

# Notice of Public Availability

From: Karen Weiss  
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**Subject: Notice of Public Availability of Proposed Planning Agreement**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is considering entering into a Planning Agreement under the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA) with the County of San Benito (County) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). This notice announces the availability of the proposed Planning Agreement for public review and comment, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2810, subdivision (d).

The NCCPA encourages broad-based planning to protect and conserve the state’s wildlife heritage while allowing appropriate development and growth. It authorizes CDFW to enter into agreements with other qualifying public agencies or private entities to prepare natural community conservation plans (NCCPs) that provide for the conservation of species and habitats, and ultimately to approve NCCPs if certain conditions are met.

The County has proposed working with CDFW and USFWS to prepare a regional conservation plan for 890,000 acres, encompassing all of San Benito County. The County anticipates that the plan, if approved, will be both an NCCP and a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) pursuant to Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act. The County desires to design and implement an NCCP/HCP that describes the measures that local agencies will perform in order to conserve biological resources while providing a permit for activities covered by the NCCP/HCP.

The primary purpose of the Planning Agreement is to define the process and goals for this NCCP/HCP. Among other things, it provides a preliminary list of the natural communities, and the endangered, threatened, candidate, or other species that are found, or may be found, in those communities and that will be the initial focus of the NCCP/HCP planning process. The execution of the Planning Agreement is not an approval of the NCCP/HCP, but rather an agreement among the parties to work together to develop an NCCP/HCP and provides an outline for the planning process.

CDFW invites the public to review and comment on the proposed Planning Agreement. The document can be viewed on the internet at CDFW’s website at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/NCCP/Plans/San-Benito>. To receive a paper copy by mail, please contact Sara Kern at [sara.kern@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:sara.kern@wildlife.ca.gov).

All comments should be sent to [sara.kern@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:sara.kern@wildlife.ca.gov). The period for public review and comment will close twenty-one (21) days after the date of this Notice. Comments received on or before December 6, 2022 will be reviewed.

Original Posting Date:  
November 15, 2022

Signature	<u>    /s/ Karen Weiss    </u>
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