

October 11, 2016

Subject: Integrated Regional Conservation and Development

Reporting Period: August - October, 2016

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Recommended Action:

For information only – no action required.

Background:

The Strategic Growth Council passed a resolution on Oct 6, 2014 to “coordinate state agencies for the development and implementation of an Integrated Regional Planning approach to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of integrated regional development and natural resource conservation in California”. The California Biodiversity Council (CBC) passed a similar resolution to align their member agencies in support of this initiative.

The Integrated Regional Conservation and Development (IRCAD) initiative is currently advancing on four fronts.

1. Refining and documenting the framework for implementing regional conservation assessments (RCAs).
2. Implementing RCAs to demonstrate the value of an IRCAD approach to inform sustainable conservation and development activities across a region.
3. Advancing the use of a technology platform to supports access and use of this information by the broad stakeholder community.
4. Advancing and supporting policies and financial strategies that advance regional conservation assessments and advance mitigation.

Update:

1. Standards are being advanced for implementation of Regional Conservation Assessments, and the evaluation of available data to support these assessments is being carried out by an interagency team.
2. Supported a multi-stakeholder legislative initiative that advances the effectiveness and efficiency of mitigation processes to result in improved efficiency and outcomes for project delivery and conservation. This legislation, AB 2087, advances a regional conservation investment process to address the efficiency of implementing advance mitigation processes through a banking program. This bill recognizes the importance of regional conservation assessments to inform this work.

3. Implementing a Regional Conservation Assessment in the Mojave ecoregion that is generating the following products.
 - A. List of priority species and ecosystems, with conservation goals for each target.
 - B. A species and ecosystem approach to efficiency address regional conservation goals.
 - C. Integration of opportunities (ownership, corridors, intact landscapes, connectivity) and threats (development projections, invasives, climate change) into the integrated planning process.
 - D. Incorporation of ecosystem service co-benefits (carbon, water and prime agriculture) into the integrated planning process.
 - E. On line technology platform that provides access to data and planning tools.