

Public Meeting Notice

Monterey County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

June 2020

Date of Notice: June 12, 2020

To: Public Agencies
Interested Parties

Public Meeting Date: July 15, 2020 at 1:30 pm

Public Meeting Location: **Virtual Meeting**

Join Zoom Meeting online at:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83340257842>

OR

Via Zoom app: Meeting ID: 833 4025 7842

OR

By teleconference at: 1 (669) 900-6833; Code: 833 4025 7842

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Introduction

This public meeting notice has been issued to inform interested parties of an upcoming public meeting for the Monterey County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) being developed by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County.

This meeting notice and background documents associated with the Monterey County RCIS are currently available for review on the project webpage at:
<https://www.tamcmonterey.org/programs/regional-conservation-investment-strategy/>.

The Technical Draft Monterey County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy will be posted to the project webpage to coincide with this meeting in July. An additional notice will be distributed when the Technical Draft RCIS is posted for review.

Virtual Public Meeting

Virtual Public Meeting: The Transportation Agency will hold a public meeting via Zoom to provide an opportunity for the public and representatives of public agencies and interested organizations to learn about and comment on the Draft Monterey County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy. Due to the Monterey County Shelter-in-Place Order in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the public meeting will be held virtually. This meeting will occur on July 15, 2020 at 1:30 PM.

The meeting will be accessible either by computer, mobile device, or telephone using the connection information provided above. The meeting information will also be re-sent to the project mailing list at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. The meeting will be recorded and posted to the project website for any interested parties that are not able to participate during the scheduled meeting time. Comments on the Technical Draft RCIS will be accepted for three weeks from the date that it is posted for review.

Comments and questions may be submitted at any time by postal mail or email to:
Postal Mail: Attn: Monterey County RCIS, 55B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA 93901
Email: RegionalConservationInvestmentStrategy@tamcmonterey.org

Project Overview

The Monterey RCIS is a voluntary, non-binding, non-regulatory conservation assessment that guides regional conservation of focal species and sensitive habitats through strategic, scientifically grounded actions and investments. It establishes conservation and enhancement goals, objectives, and priorities for Monterey County and describes and promotes conservation investment that will contribute to species and habitat conservation including, but not limited to:

- Land acquisition and protection
- Habitat enhancement, restoration, and establishment
- Creek and river restoration
- Corridor and linkage enhancement;

The RCIS is sponsored by the Transportation Agency through a planning process which includes public input and collaboration with partner organizations and agencies, such as Caltrans and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the RCIS must ultimately be approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Monterey County RCIS assesses vulnerability of species and habitats to climate change related stressors (drought, wildfire, and flooding, etc.); includes conservation strategies to improve resiliency from the identified stressors; and defines a framework to finance the implementation of these conservation strategies as compensatory mitigation from new transportation improvements. The types of conservation strategies that are eligible to be included in an RCIS will both directly and indirectly contribute to the climate resiliency of Monterey County's transportation infrastructure, including wildlife crossings, wetlands restoration, and habitat acquisition and conservation.

Once finalized, the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy may facilitate advance mitigation planning where environmental mitigation can be achieved in advance of project impacts, resulting in conservation actions that have greater benefit and expedited project delivery. Once approved, the RCIS will enable Mitigation Credit Agreements, a new mitigation tool that are developed under an approved RCIS and approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Mitigation Credit Agreements create mitigation credits by implementing the conservation actions that are identified in the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy. These conservation actions may be used as compensatory mitigation for impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act, California Endangered Species Act, and Lake and Streambed Alteration Program.

