County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency - Environmental Health

Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission

(831) 454-2022 TDD/TTY - Call 711 http://www.scceh.org

Meeting Minutes
November 5 2026

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – 6:32 pm
2. **ROLL CALL**

District	Commissioner	Status	Commissioner	Status
I	Chris Berry	P	Kevin Butler	R
II	Brian Woodward	P	David Somerton	A
III	Liz Alter	P	Jon Jankovitz	P
IV	Brooke Sampson	P	VACANT	---
V	Jenni Gomez	P	Joanne Brown	P

P = Present A = Absent R = Remote

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Com Sampson noted two spelling errors in the minutes; correction to Common Murre and deer fawn.
   - **Approve Minutes**
     - **Motion**: Jankovitz, **Second**: Sampson,
     - **Abstain:** Berry
     - **All Other Ayes:** Minutes approved

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**
   - Becky Stienbruner: Encourages commission to continue effort to revise the county Significant Tree Ordinance.

5. **PRESENTATIONS BY PUBLIC GRANT PROGRAM APPLICANTS:** Commissioners heard presentations from six of the seven grant applicants and asked questions. At the December meeting, commissioners will rate each proposal using the scoring criteria provided in the request for proposals. After scoring each proposal, the commissioners will select whether to fully, partially, or not funded each proposal.

6. **DEVELOPMENT OF CALIFORNIA VEGETATION TREATMENT PROGRAM (CALVTP):** Dave Reid (OR3) and Steve Auten (ARC Forestry) presented on a project to create wildlife resilient communities. The county received a FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure

DRAFT

and Communities (BRIC) grant for the environmental permitting required to plan and implement wildfire risk reduction on a landscape scale and along evacuation routes. The county chose 6 geographies that were representative of the full county, faced high wildfire risk, and were high enough density to meet FEMA Benefit Cost Analysis ratios. In each geography, the county will engage with the associated neighborhoods, firewise communities, and large landowners to create a wildfire management plan. That plan will utilize CalVTP protocols, which are a menu of protection measures that have been pre-approved, which will make permitting future work simpler. By having these plans in place, each geography will be ready to implement risk reduction projects as funding becomes available.

- **Com Gomez:** How will you ensure vegetation management is done in a thoughtful way?
  - **Auten:** Any hardening work done under this effort would have to meet the strict CalVTP standards to comply with its permit.
- **Com Berry:** There is significant over-growth in the second and third growth forest regions and targeted management efforts would be very beneficial to forest health.

7. **DISCUSSION OF OSPREY DRONE DISTURBANCE COMPLAINT:** Com Sampson contacted several members of the public that were concerned about PG&E work on Minto Rd that was disturbing nesting Osprey, though the Ospreys did not abandon the nest and the babies successfully fledged.

   CDFW Lt Juarez, in attendance, received a complaint in August and reached out to PG&E staff, who reported no drone or helicopter work in the area during the timeframe he inquired about. Three members of the public, Becky Steinbruner, Karell Litos, and Margaret-Ann Schott, stated that helicopters and drones were used in the area and urged the commissioners to act.

   Commissioners discussed whether this issue fell within the jurisdiction of the commission. Due to time limitations, commissioners chose to agendize a broader discussion of PG&E work practices, and whether there is any role for the Commission, for the December meeting.

8. **UPDATE ON SAFE PASSAGE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY:** The Safe Passage Santa Cruz project continues to attract new reports. As of 11/5/2026, the project has:

   - **Observations:** 67
   - **Species:** 15
   - **Members:** 20
   - **Contributing members:** 13

Staff contacted Animal Control and their staff will be contributing to the project. Public Works will not, however they will continue to report deer, which are most of their calls, in the same way that has been previously captured.

Commissioner Brown attended the Santa Clara County Wildlife Connectivity Technical Working Group in Morgan Hill and learned about the many connectivity projects in the region.

9. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Staff Reports:**
  - The Marine Life Studies proposal, which was funded last grant cycle, stated that the project is several weeks out from completion and is completing the final step, which is a wrap for the trailer with educational material. An update will be provided once the project is complete.
  - Recent ADA requirements for online materials have created additional challenges for completing agenda files. Agendas will need to be set earlier than in the past, which means commissioners' changes will need to be provided as early as possible.
- **Commissioner Reports:**
  - **Com Brown**: Agreed with the written public comment stating that road median barriers were a problem for wildlife crossing and expressed interest in learning more about possible alternatives.
  - **Com Brown**: Reported a car recently crashed into Lompico Creek, which is not an uncommon occurrence in that spot.

10. ADJOURN. **Motion to Adjourn:** Alter, **Second:** Jankovitz
All Aye: meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

DRAFT