



County of Santa Cruz
Health Services Agency ♦ Environmental Health



Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission

701 Ocean Street, Room 312, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2022 TDD/TTY -Call 711 www.sceeh.com

AGENDA
May 4, 2023, 7:00 PM

Commissioners will meet in person at **the Solarium Conference Room, at 1060 Emeline Avenue.**
Members of the public can join in person but are encouraged to join virtually using the provided link.

PLEASE NOTE: The meeting room is on the second floor, above the Water Quality Lab entrance. The door must remain locked after hours, but staff will be able to see and provide access to all attendees as they arrive.

Agenda Item #	Start Time	End Time	Description
1	7:00	7:10	Call to Order
2			Roll Call
3			Approval of Minutes
4			Public comment for items not on the agenda
5	7:10	7:15	Status of Significant Tree Ordinance
6	7:15	7:30	Discussion on 30x30 initiative
7	7:30	8:00	Discussion of potential for beaver reintroduction
8	8:00	8:45	Continued review of Workplan for 2023
9	8:45	9:50	Approval of appreciation for Sandra Baron
10	8:50	9:00	Staff Reports Commissioner Reports and Announcements
11		9:00	Adjourn

Items of Interest:

[California's 30x30 Initiative \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

[Explore California's Pathways To 30x30 - Industry Blogs \(esri.com\)](https://esri.com)

[California Releases Draft Strategy to Achieve 30x30 Conservation Target](https://ca.gov)

[Beaver information, CDFW \(ca.gov\)](https://ca.gov)

[Bill Text - AB-64 Beaver restoration. \(ca.gov\)](https://ca.gov)

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. This online meeting is available to anyone with a telephone. If you are a person with a disability and require special assistance in order to participate in the meeting, please contact Sean Abbey at (831) 454-2386 or TDD number (454-2123) at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting in order to make arrangements. Persons with disabilities may request a copy of the agenda in an alternative format. As a courtesy to those affected, please attend the meeting smoke and scent free.

Commissioner and Public Participation Information and Guidelines

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 280 221 026 432

Passcode: bpaLGF

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Or call in (audio only)

[+1 831-454-2222,,9905614#](#) United States, Salinas

Phone Conference ID: 990 561 4#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

Click on the “Click here to join the meeting” link above. If you are asked to join Teams with an application, click on “No thanks” and open in the browser. You should not need to download the application to join the meeting.

Please join the meeting a few minutes BEFORE 7:00 pm so that we can start at 7:00 pm. Staff will open the video conference at 6:50 pm. Cameras are optional for members of the public.

If you have questions, please contact Sean Abbey at sean.abbey@santacruzcounty.us.

Meeting Roles and Rules:

Chris Berry, Chair, will lead the meeting. Chair Berry will announce each agenda item, identify who will be leading an item and introduce discussion and public comment periods.

Sean Abbey, staff, will assist with roll call, note taking, and tracking who wants to speak. Please allow time for staff to make notes about any decisions. Sean will monitor both email and text messages during the meeting.

There will be a public comment period for each item and the Chair will invite the public to participate at the appropriate time.



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(831) 454-3154 TDD/TTY -Call 711 www.scceh.com

EnvironmentalHealth@santacruzcounty.us

Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2023

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – 7:02pm
2. **ROLL CALL**

District	Commissioner	Status	Commissioner	Status
I	Chris Berry	P	Samuel Adelson	P
II	VACANT		David Somerton	P
III	Liz Alter	R	Jon Jankovitz	P
IV	VACANT		VACANT	
V	Jenni Gomez	P	Jen Michelsen	A

P = Present R = Remote E = Excused A = Absent

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- **Motion to Approve Minutes:** Somerton, **Second:** Gomez,
- **All Ayes:** Minutes approved

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

5. **STATUS OF LOW FLOW FISHING CLOSURES:** *Update by Sean Cochran with CA DFW*

The San Lorenzo River recently approved a low flow closure threshold of 40 Cubic Feet per Second (CFS). This would prevent recreational Steelhead fishing because fish end up stranded in lower reaches and are more susceptible to capture. Our region is unique in that there are multiple watersheds (Aptos, Soquel, Pajaro and Pescadero) that do not have low flow closure thresholds. CDFW is currently working on a low flow closure petition for the Pescadero in San Mateo County. CDFW is still in the information gathering phase for Aptos, Soquel, and Pajaro. This will determine what gaps in knowledge exist and what needs to be studied to establish thresholds. The field surveys will likely not occur until next fall or winter, with work on a petition beginning in 2024 and going into effect in 2025. Com Berry suggests further follow up once the petition process begins.

6. **6th CYCLE HOUSING ELEMENT PRESENTATION:** *Presented by Annie Murphy with CDI.*

Our state is facing a housing crisis, with the issue being especially acute in Santa Cruz County (SCC). To address this crisis, the state has dramatically increased housing targets set in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). These RHNA numbers were then given to the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), which divides up the regional housing needs among local governments. SCC has been assigned 4,634 new housing units over the 8-year housing cycle, a 353% increase over the last cycle. To comply with other portions of the County General Plan, these units will be focused in “high resource” areas within the Urban Service Line that have access to existing infrastructure, such as sewer, water, and transit service. Increasing units in these high resource areas will likely require rezoning to allow for greater density. The recent Climate Action and Adaptation Plan recognized increasing density in urban areas as a critical mitigation action for climate change. There will be multiple opportunities for the community to provide input on the Housing Element, including an interactive map showing where the housing could be placed.

- Commissioner Questions and Comments:
 - **Somerton: What is the mechanism to force these units to be built?** There is nothing forcing these units to be built. The new Housing Element will create the potential for more housing by allowing property owners to build more units on their property if they choose to do so.
 - **Gomez: 4,634 units seems ambitious and many of the parcels identified are holdovers from previous cycles. What will change to ensure the units get built this time?** This cycle will likely require more rezoning than previous cycles to increase the density at which property owners are allowed to build. The Sustainability Update also made code changes that could make denser housing more viable on these lots.
 - **Gomez: Are these RHNA numbers accounting for units that are destroyed by fire or floods?** The RHNA numbers only focus on creating the potential for new units and do not account for housing that is lost. A parcel with a destroyed unit is assumed to have the same potential for housing as before the disaster.
 - **Berry: Do the RHNA numbers consider the “carrying capacity” of a region? People who have lived in Santa Cruz for a long time feel that it is getting crowded.** In determining the regional allocation, AMBAG did consider the effects of sea level rise and wildfires when dividing the units. Two SCC Supervisors are AMBAG members and voted in favor of this allocation. SCC is not unique in having to meet higher RHNA numbers using limited resources. For example, Monterey County has multiple water systems that are stressed to the point of requiring moratoriums on new connections.
 - **Berry: Santa Cruz County has antiquated existing infrastructure; can it support the proposed housing units?** SCC is not unique to having challenges related to old infrastructure. This is why new units are being focused in “high resource” urban areas with stronger existing infrastructure. Additionally, special districts, such as water providers, could still issue moratoriums on new connections if they do not believe they are able to meet the demands of new housing.
 - **Berry: There are large, unhoused populations in riparian corridors that are likely being undercounted in Point in Time (PIT) estimates. You are unlikely to provide housing for those individuals.** There is no doubt that PIT counts are low. The RHNA number includes specific targets for very low-income units that are more affordable to people at risk of homelessness. The [Housing for Health strategic framework](#), recognizes that “(t)he larger the gap between incomes and housing costs in a region the greater the risk of homelessness and housing instability in a community.” One key objective in the framework is to “(w)ork with local jurisdictions to reach a countywide (RHNA) goal of at least 734 new housing units affordable to people with very low incomes by December 2023”.

7. **2023 WORKPLAN ITEMS:** Commissioners revisited the 2022 workplan and discussed management going forward to make sure it is as effective as possible. Staff suggests commissioners select one workplan topic at the beginning of each year, with the assumption being that the commissioner feels they can make progress on that topic. As the commissioner studies the topic, they can report back on whether there is a role for the county to play in that topic, what that role might be, and how the commission might influence county behavior in that role. Topics will be added as they become apparent and removed if commissioners determine there is a limited role for the county to play.

- Commissioners agreed that a major obstacle to being effective in this role is presenting information to the Board of Supervisors in a way that can result in meaningful action. One barrier is the timing of meetings, as FWAC meetings rarely happen in time to comment on items before the board. While individual members might be able to comment, there is often no time for the full FWAC to provide input. Staff suggests that commissioners create a brief summary of what the FWAC believes about each workplan item. This would allow individual commissioners to appear at board meetings and provide that summary from the full FWAC.
 - Commissioners selected 1 topic and will bring a summary to the May meeting.
- Staff will also follow up with the Board of Supervisors office to determine if there are any existing documents that show the timeline of items that come before the board, which would allow FWAC to plan items further in advance.

8. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Staff Reports:**
 - CAAP: The BOS received a presentation on the Boulder Creek Sewer Project and will be receiving an update in October. OR3 office has been very busy with the multiple disaster events and was unable to respond to questions on the Significant Tree Ordinance by this meeting. Staff will continue to follow up.
 - Santa Cruz County tax rate: Received description from County Budget manager, Marc Pimentel, on why SCC has more challenges with funding than neighboring counties. The three main reasons are,
 - (1) Counties are not funded to serve a large population base. Half of our population lives in unincorporated county and the average of our peers is 16%.
 - (2) Property Tax is based on Prop 13, which locked in the % of property taxes that is kept by the county. We were a low tax county at the time, which locked us in at that level.
 - (3) Sales tax is continually eroded by online sales tax. California's decades old allocation methodologies result in online sales tax being distributed to the location of shipping warehouses.
 - New requirements for in-person meetings described.
 - To send appreciation materials for Sandra Baron to Commissioners for review
- **Commissioner Reports:**
 - **Gomez:** Attended a workshop regarding the 30x30 initiative, which intends to preserve 30% of habitat in California by 2030. This framework gets away from species-by-species protection and focuses instead on creating large areas of high biodiversity. The 30x30 initiative released packets for individual areas documenting parcels that have potential for meeting the standards to be a bio-protection area. There may be a role for FWAC to spread the word on this initiative and help the land managers confirm if their parcel does in fact meet the standard. To bring to the May meeting as an agenda item.
 - **Adelson:** Invited by Felton Library to give presentation on 5/31 on floods and their importance for healthy wildlife habitat.
 - **Berry:** There will be several meetings on anadromous salmon proposals in May. Will provide information to allow commissioners to attend.
 - **Berry:** Is no longer on Water Advisory Commission so the inter commission coordination will need to be done by someone else.
 - **Berry:** Comments from Del Crawford referring to wildlife conflict tend to be a difficult topic to manage, but are worth talking about further
 - **Berry:** Intertidal activities are also very difficult to work on and have lots of jurisdictions at play that limit the ability of the county to be effective. Com Alter suggests that increased signage could be beneficial in some areas and Com Berry suggests recommending that has a Grant proposal idea. Enforcement is notoriously difficult for human wildlife interactions.

- **Berry:** Reviewing the role of beavers in habitat management could be valuable and suggests an agenda item in May. Com Somerton is highly supportive of reviewing the item. Com Alter recommends book “Beaverland” as an excellent resource on the subject.

**9. ADJOURN. Motion to Adjourn: Somerton, Second: Gomez
All Aye: meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.**



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2023 Draft Work Plan

Dated: April 26, 2023

Public Grants Program

Monitor - Fish and Game Propagation Fund balance

Action – Decide on fund amount and suggested request level for PGP in 2023

Provide a forum for public input regarding fish and wildlife issues

Learn - about what community considers important fish and wildlife topics.

Action – Be responsive to issues as they arise, report back to Board of Supervisors

Coho salmon and steelhead recovery planning

Lead Commissioner: Berry

Learn - current status and research; impacts of CZU fire.

Monitor - low-flow fishing closure status and fishing regulation changes.

Monitor - progress for new coho salmon conservation hatchery.

Action – communicate with CDFW about fishing regulations.

Riparian Corridor Protection and Enhancement

Lead Commissioner: Jankovitz

Monitor - progress on County efforts to develop a Riparian Enhancement Program

Monitor - how local agencies are dealing with homeless living in riparian areas.

Action – support riparian corridor enhancement when appropriate

Action – communicate importance of protecting riparian from homeless encampments for wildlife and water quality benefits.

Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS)

Includes conservation for wildlife, fish, riparian, oak woodlands, idea of strategic plan for fish and wildlife

Lead Commissioner: Michelsen

Learn - about RCIS process

Action – Discuss and comment to RCD/RTC on draft RCIS.

Action – Participate in public meetings.

Action – Consider letter to BOS re: RCIS comments

Monitor - development of final plan.



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Expand Significant Tree Ordinance outside Coastal Zone

Lead Commissioner: Gomez

Action – invite Rich Sampson to present on wildfire safety at March 2022 meeting and discuss Calfire perspective on expanding Significant Tree Ordinance.

Wildlife Corridors and Open Space Conservation and Management

Lead Commissioner: Alter

Monitor - Cotoni-Coast Dairies and San Vicente Redwoods public access process.

Learn - about Cotoni-Coast Dairies and San Vicente Redwoods forestry management.

Learn - about how conservation easements are being used in County.

Learn - about how much open space is in the County.

Learn - about how to support wildlife corridors.

Marine Protection

Lead Commissioners: Somerton

Learn - about new and ongoing marine protection issues.

what community considers important fish and wildlife topics.

Learn - about local juvenile great white sharks.

Action - take action when appropriate to support Marine Protection.

Monitor - new legislation and actions.

Vision Santa Cruz Wild

Lead Commissioners: Adelson

Action – Create a strategic plan for habitat and wildlife.

Action – develop ways to education county residents about local fish and wildlife issues.

Learn - County General plan update is related to this item



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Note: Inactivated items will remain in staff records and reactivated should conditions change.

Inactivate for 2023: Letter sent to BOS, no further action at this time

Invasive Species

~~Commissioners:~~ Somerton, Gomez, Alter, Berry

~~Learn—Identify species, statuses~~

~~Action—Prioritize species for future actions~~

~~Action—Lend support to Weed Management Area~~

Inactivate for 2023: Included in scope of RCIS workplan item

Oak Tree Protection

~~Commissioners:~~ Gomez

~~Learn—about how the County currently protects oak trees.~~

Inactivate for 2023: No actionable items in 2022

CZU Fire Recovery

~~Commissioners:~~ Michelsen

~~Learn—about fire recovery status and actions.~~

~~Monitor—PG & E's Community Wildfire Safety Program~~

~~Action—consider action to comment on post fire recovery issues.~~

Inactivate for 2023: No actionable items in 2022

PG&E Tree removal ordinance:

~~Commissioners:~~ _____

~~Learn—Status of ordinances~~

Inactivate in 2023: No actionable items in 2022

Cannabis cultivation ordinance

~~Commissioners:~~

~~Monitor—implementation of Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance~~

Inactivate for 2023: After researching the topic, no actionable items were identified

Explore Share Hunting in Santa Cruz County

~~Commissioners:~~ Jankovitz, Gomez

~~Learn—with DFW, work with landowners to organize share hunts of invasive species (turkey, boar)~~

~~Action—Identify areas that could work for a share hunt location. Must be ~100-200 acres or more and not be in a “no shoot zone”. Possible location: Coast Dairies?~~

Sandy Baron

Whereas Sandy Baron has served on the Fish and Game/Wildlife Advisory Commission since 2008, and

Whereas Sandy Baron served as Chair 2015-2017; and

Whereas Commissioner Baron has been instrumental in advocating for ecosystem based conservation of local fish and wildlife in Santa Cruz County; and

Whereas Commissioner Baron, through the Vision for Santa Cruz Wildlife campaign, promoted public education on the value of natural habitats and what can be done to protect them; and

Whereas Commissioner Baron, promoted a better understanding of invasive species management issues; and

Whereas Commissioner Baron advocated for the protection of Oak Woodland habitat in Santa Cruz County;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Zach Friend, Second District Supervisor of Santa Cruz County, hereby honor the many contributions of Sandy Baron to the Santa Cruz County Community.