

# California Landscape Conservation Cooperative (CA LCC) Interim Steering Committee (ISC) Meeting Notes

March 3, 2011, 3:00 pm

## **Participants in attendance:**

Mike Allen, University of CA, Riverside  
Roger Bales, University of CA, Merced  
Lora Barrett, Center for Collaborative Policy  
Alice Berg, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service  
Ellie Cohen, PRBO Conservation Science  
Diana Craig, US Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS)  
Rebecca Fris, CA LCC  
Armand Gonzales, CA Department of Fish and Game  
Beth Hunning, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture  
Rick Kearney, US FWS  
Debra Schlafmann, CA LCC  
Bob Shaffer, Central Valley Joint Venture  
Karl Stein, Bureau of Land Management  
Tom Suchanek, US Geological Service  
Mike Tansey, Bureau of Reclamation

Debra opened the meeting, welcoming the partner and asking each to identify themselves.

## **Report on Pre-proposal Submittal Process**

Rebecca spoke about the 2011 pre-proposal process that she has been leading with a Review Panel. 170 pre-proposals have been received and evaluated. She made reference to a pie chart (attachment A) which shows the distribution of the types of agencies that submitted the pre-proposals. She also referenced a memo (attachment B) that details the seven evaluation criteria that were used by the reviewers to score each of the proposals.

Rebecca described how the pre-proposals were ranked. The review team consisted of 12 members from different entities (non-governmental organizations, state and federal) and different parts of the CA LCC (valley, coast, Southern CA. etc.). The pre-proposals were divided into three sections of 57 each. Four reviewers were assigned to independently evaluate and score each section of 57. The scores from each of the four reviewers were combined and averaged for each pre-proposal. A maximum score any proposal could receive was 14 points. The scores for the pre-proposals ranged from 0 – 12.5.

The Review Panel completed their evaluation yesterday and met this morning to review the results. Together they discussed proposals how the proposals ranked overall, where reviewers' scores varied considerably, and also discussed proposals whose scores were near the cut-off point (a score of 9). All proposals with a score of nine or above were considered. The group reached agreement to move 41 pre-proposals forward. The group also reviewed the geographic areas and topics for these pre-proposals, and felt they represented a good variety of potential projects from throughout the CA LCC.

Ellie asked how the process compared to last year. Rick said he thought the process was better organized. He reflected that this year's process allowed the reviewers to compare scores and it provided fruitful conversation on the submissions. Tom echoed Rick's comments. Ellie followed up and asked if there was general agreement of the final selection. Deb answered yes. Rebecca added that they feel it is important to now go back and follow up with those who had good proposals which didn't make the cut to continue the discussion and potentially find other resources for these efforts. Ellie volunteered to help. She suggested CA LCC staff develop a list of worthy proposals which she can present at conferences that she attends. Beth also offered to help find good partnerships for those who will not get funded.

Someone asked to identify the reviewers. Rebecca identified the following people:

Mike Allen	UC Riverside
Grant Ballard	PRBO Conservation Science
Christy Brigham	National Park Service (Los Angeles)
Trish Chapman	California Coastal Conservancy (central coast)
Diana Craig	US Forest Service
Rebecca Fris	CA LCC
Matt Gerhart	California Coastal Conservancy (Bay Area)
Armand Gonzales	CA Dept. of Fish and Game
Richard F Kearney	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Deb Schlafmann	CA LCC
Christina Sloop	San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Tom Suchanek	USGS

She added that any reviewer who had any connection to a particular proposal recused him/herself and the score for that project became the average of the remaining three reviewers.

Rebecca referred to an attachment to her email (attachment C) which lists the 41 pre-proposals that the review committee recommends to request full proposals from. She asked the ISC members to look over the selections and to indicate their approval to continue to move forward with these 41 pro-proposals no later than the end of March 8, 2011. ISC members were asked to respond by email to Rebecca and copy Lora ([lbarrett@ccp.csus.edu](mailto:lbarrett@ccp.csus.edu)) so that Lora can track the responses and follow up with those who have not replied by March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Rebecca asked ISC members not to circulate any information on the 41 proposal finalists until CA LCC is ready to make the announcement. Forty-one people will be asked to submit full proposals. Another group of people will get a response that they did not get asked for a full proposal, but that further dialogue is requested to try to move their project forward. The remaining proposals will receive a "thanks, but you have not been selected" type of correspondence.

Beth suggested that the reviewers' comments be passed on to those who did not get accepted. The group discussed the best ways to get information back to applicants. Rebecca noted that feedback will be provided to the 41 applicants moving forward to

ensure they address comments and questions that came up during the pre-proposal review. A subcommittee will follow up with high scoring pre-proposals that could not be funded this year to find support and other resources for those projects.

Rebecca asked the group if they believed four weeks would be enough for full proposals to be submitted. One of the participants suggested six weeks. Rebecca stated that the due date for full proposals would fall in the mid-late April timeframe. Ellie asked what the goal was for the final selection. Rebecca said early-mid May. Ellie affirmed her vote to move forward with the group's proposal selections.

### **Updates**

Deb updated the ISC on other items that the CA LCC has been working on. The CA LCC office is currently relocating to Sacramento State University. Deb is now located there at Modoc Hall, but Rebecca has not fully moved yet. Deb announced that she is having a meeting with University representatives tomorrow to talk about having an Open House. She asked if any ISC members wanted to join in planning this celebration to please let her know. Rick also encouraged members to attend the Open House. The date has not yet been set, but ISC members will be consulted before the date is confirmed. In all likelihood it will be in about two months.

Deb also mentioned that work is being done toward forming the Steering Committee. She will soon send out a request for committee members to work on transitioning into a full Steering Committee and what its membership should look like. The committee will also look at what the organization and structure of the LCC should be.

Deb announced that a subcommittee has formed in southern California consisting of Robert Mesta of the Sonora Joint Venture and Brian Collins of US FWS. This subcommittee will help develop partnerships with Mexico that are part of the CA LCC. A small meeting is targeted for May 9, 10, or 11 in Mexico. The goal is to have this meeting prior to the Trilateral Meeting in Mexico (Canada, US, Mexico) where LCCs will be one of the topics of discussion.

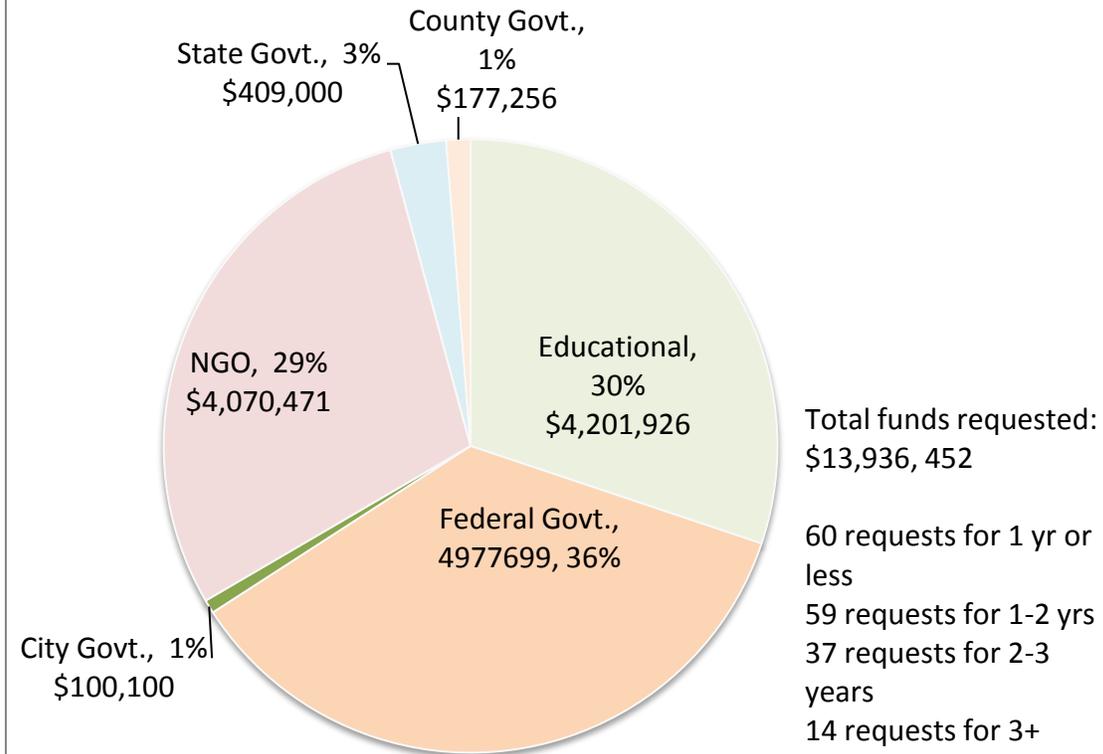
Rick added that Christina Vojta, of the Desert LCC, asked him if the CA LCC would like to go in on providing fact sheets in Spanish for distribution at the Trilateral Meeting.

Rebecca stated that one of the CA LCC-funded projects from PRBO, is creating an Environmental Change Network and are working on a survey. Rebecca will send the ISC and/or the Science Subcommittee a link to participate in the survey.

Ellie asked Rick what the prospects of funding are for LCCs in FY 2012. Rick answered that he doesn't have the numbers yet, but that there is no sign of funding being reduced or eliminating for LCCs.

Debra thanked the participants for attending the meeting.

## Attachment A Pre-proposals by requested funding



## Attachment B



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Date: March 1, 2011  
To: CA LCC Interim Steering Committee (ISC)  
From: Rebecca Fris, Science Coordinator  
Subject: 2011 Project Selection Process

This memo is to update you on the project selection process for CA LCC project funding for federal fiscal year 2011 and to request your concurrence on our steps for project selection. The ISC approved a set of priorities and criteria for use in the project selection process at their meeting in January (see Appendix A). A call went out for pre-proposals in early February with a February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, deadline for pre-proposals submission. We received 170 pre-proposals requesting over \$14 million dollars in funding. Pre-proposals were received from federal, state, and local agencies, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. USFWS has approximately \$850,000 for project funding in 2011.

### Selection Process

As agreed by the ISC, the project selection process has two phases. The pre-proposals are being evaluated against the 2011 priorities and criteria by a review team of 12 individuals from state, federal and non-agency organizations (see Appendix B). Given the large number of pre-proposals, the review team was broken into 3 groups of 4 so each pre-proposal will be reviewed by 4 people. Each reviewer is scoring the pre-proposals against the 7 criteria. The scores of the 4 reviewers will be combined and averaged for a final score. Reviewers are also recording comments, justifications and questions associated with each project. The review team will meet in person the morning on Thursday March 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss which of the highest scored pre-proposals will be asked for full proposals. That final decision process will be explained on the ISC call that afternoon on Thursday March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

After approval from the ISC on procedures to date, a sub-set of pre-proposals that best meet the priorities and criteria will be requested to submit a full

proposal. That request will go out some time during the week of March 7<sup>th</sup>. Applicants will be given a month to submit a full proposal. Then, a project selection committee will score and evaluate full proposals for consideration of funding by the ISC.

#### Tentative Schedule for 2011 Project Selection

Week of March 7-	Request full Proposals
Mid April-	Proposals due
Late April	Proposals evaluated/Recommendation developed
Late Apr/early May-	Recommendations to Steering Committee
May/June-	Projects under contract

#### Follow up

Given the large number of pre-proposals received, we will spend considerable time on following up on some of the great ideas described in the proposals. We received many projects that we may want to pursue under the CA LCC in the future or recommend to other funding programs. *We want your help in identifying other resources available to follow up on some of these potential projects.*

#### Appendix A – Priorities and Criteria for 2011 CA LCC Projects

##### **2011 CA LCC Priorities**

Projects should support decision-making and conservation delivery for natural resource managers while accounting for sources of uncertainty about system dynamics in a changing environment. Projects should address at least one of the following priority issues:

##### **Ecosystem Response/Species and Habitat Information**

- Developing relevant downscaled models clearly addressing resource manager needs and habitat/organism responses to projected change under alternative climate/economic/planning scenarios
- Identifying future biodiversity hotspots and connectivity needs
- Better understanding of demographic responses to climate change, including dispersal, survival, and productivity (e.g. why hotspots are hot)

- Modeling the frequency, intensity, and impacts of extreme climate-driven events (e.g. sea level rise, floods, wildfires, and droughts)

### **Decision Support for Climate Adaptation**

- Future scenario planning at landscape and ecoregional scales
- Ecosystem impacts of adaptive land-use change – avoiding conflicts between human infrastructure changes and biodiversity/conservation
- Developing open access information retrieval (i.e. metadata commons) systems to inform managers, and decision-support systems/tools that help managers allocate limited resources on prioritization, scenario evaluation and adaptive management.
- Development/standardization of metrics of change, measurement protocols, indicator species, performance measures to assess resiliency
- Monitoring in the context of fully implemented adaptive management frameworks
- Long term monitoring programs designed to establish ecological baselines and trends, and track climate (or adaptation to climate change) effects

### **Evaluation Criteria**

- 1. Applicability to Conservation and Adaptation Decisions-** Highly likely to aid conservation and adaptation decisions. Policy makers or other decision makers are clearly asking for support.
- 2. Ecological or Ecosystem Response to System/Climate Change** - Will improve understanding or help address crucial sources of uncertainty about how species, ecosystems, habitats, and/or landscapes respond to projected change under alternative scenarios.
- 3. Breadth of Understanding** - Project is integrative – multi taxa, crosses trophic levels, includes physical and biological data, enables comprehensive understanding, considers several major climate system components, e.g.: water, carbon.
- 4. Accessibility** – Products and information generated will be available and easy to use preferably online, designed for target audience access/understanding.

5. **Scope/Transferability** - LCC-wide or region-specific with projected outcomes and/or products that are clearly transferable to other LCCs.
6. **Partnerships/Leveraging** - Multi-partner project –includes scientists, habitat managers, and/or policy makers from multiple organizations (e.g., conservation and other NGOs, local governments, and state and federal agencies). Builds new collaborations and has secured matching funds and/or in-kind support from multiple partners.
7. **Timeliness and Urgency** - Information is urgently needed because of high risk or to avoid severe impact. Products will inform urgent actions and provide important information for setting up the CA LCC for long term success.

Continuing CA LCC projects will also be evaluated by the following additional criteria.

1. **Continued Relevance** - The project addresses one or more of the 2011 priorities.
2. **Project Performance** - The project deliverables were received in a timely manner and were high quality.
3. **Readiness** - The project is ready for additional funds.

## Appendix B

### **CA LCC Pre-proposal Review Panel**

Mike Allen	UC Riverside
Grant Ballard	PRBO Conservation Science
Christy Brigham	National Park Service (Los Angeles)
Trish Chapman	California Coastal Conservancy (central coast)
Diana Craig	US Forest Service
Rebecca Fris	CA LCC
Matt Gerhart	California Coastal Conservancy (Bay Area)
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