ATTACHMENT 1

**Responses to Comments from
Board of Supervisors January 23, 2007 INRMP Meeting**

Below are comments from the Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting on January 23, 2007, based on notes that were provided by Development Services staff. The comments and responses are grouped by the applicable tasks in the Work Plan.

Task 1 Project Management and Meetings

1. Comment: Overall process seems to be internally driven with few points of public comment, Planning Commission (PC), and BOS interaction. Document requires oversight and coordination. The BOS and PC must be included in policy decisions.

   Response: Scope includes up to 70 unspecified meetings that are spread among the Management Team, BOS, PC, and others; Scope includes 12 meetings specifically with the Stakeholder Committee, and three public workshops on the INRMP and EIR/EIS. The project Management Plan developed under Task 1.1 will describe relationships among participants in INRMP preparation and the decision making structure and will include frequent meetings as needed with the BOS and PC for coordination and oversight.

2. Comment: What are inter-committee relationships? What is the coordination among advisory groups?

   Response: A number of committees/teams/panels would be involved in support of development of the INRMP (Management Team, Interagency Committee, Stakeholder Committee, Plant and Wildlife Technical Advisory Committee [PWTAC], and the Science Panel) along with the BOS and PC. The relationship among these groups would be determined by the County at the onset of INRMP development. There will be many times when joint meetings of these groups would be conducted to facilitate coordination and maintain schedule (e.g. Management Team, Stakeholder Committee, and Interagency Committee could meet as one group to discuss reviews of some draft documents).

3. Comment: Coordinate with management team to identify other potential local and regional partners besides those noted in the work plan

   Response: The Work Plan contains names of 30 potential partners and does not limit the potential partners only to those entities named in the Work Plan.

4. Comment: Where does the public go to for questions? Contact process needs to be delineated, made more user-friendly.

    Response: Stakeholder meetings would be open to the public (at least 12 meetings); Public Workshops would encourage public comment and questions (3 public workshops); meetings of BOS provide opportunity for public comment (undetermined number of meetings, but included in 70 unspecified meetings); INRMP web page would provide much information for the public and could provide for public input and answers to questions. The scope also includes a public outreach program to further encourage public involvement.

5. Comment: An example of a better organizational structure might be like TRPA Pathways regional plan process.

    Response: Regional conservation plans can be organized in many ways for effective comment, review, and decision making. El Dorado County needs to determine what works best for this regional planning area. The Work Plan reflects guidance provided by County Staff to date, but the Work Plan includes sufficient flexibility to provide for a wide range of possible organizational structures. Determining the structure for input and decision making for the INRMP is an early step in INRMP development. The Organizational Chart from the SAIC proposal is a start at depicting a structure that can be further refined based on Board direction.

6. Comment: Who will provide updates to the BOS, how often, what will be the role of the BOS and at what point (decisions, advice, informational) (off-ramps includes at least six check-in points)?

    Response: SAIC could and would provide updates to the BOS throughout the process. There are sufficient unspecified meetings in Tasks 1, 4, 5, 9, and 11 (approx 70 meetings) to allow SAIC to meet frequently with the BOS and with the Management Team and Interagency Team. Meetings with the BOS could be scheduled for each of the potential "off-ramp" points.

7. Comment: Scope/task needs to be coordinated to ensure that decisions to exercise off-ramps does not result in unnecessary costs.

    Response: SAIC would alert the BOS as work is about to begin on tasks that would be past an off-ramp and provide the BOS an opportunity to make a decision on the best course to pursue.

8. Comment: Original chart/graphic was unclear about the scope/cost implications.

    Response: Graphics used in prior power point slide presentations will more clearly illustrate the relationship of work tasks, budget and 'off-ramps" in the next presentation.

Task 2 Public Outreach, Committees, Science Panel

9. Comment: Who is on PWTAC and the Science Advisory Panel, and what is their role? What is their expertise?

    Response: Membership in these committees would be determined in the early stages of INRMP development. PWTAC membership is a County decision, and Science Advisory Panel membership is a joint County, DFG, USFWS decision under the Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) process.

10. Comment: Stakeholder comment list, etc., needs a composite list to be sure we don't have one person on all committees.

    Response: Typically, no person should be on more than one committee as each committee serves a different purpose (stakeholder, interagency, science) exceptions can be made by the County for individuals representing multiple interests.

    Comment: What does "acceptance" mean – who makes these decisions (see pg. 3 – organize stakeholder committee)?

    Response: Acceptance" means that the Management Team or BOS determine which individuals put forth by interested stakeholder groups would best meet the needs of the INRMP Stakeholder Committee.

    Comment: Provide a chart of committees for BOS review/approval.

    Response: Developing this organizational chart of committees and approval by the BOS is part of the Work Plan Task 2 and would be conducted as the first task in the process. It can be provided earlier for Board review if requested.

11. Comment: Pg. 7 Planning Area – this determination needs to be public with opportunities for public comment/PC-BOS approval.

    Response: The Planning Area determination can be made with public input, but the Management Team or BOS need to make this decision very early in the process or the schedule will have to slip considerably as few other tasks can make much progress until this decision is made. It is a "critical path" decision very early in the INRMP schedule.

Task 3 Planning Area

12. Comment: Planning area determination needs to be explained early in the process (see CNPS letter).

    Response: At request of County, SAIC added Task 3 to work with the County and other partner agencies (e.g. EID) to assess different options for the planning area and determine the most appropriate planning area. The west slope below 4,000 feet was used as the assumed planning area in order to develop the detailed scope of work and cost estimate included in the Work Plan.

Task 4 Planning Agreement

13. Comment: How are the costs for outside counsel being addressed?

    Response: SAIC was asked by the County to remove the cost of legal support from our Work Plan so that outside counsel would be funded through a separate contract.

Task 5 Ecological Baseline

14. Comment: How is Pine Hill Preserve (PHP) coordination addressed in the scope?

    Response: Coordination with PHP will occur throughout baseline data collection, impact analysis, and conservation strategy development.

15. Comment: Pg. 11 subtask 5.2 – measurement scale (40 acre resolution issue) is an issue. Describe implementation. Degree of resolution –varies with ground truthing proposal. Can mapping provide an overlay of natural communities and plan area on parcel base? Need demonstration of how data sources relate to one-another. Describe implementation – what does it mean when you put "natural communities" on map? What does it mean to property owners and adjacent properties? Cost estimate is subject to decisions of variables (planning area, mapping, data collection exercise).

    Response: The decision on mapping resolution for the land cover GIS is based on maximizing return for regional resources planning while keeping the cost of data captured at a reasonable level. Small increases in resolution result in large increases in cost to capture data, because the cost is related to the number of polygons mapped and not to the total area mapped. SAIC has selected a resolution that is suitable and sufficient for regional conservation planning. This resolution is not sufficient for project-level planning. It would be an inappropriate use of the data collected to look at resources on individual parcels (unless the parcels are very large). The planning area is estimated at over 600,000 acres, and a 40 acre minimum for major vegetation types is sufficient to provide a detailed picture of the ecological landscape and the distribution of covered species

habitat. "Putting Natural Communities on a map" means interpreting aerial photography and drawing digital boundaries (polygons) in a GIS data base and attributing (labeling) each polygon as a specific defined land cover type (e.g., blue oak woodland, agricultural orchard, urban development).   Key aspects of a good land cover GIS data base for a regional plan are that it be complete in its coverage of the planning area and that it be uniform in resolution and classification method. Ground-truthing can only be done in a limited way because of limitations to access and funding. Only clearly discernable land cover types from the aerial "signature" can be mapped, and ground-truthing is used to verify that signature at representative sites. Other sources of data are used to improve the accuracy of the signature identification (e.g. existing reports such as EIRs, aerial photos from different seasons, soils survey data, geologic data, etc.). The land cover mapping is intended to document existing conditions throughout the INRMP planning area. Potential affects of the INRMP on land owners will be addressed during INRMP development through input from various stakeholder and public groups and expert assessments by County staff and the SAIC team. All efforts will be made to ensure that the affects of the INRMP are beneficial and that the process is voluntary and respects the rights of property owners. The EIR/EIS will assess the environmental and socioeconomic affects of INRMP implementation.

16. Comment: How good is the mapping science?

    Response: Mapping of vegetation (and other land cover types) using remote sensing techniques is a well proven method. The keys to success are 1) not to exceed the spatial and signature resolution of the source information and 2) not to exceed the analytical limits of the data collected. Examples of mapping resolution will be made available for Board review.

Task 6 Covered Activities

No questions.

Task 7 Impact Analysis

17. Comment: Address concern over use of "probability maps" to determine conservation strategies versus actual parcel level data and adequacy of ground-truthing (10 days in work plan).

    Response: The form of the INRMP Conservation Strategy will be determined as the INRMP is developed based on input from a wide variety of agencies, organizations, and individuals, and we should not pre-suppose what the final plan will look like before we have even begun the planning process. Involvement in the planning process and the use of the eventual permits developed under the plan are would be voluntary – i.e., in the future, land developers have the option to use the regional permits or obtain a project-specific permit on their own. The level of surveys that happen during plan development vs. during plan implementation is

determined during the planning process, but typically on-site surveys across a large planning area are prohibitively expensive and not of long-term value (not to mention the lack of property access), and hence such surveys are usually made part of future plan implementation.

18. Comment: Task 7 (pg. 16) subtask 7.1 – see 1. and 2. We need to be able to be specific (Ed Delfino's aerial photo presented during GP process may represent where the greatest opportunity to address conservation needs to be used – this led to IBC (Important Biological Corridor). Also, private open space (greenbelts within communities) needs to be addressed.

Response: While there can be much overlap between open space planning and habitat conservation planning, we must be cautious about equating the two. There are a lot of types of open space (e.g., golf courses, developed parks, small natural areas surrounded by development) that do not provide functioning wildlife habitat. Also, the funding of habitat acquisition and open space acquisition as mitigation must come from clearly specified impact nexus and often does not overlap. Funding from species recovery programs (e.g. ESA Sec 6) must target important habitat and cannot be used to fund non-habitat open space acquisition. Also, for a site to support functioning wildlife habitat it must meet specific size, shape, and adjacent land use criteria which are not necessarily required for an open space site.

Task 8 Conservation Strategy and Costing

19. Comment: Can we get "credit" for the public lands in the County from the federal agencies? How do we recognize lands already in federal holding?

Response: There are various ways to leverage federal and state lands in the County for credit towards conservation including: 1) funding habitat management or restoration on these lands, 2) creating preserves adjacent to these lands to achieve greater preserve size and connectivity, 3) assessing overall sustainability of covered species populations, habitat, and ecosystem functions in the planning area based on both existing and proposed conservation lands.

20. Comment: Subtask 8.3 – Need to have checkpoints along the process to make sure INRMP is doing what it is supposed to do.

Response: Monthly status reports with invoices and quarterly reports to the BOS will provide tracking of progress and budget.

Comment: Monitoring plan needs specificity as a baseline definition to measure change and attainment of goals. Timelines need to be included

Response: All of these components are anticipated to be included in the Monitoring Plan and Implementation Plan that will be included in the INRMP document.

21. Comment: How will PHP issues be addressed? What if our study says we need federal lands for mitigation, but they already have it? There could be a problem attaching tasks to works in progress such as PHP.

    Response: SAIC will coordinate closely with the PHP process during development of the INRMP. We anticipate the INRMP building upon and augmenting as needed any programs/processes that result from the PHP negotiations.

22. Comment: Pg. 20 – analyze costs of restoration/enhancement activities…need to bring to BOS to set policy to decide how 'we' want to manage lands that might be encumbered by the INRMP. Need to also thoroughly explain/understand the reasons for habitat/species management.

    Response: All of this will be included in the INRMP.

23. Comment: Task 8 – deals with fees, etc. Task approach emphasized the need to identify implementation methods as early as possible in order to address cost throughout the process. Also, need to address conservation entity formation soon.

    Response: Yes, we always must consider cost as conservation measures are developed to ensure a practicable (and affordable) conservation strategy is developed. SAIC and ENTRIX will provide specific costing of all implementation actions to provide an accurate prediction of overall INRMP implementation costs. Determining the implementing entity for the INRMP is an important decision but does not need to occur at this early stage in the process. A cost model can be developed even without knowing specifically who the entity will be.

Task 9 Funding

24. Comment: Item 6 – the cost estimate is out the door. It says, "we don't know the cost of covered activities."

    Response: SAIC will assess the cost of implementing conservation measures included in the INRMP. We will not be assessing the cost of covered activities. Covered activities are the projects and actions that are proposed to be permitted for incidental take (e.g., new residential, commercial, industrial development; new or expanded transportation systems; new or expanded utilities, etc.).

Task 10 Draft/Final INRMP

25. Comment: Task 10 Permits – need a list/crib sheet that defines and explains all
acronyms.

Response: SAIC will be happy to provide explanations of the acronyms used and
the various regulations and programs for the Board, public, and participants in the
INRMP development.

Task 11 Draft/Final EIR/EIS

26. Comment: Task 11.1 – The EIR will not address effects of buildout – this needs to
be explained. GP process needs to be addressed. See page 24. The County needs
to know what the ramifications are on land-use planning.

Response: The General Plan EIR addressed the environmental affects of build-
out. The INRMP EIR/EIS will focus on the effects of implementing the
conservation measures in the INRMP. Affects on land use of INRMP
implementation is a CEQA issue that will be addressed in the EIR/EIS. The
INRMP must be consistent with the GP.

27. Comment : Task 11.5 Meetings – this seems to be the first time the PC and BOS
appears in the document.

Response: About 66 unspecified meetings are included in Tasks 1, 4, 6, and 9 that
can include regular meetings with the PC and BOS in addition to meetings with
the Management Team and Interagency Committee. The Work Plan has plenty of
flexibility in how these meetings are used.

Task 12 Options 404/1602 Permitting

28. Comment: Benefits of optional task needs to be explained (wetlands/stream
permits – pg. 28). There is no explanation of why this is needed. What does this
mean? What is the benefit? Explain what the terms mean. What is the benefit of
doing this now, rather than at some other time?

Response: There are potentially large benefits to including regional Section
404/401 and Section 1602 compliance in the INRMP process. The key benefit
would be faster, easier, less costly future project compliance where impacts on
wetlands, streams, and ponds would result from projects. Overlapping regulations
on the same resources (e.g. many wetlands and streams are both jurisdictional
waters and endangered species habitat and hence regulated under both Clean
Water Act and Endangered Species Act). Examples include ponds and pools in
streams that are habitat for red-legged frog and tiger salamander and vernal pools
that are habitat for fairy shrimp. Conducting regional 404/1602 permitting now in
conjunction with the INRMP process provides the best opportunity for

comprehensive resource conservation and provides a greater benefit to the regulated community. County staff requested SAIC to include this optional task in the Work Plan.

Comments/Questions not associated with a Work Plan Task

29. Comment: Follow up with agencies that were mailed CAO's invitation letters but did not reply.

   Response: Development Services staff has contacted by email all agencies that did not respond to our original letter. We will ask for responses to be delivered by February 16, 2007.

30. Comment: Where is Section 2081 option?

   Response: As requested by the BOS, the Work Plan was prepared to address the requirements of a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). Should the BOS decide to convert to a Section 2081 process, the efficiency of this conversion would depend on how early in the process this "off-ramp" is taken. Because a NCCP has greater requirements than a 2081 permit, the 2081 process is encompassed by the Work Plan.

31. Comment: P. 29 General Assumptions. See first bullets about conflicting comments. What does this mean? Needs to be clarified

   Response: It means that the County should not ask SAIC to decide among conflicting comments that come from different participants (e.g., where two commenting agencies request opposite changes to the same text). SAIC will depend on the Management Team or BOS to make decisions where there are conflicting comments and communicate direction to SAIC.

32. Comment: Throughout process want to know costs – SAIC, attorneys, County staff.

   Response: SAIC has provided costs by task for the entire process of INRMP development.