Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*

Jon Sanabria
Acting Director of Planning

July 7, 2009

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Jon Sanabria
Acting ~~Director of~~ Planning

**SUBJECT: QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT ON BOARD MOTION REGARDING PROGRESS OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY OAK WOODLANDS CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (October 7, 2008, Item 95-C)**

On October 7, 2008 your Board requested appropriate County staff to participate in the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Program and instructed the Director of Planning to facilitate actions to assist the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (Resource Conservation District) in its preparation of the Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan (Oak Woodlands Plan). This third quarterly status report summarizes the progress of the Oak Woodlands Plan.

Since the last quarterly report on the progress of the Oak Woodlands Plan was delivered to your Board on April 7, 2009 the Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Conservation Strategic Alliance (Strategic Alliance) has made substantial progress in its development of the draft Oak Woodlands Plan. Working exclusively with the $50,000 allocation from your Board, the Strategic Alliance has expended $10,764.44 to-date in the preparation of the plan. A complete working draft will be prepared by the end of July and distributed to all members of the Strategic Alliance and to Regional Planning for review.

Central to the preparation of the Oak Woodlands Plan is the mapping effort to establish the historical and existing extent of Los Angeles County oak woodlands. This is a complex effort requiring the collaboration of Regional Planning GIS staff and Strategic Alliance member Dr. Tom Scott of the Integrated Hardwood Range Management

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Program and the University of California, Riverside. The intent the Oak Woodlands Plan maps are to:

- Show a boundary of existing oak woodlands
- Prioritize sites for restoration, conservation easements, and purchase
- Prioritize areas to achieve or maintain connectivity and prevent fragmentation

In its preparation of the Oak Woodlands Plan, the Strategic Alliance held meetings on the following dates:

- May 7, 2009: Third economic workshop which assessed market and regulatory approaches for conserving oak woodlands. Perspectives from experts included stakeholder ownership (e.g. conservancy); regulatory incentives and planning strategies that integrate oak woodlands as assets rather than liabilities; and federal Critical Habitat equivalency.
- May 21, 2009: Workshop to develop a checklist/questionnaire for the permitting process. Its intent is to assist Regional Planning in determining whether a case involving oak trees should be treated as an Oak Tree Permit application or if the CEQA process for oak woodlands should be initiated.
- June 25, 2009: Workshop to revise the permitting checklist/questionnaire and development of questions to incorporate into the County Initial Study to meet the current State standards for oak woodland impacts.

The Strategic Alliance will begin a comprehensive outreach effort in fall 2009 and has already completed or scheduled initial outreach to the following groups:

- June 2009: San Gabriel Chapter of the California Native Plan Society
- September 2009: Santa Monica Chapter of the California Native Plant Society; Oak Field Day, Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture

Though the grant application to the California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to match the funding your Board provided to assist in the preparation of the Oak Woodlands Plan has been held up by the State budget crisis, it has not deterred the efforts of the Strategic Alliance. The Strategic Alliance has drawn extensively upon the expertise of its membership to augment the funding provided by your Board. The following is a schedule of milestones the Strategic Alliance has established to complete the Oak Woodlands Plan:

- Draft Oak Woodlands Plan complete, July 31, 2009
- Plan Review by Strategic Alliance & Regional Planning, August/September 2009
- Conduct eight community meetings, October/November 2009
- Plan Revision, November 2009/January 2010
- Regional Planning Commission, March 2010

The next quarterly report on the progress of the Oak Woodlands Plan will be delivered October 7, 2009.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or Mark Herwick of my staff at (213) 974-6423 or by email at mherwick@planning.lacounty.gov. Our office hours are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. We are closed on Fridays.

JS:RCH:MSH

c: Chief Executive Officer, Attn. Lari Sheehan
Acting County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief of Forestry, Los Angeles County Fire Department
Rosi Dagit, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains