

Regional Conservation Authority

CONSULTANT REPORT – DUDEK

Staff Contact:

**Charles Landry, Executive Director
(951) 955-9700**

Background:

Report Covers Period: 10/1/09 to 2/26/10

- Dudek continued preparation of Joint Project Reviews (JPRs);
- Dudek attended meetings such as regular Wildlife Agency Meetings, Weekly RCA/EPD meetings, Acquisition Team Meetings, and various other Permittee-related meetings related to property acquisitions and implementation issues;
- Dudek provided MSHCP Implementation Training to City of Temecula and Wildomar; Dudek continues to coordinate individual City training throughout 2010;
- Dudek coordinated with various Permittees on JPRs, status of JPRs and on general MSHCP questions;
- Dudek initiated and completed the review and cataloging of all the habitat assessments submitted to the Monitoring Program Administrator over the past 5 years in order for that data to be converted to GIS;
- Dudek created a detailed spreadsheet to collect the data from the habitat assessment reports and compiled into GIS data ;
- Dudek attended meetings related to management and monitoring issues and provided guidance/support on burrowing owl management activities;
- Dudek provided technical support related to issues with the Wildlife Agencies such as Delhi sands rough step status;
- Dudek prepared draft version of a Brochure on the MSHCP to be provided to Cities;
- Dudek support efforts and coordinated meeting with initiation of RMOC Steering Committee;
- Dudek began work on Board Workshop presentation;
- Dudek completed several PSEs for Eastern Municipal District;
- Dudek coordinated with SCE and DWR regarding pending PSEs and overall MSHCP compliance issues;
- Dudek wrote draft annexation minor amendment for City of Riverside;
- Dudek wrote draft minor amendment related to road coverage issues;
- Dudek biologists continued monitoring and maintenance work on the Saddleback/Vaquero Estates Munz's Onion restoration project and prepared the Second Annual Report.

The services Dudek provides on an annual basis are outlined in the attached Exhibit A.

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March 17, 2010

Staff Recommendation:

That the RCA Executive Committee:

- 1) Recommend that the RCA Board of Directors receive and file the report regarding services provided by Dudek; and
- 2) Authorize staff to agendize this matter for the May 3, 2010 meeting of the RCA Board of Directors.

Attachment:

Exhibit A – Services provided by Dudek on an annual basis

FINANCIAL INFORMATION	
Fiscal Year 2010 Contract Amount: \$680,000.00	FYTD Expenditures (through 01-29-10): \$247,385.51
Approved by: <i>Honey Bernas</i>	Date: March 10, 2010

Services Provided by Dudek

Dudek was part of the consultant team hired by the County of Riverside in 1999 to coordinate the RCIP. Dudek's specific role was to coordinate and prepare the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The MSHCP was adopted in June 2003. After adoption of the MSHCP, the Federal and State "take" Permits were issued in 2004. With the MSHCP fully executed, and as the authors of the Plan, Dudek was hired to assist the County, and subsequently the newly formed Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), with implementation of the Plan.

Joint Project Review Processing

The Joint Project Review (JPR) process is the cornerstone of MSHCP implementation. When Permittees propose projects within the Criteria Area, each project and its MSHCP Consistency Determinations must be reviewed by the RCA. The purpose of the JPR process is to fulfill the RCA's obligations under the Plan to ensure Permittees are appropriately interpreting and utilizing the take authorization set forth in the MSHCP and Permits. JPR materials include detailed biological assessments, project plans and other forms of documentation needed to show consistency with the MSHCP. Dudek reviews all information and reports submitted with JPRs and provides the expertise to determine whether or not Permittees are processing development projects in accordance with the requirements of the Plan. Dudek prepares the key mapping information used to provide the Wildlife Agencies and Permittees analysis on the project and its relationship to the MSHCP. Dudek provides support and coordination to the Permittees utilizing the JPR process. Dudek coordinates meetings related to JPRs, and facilitates discussions with the Wildlife Agencies on JPRs. After coordination with RCA, Dudek prepares and finalizes the JPR final documentation and distributes that to the Wildlife Agencies per the Plan requirements. On average, Dudek processes over 100 JPRs per year.

Participating Special Entities

Dudek reviews and assists in the processing of Participating Special Entities (PSEs) which are non-Permittees that can "join on" to the MSHCP on a project-by-project basis. Processing of PSEs usually entail meetings prior to the PSE material submittals, then extensive coordination with the PSE on the details of their analysis. Dudek coordinates with RCA, Best, Best and Krieger and the Wildlife Agencies so that the Certificate of Inclusion can be issued to the PSE and fees subsequently collected.

Criteria Refinements

When Criteria Refinements have been proposed by Permittees, Dudek attends meetings and reviews the biological analysis to determine if the proposal by the Permittee meets the standards set forth in the MSHCP for a Criteria Refinement. A number of major Criteria Refinements have been proposed and considered in the past several years, including the following:

- Proposal to modify the conservation area proposed for Core 2 in the French Valley area
- Proposal to modify conservation in the West Hemet vernal pool areas
- Proposal to modify conservation in the San Jacinto River valley area

- Proposal to add a linkage in the Beaumont area
- Proposal to modify a linkage in the Horsetheif Canyon area
- Proposal to modify conservation in the Lake Elsinore Back Basin area
- Proposal by City of Calimesa to include a redundant linkage near El Casco Creek

Minor Amendments

Dudek assisted in the preparation of Minor Amendment 2007-01, which was to correct the MSHCP related to Rough Step Analysis and accounting related to properties acquired prior to the MSHCP. This task evolved over several years, and involved a detailed accounting of conservation status of various properties, and a recalculation of the Rough Step formula. All of the documentation and analysis has been prepared by Dudek. Coordination with the Wildlife Agencies regarding this Minor Amendment has been through Dudek, and Dudek has made the presentations to the RCA Board regarding this Minor Amendment. Minor Amendments proposed by Permittees are reviewed by Dudek as well.

Weekly County Coordination Meetings

Dudek participates in weekly meetings between the RCA and the County of Riverside Environmental Programs Department to discuss upcoming projects and issues related to MSHCP implementation. The meetings are an important communicative tool as the County of Riverside is the Permittee with the most acreage affected by the MSHCP. The majority of MSHCP-related cases are in the county of Riverside.

Monthly Wildlife Agency Coordination meetings

Dudek coordinates, sets agendas and participates in monthly meetings with the USFWS and CDFG to discuss a variety of issues that regularly surface on MSHCP implementation, land acquisition, funding, and management.

Bi-Weekly Acquisition Team Meetings

Dudek attends and participates in the RCA's Acquisitions Team Meetings. Dudek's role is advisory related to overall MSHCP implementation issues and assistance in strategies for acquisitions that are important for Reserve Assembly. Dudek prepares a brief analysis to determine if a potential acquisition being considered by the RCA will meet the objectives of the MSHCP.

Management and Monitoring review

Dudek has been providing the RCA with a review and audit of habitat and species monitoring to determine how efficiencies can be realized in the management and monitoring process.

Annual Report

Dudek provides data and textual support to the preparation of the Annual Report. Dudek assisted in the preparation of the 2005, 2006, 2007 Annual Reports. Dudek provided quality assurance review of the 2008 Annual Report which was prepared by the RCA.

Ongoing Individual Project Coordination

Dudek has participated in meetings and discussions regarding specific high-profile projects. Dudek provides background and MSHCP guidance regarding these projects while understanding and supporting the local and political issues surrounding these types of projects. Examples of these types of projects include: the vernal pool issues in Hemet, expansion of the Hemet-Ryan Airport, Guava Street Bridge in Murrieta, and the El Casco Substation proposed by SCE in the badlands area.

Training, Presentations and Manuals

Dudek has coordinated and executed yearly training sessions for Permittees, including cities and RCTC, covering a broad range of issues related to MSHCP implementation. Additionally, Dudek prepares and presents information regarding MSHCP implementation, rough step status and general information to the RCA Board either at Board Meetings or special Board Workshops. Dudek has prepared a Permittee Implementation Manual and supplements which act as a “how to” for the local Permittees (cities). This Manual is often referred to and used by the city planning staff that is responsible for ensuring MSHCP consistency.

Ongoing Support for Permittees

Representing RCA, Dudek, interfaces regularly with the Permittees, non-Permittees and private consultants on MSHCP questions regarding implementation.