

DRAFT PROPOSAL

BIOLOGICAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE SEP-HCP

Biological goals are the broad, guiding principles for the operating conservation program of the SEP-HCP. They are the biological rationale behind the mitigation strategies described in the Plan.

Biological objectives are the different components needed to achieve the biological goals, such as preserving sufficient habitat, managing the habitat to meet certain criteria, or ensuring the persistence of a specific minimum number of individuals.

Biological Goals:

1. Minimize and mitigate impacts to the covered species to the maximum extent practicable at a level that:
 - a. contributes substantially to the recovery of and avoid jeopardy to the covered species; and
 - b. is sufficient to obtain incidental take authorization for the covered species for those projects voluntarily participating in the Plan.
2. Contribute to the conservation of the other species addressed in the Plan to help prevent or minimize possible future declines in the status of these species.

Biological Objectives:

1. Golden-cheeked Warbler
 - a. Mitigate for the impacts of participating projects at an average ratio of 2 acres of permanently protected GCW habitat for each acre of habitat directly impacted, with exceptions to this ratio based on the intensity of the impacts. Mitigation for indirect impacts of participating projects at a rate that is 50% of the mitigation ratios for direct impacts.
 - b. Over the duration of the permit, permanently protect and manage approximately xxx acres of GCW habitat within the Plan Area as mitigation for the impacts of participating projects in parcels or clusters of adjacent parcels that are no smaller than 600 acres (250 ha). Clusters of less than 600 acres may not receive immediate credit.
 - c. Prioritize the creation of a preserve system with multiple "focal" conservation areas for the GCW that each contain several thousand acres of contiguous or nearly contiguous GCW habitat and are distributed across the Plan Area.
 - d. Create a new focal area of permanently protected GCW habitat near Camp Bullis and the rapidly urbanizing portions of the Plan Area, with an emphasis on creating new habitat or restoring degraded or low quality habitat, to contribute to recovery of the species beyond the mitigation required to compensate for authorized incidental take.
 - e. Prioritize the acquisition of those preserve parcels that expand upon or help connect existing conserved lands and parks within the Plan Area.
 - f. Manage GCW habitat within preserves to minimize threats and to maintain, restore, or enhance high quality habitat for the GCW.
 - g. Regularly monitor GCW populations and habitats to track the status of the species within the preserve system and to inform the adaptive management process.
 - h. Contribute to the body of scientific knowledge to benefit the recovery of the golden-cheeked warbler.
2. Black-capped Vireo
 - a. Mitigate for the impacts of participating projects at an average ratio of 2 acres of permanently protected BCV habitat for each acre of habitat directly impacted,

with exceptions to this ratio based on the intensity of the impacts. Mitigation for indirect impacts of participating projects at a rate that is 50% of the mitigation ratios for direct impacts.

- b. Over the duration of the permit, permanently protect and manage approximately xxx acres of BCV habitat in the Plan Area as mitigation for the impacts of participating projects with individual patches of habitat that are no smaller than x acres.
 - c. Manage BCV habitat within preserves to minimize threats and to maintain, restore, or enhance high quality habitat for the BCV.
 - d. Regularly monitor BCV populations and habitats to track the status of the species within the preserve system and to inform the adaptive management process.
 - e. Contribute to the body of scientific knowledge to benefit the recovery of the BCV.
3. Category 1 Karst Invertebrates
 - a. Recover species as described by draft Recovery Plan, through phased conservation measures. (Ensure protection for at least (12, 15, 12) high or medium quality karst faunal areas (KFAs) that are occupied by a Category 1 karst invertebrate.
 - b. Regularly monitor populations and habitats to track the status of the species within the preserve system and to inform the adaptive management process.
 - c. Contribute to the body of scientific knowledge to benefit recovery..
4. Category 2 Karst Invertebrates
 - a. Recover species as described by draft Recovery Plan, through phased conservation measures. (Treat as C1 when recovery threshold is exceeded.)
 - b. Regularly monitor populations and habitats to track the status of the species within the preserve system and to inform the adaptive management process.
 - c. Contribute to the body of scientific knowledge to benefit recovery.
5. Category 3 Voluntarily Conserved Species
 - a. Prioritize the acquisition of preserves that are occupied by or contain habitat for one or more of the Category 3 species.
 - b. Identify and monitor populations of Category 3 species within the Plan Area and manage these populations to eliminate or minimize threats, to the extent practicable given higher priority management needs for the covered species and available resources.
 - c. Assist the USFWS with the development of appropriate conservation strategies for non-listed Category 3 species, to the extent practicable given available resources.
 - d. Contribute to the overall body of knowledge for Category 3 species by assisting the USFWS with identifying data gaps and other research needs or by conducting targeted research or monitoring studies for one or more of these species, to the extent practicable given available resources.
6. Category 4 Incidentally Conserved Species
 - a. Identify and monitor populations of Category 4 species within the Plan Area and manage these populations to eliminate or minimize threats, to the extent practicable given higher priority management needs for the covered species and available resources.