

Agenda

Arana Gulch Adaptive Management Working Group Meeting

Planning Conference Room 809 Center Street, Room 107 Center Street Santa Cruz, CA

9-4 pm January 28, 2015

9- 10:30

Welcome and meeting objectives 10 min

- Prioritize our goals for 2015 thru FY 2016.
- Follow up on management action items for spring 2015
- Clarify what we want to achieve in the grassland in the first year and how to best monitor
- Discuss the initial grazing strategy and how to control priority weeds in the grasslands
- Think ahead to management actions in FY 2016 for funding consideration

Introductions 10 min

- Brief introductions with Sheila
- quorum and decision-making rules (attached)

CCC Business Kate 5 min

- Status on Year One Annual Report
- Kate will renew search for a wildlife biologist and request info on candidates via email

Prioritize goals of the HMP (part 1) 30 min

There are about 12 goals if some are combined. We will do a group exercise (attached) to develop a draft prioritization of the goals and finalize through email. Objectives will not be discussed except for the grassland later in the agenda.

The City will implement these AMWG recommendations for grassland management in 2015

20 min

- April vegetation monitoring- we will discuss methods later in agenda
- Grassland delineation/ Woody plant removal/cut stump application– discuss need for meeting in April to finalize 10 min
- Continued weed mapping according to AMWG recommendations- Kathy will conduct
- Weed control- grasslands species already prioritized (see attached): Himalayan blackberry, French broom, velvet grass, thistles, medusa head- will discuss later in agenda

- Perimeter fuel break mowing – provide direction on timing and where to mow 10 min

Public Comment 15 min

Break 10:30 -10:45

10:45- 12:00

Clarify HMP grassland Goals and Objectives (part 2) 55 min

- What is the target cover of a functioning coastal prairie system?
- What is the appropriate species richness of a functioning coastal prairie system?
- Which management actions will increase the density of viable ray achenes in the soil seedbank?

Grassland monitoring 20min

Vegetation transects and photo points- How do we effectively monitor to meet the goals and objectives?

- How often to measure canopy height and who will do it? How?
- RDM methodology
- Photopoint placement

12-12:30 lunch

12:30-2:00

Grazing program: 60min

- Meet Tommy Williams and learn about his operation and discuss initial grazing strategy
- Conducting weed control in conjunction with grazing- develop preliminary strategy

Communications with the public 30 min

- Community outreach over grazing-Noah
- Arana Gulch webpage- updates and recent comments from website/email for AMWG
- Agenda development and posting 1 week in advance

Break 2:00-2:15

2:15-3:45

Looking ahead to FY 2016: 60 min

Arana Gulch AMWG agenda January 28, 2015

- CCC Annual Reporting
- Vegetation monitoring
- AMWG facilitation
- Woody plant removal
- Weed control
- Grazing program
- Fuel break mowing

Time of learning 15 min

- What went wrong with the Area C soil salvage and how can we improve outcomes of recommended management actions?

Debriefing of objectives and outcomes and timing for next AMWG meeting 20 min

Adjourn meeting at 3:45

In the July 16, 2013 meeting, the AMWG adopted the following decision-making process:

A quorum is 6 of 10 members, consisting of four voting members and two non-voting members. The four voting members must include 2 of the regulatory agencies (CCC, CDFW, and/or USFWS) and two of the four technical advisors (Sue, Tim, CNPS, Kathy). The two non-voting members include one staff member from the City and the Facilitator.

The adopted decision making process is informal consensus. Consensus equals support from 4 voting members. Every effort will be made to obtain advance input from all members via email on any issues requiring a decision on a recommendation. If this approach leads to conflict or inaction then it can be modified within the group, as necessary, without CCC Exec Director approval.

As of the January 28 2015 meeting there are now 11 members, but one previously voting member (Kathy Lyons) has withdrawn from voting.

The quorum can stay the same with 6 of 11 voting members including

- 2 of 3 regulatory agencies: Kate for CCC, Lena for USFWS, and Melissa for CDFW,
- 2 of 4 technical advisors: Sue, Tim, Grey or Suzanne for CNPS, Sheila/Deevii

2 of 4 non-voting members

- Mauro and Noah and/or Mike for City and Kathy Lyons
- Alison as Facilitator

Arana Gulch Habitat Management Plan (HMP) Goals
AMWG group exercise January 28, 2015

Objective: Use a broad brush approach to prioritize the existing goals from 1-13 for 2015 and FY 2016. Please place the rank next to each goal. Write-in one goal if desired but do not include that within your ranking. The full text of each goal is provided below for reference.

CP/SCT

- 1) Increase SCT population size _____
- 2) Restore disturbance regime with grazing _____
- 3) Reduce non-native species _____
- 4) Increase seedbank _____

Hagemann Gulch

- 5) Reduce non-native understory _____
- 6) Reduce fire hazard _____
- 7) Maintain SF dusky woodrat nests and sensitive bird and bat nesting features _____
- 8) Increase appropriate use _____

Arana Creek

- 9) Reduce sedimentation and improve steelhead habitat within the watershed _____
- 10) Engage with RCDSCC on tidal reach _____
- 11) Engage with RCDSCC on eroded gully _____
- 12) Seek funding to control non-native understory _____
- 13) Provide educational opportunities and increase appropriate uses _____

Write-in goal _____

NOTE* The Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District RCDSCC has the tidal reach and the eroded gully on their docket for priority funding and are actively pursuing funding

1.0 CP/SCT

Goal 1: Increase the abundance and distribution of the SCT population.

Goal 2: Restore a proper disturbance regime with the reintroduction of grazing.

Goal 3: Minimize the detrimental effects of high non-native cover and restore coastal prairie species diversity and habitat function.

Goal 4: Increase the size of the SCT seed bank to a level that will ensure a high probability of persistence for 100 years, or in perpetuity.

2.0 Hagemann Gulch

Goal 1: Develop an integrated pest management (IPM) plan to reduce the understory of non-native species in Hagemann Gulch.

Goal 2: Reduce the fire hazard within Hagemann Gulch.

Goal 3: Protect wildlife habitat features in Hagemann Gulch.

Goal 4: Increase appropriate uses in Hagemann Gulch.

Goal 5: Preserve the “Rose of Castile” heritage roses.

NOTE* These shrubs have been relocated to City Hall and are no longer at Arana Gulch.

3.0 Arana Gulch Riparian and Wetland Management Area Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Reduce sedimentation and improve steelhead habitat conditions within the Arana Creek watershed.

Goal 2: Stabilize the tidal reach of Arana Gulch Creek.

Objectives: Engage the RCDSCC to A) identify possible solutions for bank failure in the tidal reach of Arana Gulch Creek and to B) pursue funding to implement restoration.

Goal 3: Restore the eroded greenbelt gully in the northern portion of the Arana Gulch coastal prairie.

Objective 3A: Engage the RCDSCC to pursue funding to design and implement a restoration project

Goal 4: Seek funding to develop an integrated pest management (IPM) plan to reduce the understory of non-native species in the Arana Gulch Creek management area.

Goal 5: Provide educational opportunities and increase appropriate uses.