

## Appendix C

### Required Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Elements and Recommended HCP Outline

#### **Required HCP Elements**

During the habitat conservation plan (HCP) development phase, the project applicant prepares a plan that integrates the proposed project or activity with the protection of listed species. An HCP submitted in support of an incidental take permit application must be in accordance with the ESA [Section 10(a)(2)(A)] and Federal Regulation [50 CFR 17.22(b)(1), 17.32(b)(1), and 222.22] (see the [HCP Handbook Toolbox](#)).

. The plan must include the following information:

- impacts likely to result from the proposed taking of the species for which permit coverage is requested;
- measures that will be implemented to monitor, minimize, and mitigate impacts; funding that will be made available to undertake such measures; and procedures to deal with unforeseen circumstances;
- the alternative actions to incidental taking the applicant has considered and the reasons the applicant rejected those alternatives; and
- additional measures the Service may require as necessary or appropriate for purposes of the plan.

Based on a long history of providing technical assistance to applicants and reviewing HCPs in the context of making an incidental take permit decision, we provide the following recommended HCP format. Applicants can facilitate our review of the HCP by treating the issuance criteria as a set of questions that they answer in the HCP. Note that you should check with your Regional HCP Coordinator on sections labeled optional or as needed. A more detailed template document is provided in the [HCP Handbook Toolbox](#).

#### **Recommended HCP Outline**

##### **Title Page**

##### **Executive Summary or Summary Sheet**

##### **Chapter 1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Overview and Background
- 1.2 Purpose and Need (Optional)
- 1.3 Plan Area / Permit Area
- 1.4 Permit Duration
- 1.5 Alternatives to the Taking
- 1.6 Coordination with Federal and State Agencies
- 1.7 Permit Structure (As Needed)

- 1.8 Summary of Relevant Laws and/or Regulations (Optional)
  - 1.8.1 Federal Endangered Species Act (use Services provided language)
  - 1.8.2 National Environmental Policy Act (use Services provided language)
  - 1.8.3 National Historic Preservation Act
  - 1.8.4 Relevant State Laws and Regulations

**Chapter 2.0 Project Description and Covered Activities**

- 2.1 Project Description
- 2.2 Covered Activities

**Chapter 3.0 Covered Species**

- 3.1 Covered Species (section for each covered species)
  - 3.1.1 Status and Distribution
  - 3.1.2 Habitat Characteristics and Use
  - 3.1.3 Occurrence in the Project Area
- 3.2 Covered Plant Species (As Needed)
  - 3.2.1 Status and Distribution
  - 3.2.2 Habitat Characteristics and Use
  - 3.2.3 Occurrence in the Project Area
- 3.3 Species in Plan Area That Don't Need Coverage and Why
  - 3.3.1 Status and Distribution
  - 3.3.2 Habitat Characteristics and Use
  - 3.3.3 Occurrence in the Project Area
  - 3.3.4 How take will be avoided

**Chapter 4.0 Environmental Setting and Biological Resources**

- 4.1 Environmental Setting
  - 4.1.1 Climate
  - 4.1.2 Topography/Geology
  - 4.1.3 Hydrology/Streams, Rivers, and Drainages
  - 4.1.4 Water Quality/Water Quantity
  - 4.1.5 Existing Land Use
- 4.2 Biological Resources: Wildlife, Fish, and Vegetation
  - 4.2.1 Wildlife
  - 4.2.2 Vegetation

**Chapter 5.0 Potential Biological Impacts and Take Assessment**

- 5.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts
- 5.2 Anticipated Take of Each Covered Species
- 5.3 Anticipated Impacts to Covered Plant Species (As Needed)
- 5.4 Anticipated Impacts of Take on Critical Habitat (As Needed)
- 5.5 Anticipated Impacts of the Taking

**Chapter 6.0 Conservation Program**

- 6.1 Biological Goals
- 6.2 Biological Objectives
- 6.3 Measures to Avoid and Minimize Take

- 6.4 Measures to Mitigate the Unavoidable Take
- 6.5 Monitoring
  - 6.5.1 Biological/Effectiveness Monitoring
  - 6.5.2 Compliance Monitoring
- 6.6 Adaptive Management Strategy (As Needed)
- 6.7 Reporting (check with the Regional HCP Coordinator for the Required Format)
  - 6.6.1 Project Status and Impacts (e.g., completed stages)
  - 6.6.2 Take Tracking
  - 6.6.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and Monitoring
  - 6.6.4 Mitigation
  - 6.6.5 Changed circumstances
  - 6.6.6 Funding
  - 6.6.7 Other HCP Measures (e.g., Amendments, Adaptive Management, etc.)
  - 6.6.8 Other Measures as Required by Director (As Needed)

### **Chapter 7.0 Changed and Unforeseen Circumstances**

- 7.1 Changed Circumstances
- 7.2 Unforeseen Circumstances

### **Chapter 8.0 Funding**

- 8.1 Costs and Budget for the Conservation Program and Plan Implementation
- 8.2 Funding Sources
- 8.3 Funding Mechanisms
- 8.4 Funding Assurances

### **Chapter 9.0 Permit/HCP Administration (Optional)**

- 9.1 Amendments (use Services provided language)
- 9.2 Permit Renewal (use Services provided language)
- 9.3 Permit Transfer (use Services provided language)

### **Chapter 10.0 References**

- 10.1 Literature Cited
- 10.2 Personal Communications
- 10.3 List of Preparers

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Maps/Figures
- Appendix B: Data Management Plan
- Appendix C: Covered Lands (legal description)
- Appendix D: Background Reports/Supporting Documents
- Appendix E: Implementing Agreement (Optional)
- Appendix F: Conservation Easement (As Needed)
- Appendix G: Other Project Specific Materials

### **Tables**

- Table XX. Summary of Impacts to Covered Species by Covered Activities
- Table XX. Summary of Minimization and Mitigation Measures and Corresponding

Biological Goals and Objectives Based on the Level of Impacts Resulting From  
Covered Activities

Table XX. Changed Circumstances and Permittee Response

Table XX. Costs/Budget for HCP Implementation and Conservation Program