Bay Area Open Space Council
California Landscape Conservation Cooperative Full Proposal
June 1, 2010

1. **Title: San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals**

2. **Project Leader/Agency/Contact Information:** Bettina Ring, Bay Area Open Space Council, (510) 809-8009 x254, bettina@openspacecouncil.org.

3. **Partners:** Twenty three agencies and nonprofits have been participating on the Upland Habitat Goals Steering Committee to oversee and guide the project's development. Steering Committee members are listed on the fact sheet in Attachment 1. Seven funding/technical assistance partners are listed on page 4.

4. **Conservation Outcomes/Project Goals:** The conservation outcome is to conserve biodiversity in the nine-county Bay Area. To achieve this outcome, the project goals are to complete a scientifically credible conservation plan and create application tools that are readily accessible and easy to use by conservation practitioners, land use planners, policymakers and funders.

5. **Project Summary:** The Bay Area Open Space Council is requesting $98,500 to complete the San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals project. The Upland Habitat Goals project, now nearing completion, is a science-based process using existing data supplemented by expert opinion to identify a Conservation Lands Network for biodiversity preservation to inform conservation investments – the first ever for the San Francisco Bay Area. The final report will recommend the types, amounts and distribution of habitats, linkages, compatible uses and the ecological processes needed to sustain diversity. The Draft Conservation Lands Network, still subject to revision, is in Attachment 2. To facilitate the application of the goals, a GIS database of numerous datasets is available for download and a prototype online decision support tool will be available in July 2010 These tools will assist the LCC and its partners make informed decisions when selecting acquisition and restoration projects that best meet biodiversity conservation goals. Deliverables from this grant are 1) the completion of the fine filter analyses that will allow the GIS database and online tool to be finalized; 2) completion of the peer-reviewed final report; and 3) incorporation of more detailed climate change impacts into the project.

6. **How project will advance LCC goals**: The Upland Habitat Goals project will help advance LCC goals in the following areas:

   a. Climate Information. Dr. David Ackerly of UC Berkeley, using a grant from the Moore Foundation, is convening climate change experts in July 2010 to determine how to incorporate climate change into Upland Habitat Goals. The project's Conservation Lands Network will be updated using the climate data and a final report will be completed in summer 2011.

   b. Land Cover, Data Sharing, Management, and Interfacing. The GIS database includes datasets on land cover, land use and vegetation types and a wealth of additional data organized into groups with consistent symbology and cartography. The GIS database and online decision support tool are designed to maximize data sharing and make the data useful to everyone regardless of their GIS experience. The GIS database is currently available at www.uplandhabitat.org/gis and has already been downloaded by over 80 individuals and organizations. In addition, the project offers an analytical framework and site planning software (Marxan) that can be tailored to finer-scaled plans by agencies and nonprofit organizations.

   c. Habitat Connectivity. The current iteration of Upland Habitat Goals incorporates linkages into the planning process but detailed linkage analysis is beyond the initial scope of the project. To address the issue, the Moore Foundation has funded SC Wildlands to undertake Critical Linkages: The Bay

Area and Beyond. SC Wildlands launched the project with two workshops in April 2010. The results will be incorporated into Upland Habitat Goals upon completion in late 2011.

d. Species and Habitat Information. The GIS database will include extensive habitat information from CNDDB, UCB's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology and expert opinion. The Upland Habitat Goals vegetation types were crosswalked to the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships vegetation types so that a GIS user can evaluate habitat suitability.

e. Communications and Information Exchange. The Council has secured a $239,938 two-year grant from the Moore Foundation for outreach and implementation as the project nears completion. Activities include creating the online tool, holding workshops on the GIS database and online tool for agency and nonprofit conservation organizations, offering technical assistance, and holding informational meetings with transportation and county land use staff to demonstrate the online tool applications for planners.

f. Projects that have multiple partners. The project's Steering Committee (see Attachment 1) consists of 23 agencies and organizations that have helped shape the project. Numerous agencies, nonprofits, universities and consultants offered expertise on the focus teams. Seven funders, listed on page 4, provided grants or technical assistance.

g. Projects that leverage funding or personnel. The project has received just under $500,000 over the past five years for the conservation planning process (see table on page 4). The Moore Foundation has provided $239,938 for outreach and implementation for 2010 and 2011.

h. Projects that show immediate results (by September 30, 2010). The GIS database and online tool will be fully operational by September 30 if this grant request is funded. The Council has funding to hold workshops for conservation practitioners in the use of the online tool and database. The first workshop will be held in late fall or early winter 2010.

i. Projects that set LCC for long-term success. The Upland Habitat Goals provides a solid foundation for LCC and its partners offering guidance to maximize biodiversity benefits from conservation investments. The project will be updated every two years as new data and planning methods are developed giving LCC access to updated information.

j. Projects that result in on-the-ground conservation. The project will provide guidance to LCC and its partners in the selection of the best projects to ensure biodiversity conservation.

k. Projects that improve the understanding of how species, habitats, or landscapes adjust to stressors, including climate change. The Ackerly climate change workshops and analyses will incorporate climate change impacts into the next update of Upland Habitat Goals in 2011. The Critical Linkages project will identify key barriers and choke points for maintaining connected and functioning habitats that can be vital for resilience in the face of climate change.

l. Projects that address existing resource goals/plans/priorities of LCC partners, such as State Wildlife Action Plans, Joint Venture management plans/goals, FWS Habitat Conservation Plans, etc. The completion of the Upland Habitat Goals fulfills the recommendation in California's wildlife action plan, *California Wildlife Conservation Challenges*, which calls for the development of regional conservation plans. Because of the regional nature of Upland Habitat Goals, Habitat Conservation Plans generally provide finer-scale plans and users will be directed to the HCPs where they exist.

7. Methods: The Upland Habitat Goals project incorporates the basic principles of the coarse filter/fine filter approach to conservation planning. An overview of the goal-setting process is in Attachment 1. The "coarse filter" is the vegetation representation analysis or gap analysis that inventoried all vegetation types, evaluated the extent of protection afforded by existing protected lands and set protection goals for all vegetation types based on the "gaps" in protection. This approach assumes that if an adequate portion of each vegetation type is preserved, the majority of biodiversity elements will also be preserved. To capture species that may not be covered by the coarse filter analysis, the "fine filter" analysis was conducted to further refine the goals. Therefore, the Coarse Filter Conservation Lands Network emerging from the vegetation representation analysis was the starting point for evaluating coverage for the "fine filter" conservation targets that include plants, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates as well as abiotic elements such as unique soil types. The

Coarse Filter Conservation Lands Network was adjusted as needed to ensure sufficient coverage for fine filter targets.

The fine filter conservation targets were selected by experts participating on the focus teams. Experts were drawn from the Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, US Geological Service, California Native Plant Society, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, PRBO Conservation Science, SF Bay Joint Venture, San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, National Audubon and several consultants to name some of the participants. Focus team members were also asked to address viability issues and offer management recommendations.

Much more detail on the methodology, including coarse and fine filter conservation target lists, can be found at www.uplandhabitatgoals.org.

8. **Products/Data Sharing**: Final products from Upland Habitat Goals include the following:

- Final report with maps illustrating a conservation lands network.
- Online decision support tool.
- GIS database available at www.uplandhabitatgoals.org.
- Framework to update goals as new data becomes available and measure progress toward goals.
- Access to computer software for finer scale planning.
- Biennial report card template.

The final products noted above as well as the specific deliverables from this grant request will be or are currently available to anyone who is interested. The Council is focusing outreach activities on conservation practitioners at resource agencies, conservation nonprofits, transportation and land use planners, policymakers and funders. The GIS database is currently available and has already seen significant use. Over 80 entities (individuals and organizations) have downloaded the database since tracking started in the summer of 2009. An updated version will soon be posted to the website. A prototype of the online tool is slated for release in July 2010 and intended to make relevant data available to those with no or limited GIS capacity. Three workshops will be held to train conservation practitioners and outreach meetings are planned for transportation and land use planners.

9. **Is the Project on-going? If so, describe: 1. what has been completed to date, 2. who has supported it, both fiscally and in-kind, 3. what will this proposal add to the project.** The Upland Habitat Goals project began in earnest in February 2005 and much of the work has been completed. However, the state bond freeze in late 2008 through 2009 stalled the project for many months, costing additional time and expense to see the project to completion.

LCC Request. The remaining tasks and the focus of this grant request are 1) complete the analyses for several fine filter conservation targets so that the GIS database and online tool can be completed; 2) complete and print the peer-reviewed final report; and 3) incorporate climate change into the Upland Habitat Goals. We respectfully request $98,500 in order to achieve these tasks and make this important information available to the conservation community.

Completed to Date: The project has completed the following tasks to date:

1. Drafted methodology, conducted peer review and revised methodology accordingly.

2. Drafted and implemented the Partner Outreach Plan holding meetings and making presentations to resource conservation districts, agency heads at USFWS, California State Parks, Department of Fish and Game, Natural Resources Agency, transportation agencies and numerous other groups not directly involved on the Steering Committee or focus teams.

3. Convened Vegetation Focus Team, developed Coarse Filter Vegetation Map (http://uplandhabitatgoals.org/gis/maps.php) and completed coarse filter or vegetation

representation analysis. Drafted Methodology and Vegetation Representation Analysis (http://uplandhabitatgoals.org/about/approach.php).

4. Developed Draft Conservation Lands Network, convened fine filter focus teams to select conservation targets and reviewed network coverage for targets. Completed most analyses for fine filter targets and refined Draft Conservation Lands Network accordingly. The Draft Conservation Lands Network in Attachment 2 incorporates the following fine filter targets: plants, old growth redwood, vernal pools, priority stream segments and some linkages.

5. Created a website (www.uplandhabitatgoals.org) and initiated development of online decision support tool (see Attachment 3 for sample report and preview of online tool).

6. Assisted with and participated in the Critical Linkages: The Bay Area and Beyond project under the direction of SC Wildlands and funded by the Moore Foundation.

7. Assisting with the design and research for the July 2010 climate change workshops spearheaded by Dr. David Ackerly.

Project Supporters: The table below lists the project funders.

Conservation Planning Process	**Grant Amount**
Coastal Conservancy (2005)	$100,000
Coastal Conservancy (2008)	$50,000
California Coastal and Marine Initiative of Resources Legacy Fund Fdn (2006)	$30,000
David and Lucile Packard Foundation (2008)	$50,000
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (2005)	$25,000
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (2006)	$50,000
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (2008)	$75,000
Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund (2007)	$80,000
US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program at San Francisco Bay (2008)	$31,395
	$491,395
Outreach and Implementation	
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (2009) (2-year grant)	**$239,938**
Public outreach assistance provided by the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (2007 & 2008)	

10. **Performance Metrics with Timeline for each:** Upland Habitat Goals will give LCC and its partners much-needed tools to identify on-the-ground actions that make the greatest contribution to biodiversity conservation. Current metrics for measuring progress are the number of acres conserved within the Conservation Lands Network, acreage conserved of each vegetation type conservation target, and the number of GIS database users.

    These measures will be refined as the project develops a biennial "report card" template, funded by the Moore Foundation grant, which will develop additional measures for meeting biodiversity goals. The new Upland Habitat Goals website launched earlier this month tracks more details about who is using the site, how often and for what purpose so we can gauge the effectiveness of the database. The template is slated for development in mid- to late 2011. The first report card is tentatively scheduled for mid- or late 2012.

11. **Budget, Timeline and Matching Funds for Deliverables.** Please see the table on the following page. Note that the funding requested does not lend itself to organization by outcomes because the primary outcome is increased conservation of the region's biodiversity. Therefore the budget is organized by deliverables.

11. DELIVERABLES, TIMELINE, BUDGET and MATCHING FUNDS FOR UPLAND HABITAT GOALS

1. COMPLETED FINE FILTER ANALYSES. September 30, 2010

TASK	Budget Item	LCC Hours	LCC	Match***	Total
1. Complete analyses and draft reports for all fine filter conservation targets. Convene one additional meeting for all focus teams to review final Conservation Lands Network incorporating all coarse and fine filter targets. Finalize GIS database & onli	*Project Staff- Bettina Ring**	10	$1,000	$1,000	$2,000
	*Project Staff - Ryan Branciforte**	50	$4,000	$8,795	$12,795
	*Consultant - Nancy Schaefer***	60	$5,100	$5,700	$10,800
	*Consultant - Stu Weiss, Ph.D.***	35	$4,375	$5,625	$10,000
	Travel (to be reimbursed at $.48/mile)		$100	$350	$450
	Phone, fax, postage, copies		$50	$50	$100
	SUBTOTAL TASK 1	**155**	**$14,625**	**$21,520**	**$36,145**

2. PEER-REVIEWED FINAL REPORT. December 2010

TASK	Budget Item	LCC Hours	LCC	Match***	Total
2.a. Complete draft of final report.	*Project Staff- Bettina Ring*	10	$1,000	$1,540	$2,540
	Project Staff - Ryan Branciforte	50	$4,000	$5,700	$9,700
	Consultant - Nancy Schaefer	80	$6,800	$14,000	$20,800
	Consultant - Stu Weiss, Ph.D.	50	$6,250	$10,000	$16,250
	Travel		$0	$150	$150
	Phone, fax, postage, copies		$50	$50	$100
	Subtotal	**190**	**$18,100**	**$31,440**	**$49,540**
2.b. Peer Review of Draft Final Report.	*Project Staff- Bettina Ring*	5	$500	$0	$500
	Project Staff - Ryan Branciforte	10	$800	$0	$800
	Consultant - Nancy Schaefer	15	$1,275	$0	$1,275
	Consultant - Stu Weiss, Ph.D.	20	$2,500	$0	$2,500
	Travel		$200	$0	$200
	Phone, fax, postage, copies		$50	$0	$50
	Subtotal	**50**	**$5,325**	**$0**	**$5,325**
2.c. Revise Final Report to include comments from Peer Review Panel.	*Project Staff- Bettina Ring*	5	$500	$0	$500
	Project Staff -Ryan Branciforte	35	$2,800	$0	$2,800
	Consultant - Nancy Schaefer	50	$4,250	$0	$4,250
	Consultant - Stu Weiss, Ph.D.	30	$3,750	$0	$3,750
	Travel		$100	$0	$100
	Phone, fax, postage, copies		$50	$0	$50
	Subtotal	**120**	**$11,450**	**$0**	**$11,450**
2.d. Edit, design and print Final Report.	*Project Staff- Bettina Ring*	25	$2,500	$0	$2,500
	Project Staff -Ryan Branciforte	40	$3,200	$0	$3,200
	Consultant - Nancy Schaefer	45	$3,825	$0	$3,825
	Consultant - Stu Weiss, Ph.D.	25	$3,125	$0	$3,125
	Edit, Design and Print		$27,000	$0	$27,000
	Travel		$100	$0	$100
	Phone, fax, postage, copies		$0	$0	$0
	Subtotal	**135**	**$39,750**	**$0**	**$39,750**
	SUBTOTAL TASK 2	**495**	**$74,625**	**$31,440**	**$106,065**

3. CLIMATE CHANGE INCORPORATED INTO UPLAND HABITAT GOALS. July 2011

TASK	Budget Item	LCC Hours	LCC	Moore	Total
3. Assist with preparation for and attend July and September 2010 climate change workshops.	*Project Staff- Bettina Ring*	10	$1,000	$4,000	$5,000
	Project Staff -Ryan Branciforte	40	$3,200	$5,500	$8,700
	Consultant - Nancy Schaefer	35	$2,975	$4,000	$6,975
	Consultant - Stu Weiss, Ph.D.	15	$1,875	$5,500	$7,375
	Travel		$200	$1,000	$1,200
	Phone, fax, postage, copies		$0	$0	$0
	SUBTOTAL TASK 3	**90**	**$9,250**	**$20,000**	**$24,250**
	TOTAL	**650**	**$98,500**	**$72,960**	**$166,460**

**Bettina Ring, $100/hr, Ryan Branciforte, $80/hr, **Nancy Schaefer's rate is $85/hr, Stuart Weiss' rate is $125/hr*

****Matching funds from Moore Foundation and Coastal Conservancy*

Attachments

Attachment 1: Fact Sheet for San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals
Attachment 2: Map of Draft Conservation Lands Network
Attachment 3: Sample Biodiversity Report from Online Tool
Attachment 4: Letters of Support from:
California State Coastal Conservancy
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Sonoma Land Trust

Attachment 1. San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals Fact Sheet

BAY AREA OPEN SPACE COUNCIL

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA UPLAND HABITAT GOALS

PRESERVING BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

A PROJECT OF THE BAY AREA OPEN SPACE COUNCIL

UPLAND HABITAT GOALS STEERING COMMITTEE

Virginia Boucher
Natural Reserve System
University of California, Davis

Laura Baker/Lech Naumovich
California Native Plant Society

Kim Batchelder/Tom Robinson
Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District

Melanie Denninger
Coastal Conservancy

Dick Cameron
The Nature Conservancy

Wendy Eliot
Sonoma Land Trust

Janice Gan
Department of Fish and Game

Marla Hastings/Cyndy Shafer
California State Parks

Darren Fong
National Park Service

Keenan Foster
Sonoma County Water Agency

Geoff Geupel
PRBO Conservation Science

San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Sandra Scoggin

Rainer Hoenicke/Josh Collins
San Francisco Estuary Institute

Terry Huff/Morpheus Anima
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Laura Kindsvater
Save the Redwoods League

Kirk Lenington
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Mischon Martin
Marin Open Space District

Ryan Olah/Kim Squires
US Fish and Wildlife Service

Beth Stone
East Bay Regional Park District

Paul Ringgold
Peninsula Open Space Trust

Don Rocha
Santa Clara County Parks

Darrel Sweet/Tina Batt
California Rangeland Trust

PROJECT TEAM

Nancy Schaefer
Consulting Project Manager
Land Conservation Services

Stuart Weiss, PhD
Science Advisor
Creekside Center for Earth Observation

Ryan Branciforte
Director of Conservation Planning
Bay Area Open Space Council

The Bay Area Open Space Council, a collaborative of over 55 organizations actively involved in open space protection and stewardship, recognizes the power of a collective vision identifying important habitats to be conserved. As haphazard development continues in the region, conservation investments informed by science are essential to protect biological diversity.

PURPOSE:

- PROTECT biological diversity by drafting a scientifically credible conservation plan identifying a network of conservation lands to guide protection & restoration activities of public agencies, conservation nonprofits and other conservation practitioners.
- Provide the foundation for support of major public and private funding initiatives for the protection and restoration of upland areas.

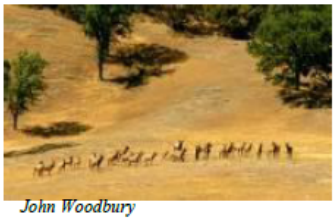
DESCRIPTION:

- Broad-based scientific process to determine the types, amounts and distribution of habitats and the ecological processes needed to sustain diverse and healthy communities of plant, fish and wildlife resources in the nine-county Bay Area.
- Habitat protection recommendations are intended to inform protection strategies and stewardship policies of public and private conservation practitioners (resource agencies, nonprofit conservation organizations, and consulting firms), landowners, regulators, local government planners, elected officials and private foundations.
- Will *not* provide a list of priority properties for protection.
- Implementation will be *voluntary* by public and private conservation practitioners.

FINAL PRODUCTS:

- Final report with maps illustrating a network of conservation lands.
- Framework to update goals as new data becomes available and measure progress toward goals.
- Access to computer software for finer scale planning.
- Online decision support tool
- GIS database available at www.uplandhabitatgoals.org

COMPLETION DATE: *Fall/Winter 2010*



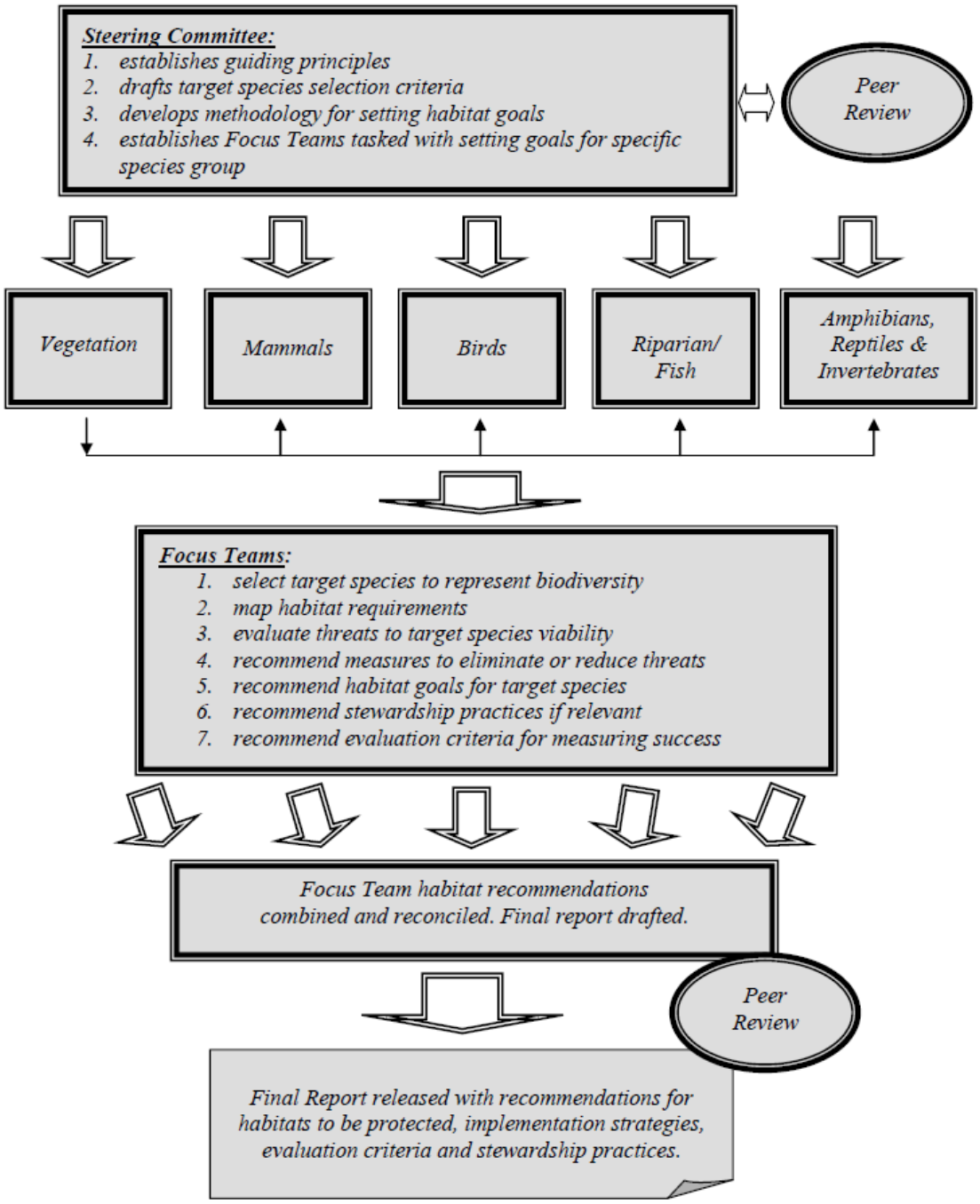
John Woodbury

Lech Naumovich

Leslie Wood

For more information, contact Nancy Schaefer at nschaefer1@comcast.net or Ryan Branciforte at ryan@openspacecouncil.org or go to www.uplandhabitatgoals.org.

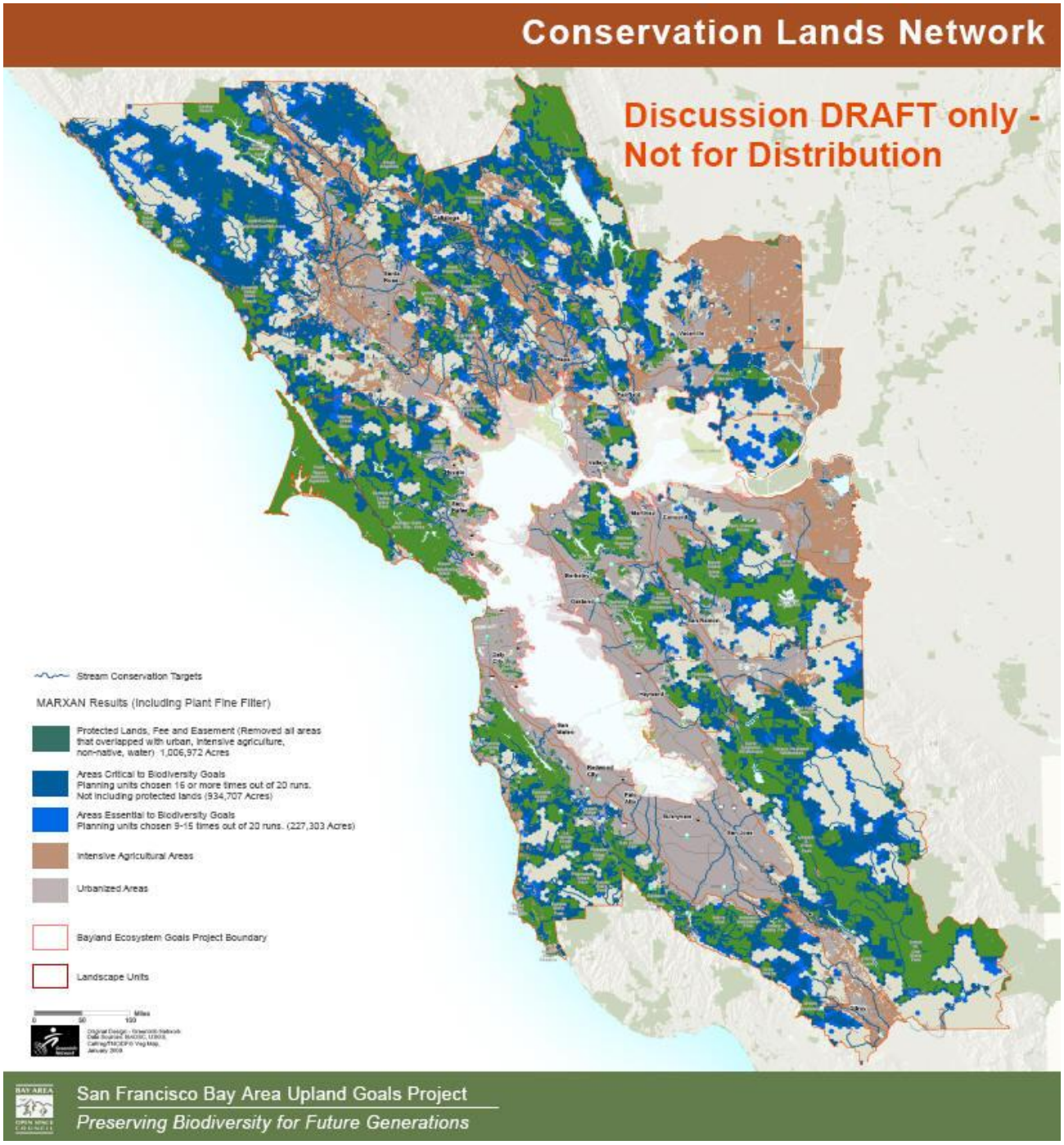
THE GOAL SETTING PROCESS



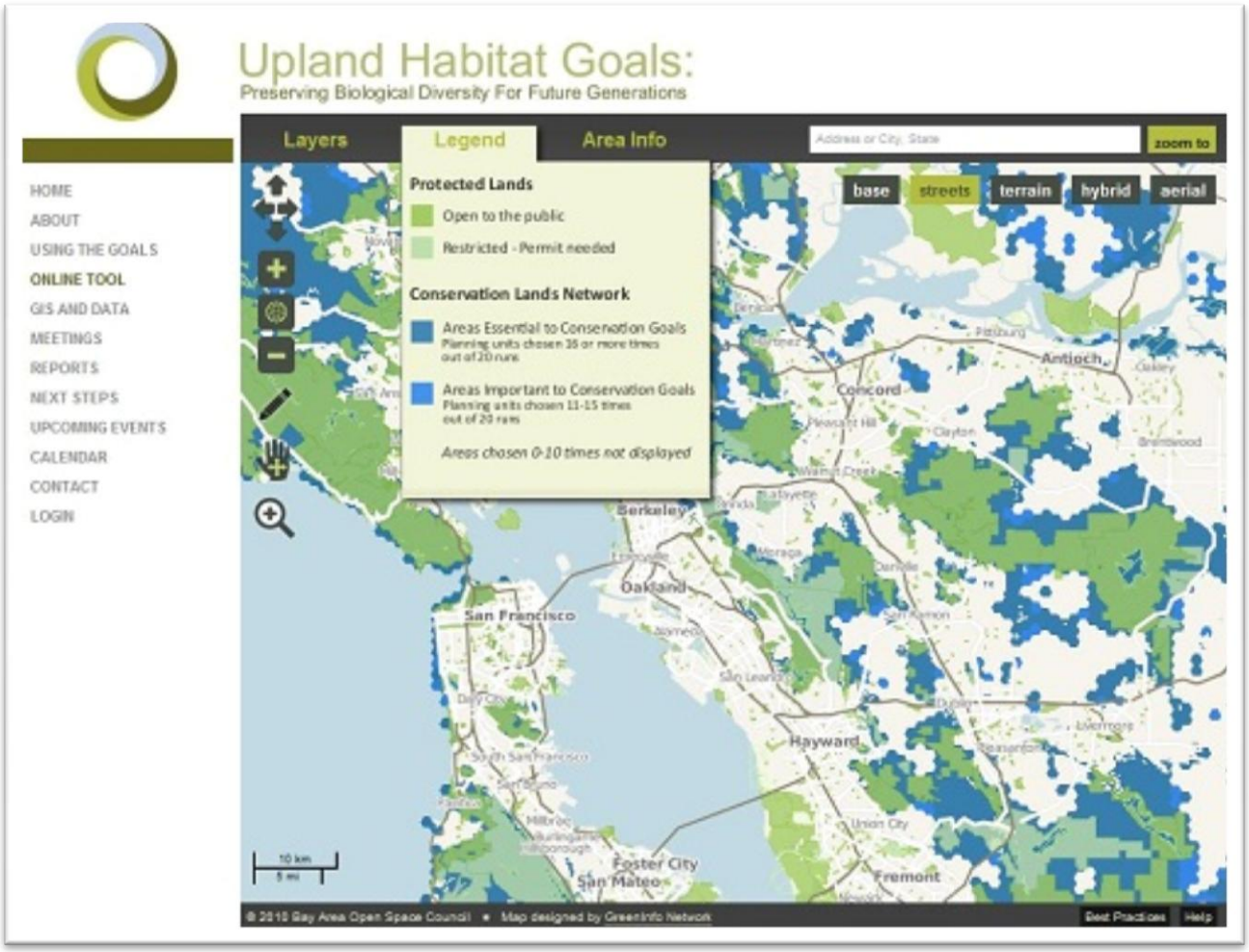
Project funded by the California State Coastal Conservancy, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the California Coastal and Marine Initiative of the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the US Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program at San Francisco Bay. Public outreach assistance provided by the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program.

Attachment 2. Draft Conservation Lands Network

(incorporates fine filter targets for plants, old growth redwood, vernal pools, priority stream segments and some linkages)



Attachment 3. Preview of Online Tool and Sample Biodiversity Report



Attachment 3 (continued). Preview of Online Tool and Sample Biodiversity Report

SAMPLE Upland Habitat Goals
Biodiversity Portfolio Property Report

This is the Biodiversity Portfolio Report for the area that you defined. The following information is intended to give you a better understanding of the biodiversity values of the specified area and how it contributes to the regional biodiversity goals.

Map of specified area. The data in the Upland Habitat Goals Project is not intended to be analyzed for areas smaller than 250 acre. Please read the Best Practices guide and review more detailed information about the project at www.uplandgoals.org (not live).

Landscape Unit – Santa Cruz Mountains North

Defined Area Size – 327 Acres, 132 Hectares

Conservation Lands Network Category – Critical to Biodiversity Goals - 20 (out of 20)

Conservation Suitability – 100 (Excellent)
- Parcel – 8 (8 parcels intersecting area)
- Population – ~163 people(.5 person/acre)
- Roads – 1.5km to closest road

Protected Land – None
- ~ .5 km closest protected area

Elevation:
- Range = 245-403 meters
- Mean = 345 meters

Slope:
- Range = 1-57 %
- Mean = 28

Climate Index Averages:
- January Min Temp – 3-5 deg. C
- July Max Temp – 28-29 deg. C
- Annual Precipitation – 548-564 mm/year
- Cloud Cover – 21% of days June-October (cover at 10:30am)

Nitrogen Deposition – 11.26 Kg/H/Yr (High)

CONSERVATION TARGETS:

Coarse Filter Vegetation Targets:

Target ID	Conservation Target	Rarity Rank	Acres	LU Goal	Goal
2	Coast Live Oak Forest – SC Mtns North	3	78.6	23,781	0.06%
317	Redwood Forest – SC Mtns North	3	220.6	45,773	0.07%
674	Serpentine Hardwoods – SC Mtns North	1	23.2	4,148	0.09%

Fine Filter Targets:

Target ID	Conservation Target	Rarity Rank	Acres	LU Goal	Goal
1099	Metcalf Canyon Jewel Flower		33.2	712	4.66%
1105	Santa Clara Valley Dudleya		11.17	623	1.79%

Streams – 725 meters of Priority 1 Stream. San Francisquito Creek in the Corte Madera Watershed, Priority Fish Species - Steelhead Trout

Coastal Conservancy

May 24, 2010

Bettina Ring
Bay Area Open Space Council
2150 Allston Way, Suite 320
Berkeley, CA 94704

RE: California Landscape Conservation Cooperative Grant Request

Dear Bettina:

The State Coastal Conservancy enthusiastically supports the Bay Area Open Space Council's request for $98,500 in funding from the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative to complete the San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals Project. The Conservancy has provided several grants to support the project in the past few years; the information that is being developed is very valuable for evaluating habitat conservation projects in the near future. We have also been participating on the Steering Committee which oversees the project's direction.

The project provides excellent tools to aid land trusts, open space districts, park departments, and other public land managers in land acquisition decisions. I understand that a number of nonprofits and public agencies in the Bay Area are already reviewing and using the GIS database and we look forward to the release of the online decision support tool and a new release of the expanded GIS database.

I hope the LCC will consider the Council's request favorably to match our funding and allow the Council to bring the Upland Habitat Goals project to completion and initiate implementation of the project in earnest.

Sincerely,

Amy Hutzel
Program Manager
San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy

1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612-2512
510·286·1015 Fax: 510·286·0470

Regional OpenSpace | Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

GENERAL MANAGER
Stephen E. Abbors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Pete Siemens
Mary Davey
Jed Cyr
Curt Riffle
Nonette Hanko
Larry Hassett
Cecily Harris

May 26, 2010

Bettina Ring
Bay Area Open Space Council
2150 Allston Way, Suite 320
Berkeley, CA 94704

Re: Support for Application by the Bay Area Open Space Council for funding from the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative to complete the San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals Project

Dear Bettina,

With this letter, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) would like to express full support for the funding application by the Bay Area Open Space Council (Council) from the Landscape Conservation Cooperative to complete the San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals Project. As you are aware, the District continues to be an active Steering Committee participant on the Upland Habitat Goals Project and values the opportunity to support the project through to its completion.

One of the most beneficial deliverables emerging from this project is the Conservation Lands Network analysis that is based on a robust dataset of regional information and a state-of-the-art conservation GIS analysis. This information is extremely helpful to land managers, such as the District, when selecting priority properties for conservation or management strategies to best ensure habitat sustainability and preservation. We eagerly await the full release of the online decision support tool and database, and look forward to a more systematic and joint conservation approach whereby we and our partner agencies can use the same tool to help guide our conservation efforts by identifying the land that offers the greatest habitat benefit.

The District recognizes the importance of securing additional funding to allow the Council to bring the Upland Habitat Goals Project to completion. We hope that the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative considers the Council's request favorably and recognizes the immense long-term conservation benefits that will emerge once the implementation tools from this project become available to the many open space agencies and organizations across the greater Bay Area.

Sincerely,

Stephen E. Abbors, General Manager

cc: MROSD Board of Directors
Nancy Schaefer, Project Manager, Upland Habitat Goals Project

330 Distel Circle Los Altos, CA 94022 | P 650.691.1200 | F 650.691.0485 | www.openspace.org

SONOMA LAND TRUST

966 Sonoma Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Tel: 707-526-6930
Fax: 707-526-3001
www.sonomalandtrust.org

May 28, 2010

Debra L. Schlafmann
California Landscape Conservation Cooperative
Pacific Southwest Region (Region 8)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825

RE: Upland Goals Habitat Report Funding Proposal

Dear Bettina:

I am writing to offer our enthusiastic support for the Bay Area Open Space Council (BAOSC) request for funding from the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative to complete the San Francisco Bay Area Upland Habitat Goals Project. The Upland Habitat Goals Report will provide an essential road map for preserving biological diversity in the San Francisco Bay area that will lead to increased awareness of threats to its survival and effective action to protect significant habitats and linkages.

Sonoma Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the varied scenic, natural, agricultural and open landscapes of Sonoma County. Since our inception in 1976, we have preserved over 25,000 acres through conservation easements and acquisition of land. Sonoma County, with its varied topography, has a diverse and rich array of landscapes and habitats including oak woodlands, redwood forests, coastal prairie, and tidal wetlands, yet, of the million acres comprising the county, only 150,000 acres, or 15 percent, are protected for future generations. More than ever, with limited funding resources for land protection, we need to strategically protect and connect our remaining landscapes. The Upland Habitat Goals Report will provide us and our conservation partners and funding organizations with a science based plan for creating and managing a network of protected lands in Sonoma County and ensuring that landscape level linkages are created across county boundaries. We are already using the Upland Habitat Goals GIS database to provide a preliminary evaluation of potential projects and we eagerly anticipate the release of the online decision support tool and a new release of the expanded GIS database. The Upland Goals Project follows the successful model of the San Francisco Baylands Ecosystem Goals which has been a critical element in our successful acquisition and restoration of over 5,000 acres along San Francisco Bay.

As a member and partner in the mission of the Bay Area Open Space Council, Sonoma Land Trust strongly urges that the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative approve this request for funding so that BAOSC can bring the Upland Habitat Goals project to completion and make this valuable tool available to the Bay Area community.

Sincerely,

Ralph Benson
Executive Director

Cc: Bettina Ring and Nancy Schaeffer, Bay Area Open Space Council