presentations: \$6,575
- Total contract: \$7,000
- Total amount invoiced: \$6,575

Metropolitan Water District:

- General On-call Reserve Management: \$10,719
- Reserve Patrol and Security: \$11,135
- Weed Management and Mapping Herbicide: \$3,455
- Access Control and Maintenance: \$10,082
- Sage Scrub Restoration: \$3,695
- Grassland Grazing Management: \$7,741
- Mowing Grassland Management: \$10,484
- Coastal CAGN Survey: \$6,181
- Prescribed Burn Coordination: \$2,120
 - Total Contract: \$200,000
 - Total amount invoiced this period: \$70,786
 - Total amount invoiced this contract period: \$143,222

BLM Fuels Management for SKR Reserve System Grant

In April, 2023, RCHCA applied for a grant with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to assist with funding for the management of the reserve system to reduce flashy fuels. In July, RCHCA was informed that its BLM grant application for fuels management was accepted for funding negotiations. The total amount of the award is yet to be negotiated; however, RCHCA applied for a total of \$1.2M for a period of five years. The first year will include equipment purchases, and staff and labor time for a total of approximately \$360k, with subsequent year funding for staff and labor time of approximately \$212k each year.

California received record rainfall in 2023 resulting in substantial vegetative growth of flashy fuels, including non-native grasses, mustards, tumbleweeds, and Stinknet, among others. In coordination with BLM, with this funding, RCHCA is proposing to reduce fire fuel loads and enhance habitat for SKR and other species by controlling non-native weeds within the wildland urban interface through a combination of prescribed burns, targeted grazing, herbicide application, and mechanical methods. Approximately 4,000 acres will be managed.

Staff will keep the Board informed of the grant progress and will include a budget amendment for the

increase of revenue once the award amount is determined.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Single Signature Authority Report
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to notify the Board of Directors of contracts recently signed under the Single Signature Authority of the Executive Director.

Background:

The Executive Director has Single Signature Authority for contracts up to \$50,000. For the months of April through June 2023, one contract and one Professional Services Agreement (PSA) amendment were signed by the Executive Director:

1. In May 2023, a contract amendment with A.B. Landscape for weed abatement services for \$27,500 was executed, extending the contract term period to June 30, 2024.
2. In June 2023, a PSA amendment was executed with Doug Deutschman for \$7,000 for biological statistics consulting services in coordination with Conservation Biology Institute's contract for the SKR Range-wide Monitoring Plan.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Fiscal Impact:

For the Fiscal Year 2023/2024, there will be a total Agency increase in expenditures of \$34,500 for weed abatement services and biological statistics consulting services, which has been included in the approved budget.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Status Report Concerning Reserve Management Committee for the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve and the Lake Mathews Reserve

Contact: Brian Shomo, Director of RCHCA, bshomo@wrcog.us, (951) 840-8070

Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to report on staff attendance and topics discussed related to the Reserve Management Committees for the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve and the Lake Mathews Reserve.

Background:

Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve (SWMSR) Management Committee (6/7/2023)

- Metropolitan Water District (MWD) provided an update on the Reserve's endowment fund. MWD is tasked with managing the Reserve's investment options and has historically invested these funds in a separate account from other MWD investments. The result has been lower returns than otherwise would be realized if these funds were invested alongside other MWD assets. Accordingly, MWD has moved the Reserve's endowment funds into an account shared with other MWD investments that should provide higher future returns with lower volatility. If proven accurate, the endowment fund will provide enough funding to manage the Reserve for the foreseeable future.
- The Reserve Manager presented the 2023 annual workplan and budget of \$500,000 for the RMC's consideration. The annual workplan includes extensive management for SKR, an updated GIS database to track activities, habitat restoration, and an educational interpretive program. The RMC voted unanimously to adopt the 2023 annual workplan and budget.

Lake Mathews Reserve Management Committee (RMC) (6/29/2023)

- The Reserve Manager presented the 2023 annual workplan and budget of \$200,000 for the RMC's consideration. The annual workplan includes SKR management, weed management, habitat restoration, and increased fencing / access controls. The RMC voted unanimously to adopt the 2023 annual workplan and budget.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Status Report Concerning Reserve Management Coordinating Committee
Contact: Harry Sandoval, Natural Resources Manager, hsandoval@wrcog.us, (951) 206-3260
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to report on staff attendance and topics discussed related to the Reserve Management Coordinating Committee (RMCC).

Background:

The primary mission of the Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee (RMCC) is to promote coordination of Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) management throughout the eight Reserves and to address regional management issues of importance to species recovery in the SKR Habitat Conservation Plan.

Reserve Managers Coordinating Committee (RMCC)

No RMCC meeting was held during the current reporting period.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Fiscal Year 2022/2023 4th Quarter Budget Amendment
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Approve the 4th Quarter Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year 2022/2023.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to request approval of RCHCA's 4th Quarter Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022/2023. The staff report includes a summary of increases and/or decreases to both revenues and expenditures.

Background:

RCHCA's annual Budget is adopted by the Board of Directors. The annual Budget is designed to support Agency goals and objectives with available resources and to be transparent so that the financial activities of the Agency are clear and easily tracked. RCHCA operates on a fiscal year calendar; July 1st through June 30th.

The budget document is a prospective spending plan that predicts and constrains spending for the upcoming year. Each budget category is comprised of component parts or subcategories known as line items. Changes in those subcategories or line items often materialize throughout the year and those adjustments are reflected in a budget amendment. In this case, changes are reflected that include offsetting line items (i.e., reduced expenditures in one line item offset by increased expenditures in another line item within the same program). For this budget amendment, in all cases, the increases in expenditure line items are offset by increased revenue, a reduction in other expense categories, or both.

The net change for the budget amendments listed below will result in a net revenue increase of \$119,351, primarily due to an increase in interest revenues and an increase of mitigation fee revenue. Expenditures also exceeded their budgeted amounts by approximately \$59k, primarily due to increases in insurance costs, membership dues, computer equipment, and fringe benefits, which will be offset by decreases in consulting labor, legal expenses and program supplies, which will result in no net increase in expenditures to the Agency's budget.

Revenues

Development activity drives a significant revenue source for RCHCA and has increased slightly during the last half of the fiscal year. SKR Mitigation Fee revenue for Q4 FY 2022/2023 was initially budgeted at \$320k but the revised revenue received is \$392k (an increase of \$72k).

During the same timeframe, interest rates (and earnings) have increased substantially. The Federal Funds Rate continue to increase from approximately 4.5% (at the time the 2nd Quarter Budget Amendment was being prepared) to over 5% today. This has provided a substantial increase in interest revenue to the agency. The budgeted interest revenues were estimated at \$350k but revenue receipts through June are approximately \$565k (an increase of \$215k).

Overall, an increase in mitigation fee revenues and the interest revenues create a net increase in RCHCA's revenues for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 of \$119,351.

Expenditures

Due to an increase in insurance rates (\$4.2k), software subscription prices (\$1.5k), and membership dues (\$1.4k), some line items were above their estimated budget. Additionally, a staff member required a new computer (\$1k) and there was an increase in fringe benefits expenses (\$9.6k) due to the approved agency-wide classification and compensation analysis for the two full-time Open-Space Habitat Technician positions that were originally budgeted as four seasonal positions with no benefits.

Overall, expenditures also exceeded their budgeted amounts by approximately \$59k, primarily due to increases in insurance costs, membership dues, computer equipment, and fringe benefits, which will be offset by decreases in consulting labor, legal expenses and program supplies, which will result in no net increase in expenditures to the Agency's budget.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Fiscal Impact:

For the 4th Quarter of Fiscal Year 2022/2023, there is a net increase in revenues of \$119,351 and no net increase in expenditures.

Attachment(s):

[Attachment - FY22/23 4th Quarter Budget Amendment](#)



**Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Q4 Budget Amendment
For the Month Ending June 30, 2023**

	Actual 6/30/2023	Budget 6/30/2023	Variance 6/30/2023	Amendment 6/30/2023
Total Agency				
Revenues and Transfers in				
RCHCA Revenue	\$ 391,606	\$ 320,000	\$ (71,606)	\$ 71,606
Interest Revenue - Banks	564,819	350,000	(214,819)	214,819
Net Proceeds from Sale of Land	1,485,202	1,490,000	4,798	(4,798)
RCHCA - Contracted Services	48,886	170,000	121,114	(121,114)
Lake Mathews - Contracted Services	114,068	110,000	(4,068)	4,068
Lake Mathews Fund Drawdown	360,647	405,377	44,730	(44,730)
Total Revenues	\$ 2,965,228	\$ 2,845,877	\$ (119,351)	\$ 119,351
Expenses				
RCHCA Salaries & Wages	\$ 601,409	\$ 606,108	\$ 4,699	\$ 8,325
Fringe Benefits	214,212	204,563	(9,649)	9,649
General Legal Services	15,105	20,000	4,895	-
Audit Svcs - Professional Fees	13,000	20,000	7,000	(7,000)
Commissioners Per Diem	4,700	6,500	1,800	-
Vehicle Maintenance Expense	8,125	10,000	1,875	-
Program/Office Supplies	6,840	18,000	11,160	-
Computer Equipment/Supplies	3,563	2,500	(1,063)	1,063
Computer Software	2,494	1,000	(1,494)	1,494
Rent/Lease Equipment	3,795	4,500	705	-
Membership Dues	3,899	2,500	(1,399)	1,399
Subscriptions/Publications	677	1,000	323	-
Postage	-	250	250	-
Other Household Exp (Gas & janitorial)	21,788	25,000	3,212	(2,500)
Printing Services	1,408	5,000	3,592	(3,592)
Uniforms and Replacement Clothing	2,049	3,000	951	-
Small Tools & Instruments	910	10,000	9,090	(7,500)
Communications - Cellular Phones	4,450	4,500	50	-
Equipment Maintenance - General	1,846	3,500	1,654	-
Insurance - Gen/Busi Liab/Auto	54,216	50,000	(4,216)	4,216
License & Permits	417	1,000	583	-
Seminars/Conferences	959	1,000	41	-
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	338	500	162	-
Travel - Ground Transportation	-	1,500	1,500	(1,500)
Special Program Expense	20,549	20,000	(549)	549
Weed Abatement	-	15,000	15,000	(4,603)
Staff Education Reimbursement	117	2,500	2,383	-
Consulting Labor	257,691	299,000	41,309	-
Motor Vehicles Purchased	-	50,000	50,000	-
Operating Transfer Out (overhead)	302,261	302,261	-	-
Total Expenses	\$ 1,546,816	\$ 1,690,682	\$ 143,866	\$ -



**Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Q4 Budget Amendment
For the Month Ending June 30, 2023**

	Actual 6/30/2023	Budget 6/30/2023	Variance 6/30/2023	Amendment 6/30/2023
Program: Administration				
Revenues and Transfers in				
RCHCA Revenue	\$ 391,606	\$ 320,000	\$ (71,606)	\$ 71,606
Interest Revenue - Banks	564,819	350,000	(214,819)	214,819
RCHCA - Deposit Based Fee Draws	-	500	500	(500)
Net Proceeds from Sale of Land	1,485,202	1,490,000	4,798	(4,798)
RCHCA - Revenue for Contracted Services	48,886	170,000	121,114	(121,114)
Total Revenues	\$ 2,490,513	\$ 2,330,500	\$ (160,013)	\$ 160,013
Expenses				
RCHCA Salaries & Wages	\$ 259,869	\$ 230,521	\$ (29,348)	\$ 29,348
Fringe Benefits	88,399	99,773	11,374	(11,374)
General Legal Services	15,105	20,000	4,895	
Audit Svcs - Professional Fees	13,000	20,000	7,000	(7,000)
Commissioners Per Diem	4,700	6,500	1,800	
Vehicle Maintenance Expense	8,125	10,000	1,875	
Program/Office Supplies	2,477	3,000	523	
Computer Equipment/Supplies	3,563	2,500	(1,063)	1,063
Computer Software	2,494	1,000	(1,494)	1,494
Rent/Lease Equipment	3,795	4,500	705	
Membership Dues	3,899	2,500	(1,399)	1,399
Subscriptions/Publications	677	1,000	323	
Postage	-	250	250	
Other Household Exp (Gas)	21,788	25,000	3,212	(2,500)
Printing Services	1,408	5,000	3,592	(3,592)
Uniforms and Replacement Clothing	2,049	3,000	951	
Small Tools & Instruments	910	10,000	9,090	(7,500)
Communications - Cellular Phones	4,450	4,500	50	
Equipment Maintenance - General	1,846	3,500	1,654	
Insurance - Gen/Busi Liab/Auto	54,216	50,000	(4,216)	4,216
License & Permits	417	1,000	583	
Seminars/Conferences	959	1,000	41	
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	338	500	162	
Travel - Ground Transportation	-	1,500	1,500	(1,500)
Special Program Expense	20,549	20,000	(549)	549
Weed Abatement	-	15,000	15,000	(4,603)
Staff Education Reimbursement	117	2,500	2,383	
Consulting Labor	254,691	279,000	24,309	
Motor Vehicles Purchased	-	50,000	50,000	
Operating Transfer Out (overhead)	302,261	302,261	-	
Total Expenses	\$ 1,072,101	\$ 1,175,305	\$ 103,204	\$ -



**Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
Q4 Budget Amendment
For the Month Ending June 30, 2023**

	Actual 6/30/2023		Budget 6/30/2023		Variance 6/30/2023		Amendment 6/30/2023
Program: Lake Mathews Reserve							
Revenues							
Lake Mathews - Contracted Services	114,068	\$	110,000	\$	(4,068)	\$	4,068
Lake Mathews Fund Drawdown	360,647		405,377		44,730		(44,730)
Total Revenues	\$ 474,715	\$	515,377	\$	40,662	\$	(40,662)
Expenses							
Salaries & Wages - Fulltime	\$ 341,539	\$	375,587	\$	34,048	\$	(21,023)
Fringe Benefits	125,813		104,790		(21,023)		21,023
Reserve Program Supplies	4,362		15,000		10,638		
Consulting Labor	3,000		20,000		17,000		
Total Expenses	\$ 474,715	\$	515,377	\$	40,662	\$	-

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Annual Review and Financial Analysis
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an annual review and a financial analysis of Fiscal Year 2022/2023.

Background:

The RCHCA Budget consists of two parts: General Operations and Lake Mathews Reserve Operations.

The General Fund revenue sources include SKR mitigation fee transfers from member agencies, which are assessed on development projects within the SKR fee area, interest earned, and other general revenue earned by contractual agreements.

The Lake Mathews Reserve Operations is funded by endowment and contractual agreements which support salary and benefits for Reserve staff, land management activities, biological surveys, research programs, and community outreach.

Expenditures from the General Fund include administrative salary and benefits, general operations, land management for RCHCA-owned lands, and educational outreach and program improvements that are not covered by endowment funds.

Overall, Fiscal Year (FY) 2022/2023 was balanced and productive. The total revenue collected through June 30, 2023, was a total of \$2,965,228 against \$1,546,816 in expenditures. The mitigation fee revenue collected through June 30, 2023, was a total of \$391,606, a 73% decrease from FY 2021/2022. While RCHCA saw a decrease in its mitigation fee collection, the sale of surplus land provided additional revenue in the amount of \$1,485,202. RCHCA endowment funds earned \$564,819 in interest, and \$162,954 in revenues for contracted services. These numbers are not final since our accounting books have another month before closing out FY 2022/2023.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Status Update on Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Recovery Efforts
Contact: Brian Shomo, Director of RCHCA, bshomo@wrcog.us, (951) 840-8070
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Authorize the Executive Director to accept the grant funding available under the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Funding Opportunity Announcement L23AS00286, 15.228 California Fuels Management and Community Fire Assistance Program, Application Titled: Fuels Management for SKR Reserve System and execute all associated documents to comply with the issuance of the grant.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on staff's efforts and meetings to discuss opportunities regarding species recovery efforts for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat.

Background:

The Endangered Species Act was established in 1973 when Congress declared that various species of fish, wildlife, and plants in the United States have been rendered extinct because of economic growth and development, untampered by adequate concern and conservation. RCHCA was formed in 1996 under a Joint Powers Agreement for acquisition, administration, operation, and maintenance of land and facilities for ecosystem conservation and habitat reserves for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR).

In order to fully recover Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR), it is necessary to estimate the percentage of area (PAO) occupied by SKR and extrapolate a reasonable estimation of population density. This data must be collected regularly and consistently throughout the range of the species to determine the long-term health of the population. We must recognize the interaction between short-term year-to-year fluctuations and long-term population stability. Consequently, last fall, the RCHCA began collecting range-wide SKR data from 76 random sample cells throughout the historic range of the species. In 2023, another 76 sample cells will be evaluated for live-trapping consisting of 50 repeated sample sites from last year and 26 new sample cells.

During June and July 2023, RCHCA-qualified biologists pre-scouted all 76 sample cells to determine whether SKR signs (burrows, scat, tail drags, etc.) were present and therefore warranted further live trapping. Due to the high rainfall totals and the extreme vegetation growth this year, SKR habitat in many of the sample cells demonstrated reduced or non-existent SKR signs. This is a natural and expected response in rodent populations, which typically show boom and bust cycles during such events. As a result, staff anticipates only live-trapping 34 of the 76 sample cells in 2023. This effort will not require any outside support and will be conducted by the RCHCA's biologists.

In April 2023, staff applied for a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) grant to fund approximately \$1,200,000 worth of labor and equipment for fire fuels management within the SKR Reserve system. Managing fire fuels has the added benefit of enhancing SKR habitat and assisting with the region's recovery efforts for the species. In July, the RCHCA was informed that the BLM selected the RCHCA's grant application as the highest priority in the state for funding negotiations. Once awarded, the grant will provide equipment including skid steers, bat wing mowers, large scale herbicide sprayers, and reimbursement for RCHCA staff labor and time for five years. The first year consists of approximately \$360,000 in funding followed by four more years of \$212,000. The grant allows for RCHCA and its partners to dramatically increase regional SKR habitat management, enhance public safety by reducing flashy fuels around our communities, and supports SKR recovery by stabilizing populations during high vegetation growth years.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Reserve Management and Monitoring Efforts Activities Update
Contact: Harry Sandoval, Natural Resource Manager, hsandoval@wrcog.us, (951) 206-3260
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide information on RCHCA management and coordination efforts occurring for RCHCA-owned lands at the Lake Mathews and Steele Peak Reserves.

Background:

During the current reporting period, RCHCA has conducted the following actions:

Staff carried out a variety of land management activities to restore and enhance habitat for SKR and various other species within the region. Approximately 2,300 acres within the Lake Mathews / Estelle Mountain Reserve were managed during the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year.

Staff coordinated a prescribed burn with Cal Fire to enhance grassland habitat for various species and reduce the threat of uncontrolled wildfires to residential areas surrounding the Lake Mathews / Estelle Mountain Reserve.

Staff met with various partner agencies to assist with development and enhancement of remote sensing programs to help detect and combat the establishment of invasive plant species. RCHCA staff will provide technical support and guidance to partners developing programs.

Prior Action(s):

May 11, 2023: The Board of Directors received and filed.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board Meeting

Staff Report

Subject: Educational Outreach Program Activities Update
Contact: Riana Fisher, Program Manager, rfisher@wrcog.us, (951) 405-6708
Date: August 10, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. Receive and file.
-

Purpose:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on activities regarding RCHCA's Educational Outreach Program.

Background:

The Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) allows RCHCA to provide an Educational Outreach Program to increase awareness of threatened and endangered species in Western Riverside County. The Program offers an opportunity to share information regarding the SKR reserves and the importance of conserving natural resources.

National Endangered Species Day (ESA) was first celebrated in 2006 to raise awareness about the threats to endangered species – including global warming – and the success stories in species recovery. It provides an opportunity for schools, libraries, museums, zoos, botanical gardens, agencies, businesses, communities, and conservation organizations to educate the public about the importance of protecting endangered species. It is also an opportunity to highlight the everyday actions that individuals and groups can take to help protect our nation's wildlife. ESA is celebrated in May; however, RCHCA hosts its annual events in the fall months so there is no interference with student testing and breaks.

For this year's event, RCHCA plans on hosting Hidden Springs Elementary school from Moreno Valley, Rice Canyon Elementary from Lake Elsinore, and Warm Springs Elementary from Murrieta. The event dates are tentatively scheduled for October 3, 2023, at the Southwest Multi-Species Reserve and November 7 and 8, 2003, at the Lake Mathews Reserve.

Prior Action(s):

None.

Fiscal Impact:

This item is for informational purposes only; therefore, there is no fiscal impact.

Attachment(s):

None.

