



Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Board of Directors Meeting Recap December 14, 2023

Following is a summary of essential items discussed at the last Board of Directors meeting.

Agenda Packet: <https://www.rchca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1001/rchca1223ap>

PowerPoint Presentation: <https://www.rchca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1004/rchcapp121423>

Election of Leadership for Calendar Year 2024

- Mayor Steve Manos was elected as Chair, and Mayor Michael Vargas was elected as Vice-Chair, for 2024.

Status Update on SKR Recovery Efforts

- Dr. Wayne Spencer with Conservation Biology Institute presented the Rangewide Management and Monitoring Plan and results from 2022 – 2023 monitoring season.
- 81 sites were sampled in 2022 and 79 sites in 2023, with 48 of those sites in common to both years.
- The results showed that, except for one reserve, the SKR occupancy remained stable. However, there was a notable decrease in numbers, likely due to heavy rainfall in those years. The populations are expected to recover in drier conditions and with active management in the SKR Reserve system.

Educational Outreach Program Activities Update

- During October and November of 2023, RCHCA hosted over 330 fifth graders from the Hemet, Lake Elsinore, and Moreno Valley Unified School Districts for the annual “Celebrating Endangered Species Day” event. Events were held at the Southwest Multi-Species Reserve and Lake Mathews Reserve.
- The Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District participated in this year's event with a learning station about the Santa Ana Sucker fish, a threatened species endemic to southern California streams, and the importance of stormwater pollution prevention.
- As a follow-up and an additional opportunity for learning, RCHCA provides art paper and colored pencils to the teachers for an artist contest with the theme “Where our world and the natural world meet.” Entries will be judged based on four categories and awards will be presented to each school in the spring.

SKR Reserve Management and Monitoring Efforts Activities Update

- In the current reporting period (August - October 2023), RCHCA conducted over 200 acres of prescribed burns, spread seed by hand and mechanically in a method called broadcast-seeding for 60 acres for SKR recovery, and partnered with Riverside’s Park and Recreation and Fire Departments to make improvements in Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park.
- RCHCA has a \$1.2M non-wasting endowment with \$117k in interest available to the City of Riverside for SKR-related management. Plans potentially conducted a small-scale prescribed burn, trail planning to limit access to highly sensitive habitat, create buffers and reduce fire fuels to protect nearby communities, and road maintenance to allow public safety vehicles to conduct management activities and respond to emergencies within Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park.
- RCHCA completed the 2023 SKR rangewide monitoring and began discussions with military installations to reduce data gaps.

Next Meeting

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 11:30 a.m., in WRCOG's office at 3390 University Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside.