



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Committee Meeting Minutes - Draft

Fish and Wildlife Committee

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

3:00 PM

40 Muir Road, Martinez, CA 94553
Construction Conference Room

ZOOM LINK

<https://cccouny-us.zoom.us/j/88999953831>

| Dial: 855-758-1310 |

The public may attend the Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting in person and remotely via call-in or Zoom.

Persons who wish to address the Fish and Wildlife Committee during public comment or with respect to an item that is on the agenda may comment in person, via Zoom, or via call-in. Those participating in person should offer comments when invited by the Committee Chair. Those participating via Zoom should indicate they wish to speak by using the “raise your hand” feature in the Zoom app. Those calling in should indicate they wish to speak by pushing *9 on their phones.

3:00 P.M. Convene Meeting.

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND STATEMENT OF CONFLICT

A member who has a conflict should, prior to consideration of the decision: (1) publicly identify in detail the financial interest that causes the conflict; (2) recuse himself/herself from discussing and voting on the matter; and (3) leave the room until after the decision has been made.

Nicole Balbas, Courtney Coon, Roni Gehlke, Kathleen Jennings, Brett Morris, Olivia Ortega, Danny Pellegrini and Jamin Pursell attended the meeting. Tim Fares and Susan Heckly provided advance notice that they would not be able to attend the meeting. Lieutenant Brian Elder (Marine Patrol, Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff), Wade Finlinson (Contra Costa Health), Jim Hanson, Lieutenant Ryan McCoy (California Department of Fish and Wildlife), Miranda Murphree, Warden Adam Nielsen (California Department of Fish and Wildlife), Warden Dominic Orlando (California Department of Fish and Wildlife), Jill Ray (Office of District 2 Supervisor), Lieutenant Jason Rogers (Office of Spill Prevention and Response "OSPR"), California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Captain Brian Sliger (Special Operations Division, CCC Office of the Sheriff) attended the meeting. Conservation and Development staff attending the meeting were Abigail Fateman, Maureen Parkes, AiLi Pigott and Kristine Solseng.

- #### 2. REVIEW and CONSIDER APPROVING the minutes for the October 15, 2025 meeting.

[26-1159](#)

Attachments: [Draft Meeting Minutes: 10-15-25](#)

The meeting minutes were approved as written. (Vote 7-0: Balbas, Gehlke, Jennings, Morris, Ortega, Pellegrini, and Pursell; Absent: Fares and Heckly)

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Includes public comment on topics on the agenda and items not listed on the agenda. The FWC shall also accept public comment on agenda items at the time they are discussed. (3 minutes each speaker)

There were no public comments.

4. CONSIDER electing the Fish and Wildlife Committee 2025 Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary).

The Committee elected Daniel Pellegrini as Chair, Roni Gehlke as Vice-Chair, and Susan Heckly as Secretary of the Committee. (Vote: 7-0: Balbas, Gehlke, Jennings, Morris, Ortega, Pellegrini and Pursell; Absent: Fares and Heckly)

5. UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Presented by Staff and FWC Members)

Includes discussion of implementation of actions authorized previously, correspondence received, and upcoming meetings of interest to the FWC.

Maureen Parkes provided the following updates to the Committee:

- . Tim Fares and Susan Heckly provided advance notice that they would not be able to attend the meeting today.
- . Tim Fares was reappointed to the District 3 seat and Susan Heckly was reappointed to the District 2 seat for terms ending February 28, 2030.

Correspondence forwarded to Committee members:

- . Email from Supervisor Candace Andersen regarding the Urban Limit Line Update that will be on the ballot in the June 2026 election.
- . Emails from Supervisor Diane Burgis regarding a Rare Plant Discovery in Vasco Hills Regional Preserve, Discover Hoover Ranch on the Delta, Step Into A New Year Adventure with Nature with East Bay Regional Park District regarding the California State Boating and Waterways Partner Dockwalker program.
- . Emails from Supervisor Ken Carlson regarding the 13th Annual Giving Natives a Chance Planting Event and the 2026 Contra Costa County Urban Limit Line Renewal.
- . Emails from Supervisor Shanelle Scales-Preston regarding Building a Greener Bay Point, The Watershed Project and Conservation and Development Community Tree Planting Workshop, Honoring the Life and Legacy of Betty Reid Soskin, a January 7, 2 p.m. Contra Costa Library/EBRPD class for youth on basic skull anatomy and animal identification, announcements on the Diamond Classic Sturgeon Derby on January 24, 2026, hosted by the Pittsburg Marina, the Joint District Attorney and Air District Prosecution securing \$10 Million from Martinez Refining Company, and Step Into One of California's Most Important Landscapes
- . Emails from Nicole Balbas and Abby Fateman with links to articles regarding the \$10,000,000 fine for a string of safety violations at the Martinez Refining Company; noting that \$50,000 is

directed to the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund.

- . Emails from Maureen Parkes regarding updates to the Brown Act and the 2026 FWC meeting schedule.

Newsletters and Announcements forwarded to Committee members

- . California Department of Water Resources - 7
- . California Fish and Game Commission - 23
- . California Oaks Coalition - 1
- . Contra Costa County Sustainability Exchange - 1
- . Contra Costa County Sustainability Team - 1
- . Contra Costa Watershed Forum agendas - 2
- . Greenbelt Alliance - 3
- . Golden Gate Bird Alliance - 14
- . Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee and Subcommittees agendas - 3
- . John Muir Land Trust - 3
- . KIDS for the BAY - 3
- . League of Women Voters - 2
- . Lindsay Wildlife Experience - 4
- . Marine Science Institute - 1
- . Save Mount Diablo - 13
- . The Watershed Project - 1
- . Urban Tilth - 7
- . UC Master Gardener Program - 2

6. CONSIDER the following Consent items:

[26-1158](#)

a) REVIEW the letter of appreciation received from International Bird Rescue for their 2025 “Ethically and Effectively Resolving Human/Wildlife Interaction Issues in Contra Costa County Through Temporary Emergency Treatment and Care of Injured and Orphaned Wildlife” project grant reimbursement.

b) REVIEW the administratively approved request from Save Mount Diablo for their 2025 “Expanding the Kestrel Population on Mount Diablo” project to use unspent grant funds and for an extension of time to complete the project.

c) REVIEW and ACCEPT the final report from John Muir Chapter of Trout Unlimited for their 2025 “Wildcat Creek Fish Habitat and Fish Barrier Assessment Study” project.

d) REVIEW and ACCEPT the final report from The Watershed Project for their 2025 “Contra Costa Water Quality Monitoring and Water Quality Apprenticeship Training Program” project.

e) REVIEW and ACCEPT the final report from Golden Gate Bird Alliance for their 2025 “San Francisco Bay Osprey Camera” project.

f) REVIEW and APPROVE the request from Earth Team regarding their 2026 “Water Quality Monitoring in Contra Costa Watersheds” project for a modification to the usage of approved grant funds; and RECOMMEND APPROVAL to the Board of Supervisors for an early disbursement of funds for half the amount of the award due to financial hardship.

g) REVIEW and RECOMMEND APPROVAL to the Board of Supervisors the request from Mira Vista Field Stewardship Committee/The Watershed Project regarding their 2026 “Mira Vista Field Restoration Project” for an early disbursement of funds for half the amount of the award due to financial hardship.

Attachments: [International Bird Rescue - Letter of Appreciation](#)
[Save Mount Diablo - Request](#)
[John Muir Chapter of Trout Unlimited - Final Report](#)
[Golden Gate Bird Alliance - Final Report](#)
[Earth Team - Request](#)
[Mira Vista - Request](#)

The Committee reviewed and accepted Items 6a - 6e and approved Items 6f and 6g. (Vote 7-0: Balbas, Gehlke, Jennings, Morris, Ortega, Pellegrini, and Pursell; Absent: Fares and Heckly)

7. DISCUSS the Fish & Wildlife Propagation Fund and receive general updates from local enforcement agencies responsible for California Fish and Game law enforcement.

Officers from the Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Department and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, including the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), were in attendance and provided general updates on their activities and field operations. Officers answered questions from FWC members, which helped deepen understanding of their roles, how their work is carried out, and the frequency of fines directed into the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund.

8. UPDATE on the activities of the Contra Costa County Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee (IPM) (Wade Finlinson, Contra Costa Health). [26-1156](#)

Attachments: [County IPM Policy](#)
[Ground Squirrel Decision Document](#)

Wade Finlinson provided an update on the activities of the Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee. Miranda Murphree provided comments regarding integrated pest management approaches and the installation/maintenance of owl boxes to support rodent control.

9. RECOMMEND the appointment of a Fish and Wildlife Committee representative to serve on the Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee.

[26-1157](#)

Attachments: [IPMAC Roster](#)

The Committee recommended that Courtney Coon be appointed as the Fish and Wildlife Committee representative on the Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee. (Vote: Balbas, Gehlke, Jennings, Morris, Ortega, Pellegrini, and Pursell; Absent: Fares and Heckly)

10. PREVIEW interactive grant database for the Fish and Wildlife Committee webpage.

Maureen Parkes introduced the agenda item. AiLi Pigott, an intern with the Department of Conservation and Development, presented the interactive grant database, with additional information provided by Abigail Fateman and Kristine Solseng. The Committee was impressed with the database and noted that it would be very useful to them.

11. DETERMINE the agenda for the next meeting. The next regular meeting date is May 20, 2026. Possible agenda items for upcoming meetings include:

- 2027 Grant RFP Review
- 2027 Grant Application Review
- 2026 Fall Forum planning
- Draft 2026 Work Plan and Annual Report
- Informational brochure on invasive species
- Field Trip

12. Adjourn