

North County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (North County Plan)

Stakeholder Working Group Meeting

April 14, 2023



North County Plan



Traducción simultánea en español

Si necesita traducción simultánea:

Presione "Interpretation" y
seleccione "Spanish"



North County Plan

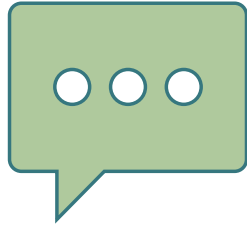


Agenda

- Workshop Logistics
- Public Communication
- Overview & Background
- Covered Species
 - Discussion
- Covered Activities
 - Discussion
- Chat Q&A (as time permits)



How to Participate



Submit Comments/Questions
During the Meeting



Having Issues With Zoom
During The Meeting?

**Use the Q&A feature at the
bottom of your screen**

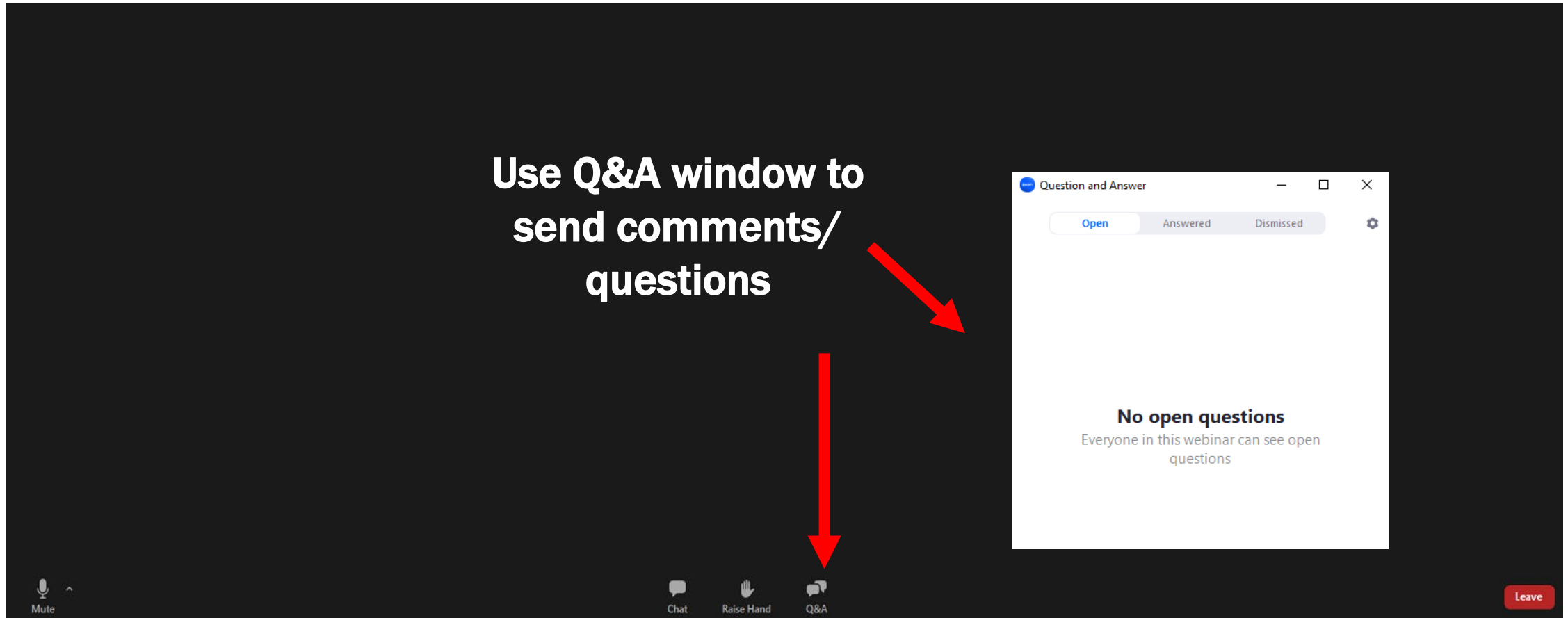


North County Plan



Zoom Meeting Controls – Desktop

Use Q&A window to send comments/questions



The image shows a Zoom meeting interface on a desktop. At the bottom, there is a toolbar with icons for Mute, Chat, Raise Hand, and Q&A. A red arrow points from the text 'Use Q&A window to send comments/questions' to the Q&A icon in the toolbar. Another red arrow points from the same text to a 'Question and Answer' window that is open. The window has tabs for 'Open', 'Answered', and 'Dismissed'. The 'Open' tab is selected. The window displays the text: 'No open questions' and 'Everyone in this webinar can see open questions'. A 'Leave' button is visible in the bottom right corner of the meeting interface.



Public Communication



North County Plan



Upcoming Public Workshops

- **Covered Species and Covered Activities**
 - Revised Covered Species list criteria & inclusion of indicator species
 - Private & public activities to be covered under the North County Plan

Public Workshops

**Tuesday, April 18 &
Wednesday, April 26
6 PM – 7:30 PM**



North County Plan



Public Communication

1. Libby Lucas

5. Laura Hunter

9. John Bottorff

2. Mark Wall

6. Sandra Farrell

10. Suzanne Hume

3. Susie Murphy

7. Mike Bullock

11. Lisa Ross

4. Leon Benham

8. Margot Lowe

2:00

1:30

1:00

:30



North County Plan



Overview & Background



North County Plan



Federal and California Endangered Species Acts

Purpose

Conserve and protect plant and animal species at risk of extinction and conserve and protect the ecosystems upon which they depend

- **Including species already listed as threatened or endangered, AND those in decline that might become listed in the future**

“Take”

Under these laws, cannot "take" listed species or remove habitat of a listed species

- **“Take” generally means to harm, harass, or kill a species and can include removing habitat**

Compliance

Development projects or other activities must obtain an Incidental Take Permit to move forward when impacting listed species and habitat



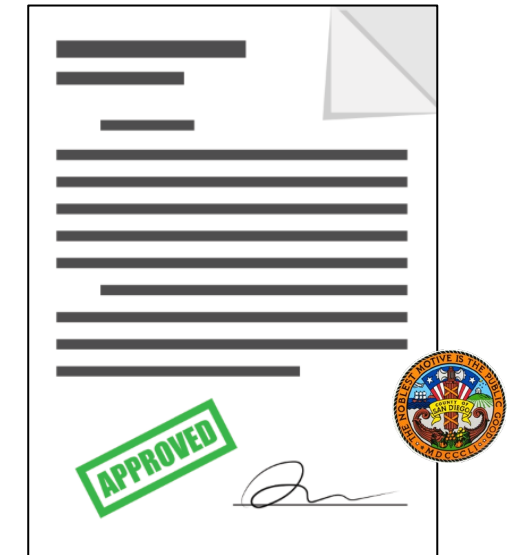
Federal and California Endangered Species Acts



Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP)

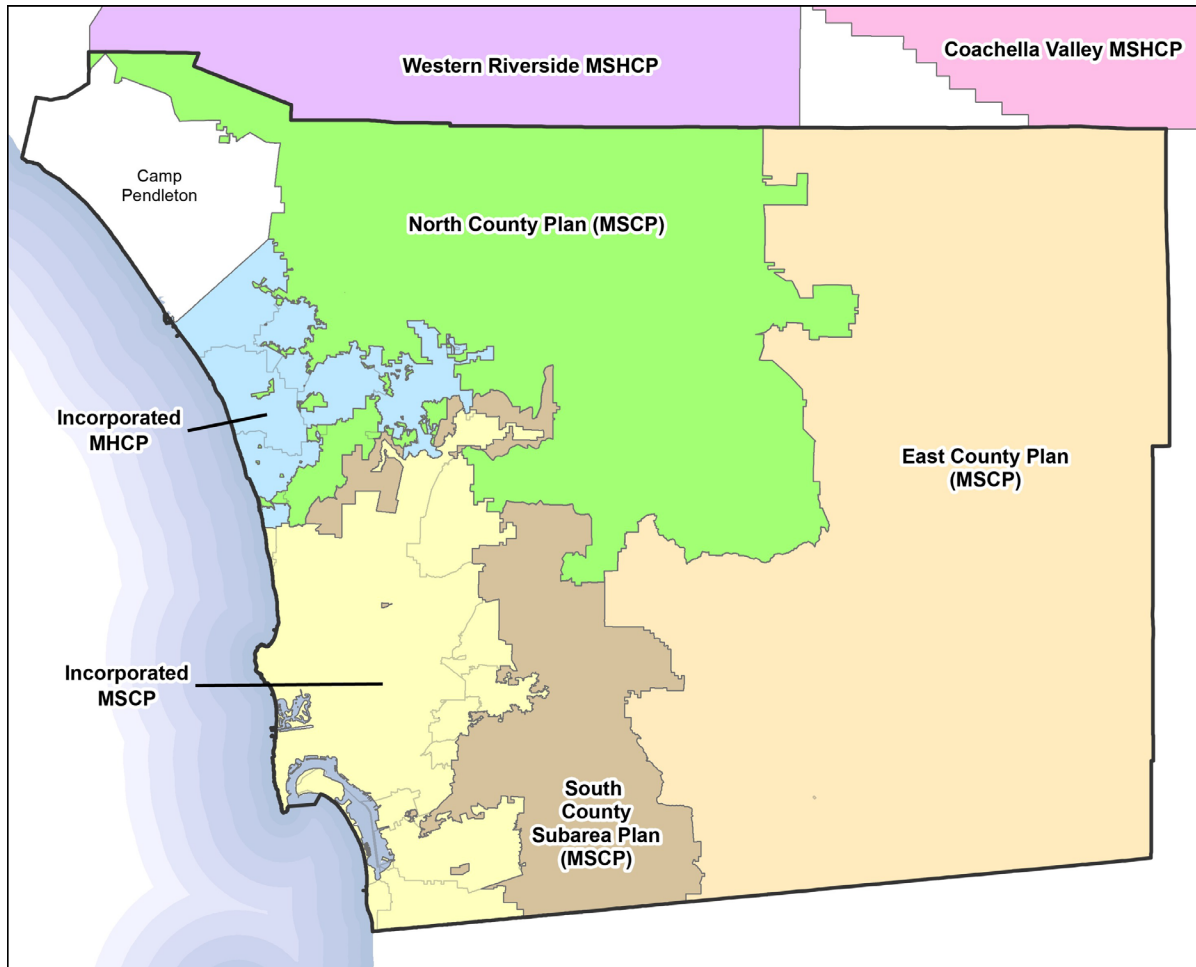
Incidental Take Permit



North County Plan



Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP)



- Enacted by the County in 1997 with 11 other jurisdictions
- Incorporated Cities
 - MSCP (south coastal)
 - MHCP (north coastal)
- Unincorporated Area
 - South County Subarea Plan
 - North County Plan
 - East County Plan



North County Plan



Anticipated Benefits

Community

- Simplifies Federal and State compliance for projects by transferring decision making to the local level
- Simplifies biological mitigation for single-family homes and agricultural clearing
- Preserves a balance of scenic landscapes, natural features, and community character

Economic

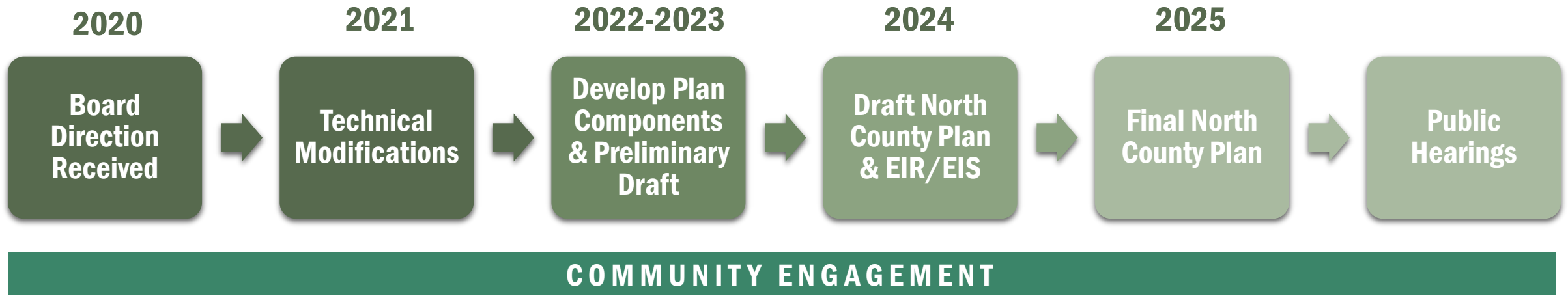
- Reduces project mitigation costs
- Reduces project processing and approval timelines
- Reduces project survey costs
- Provides fair compensation to willing landowners for permanent protection of resources on their land

Environmental

- Protects large blocks of species' habitat
- Protects landscape linkages and wildlife corridors
- Comprehensive and consistent long-term management and monitoring



North County Plan Timeline



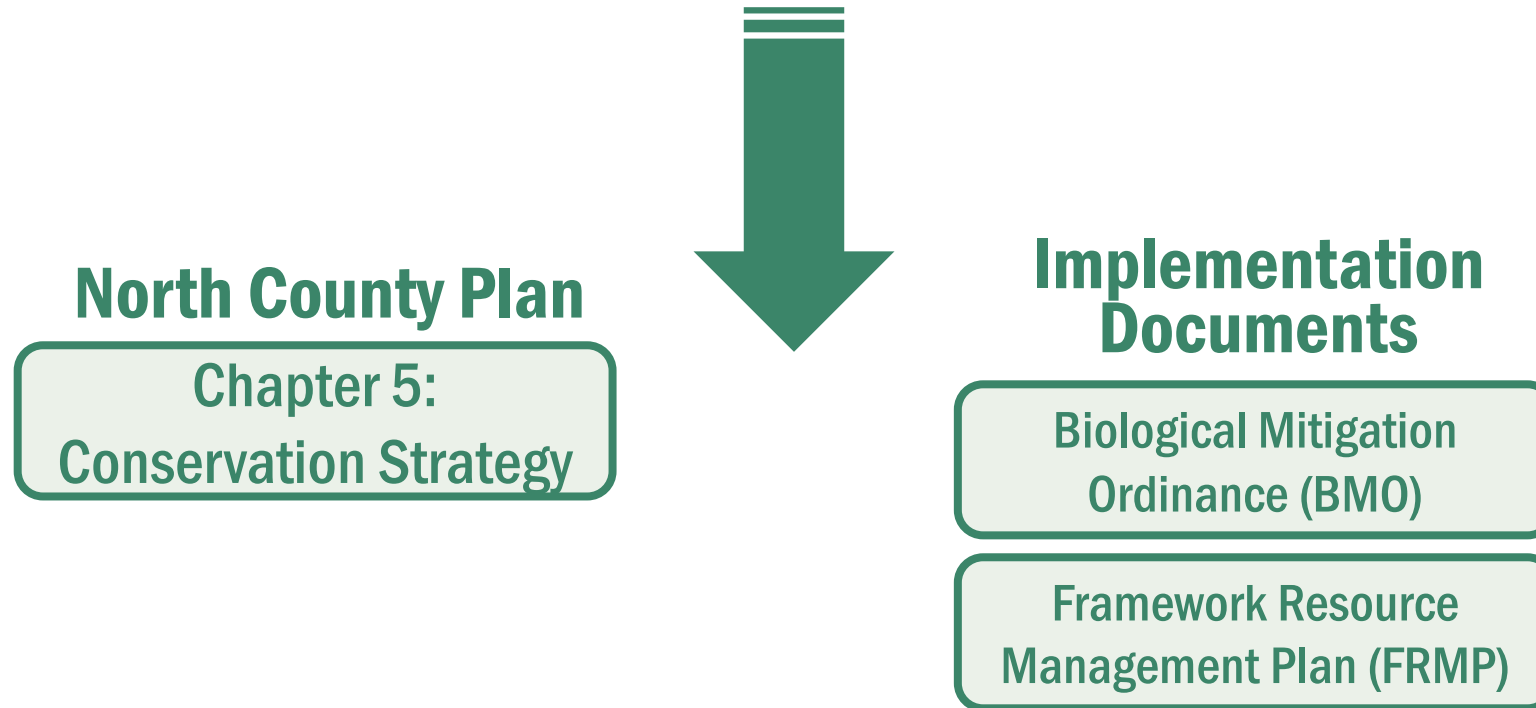
North County Plan



Covered Species



Covered Species: Those species within the Plan Area that will be conserved through implementation of the North County Plan. “Take” is allowed, provided that the provisions of the North County Plan are implemented.



Standard Criteria for the Covered Species List



Occurrence

Does the species occur in the Plan Area?



Status

Is the species listed, or is it likely to become listed during permit term?



Impact

Will the species be impacted by covered activities?



Data

Do we have enough information on the species to assess impacts and prepare a conservation strategy?

Wildlife Agencies will make findings to determine if coverage is warranted for Covered Species (i.e., they will issue an incidental take permit)



What We Heard...

- In Fall 2021, two Public Workshops were held to receive feedback on technical modifications to the draft Plan Area, Preserve Design, and Covered Species list
- Request to expand Covered Species list to go beyond species that require Incidental Take Permits
 - Include species that may indicate how well the preserve system is functioning



Indicator Species Criterion

- **What is an indicator species?**
 - Surrogate species have been used to facilitate the development of habitat conservation plans (USFWS 2015), includes a wide variety of terms, including focal species, umbrella species, indicator species, keystone species and others
 - For the North County Plan, it was determined that “indicator species” was the most useful term and is defined as a species whose presence is indicating elements of habitat structure and ecological function

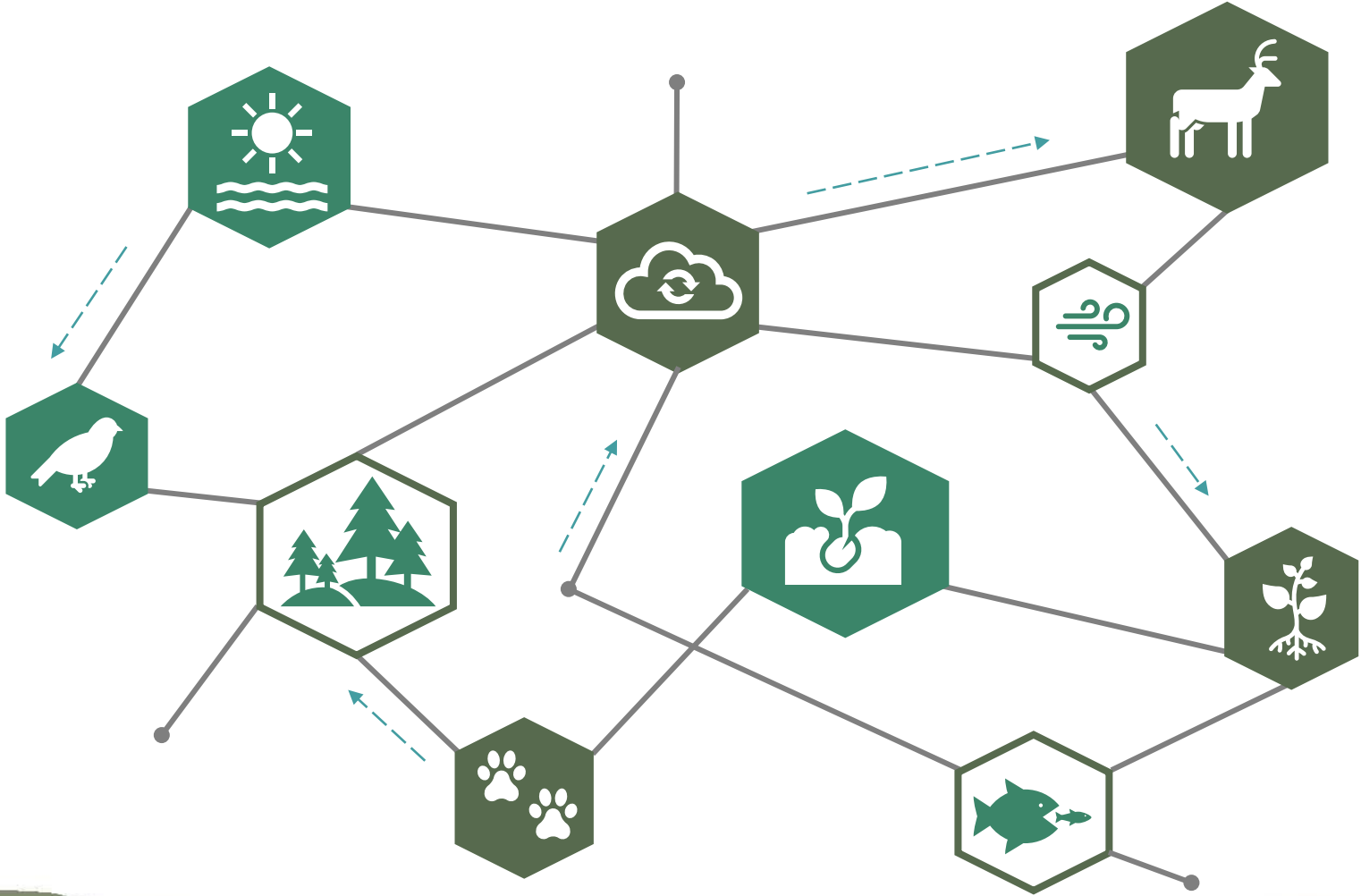


Indicator

Is the species a good indicator of habitat structure, function, or ecological connectivity?



Indicator Species Criterion – Definitions



Habitat Structure

The composition and arrangement of physical matter (abiotic and biotic) at a specific location (Byrne 2007).

Ecological Function

The dynamic interactions between physical, chemical, and biological elements of the ecosystem (CDFW 2022).



Revised Criteria for the Covered Species List



Occurrence

Does the species occur in the Plan Area?



Status

Is the species listed, or is it likely to become listed during permit term?



Impact

Will the species be impacted by covered activities?



Data

Do we have enough information on the species to assess impacts and prepare a conservation strategy?



Indicator

Is the species a good indicator of habitat structure, function, or ecological connectivity?

Covered Species criteria were then applied to list of species recommended by stakeholders & Wildlife Agencies as well as existing covered species list



Additions to Covered Species List

Species added to Covered Species list after application of indicator criteria and evaluation:

- *Arroyo chub*
- *Two-striped garter snake*
- *Bell's sparrow*
- *Grasshopper sparrow*
- *Northern harrier*
- *San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit*
- *Southern mule deer*

Other species added to Covered Species list after discussion with Wildlife Agencies:

- *Loggerhead shrike*
- *Crotch bumblebee*
- *Southern California ringtail*
- *Spotted owl*



Updated Draft Covered Species List-40 species*

* *New additions in green italics*

- **Plants**

- Del Mar manzanita
- Encinitas baccharis
- Engelmann oak
- Mojave tarplant
- San Diego ambrosia
- San Diego button-celery
- San Diego thornmint
- Spreading navarretia
- Thread-leaved brodiaea

- **Invertebrates**

- *Crotch bumblebee*
- Riverside fairy shrimp
- San Diego fairy shrimp

- **Fish**

- *Arroyo Chub*

- **Amphibians**

- Arroyo toad
- California red-legged frog
- Western spadefoot toad



Updated Draft Covered Species List-40 species*

• Reptiles

- San Diego coast horned lizard
- Southwestern pond turtle
- *Two-striped garter snake*

• Mammals

- Mountain lion
- Pallid bat
- *San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit*
- *Southern California ringtail*
- *Southern mule deer*
- Stephens' kangaroo rat
- Townsend's big-eared bat

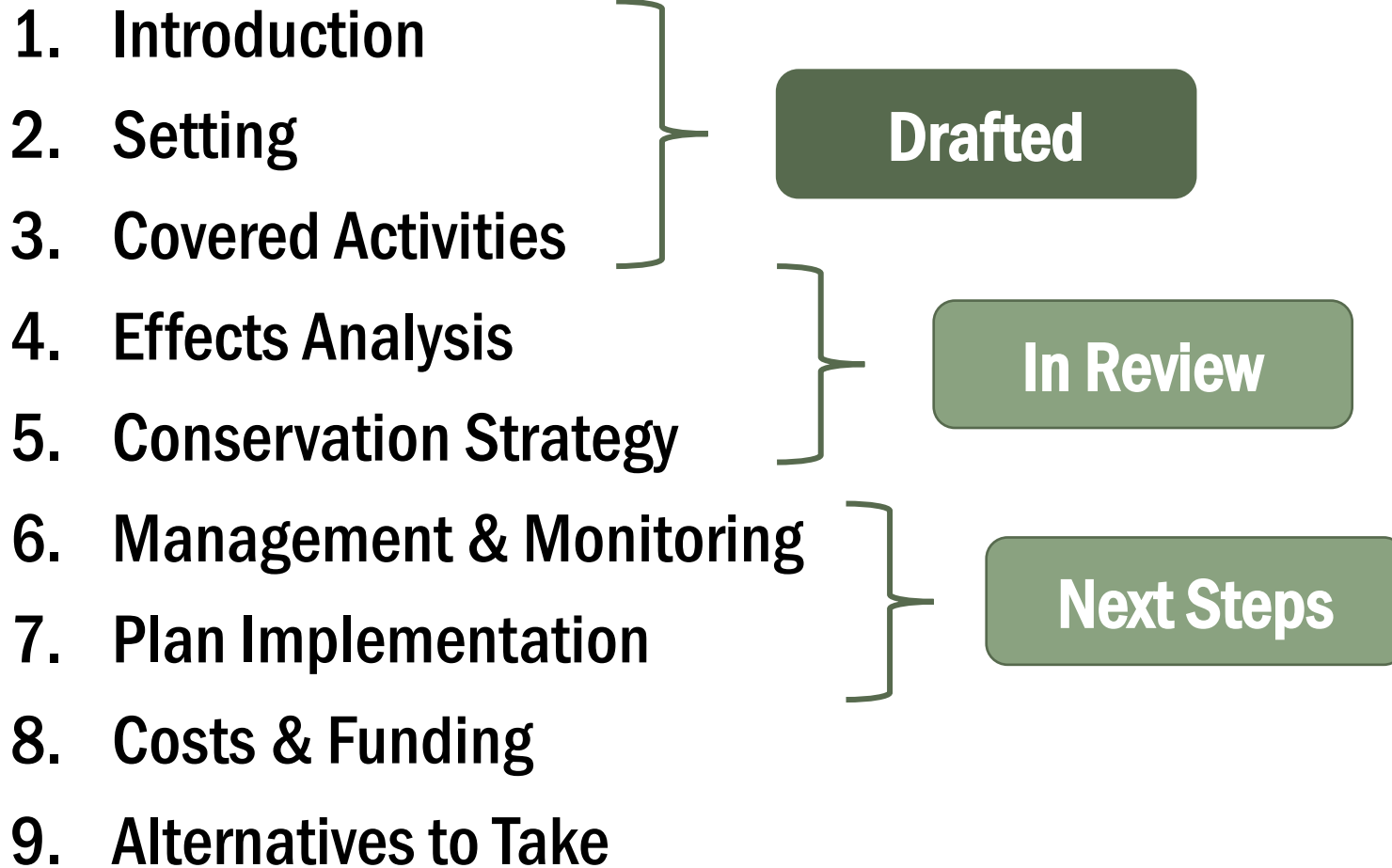
• Birds

* *New additions in green italics*

- Bald eagle
- *Bell's (sage) sparrow*
- Coastal cactus wren
- Coastal California gnatcatcher
- Golden eagle
- *Grasshopper sparrow*
- Least Bell's vireo
- *Loggerhead shrike*
- *Northern harrier*
- Southwestern willow flycatcher
- *Spotted owl*
- Tricolored blackbird
- Western burrowing owl
- Western yellow-billed cuckoo



Plan Components



► ICF will prepare appendix to the Public Draft North County Plan with detailed methodology for developing the Covered Species list



Discussion



Covered Activities



Covered Activities: Private and public land uses, land and public infrastructure development, and conservation activities subject to the County of San Diego’s jurisdiction and control that may result in “take” of Covered Species.



North County Plan

Chapter 3:
Covered Activities

Implementation Documents

Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO)

Framework Resource Management Plan (FRMP)



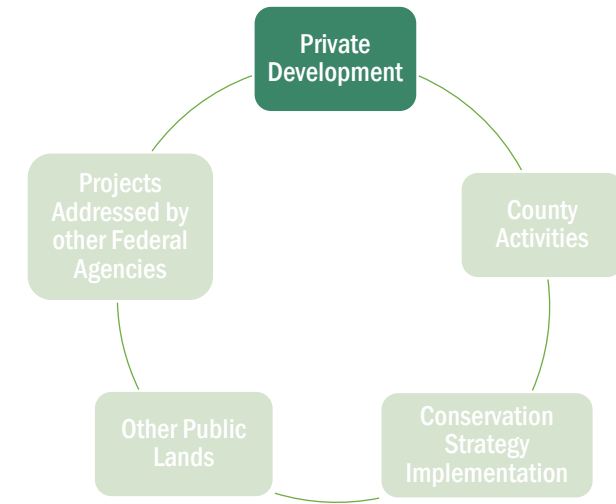


North County Plan



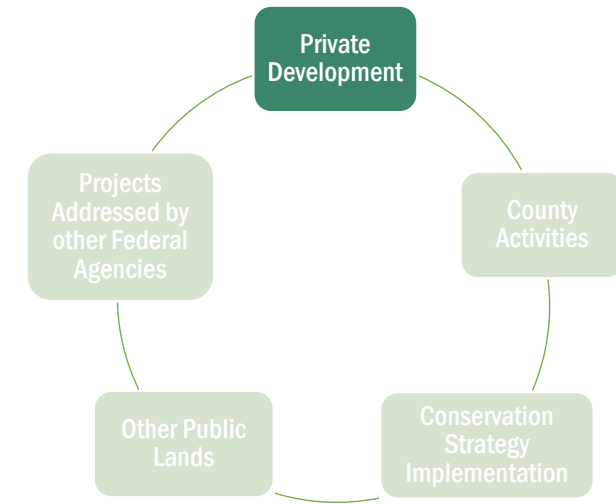
Private Development

- Private projects and land uses with direct impacts to natural habitats such as residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural activities
 - In conformance with the County's adopted General Plan and North County Plan & implementation documents
- Future discretionary: requests for development that require approval by a County decision maker
- Future ministerial: requests which require submittal of applications and the issuance of permits, but do not require discretionary approval by the County



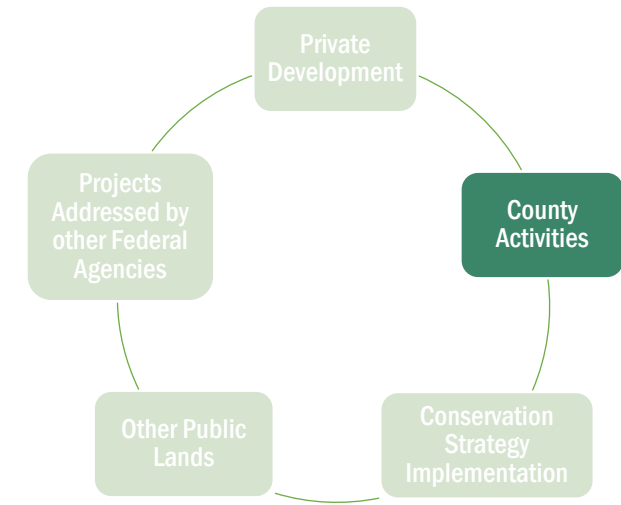
Private Development

- Private development projects and activities exempt from the North County Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO)
 - New or Expanded Agricultural Clearing Exemption
 - New Single-Family Residential Exemption
 - Fuel modification of natural vegetation for wildland fire protection surrounding existing structures
- Mitigation implemented by County Parks & Recreation



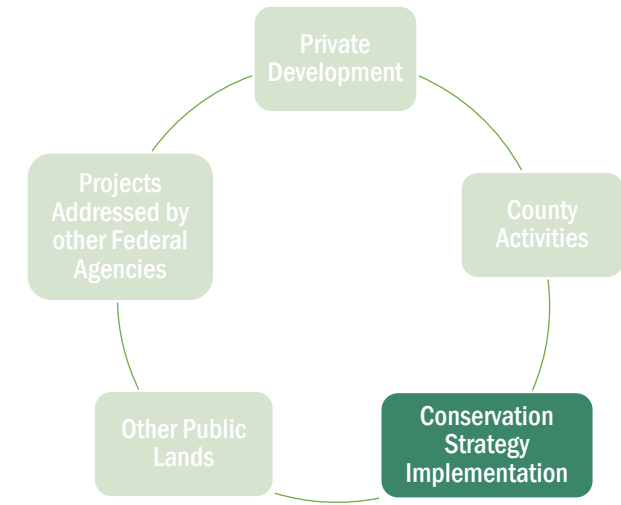
County Projects and Activities

- County projects resulting in direct impacts to natural habitat will conform to North County Plan & implementation documents
- County covered activities includes a range of future development actions
 - Transportation, parks and recreation, airport improvements, flood control, stormwater, new and expanded County facilities, emergency projects
- Ongoing County operations and maintenance (O&M)
 - Road maintenance and safety improvement, parks and recreation O&M, airport O&M, integrated vector & pest management, landfill/burn sites, O&M of existing County facilities



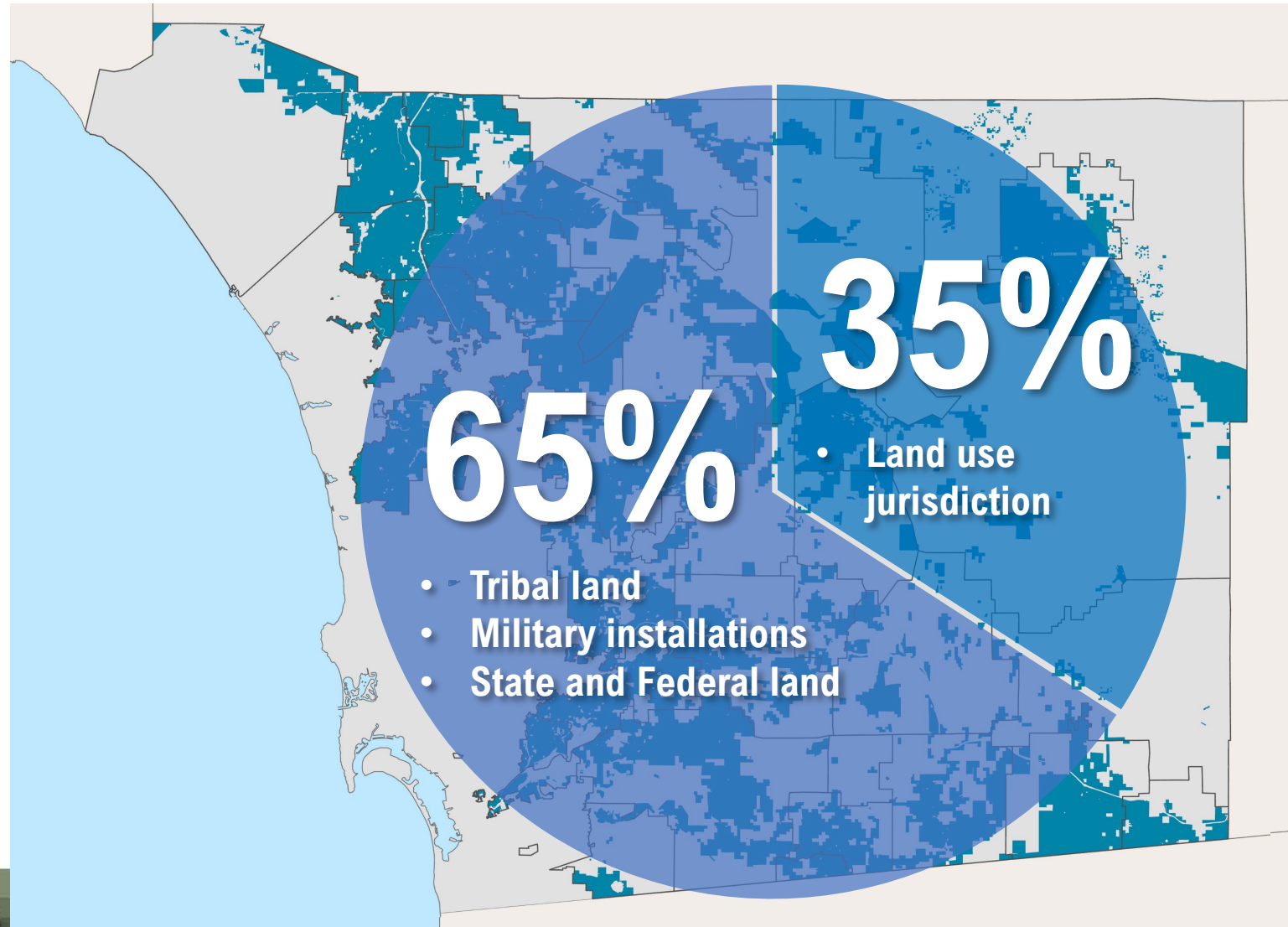
Conservation Strategy Implementation

- Projects and activities associated with implementation of the Conservation Strategy will generally occur within existing and future conserved land, both public and privately held properties
 - Acquisition of land and dedication of easements
 - Preserve management and maintenance
 - Biological monitoring
 - Adaptive management activities
 - Habitat restoration
 - Species translocation and reintroductions



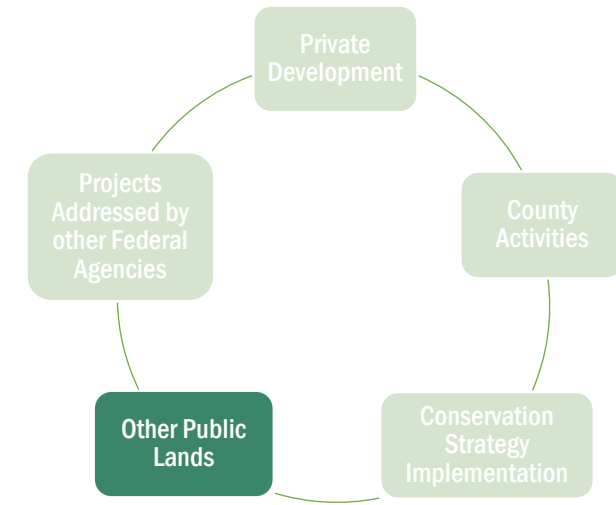
Where Does the County Have Land Use Jurisdiction?

- San Diego County area:
2.9 million acres
- Unincorporated area:
2.2 million acres
 - Land use jurisdiction:
over 772,239 Acres or 35%



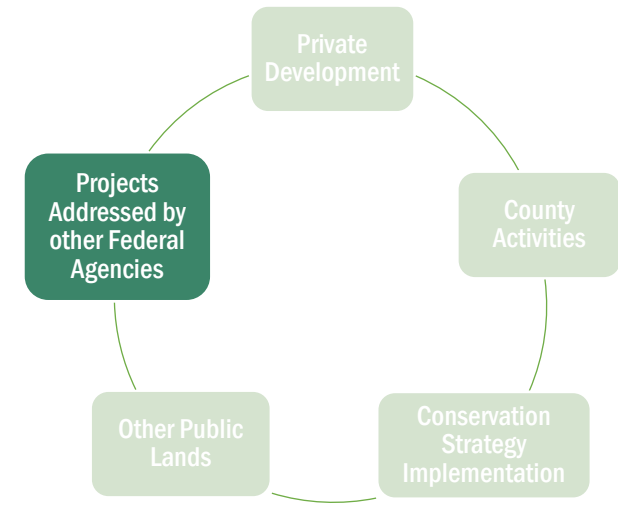
Other Public Lands

- Lands not be subject to County regulatory authority may include Special District, City-owned properties, Joint Power Authority (JPA) and other public land ownerships
 - Able to seek such coverage from the County by voluntarily requesting take coverage under the County's permits
- County will process applications for permits, apply the North County BMO to the project and grant Third Party Beneficiary status through a Certificate of Inclusion



Projects Addressed by other Federal Agencies

- Incidental Take Permits issued pursuant to the North County Plan are not intended to satisfy requirements regulated by other Federal agencies
 - i.e., Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) 404 permit for impacts to wetlands
- Projects by Federal agencies will continue to be subject to Section 7 consultations under the ESA

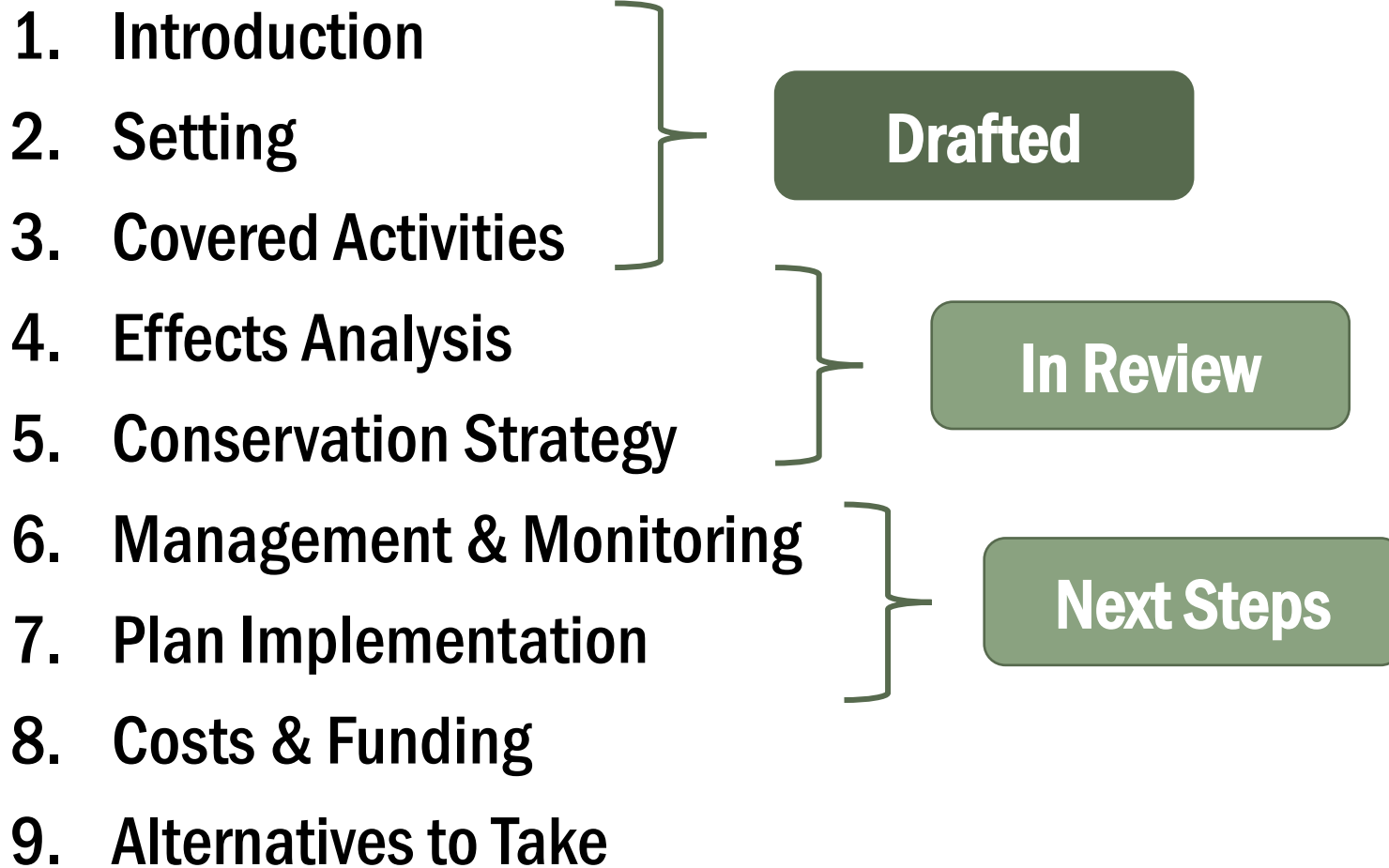


Projects and Activities Not Covered

- Illegal projects and activities (not in conformance with applicable laws and regulations)
- Existing routine and ongoing existing agricultural activities
- Operations of existing projects addressed by other take permits
- Emergency activities not defined as a Changed Circumstance
- Pending projects



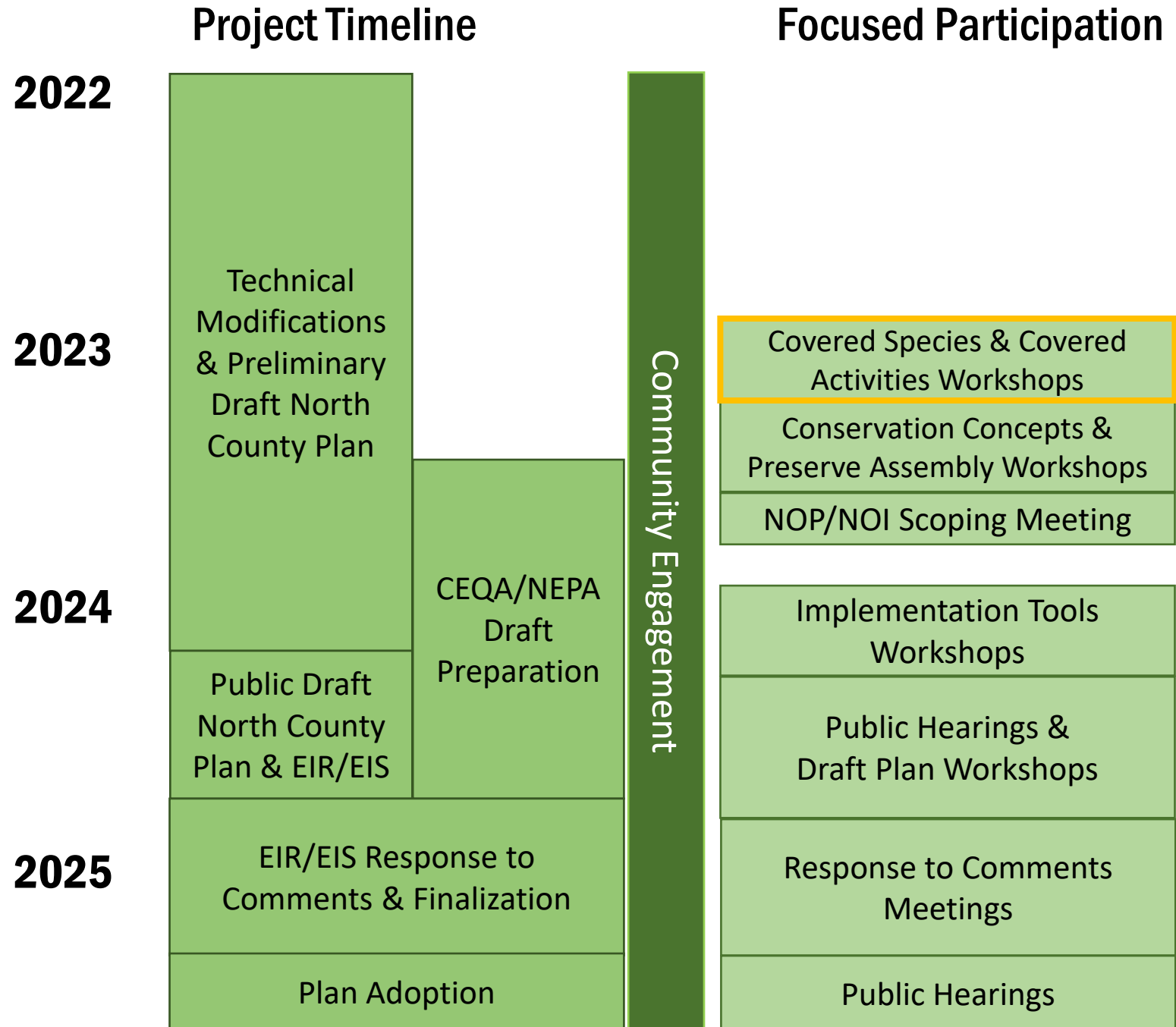
Plan Components



Discussion



Project Schedule



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Questions and Comments



Project Contact: Stephanie Neal
(858) 505-6677
MSCP@sdcounty.ca.gov



Project website:
www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/mscp

