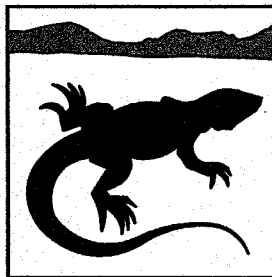
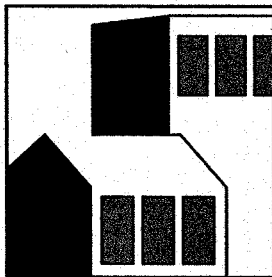
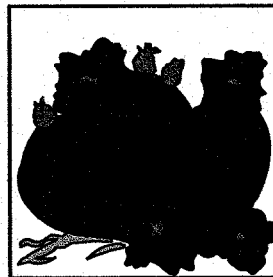
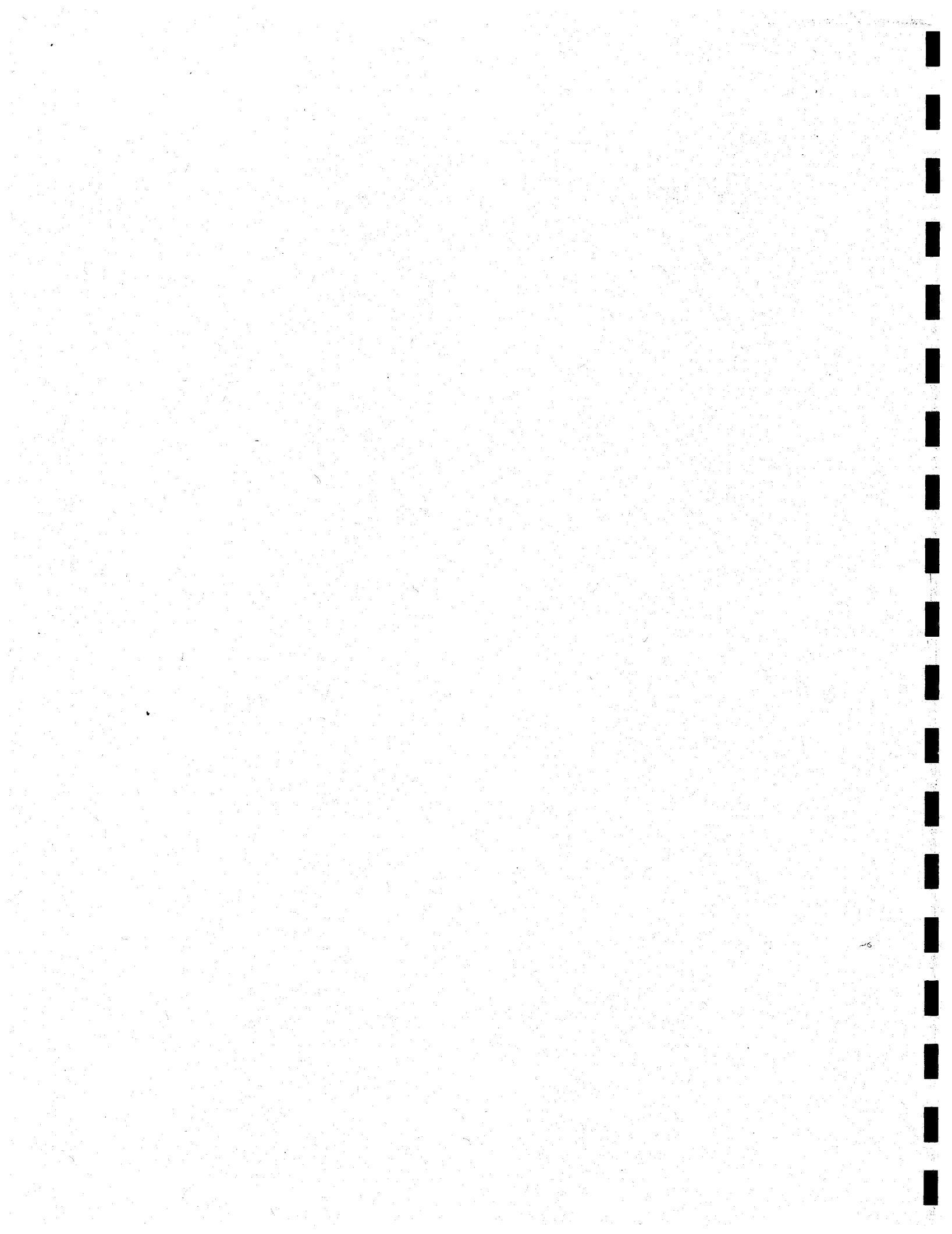


# METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN AND



- **INCIDENTAL TAKE PERMIT PRT-786634 (ISSUED 8/24/94)**
- **IMPLEMENTATION/MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT**



**METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD  
HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN**

City of Bakersfield  
County of Kern

APRIL 1994

SCH# 89020264  
City of Bakersfield  
Lead Agency

Prepared by:  
Metropolitan Bakersfield  
Habitat Conservation Plan  
Steering Committee

Technical Assistance:  
Thomas Reid Associates with  
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# METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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## S. SUMMARY

This document is the Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan (MBHCP). The MBHCP is the result of over three years of technical and planning studies overseen by a Steering Committee comprising representatives of local government, state and federal resource agencies, conservation groups, and the building and construction industry. It responds to public comment provided during a formal review period.

The MBHCP is intended to set forth in a planning document the components of a conservation plan and is not drafted as a contract document. As a result, in the event of any direct contradiction, conflict or inconsistency between the terms of the MBHCP and the associated Implementation/Management Agreement, the terms of the Implementation/Management Agreement shall control. In all other cases, the terms of the MBHCP and the terms of the Implementation Management Agreement shall be interpreted to be supplementary to each other.

### **Purpose**

The goal of the MBHCP is to acquire, preserve and enhance native habitats which support endangered and sensitive species, while allowing urban development to proceed as set forth in the Metropolitan Bakersfield 2010 General Plan. The study area covered by the MBHCP contains both City of Bakersfield and County of Kern jurisdictions.

Existing conflicts between species of concern and urban development have prompted the City and the County to pursue a Habitat Conservation Plan and incidental take permits: a permit under Section 10(a) (1)(B) (hereafter referred to as 10(a) permit) of the United States Endangered Species Act and a permit under Section 2081 of the California Endangered Species Act. The Habitat Conservation Plan is designed to offset impacts resulting from loss of habitat incurred through the authorization of an otherwise lawful activity.

### **Applicable Law**

The United States Endangered Species Act (ESA) provides for the protection of endangered and threatened species. Section 9 of the Act prescribes civil and criminal penalties for take of a protected species except when the take is in accordance with a valid permit issued under Section 10(a) of the Act. Development on open lands in Metropolitan Bakersfield would likely result in take and would be subject to federal enforcement action.

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) also prohibits take of state listed threatened or endangered animal species. California Fish and Game's participation in the MBHCP will permit incidental take of state listed threatened and endangered species through the issuance of a 2081 permit (Memorandum of Understanding).

The MBHCP is intended to meet the requirements of both the state and federal Endangered Species Acts. In addition the MBHCP will comply with state and federal environmental regulations set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).



## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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### Species of Concern

Species of concern in the 408 square mile area of Metropolitan Bakersfield include the following plants and animals:

#### ANIMALS

##### State and Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened

San Joaquin kit fox  
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard  
Tipton kangaroo rat  
Giant kangaroo rat

##### State Listed Threatened Federal Candidate for Listing

San Joaquin (Nelson's)  
antelope squirrel

##### State and Federal Candidate for Listing

Short-nosed kangaroo rat\*

##### Federal Candidate for Listing

San Joaquin pocket mouse\*

#### PLANTS

##### State and Federally Listed Endangered

Bakersfield cactus  
*Opuntia treleasei*  
California jewelflower\*  
*Caulanthus californicus*

##### Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened

San Joaquin wooly-threads  
*Lembertia congdonii*  
Hoover's wooly-star  
*Eriastrum hooveri*  
Kern mallow\*  
*Eremalche kernensis*

##### State Listed Threatened or Endangered

Tulare pseudobahia\*  
*Pseudobahia peirsonii*  
Striped adobe lily  
*Fritillaria straita*  
Bakersfield Saltbush\*  
*Atriplex tularensis*

##### Federal Candidate for Listing

Bakersfield saltbush\*  
*Atriplex tularensis*  
Slough thistle\*  
*Cirsium crassicaule*  
Recurved larkspur  
*Delphinium recurvatum*

\* Studies conducted or reviewed in conjunction with the development of this HCP did not confirm the presence of these species within the Metropolitan Bakersfield 2010 General Plan area.

The sensitive species value is scattered generally throughout the open, non-urbanized lands of the Metropolitan Bakersfield area. According to biological surveys conducted for the MBHCP and surveys conducted by others since 1980, several of the species of concern may no longer occur in the area. The San Joaquin kit fox is the most widespread of the species of concern and is most frequently affected by urbanization in the MBHCP area. That high potential for impact coupled with the need for large preserves makes the kit fox a natural focus for the MBHCP, but it is intended that MBHCP enhancement will restore habitat value for *all* species of concern.

## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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Much of the area is in intensive agriculture, but retains value for kit fox in prey and even for dens in berms, near water impoundments, and on fallow land. Urbanization of agricultural land will result in a take of species, loss of habitat and intensification of population related take (e.g. road kills). The natural lands of the area have greater species value and represent a more viable long-term habitat. Urbanization of these lands also results in take.

### Take and Mitigation

The MBHCP will result in incidental take of some of the species. Here, take generally means destruction or displacement of individuals of the species and would result from loss of open lands incidental to development.

The state and federal permits would make this take lawful as long as it is in accordance with the conditions of the permit as described in the MBHCP. The permits issued by each authority cover the species formally listed by each authority at the time of issuance. Other species would be added by amendment.

Thus, the federal Section 10(a) permit would address:

San Joaquin kit fox	Bakersfield cactus
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard	California jewelflower
Tipton kangaroo rat	San Joaquin wooly-threads
Giant kangaroo rat	Hoover's wooly-star
	Kern mallow

The state 2081 permit would address:

San Joaquin kit fox	Bakersfield cactus
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard	California jewelflower
Tipton kangaroo rat	Tulare pseudobahia
Giant kangaroo rat	Striped adobe lily
San Joaquin (Nelson's) antelope squirrel	Bakersfield saltbush

The MBHCP describes a method of collecting funds for the acquisition and/or enhancement of natural lands and restorable lands for purposes of creating preserves. The MBHCP also provides for reduction of take within the developed areas. This is the mitigation for the take and the impact on species habitat.

The MBHCP meets the criteria set forth in the Endangered Species Act for a Section 10(a) permit. Specifically it provides for:

- Land acquisition outside of the MBHCP area, with consideration to pre-approved acquisition areas identified by CDFG. (These areas will be the primary focus of the acquisition effort).

## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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Other options for acquiring or providing habitat include:

- Acquisition and management of between 500 and 1,000 acres of land in the northeast portion of the study area for the primary purpose of preserving the Bakersfield cactus.
- Acquisition and management of land, as feasible, adjacent to the Kern Water Bank project on the west side of I-5, south of Panama Lane.
- Pursuit of cooperative agreements for restoring and enhancing land, as feasible, within the Kern Water Bank project area and provide funding as appropriate.
- Relocation or displacement of individuals in areas affected by development as a means of reducing direct take of endangered species.

The MBHCP addresses two categories of land: 1) natural land, meaning land generally in grazing and with original soil and topography intact, and 2) open land, which includes natural land as well as agriculture and all other non-urban lands in the area. Urbanization of either category would pay the same mitigation fee, but the two are distinguished for the purposes of environmental assessment and permit monitoring.

### Implementation/Permits

The MBHCP will be implemented under the terms of a Section 10(a) permit issued by the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and a 2081 permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Game. Both permits will be issued to the City of Bakersfield and to Kern County and both permits will be issued for a concurrent period of up to twenty years or until urban development permits are issued for 15,200 acres of natural lands or 43,000 acres of open lands subject to the revocation or amendment process described below. The permits could be renewed by submitting a formal request for renewal to the Director of the USFWS and to the Department of Fish and Game.

The MBHCP has three categories of participation:

1. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game as Permittees and advisors to the Implementation Trust,
2. The City of Bakersfield and County of Kern as Permittees and Implementation Trust administrators, and
3. Other implementing entities such as The Nature Conservancy and the California Department of Fish and Game as preserve development coordinators.

As permit holders, the City and County will be the primary entities responsible for administering the institutional elements of the MBHCP in the areas of their respective jurisdictions.

## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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### Applicability of the Section 10(a) and 2081 Permits

The MBHCP applies to the entire 2010 Plan area, but the federal Section 10(a) permit and state 2081 permit will only allow take in the area outside of the primary flood plain of the Kern River and lands within the Kern Water Bank. The river is excluded to assure that an open corridor can be maintained between the foothills to the northeast and the San Joaquin Valley floor to the west. Kern Water Bank lands are under the jurisdiction of the State of California.

The MBHCP addresses lands converted primarily to urban uses as permitted by the City or County. Activities which may result in a take but which are not subject to approval by the City or County would *not* be authorized by the proposed permit. Thus impact on natural lands from oil extraction or agriculture are not subject to this permit, although some types of ancillary oil and agricultural facilities that are subject to City or County permits would be covered. Activities not covered by this permit would have to comply separately with state and federal requirements.

### Mitigation Fees

The MBHCP program will be funded through the collection of onetime mitigation fees paid on all new construction taking place within the Bakersfield 2010 General Plan Area. The fee is expected to be approximately \$1,250<sup>40</sup> per gross acre for all new construction on previously undeveloped land. The fee is payable to either City or County at the time of grading permit approval, grading plan approval or issuance of building permit, whichever occurs first. The fee is set in 1994 dollars and would be adjusted annually for inflation.

Upon payment of this fee and receipt of City or County project approval, a development permit applicant would become a sub-permittee and would be allowed the "incidental take" of species in accordance with state and federal endangered species laws. The MBHCP does not eliminate the need to consider endangered species under CEQA, but it does establish programmatic mitigation for project impacts on endangered species.

The fee is based on an estimated \$600 per acre land costs, \$100 per acre fencing and improvement costs, \$300 per acre management and enhancement ("endowment") costs and \$250 per acre program administration costs.

The amount of mitigation fees collected will depend on the rate of metropolitan growth. At current growth rates, fees would generate a level of funding for acquisition and management of roughly 700 acres per year. State and Federal conservation funds will be sought to augment local funds for land acquisition.

### Plan Administration

Administration of the MBHCP involves the following categories: 1) local mitigation fee collection and fund management, 2) management of state and federal funding, if applicable, 3) preserve selection and acquisition, 4) preserve management, if applicable 5) land restoration and enhancement and species monitoring as necessary, 6) status report preparation and 7) enforcement.

The MBHCP program relies on the formation of an Implementation Trust which would be in charge of making major preserve acquisition decisions and for administering the plan. The Trust will comprise representatives from the City of Bakersfield and Kern County as trustees, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game and member of the public as advisors. Others could

## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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be added or consulted as deemed appropriate. Specific preserve management plans would be developed and carried out by each individual preserve management entity.

The mitigation funds collected by the City and County will be deposited into a trust fund and would be administered by the Implementation Trust. The Trust will meet as necessary to carry out the HCP. The Trust will be responsible for reporting to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as to the status of enhancement.

### Monitoring

The MBHCP is essentially a "pay-as-you-go" program. The amount of take, the impact on the species -- and the amount of acquisition and enhancement, the mitigation for take -- will vary from year-to-year, but the Section 10(a) permit will remain in force as long as the mitigation stays ahead of the take. Because the actual extent and location of Metropolitan Bakersfield growth cannot be predicted exactly, the HCP must rely on the ongoing preservation actions of the Implementation Trust.

Monitoring take and enhancement is the heart of the program. Each quarter, the Implementation Trust will report to the Service the cumulative status of take and enhancement. As long as the level of acquisition and provisions for enhancement are adequate, the permit is in compliance. Because the permit allows the City or County to approve activities resulting in take over a large portion of the MBHCP area, there is a possibility that there may be more intensive urbanization of natural lands than of open lands generally. For this reason, there are two tests that the Implementation Trust must meet: 1) one acre of enhancement for each acre of open land urbanized, or 2) three acres enhanced for each acre of natural land urbanized, *whichever is greater*. The accounting is done quarterly and annually, but must reflect cumulative urbanization since the beginning of the permit.

### Amendment

Major amendments to the MBHCP may be initiated by any of the parties to the Implementation/Management Agreement. The party proposing the major amendment shall circulate to the other parties a statement of the reason for the amendment and an analysis of the effect of the amendment on the Species of Concern and the implementation of the MBHCP.

The other parties shall make every effort to approve the proposed amendment within 120 days of publication in the Federal Register except where longer time lines are imposed by requirements of law. Except as otherwise determined by the U.S.F.W.S. major amendments shall be limited to changes in the following: (i) the boundaries of the permit area, or (ii) the method of calculating the adequacy of mitigation.

Minor amendments to the MBHCP shall not require amendment of the Implementation/Management Agreement, and may be initiated by any of the parties to the Agreement or the 10(a) permit. The party proposing a minor amendment shall circulate to the other parties a statement of the reason for the amendment. Minor amendments require the approval of the Implementation Trust, which shall approve or deny the proposed amendment within ninety (90) days of receipt of the proposal.

The U.S.F.W.S. shall be provided an opportunity to review all minor amendments presented to the Implementation Trust. If the U.S.F.W.S. determines within sixty (60) days of its receipt of a proposed amendment, that a proposed amendment to the MBHCP is major, the parties to the Implementation/Management Agreement shall process the plan amendment as an amendment to the Agreement and the 10(a) permit.

## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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### Alternatives

During the course of formulating the proposed MBHCP, the Steering Committee evaluated a broad range of alternatives. Alternatives were examined pertaining to preserve strategy, reduction of take, and mitigation fee amount and means of assessment. The proposed plan represents an optimum selection from among alternatives that offers the greatest practical opportunity for successful implementation and reflects the current status of the species of concern in the Metropolitan Bakersfield area.

No action, meaning the City and County do not obtain a permit, would leave much of the Metropolitan Bakersfield area in conflict with the Endangered Species Act and potentially subject to civil and criminal penalties.

Since much of the land is marginal habitat, the burden of proof as to whether a take occurs from development would be up to the enforcement agencies. State and federal enforcement could be difficult and not completely effective in preventing take. Projects within areas that contain habitat would be subject to lengthy CEQA analysis on a case-by-case basis and separate consultation with the resource agencies as to appropriate mitigation. Under this circumstance, there would be no unified mitigation program and the cumulative impact of growth would continue to degrade the habitat in the Metropolitan Bakersfield area. Significant impacts on endangered species could still occur.

Development is not the only source of urban impact on the San Joaquin kit fox. Road kills and rodenticide poisoning are well documented (Murphy, pers. com.). Technically, absence of the permit could completely halt development in occupied habitat, but it would be ineffective in reducing many other threats to the kit fox populations in the Metropolitan Bakersfield area. Thus, the No Action alternative would not necessarily eliminate take.

### Environmental Impact

The MBHCP would have a potentially significant impact on the habitats of the species of concern by removing a major barrier to the development of much of the Metropolitan Bakersfield area. The plan contains mitigating measures which effect off site mitigation for the cumulative impacts of urbanization on the species of concern.

Although the permit covers a large area, the take of endangered species will only occur where actual urban growth occurs. The recently adopted 2010 Plan is a reasonable guide to the portion of the permit area where growth is most likely. The area designated for urban uses (including all low density residential categories) in the 2010 Plan covers roughly 74.5 square miles (47,600 acres) of undeveloped or open land. Of this, 22.25 square miles (14,200 acres) is natural land, which currently supports populations of the species of concern, and 52.25 square miles (33,400 acres) of other open lands, primarily intensive agriculture.

Full build-out of the 2010 Plan would double the size of Bakersfield and is not expected to occur within the proposed twenty year life of the permit. Realistic projections indicate a loss of open lands at a rate of roughly one square mile per year which is assumed to be divided proportionately between natural and other open lands. At that rate, a loss of some 20 square miles of open land, including some 7 square miles of natural land will take place over the life of the permit. While actual growth and impact will vary, the mitigation program is designed to be self regulating: even a major increase in growth could be accommodated by the proposed MBHCP program.

## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - SUMMARY

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The expected amount of natural land lost from urban development in Metropolitan Bakersfield over the next 20 years is 4,400 acres. This is based on the current level of development projected over the next 20 years. The maximum amount of natural land that could be urbanized under the 2010 General Plan is 15,200 acres. For open land, the expected amount lost in the next 20 years is 12,800 acres. The maximum open land allowed to be developed under the 2010 Plan is 43,000 acres.

Expected take of San Joaquin kit fox from loss of natural land is 2.5 to 10 foxes under the expected development scenario, and 8.5 to 34 fox under the maximum development scenario. This is based on data that one kit fox requires between 448 and 1,792 acres of land (see Table 3 on page 18). If all open land is considered kit fox habitat then the number of kit fox taken would increase to 10 to 39 under the expected development scenario and to 32 to 130 under the maximum development scenario.

It is more difficult to assess loss of individuals of the other listed animal species, Tipton and giant kangaroo rats and the blunt nosed leopard lizard, because sightings of these animals are so scarce. No giant kangaroo rats or leopard lizards were identified in areas subject to urban development in the 2010 General Plan area, thus no direct take of these animals is expected. The Tipton kangaroo rat was found on 160 acres of urban development land. The loss of this land could result in the take of between 64 to 1,600 Tipton kangaroo rats based on a utilization rate of 0.4 to 10 rats per acre.

Urbanization will impact aspects of the environment such as traffic, air quality, noise, aesthetics, cultural resources, public services and impacts on vegetation and wildlife species not addressed by the MBHCP. These potential effects are secondary impacts of the permit. The permit only addresses the question of endangered species and does not exempt City or County from the requirements of CEQA. Secondary impacts of the permit will be addressed in detail through City or County CEQA processing of specific projects.

Imposition of the mitigation fee would probably not significantly impair the economics of development, and in most cases, local availability of the Section 10(a) and 2081 permits would facilitate plan processing which would offset the direct impact of the fee itself.

The community will benefit from the MBHCP. The City of Bakersfield and Kern County will be able to proceed with the land use permitting process. Further, preserves created under the MBHCP will provide open space and enhance the beauty of natural lands and provide benefits to residents in addition to value as endangered species habitat.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. BACKGROUND

This document is the Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan (MBHCP) and Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The goal of the MBHCP is to acquire, preserve and enhance native habitats which support endangered and sensitive species, while allowing urban development to proceed as set forth in the Metropolitan Bakersfield 2010 General Plan.

In 1973 the U.S. Congress passed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in response to the alarming population decline of a number of plant and animal species due to loss of their habitat. The ESA was designed to slow or stop the human influenced extinctions of various species of fish, wildlife, plants and invertebrates. The legislation categorizes species as either "endangered" or "threatened" by assessing the immediacy of the threat posed to them. Among other protective features of the ESA, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required to develop recovery plans for all listed species.

Species of concern are also recognized and protected by state legislation. The California Endangered Species Act, the Native Plant Protection Act, and the California Environmental Quality Act afford protection to species of concern included on state-maintained lists.

Though both the federal and state endangered species acts provide levels of protection for species of concern, the federal act in particular prohibits "take". "Take" is defined by the ESA as: "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect a federally listed, endangered species of wildlife, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." Take not specifically allowed by federal permit under Section 10(a) is subject to enforced through civil or criminal proceedings under Section 9.

While "take" is easily understood in the sense of deliberately capturing or killing individual animals, regulations also define take to include the incidental destruction of animals in the course of an otherwise lawful activity, such as habitat loss due to development. It has been ruled that take includes significant habitat modification or degradation that actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or shelter (50 CFR Section 17.3). A ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court confirmed a district court's finding that habitat degradation that could result in extinction is harm (*Palila v. Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources*) and therefore, considered a "take" of a species.

Bakersfield and Kern County are jointly pursuing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Section 10(a) permit under the ESA with the aim of resolving conflicts between species of concern and development within the boundary of the Metropolitan Bakersfield 2010 General Plan area.

The MBHCP addresses existing conflicts and those resulting from projected growth as outlined in the Metropolitan Bakersfield 2010 General Plan. The General Plan area, as defined by requirements set out in the State Planning Law, includes not only all lands within the Bakersfield city limits but also, in accordance with Government Code Section 65300, all lands beyond the city limits that "bear relation to its [Bakersfield's] planning". This includes unincorporated lands under the jurisdiction of Kern County.



## METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HCP - INTRODUCTION

An HCP is an explicit mitigation program designed to offset impacts created by the loss of habitat incurred through the authorization of an otherwise lawful activity. According to the ESA, a Section 10(a) or "incidental take" permit may be issued by the Secretary of the Interior. It allows the "take" of listed species in conjunction with the implementation of an HCP that aims to provide long-term protection and enhancement of the species' remaining significant habitat.

An HCP is also a means for local land use authorities, such as cities and counties, to incorporate federal and state mandates for endangered species conservation into land use plans. With a Section 10(a) permit, local planning resulting in incidental take, as defined in the permit, would be in compliance with federal law. Incidental take would result when development allowed through the planning process destroys habitat on privately owned land.

The most publicized federally-listed endangered species in the MBHCP area is the San Joaquin kit fox. Undeveloped lands in the MBHCP area also support other listed or proposed endangered or threatened species, these are:

### ANIMALS

#### State and Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened

San Joaquin kit fox  
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard  
Tipton kangaroo rat  
Giant kangaroo rat

#### State Listed Threatened Federal Candidate for Listing

San Joaquin (Nelson's)  
antelope squirrel

#### State and Federal Candidate for Listing

Short-nosed kangaroo rat\*

#### Federal Candidate for Listing

San Joaquin pocket mouse\*

### PLANTS

#### State and Federally Listed Endangered

Bakersfield cactus  
*Opuntia treleasei*  
California jewelflower\*  
*Caulanthus californicus*

#### Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened

San Joaquin woolly-threads  
*Lembertia congdonii*  
Hoover's woolly-star  
*Eriastrum hooveri*  
Kern mallow\*  
*Eremalche kernensis*

#### State Listed Threatened or Endangered

Tulare pseudobahia\*  
*Pseudobahia peirsonii*  
Striped adobe lily  
*Fritillaria straita*  
Bakersfield saltbush\*  
*Atriplex tularensis*

#### Federal Candidate for Listing

Bakersfield saltbush\*  
*Atriplex tularensis*  
Slough thistle\*  
*Cirsium crassicaule*  
Recurved larkspur  
*Delphinium recurvatum*

\* Studies conducted or reviewed in conjunction with the development of the MBHCP did not confirm the presence of these species within the study area.

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According to the ESA, an HCP must be supported by adequate biological data allowing a quantitative impact assessment to be made for each affected species. It must also include a detailed mitigation program to offset the impacts of the taking. Possible mitigation measures might include habitat preservation, restoration, and habitat replacement.

As explained later in the discussion of biological issues, the practical effort at preservation of species of concern is through acquisition or protection and enhancement of native habitats. Preservation of native habitat will protect listed and non-listed species together. Technically, the federal and state incidental take permits apply only to those species listed according to federal or state law at the time the permits are issued. If candidate or other species become formally listed later, the permits would be amended to cover those additional species.

### **B. PLAN FORMULATION PROCESS**

#### **1. Steering Committee Representation**

In July 1987, a Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan Steering Committee was formed for the purposes of formulating MBHCP program goals, and guiding the development and drafting of the MBHCP. The purpose of the Steering Committee is to ensure that both economic and environmental interests are considered when formulating the MBHCP. The Steering Committee is composed of representatives from:

- City of Bakersfield
- Kern County
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Building Industry Association of Kern County
- Building Trades Council of Kern County
- Sierra Club
- The Nature Conservancy
- City of Bakersfield Planning Commission

The list of Steering Committee participants is included as Appendix A to this document.

#### **2. Consultant Work Program**

In September 1987, the City of Bakersfield, under the direction of the Steering Committee, hired a team of environmental consultants headed by Thomas Reid Associates to help with preparation of the MBHCP and EIR. The consultants work program has consisted of:

1. Performing air photo analysis of the 408 mile study area to determine existing land uses. Color infrared air photos taken in February 1988 were used in the analysis.
2. Conducting both qualitative and quantitative habitat analysis of the remaining natural lands in the study area.

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3. Performing plant and animal field surveys in natural areas having potential to support the species of concern. Sightings of plants and animals discovered during the surveys were mapped. Results of the biological inventory are contained in a supporting document to this MBHCP. A summary of the biological work is contained in Chapter II.
  4. Identifying focus areas which were subject to more detailed biological and land use analysis. The two conceptual focus areas identified were in the northeast and southwest portion of the study area. The focusing effort is described in Chapter III.F.
  5. Performing a quantitative analysis of the Metropolitan Bakersfield 2010 General Plan to determine the scale of the ultimate loss of species habitat resulting from urban development in the study area (see Chapter IV.D.).
  6. Evaluating alternative preserve strategies with the Steering Committee. The alternatives considered are discussed in Chapter IV.C.
  7. Developing an HCP acceptable to the Steering Committee, which will: be feasible to implement; provide appropriate scale of mitigation for loss of habitat; allow the City and County to proceed with land use permitting; and preserve species habitat in perpetuity. The MBHCP is set forth in Chapter III.
  8. Evaluating the environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the MBHCP (see Chapter IV.).
3. **Public Review**

The MBHCP was first published in draft in September 1990 along with a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Public comment was received at a public hearing and in correspondence. The plan has been modified and republished along with the Final EIR. The comments and responses are included in Appendix D (bound separately).

