

Perdido Key Programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan
Project No. 310392
Escambia County, Florida
Agency Coordination Kickoff Meeting
December 13, 2007
1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. – Panama City Beach, FL
Meeting Minutes

Participating Attendees*: Eric Schneider (PBS&J), Bill J. Lynn (PBS&J), Bill C. Lynn (PBS&J), Nika Parker (PBS&J), Scott Zengel (PBS&J), Tim Day (Escambia County), Anne Harvey (DEP), David Colbert (DEP), John Bente (DEP), Melissa Tucker (FFWCC), Lorna Patrick (USFWS), Patty Kelly (USFWS), Mary Mittiga (USFWS), Sandra Sneckenberger (USFWS)

I. Staff and Agency Introductions

Eric began the meeting approximately 1:30 pm.

II. Project Introduction

- A. Project Area – entire Perdido Key, including SR 292, but excluding Perdido Key state Park and Gulf Islands National Seashore
- B. Focal Species
 - 1. PKBM
 - 2. Four nesting sea turtles (Loggerhead, green, leatherback, and Kemp's Ridley)
 - 3. Non-breeding Piping Plover
 - 4. Other Species
 - o Red Knot
 - o Snowy Plover
 - o Least Turn
 - o State listed plant species
 - o Melissa Tucker (FFWCC) stated she would check on any other plant species that need to be addressed.

III. Document Development

- A. Programmatic vs Individual
 - 1. Habitat Conservation Plan
 - 2. Environmental Assessment
 - 3. Incidental Take Permit
- o Will be programmatic
- o Lorna Patrick said we need to think about any other County activities that we want to cover. Vendors on the beach, driving on the beach, etc.
- o DEP is getting a state-wide coastal programmatic HCP but is behind schedule
- o Anne Harvey with DEP brought up the point that as of February 2004, all state parks must abide by County building regulations – this may change some guidelines
- o Patty Kelly can provide the life history of the Piping Plover – sightings have been made on the Old River shoreline side, but not on the Gulf of Mexico side
- o Skimmers, oyster catchers, red knots – present outside state park
- o Patty Kelly stated the Red Knot is waiting to be listed
- o Need to consider and include species that may become federally listed
- o Scope does not include National Marine Fisheries – HCP starts above the mean high water line. USFWS mentioned the need to make sure this is stated early in the documents.

- Approximately 5 HCP/ITPs are in process for Perdido Key currently
- Individuals can still apply for HCP/ITP during the process of the programmatic HCP
- Eric should receive the following from USFWS: HCP – Hurricane clean up – FEMA state wide
- Proposed alternatives will be outlined in the EA not the HCP
- It was recommended to utilize recently issued HCPs as example; one challenge is including the roadway with the rest of the considerations for the Key
- Mitigation or compensation for the ITP should be in the HCP
- Socioeconomic, noise factors, etc can be “canned” language from the current PD&E study
- USFWS suggested to start with the Table of Contents and build the HCP from there
- Tim Day inquired about the possibility of WCI being included on the programmatic HCP/ITP if WCI are not issued a separate authorization and does not get the Section 7 completed. Discussion followed that the number of acres involved in take for WCI is relatively large and may utilize more than a proportionate amount of take appropriated for the entire Key.
- It was also noted that USFWS would have to look at the distribution of how the County’s take is used
- The County currently has 3 beach front parcels; the rest are privately owned. All remaining suitable beach mouse habitat is now considered critical habitat

IV. Discussion of Future Agency Coordination and Anticipated Efforts

- Make sure State Fish and Wildlife and FDEP State Parks are included
- Must form a steering committee including stakeholders and conduct regular committee meetings to be recorded for the process
- The agency meetings can be the technical advisory meetings; must just provide meeting minutes
- Patty Kelly requested a field trip
- Outreach component will involved a website – the County is working on
- Must have quarterly public meeting including the steering committee
- Technical advisory meeting must be quarterly – can be in person or conference call

V. Closing Comments