

A. Background and Goals

Farmers and private landowners on the Central Coast are increasingly interested in implementing best management practices (BMPs) on their lands to remove invasive species, reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and enhance habitat. These commonly used, highly effective BMPs (such as road maintenance, riparian buffers, and streambank protection) significantly reduce erosion and a farmer's associated operational costs. Non-regulatory government agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) and UC Cooperative Extension have a long and successful record of partnering with farmers and ranchers to design, fund and implement these BMPs. Because of these incentives and the relationships and trust that have been built over many years, farmers and ranchers are frequently willing to work with these organizations to install BMPs on their lands.

Unfortunately, landowners face a major barrier in their desire to improve water quality: the time, cost and complexity of regulatory review. The average farmer willing to invest his or her own money to do a streambank protection project, designed by the NRCS and supported by other agencies, faces the prospect of separate and individual review by six or more local, state and federal regulatory agencies. This process frequently takes well over a year and involves fees that can regularly exceed \$1,800. These are significant obstacles for landowners and farm operators with limited time and resources, especially given their voluntary participation and the projects' substantial environmental and community benefits. Paradoxically, the regulatory review processes designed to protect water quality and natural resources from degradation has become a significant barrier to restoration of these same resources. As a result, fewer conservation projects incorporating these BMPs are done and water quality continues to degrade.

The NRCS and Sustainable Conservation, together with local RCDs, have developed permit coordination tools to encourage and support private landowners in their efforts to enhance water quality and restore habitat. Watershed-scale permit coordination for small-scale restoration activities has achieved recognition in coastal California as a tool for promoting conservation on private lands. It can also be modified to advance larger scale restoration projects, or projects in sensitive habitat. Traditionally it has been set up on a watershed or county level and has been administered jointly by the local NRCS and RCD. The Blueprint for Expenditure of the Guadalupe Settlement Fund names Permit Streamlining as one of six proposed projects. Specifically, it suggests that the RWQCB should "provide seed money for development of a catalogue of pre-permitted or pre-approved BMPs' commonly used to implement individual ranch management plans for water quality improvement."

Sustainable Conservation has worked with NRCS offices and RCDs along the California coast to establish coordinated permit programs. We have learned that replicating the success of the Elkhorn Slough is not a "cut & paste" type operation. Different species, different agencies, different landowners, and changing regulations necessitate modifications to the program design and implementation. While we strongly support the establishment of permit coordination in the area and encourage the local RC&D, RCDs and NRCS to establish this program, this scope of work emphasizes that early planning work is critical to developing an effective strategy to serve the two implementation areas. To the extent possible, we will seek approvals that will serve both counties. The process of collecting information will provide an opportunity to build support for the streamlining program among the regulatory agencies.

B. Work to be Performed

This proposal identifies four components:

Component 1: Establishment of Permit Coordination in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties

Component 2: Renewal of Elkhorn Slough Permit Coordination

Component 3: Operation of Santa Cruz County Permit Coordination

Component 4: Evaluation of Methods to Provide Permit Coordination to All RCDs in the Central Coast

Component 1: Establishment of Permit Coordination in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties

The work of setting up permit streamlining programs will be carried out through a partnership of the Sustainable Conservation, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and several Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) including Coastal San Luis RCD, Cachuma RCD and Upper Salinas/Las Tablas RCD. The permit streamlining program will build on the successful pilot project currently in operation in Morro Bay and other coastal watersheds.

Sustainable Conservation and the local RCDs will cooperatively carry out the work covered by this grant. Some activities are best carried out by the RCDs, whose local knowledge, contacts, and experience will make the process move faster. For other tasks, Sustainable Conservation's experience with permit streamlining and familiarity with the multiple agencies mandates will make the process move faster. Sustainable Conservation will coordinate the division of labor, and ultimately be responsible for ensuring all tasks are completed.

This effort will produce two sets of permits: one for San Luis Obispo County and one for Santa Barbara County. Agencies expected to permit the catalogue of pre-approved projects or management measures include San Luis Obispo County, Santa Barbara County, Coastal Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, Regional Water Quality Control Board, National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and US Army Corps of Engineers. The proposed cost for the two sets of permits is \$566,000 (Component 1, Table 1). The funds are targeted for program set-up interagency workshops, watershed tours, coordination meetings, completion of permit applications, procuring approved permits, training, and contract reporting.

Task 1. Project Administration

- 1.1 Provide all technical and administrative services as needed for contract completion and coordinate budgeting and scheduling to assure that the contract is completed within budget, on schedule, and in accordance with approved procedures, applicable laws, and regulations.
- 1.2 Ensure that the contract requirements are met through completion of quarterly progress reports submitted to the RWQCB Project Representative. The progress reports shall describe activities undertaken and accomplishments of each task during the quarter, milestones achieved, and any problems encountered in the performance of the work under this contract. The description of activities and accomplishments of each task during the quarter shall be in sufficient detail to provide a basis for payment of invoices and shall be translated into percent of task work completed for the purpose of calculating invoice amounts.
- 1.3 Award subcontract(s) to appropriate organization(s) to perform tasks as outlined in this agreement. Document steps taken in soliciting and awarding the subcontract and submit them to the Contract Manager for review and approval. Document all subcontractor activities and expenditures in progress reports. The RCDs that will be working as subcontractors on this task are: Upper Salinas Las Tablas RCD, Central San Luis RCD and Cachuma RCD.

Task Deliverables:

- 1.1 Progress Reports
- 1.3 Subcontractor Documentation

Task 2: Program Set-Up

- 2.1 Research resource and regulatory issues specific to the implementation areas
- 2.2 Develop a list of sensitive plant and animal species that may need to be addressed in permit applications and for Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations.

- 2.3 Meet with the NRCS and RCDS to identify water quality problems, appropriate BMPs for program, and existing and ongoing watershed assessment and planning efforts.
- 2.4 Make presentation to RCD Boards to discuss program, identify potential issues, discuss choice of CEQA lead agency and answer questions about potential RCD responsibilities.
- 2.5 Identify regulatory agency staff to work with and initiate contact.
- 2.6 Develop a short (2-page) program description to use as an outreach tool (description of program, description of proposed activities, environmental and species data, protection measures and background information typically required by regulators).

Task Deliverables:

- 2.2 Summary of Listed Sensitive Plant and Animal Species
- 2.3 List of proposed BMPs
- 2.4 Meeting notes and presentation materials from RCD meetings
- 2.5 List of agency contacts
- 2.6 2-page Program Description for outreach

Task 3. Interagency Workshop

For each implementation area, Sustainable Conservation and partners will jointly host a one day inter-agency workshop to introduce regulatory/resource agencies to the program, discuss concerns and opportunities, and obtain their agreement to partner on this project.

- 3.1 Invite field and management staff from each local, state and federal regulatory agency with jurisdiction over proposed conservation practices identified in Task 2.3 to an inter-agency workshop.
- 3.2 Prepare presentation and handout materials for workshop.
- 3.3 Conduct workshop.
- 3.4 Agree on watershed tour dates.
- 3.5 Prepare detailed meeting notes and action items.
- 3.6 Brief partners who missed meetings via follow up phone calls.

Task Deliverables:

- 3.2 Meeting packet and agenda
- 3.5 Meeting Notes from Interagency Workshop

Task 4. Watershed Tours for Regulators

Conduct watershed tours for regulators to view typical resource problems on farms, ranches, and rural lands and the effectiveness of the NRCS conservation practices and their conservation planning process. The number of tours is dependent on the attendance – all the agency representatives need to attend one tour. These tours will provide key opportunities to build relationships, trust and cross training between the program proponents and the regulators through frank, facilitated discussion of what we see. Agency input will be used to guide environmental protection measures for BMPs.

- 4.1 Prepare detailed itinerary, maps, before and after photos and similar materials for tour packet.
- 4.2 Confirm attendance and make appropriate arrangements for transportation, meals, and meeting rooms.
- 4.3 Conduct tour.
- 4.4 Prepare detailed meeting notes.
- 4.5 If needed, provide additional tours for regulatory agencies.

Task Deliverables:

- 4.1 Watershed Tour Packet
- 4.4 Meeting Notes from Watershed Tour

Task 5. Interagency Follow-up Meetings

Following each watershed tour, RCDs with assistance from Sustainable Conservation will convene meeting(s) to discuss what we have seen and review next steps for completing permit applications with the regulators.

- 5.1 Prepare meeting materials, including draft protection measures and sensitive species lists.
- 5.2 Conduct meetings following field tours.
- 5.3 Record agency concerns, information needs, and next steps
- 5.4 Prepare detailed meeting notes

Task Deliverables:

- 5.4 Meeting notes from Interagency Follow-up meetings

Task 6. Meetings with Individual Agencies

Because each agency has distinct permitting mechanism, we will arrange phone calls, conference calls and meetings as necessary to discuss concerns, create solutions, and complete the necessary documents for the permit applications.

- 6.1 Arrange necessary meetings with
 - Counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara;
 - Coastal Commission;
 - California Department of Fish and Game;
 - Regional Water Quality Control Board;
 - National Marine Fisheries Service;
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service; and
 - US Army Corps of Engineers.
- 6.2 If necessary contact municipalities within the watershed to determine jurisdictional intersection with the program. Determine the appropriate level of involvement of municipalities in the program.
- 6.3 Revise Project Proposal and circulate to agencies for review, arranging conference calls or meetings if and as necessary to reach consensus on protection measures.
- 6.4 Complete a draft full-length program description (app. 200 pages, similar in many ways to a CEQA initial study).

Task Deliverables:

- 6.1 Draft protection measures
- 6.2 Draft full-length program description

Task 7. Meetings with Community Groups

Once basic agency concerns and conditions are known, conduct meetings with local agricultural, environmental, Native American, and other community groups to present the permit coordination program and gather comments and concerns in preparation for public comment periods associated with different permitting processes.

- 7.1 Develop list of community groups and contacts who might be interested in the program and meeting. This list would be based primarily on the list the County Planning department keeps on environmental/community groups that are notified of projects.
- 7.2 Call each organization and invite them to the meeting.
- 7.3 Develop meeting information and send out with reminder notices to interested parties via email or other methods.
- 7.4 Solicit involvement from community groups through flyers and news releases.
- 7.5 Conduct meeting and collect comments.
- 7.6 Prepare notes and distribute to attendees and invitee list from Task 7.1.

Task Deliverables:

- 7.1 List of invitees
- 7.3 Meeting materials
- 7.4 Flyers and new releases
- 7.6 Meeting notes, including list of attendees

Task 8. Completion of Permit Applications

- 8.1 Finalize full-length project description and allow for contract manager to review.
- 8.2 Complete each agency's permit application and submit for formal review.
- 8.3 Arrange for final review of permit applications and sign-off by appropriate NRCS and RCD staff.
- 8.4 Submit applications to each of the agencies listed in Task 6. Anticipated permitting mechanisms are:
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Programmatic Biological Opinion and/or Letter of Concurrence
 - National Marine Fisheries Service: Programmatic Biological Opinion and/or Letter of Concurrence
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Regional General Permit or Memorandum of Agreement
 - Coastal Commission: Federal Consistency Review
 - Regional Water Quality Control Board: 401 Water Quality Certification
 - California Department of Fish and Game: MOA and Template for Streambed Alteration Agreement
 - CEQA Negative Declaration

Task Deliverables:

- 8.1 Project Description
- 8.4 Permit applications and agreements

Task 9. Shepherd Permits Applications through Process

Maintain regular contact with agencies to ensure that the permits applications have been received, are being reviewed in a timely manner according to statute, and answer questions and/or provide further information as required to receive the permits.

- 9.1 Continue communication as necessary with each agency.
- 9.2 Attend necessary approval meetings (e.g. planning commission meetings) as requested.
- 9.3 Coordinate the necessary partners' signatures on required permits and agreements, ensuring they are signed in a timely manner.
- 9.4 Receive signed approved permits or equivalent agreements from each agency.

Task Deliverables:

- 9.4 Signed approved permits or equivalent agreements from each agency

Task 10 Outreach to Potential Participants

Conduct outreach to community so they know how to take advantage of the permit coordination program.

- 10.1 Develop a list of groups and individuals to make presentation to (based on RCDs recommendation of which groups are most interested in the program and may potentially take advantage of the permit coordination program).
- 10.2 Develop necessary materials (e.g. fact sheets, tri-fold brochure) to be used in outreach effort.
- 10.3 Place meeting announcements in local newspapers, bulletin boards, and websites appropriate to the target audience.
- 10.4 Conduct 2 to 4 meetings to present program, partners and process to potential users.

Task Deliverables:

- 10.1 List of groups or individuals
- 10.2 Outreach materials
- 10.3 Meeting notices
- 10.4 Attendance sheets

Task 11. NRCS and RCD Training

Typically, we have a single contact for NRCS and RCD as we will develop the permits for the program. Once the permits are in place, a number of staff may be involved in developing projects with landowners that will be covered under the program. We develop training materials and conduct a training workshop that must be attended by personnel who will be working with the program. The workshop will typically last 2-3 days.

- 11.1 Develop a Program Guide for conservation planners at the NRCS and RCD.
- 11.2 Develop additional training materials for the workshop as needed.
- 11.3 Conduct a training workshop for NRCS and RCD staff to instruct them in program administration, endangered species issues, and regulatory compliance.

Task Deliverables

- 11.1 Guide for Conservation Planners
- 11.2 Additional training materials
- 11.3 Workshop agenda and materials

Task 12. Draft and Final Project Report

- 12.1 Prepare a draft project report that includes the results of the tasks listed above.
- 12.2 Prepare a final project report that addresses, to the extent feasible, comments made by the RWQCB.

Task Deliverables:

- 12.1 Draft Project Report
- 12.2 Final Project Report

TASK BUDGET FROM COMPONENT #1

TASK			
1	Project Administration	30,000	Months 1-36
2	Program Set-Up	40,000	Months 1-4
3	Interagency Workshop	25,000	Months 4-6
4	Watershed Tours	8,000	Months 4-6
5	Interagency Follow-up Meetings	35,000	Months 6-12
6	Meetings with Individual Agencies	50,000	Months 6-36
7	Meetings with Community Groups	8,000	Months 12-24
8	Complete Applications, including CEQA	120,000	Months 9-24
9	Outreach	5,000	Depends on RCDs
10	Shepherd Permits to Issuance	75,000	Months 12-36
11	NRCS and RCD Training	15,000	Months 24 & 30 (approx)
12	Draft and Final Report	4717	Month 36
	SUSCON TOTAL	415,717	

SUBGRANTS TO RCDS 150,000

TOTAL 565,717

Component 2: Renewal of Permit in Elkhorn Slough

The highly successful permit streamlining effort in Elkhorn Slough started up in 1998 and was designed to expire in five years. The permits that were issued to the NRCS and Monterey RCD are now in need of renewal to meet the continued demand for conservation work in this watershed. Since permits for this watershed have been previously issued and Elkhorn Slough is a relatively small watershed, it is anticipated that permit re-issuance will not be as challenging or time consuming as new streamlining efforts. Additionally, there are no anadromous fish in this watershed, so no consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service is needed. The budget for this component is significantly smaller than San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County streamlining component.

This effort will produce one set of permits for the Elkhorn Slough watershed. The same group of agencies, with the exception of the National Marine Fisheries Service, will participate in the project. The proposed cost for the set of permits is \$117,500 (Component 2, Table 2). The funds are targeted for program set-up interagency workshops, watershed tours, coordination meetings, completion of permit applications, procuring permits, training, and contract reporting.

Task 1. Project Administration

- 1.1 Provide all technical and administrative services as needed for contract completion and coordinate budgeting and scheduling to assure that the contract is completed within budget, on schedule, and in accordance with approved procedures, applicable laws, and regulations.
- 1.2 Ensure that the contract requirements are met through completion of quarterly progress reports submitted to the RWQCB Project Representative. The progress reports shall describe activities undertaken and accomplishments of each task during the quarter, milestones achieved, and any problems encountered in the performance of the work under this contract. The description of activities and accomplishments of each task during the quarter shall be in sufficient detail to provide a basis for payment of invoices and shall be translated into percent of task work completed for the purpose of calculating invoice amounts.

Task Deliverables:

- 1.1 Progress Reports

Task 2: Program Review

- 2.1 Review conditions of previous permits and identify where regulations or conditions have changes to require modifications to type of permit. (e.g., the programmatic 1600 Agreement issued by Department of Fish Game is no longer issued by that agency). resource and regulatory issues specific to the implementation areas
- 2.2 Review list of sensitive plant and animal species that may need to be addressed in permit applications and for Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations. Identify new species or critical habitats that have been identified in this region. For example, Tidewater goby has been identified in Elkhorn Slough since 1998 and U.S. Fish and Wildlife may want to consult on that species.
- 2.3 Meet with the NRCS and RCDS to review BMPs used in the program and see if new practices need to be added.
- 2.4 Make presentation to RCD Board to discuss program, identify potential issues, discuss choice of CEQA lead agency and answer questions about potential RCD responsibilities.
- 2.5 Identify regulatory agency staff to work with and initiate contact.

Task Deliverables:

- 2.2 Summary of Listed Sensitive Plant and Animal Species
- 2.3 List of proposed BMPs; Meeting notes and presentation materials from RCD meetings
- 2.5 List of agency contacts

Task 3. Interagency Workshop

Host a one day inter-agency workshop to introduce regulatory/resource agencies to the program, discuss concerns and opportunities, and obtain their agreement to partner on this project. In many cases, agencies will be able to identify areas to improve the program over the previous implementation.

Invite field and management staff from each local, state and federal regulatory agency with jurisdiction over proposed conservation practices identified in Task 2.1 to an inter-agency workshop.

- 3.1 Prepare presentation and handout materials for workshop.
- 3.2 Conduct workshop.
- 3.3 Agree on watershed tour dates.
- 3.4 Prepare detailed meeting notes and action items.
- 3.5 Brief partners who missed meetings via follow up phone calls.

Task Deliverables:

- 3.1 Meeting packet and agenda
- 3.2 Tour schedule
- 3.4 Meeting Notes from Interagency Workshop

Task 4. Watershed Tours for Regulators

Conduct watershed tours for regulators to view typical resource problems on farms, ranches, and rural lands and the effectiveness of the NRCS conservation practices and their conservation planning process. The number of tours is dependent on the attendance – all the agency representatives need to attend one tour. These tours will provide key opportunities to build relationships, trust and cross training between the program proponents and the regulators through frank, facilitated discussion of what we see. Agency input will be used to guide revisions to the Project Proposal.

- 4.1 Prepare detailed itinerary, maps, before and after photos and similar materials for tour packet.
- 4.2 Confirm attendance and make appropriate arrangements for transportation, meals, and meeting rooms.
- 4.3 Conduct tour.
- 4.4 Prepare detailed meeting notes.
- 4.5 If needed, provide additional tours for regulatory agencies.

Task Deliverables:

- 4.1 Watershed Tour Packet
- 4.4 Meeting Notes from Watershed Tour

Task 5. Interagency Follow-up Meetings

Following each watershed tour, RCDs with assistance from Sustainable Conservation will convene meeting(s) to discuss what we have seen and review next steps for completing permit applications with the regulators.

- 5.1 Prepare meeting materials, including draft protection measures and sensitive species lists.
- 5.2 Conduct meetings following field tours.
- 5.3 Record agency concerns, information needs, and next steps
- 5.4 Prepare detailed meeting notes

Task Deliverables:

- 5.1 Meeting notes from Interagency Follow-up meetings

Task 6. Meetings with Individual Agencies

Because each agency has distinct permitting mechanism, we will arrange phone calls, conference calls and meetings as necessary to discuss concerns, create solutions, and complete the necessary documents for the permit applications.

- 6.1 Arrange necessary meetings with
 - Counties of Monterey
 - Coastal Commission;
 - California Department of Fish and Game;
 - Regional Water Quality Control Board;
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service; and
 - US Army Corps of Engineers.
- 6.2 If necessary contact municipalities within the watershed to determine jurisdictional intersection with the program, and determine the appropriate level of involvement of municipalities in the permit coordination program.
- 6.3 Revise Project Proposal and circulate to agencies for review, arranging conference calls or meetings if and as necessary to reach consensus on protection measures.
- 6.4 Complete Final Project Proposal.

Task Deliverables:

- 6.3 Draft protection measures
- 6.4 Final Project Proposal

Task 7. Meetings with Community Groups

Once basic agency concerns and conditions are known, conduct meetings with local agricultural, environmental, Native American, and other community groups to present the permit coordination program and gather comments and concerns in preparation for public comment periods associated with different permitting processes.

- 7.1 Develop list of community groups and contacts who might be interested in the program and meeting. This list would be based primarily on the list the County Planning department keeps on environmental/community groups that are notified of projects.
- 7.2 Call each organization and invite them to the meeting.
- 7.3 Develop meeting information and send out with reminder notices to interested parties via email or other methods.
- 7.4 Solicit involvement from community groups through flyers and news releases.
- 7.5 Conduct meeting and collect comments.
- 7.6 Prepare notes and distribute to attendees and invitee list from Task 7.1.

Task Deliverables:

- 7.2 List of invitees
- 7.2 Meeting materials
- 7.3 Flyers and new releases
- 7.4 Meeting notes, including list of attendees

Task 8. Completion of Permit Applications

- 8.1 Develop project description and allow for contract manager to review project description if desired.
- 8.2 Complete each agency's permit application and submit for formal review.
- 8.3 Arrange for final review of permit applications and sign-off by appropriate NRCS and RCD staff.
- 8.4 Submit applications to each of the agencies listed in Task 6. Anticipated permitting mechanisms are:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Programmatic Biological Opinion and/or Letter of Concurrence
- National Marine Fisheries Service: Programmatic Biological Opinion and/or Letter of Concurrence
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Regional General Permit or Memorandum of Agreement
- Coastal Commission: Federal Consistency Review
- Regional Water Quality Control Board: 401 Water Quality Certification
- California Department of Fish and Game: MOA and Template for Streambed Alteration Agreement
- CEQA Negative Declaration

Task Deliverables:

- 8.1 Project Description
- 8.4 Permit applications and agreements

Task 9. Shepherd Permits Applications through Process

Maintain regular contact with agencies to ensure that the permits applications have been received, are being reviewed in a timely manner according to statute, and answer questions and/or provide further information as required to receive the permits.

- 9.1 Continue communication as necessary with each agency.
- 9.2 Attend necessary approval meetings (e.g. planning commission meetings) as requested.
- 9.3 Coordinate the necessary partners' signatures on required permits and agreements, ensuring they are signed in a timely manner.
- 9.4 Receive signed approved permits or equivalent agreements from each agency.

Task Deliverables:

- 9.4 Signed approved permits or equivalent agreements from each agency

Task 10. Outreach to Potential Participants

Conduct outreach to community so they know how to take advantage of the permit coordination program.

- 10.1 Develop a list of groups and individuals to make presentation to (based on RCDs recommendation of which groups are most interested in the program and may potentially take advantage of the permit coordination program).
- 10.2 Develop necessary materials (e.g. fact sheets, tri-fold brochure) to be used in outreach effort.
- 10.3 Place meeting announcements in local newspapers, bulletin boards, and websites appropriate to the target audience.
- 10.4 Conduct meetings to present program, partners and process to potential users.

Task Deliverables:

- 10.1 List of groups or individuals
- 10.2 Outreach materials
- 10.3 Meeting notices
- 10.4 Attendance sheets

Task 11. NRCS and RCD Training

Typically, we have a single contact for NRCS and RCD as we will develop the permits for the program. Once the permits are in place, a number of staff may be involved in developing projects with landowners that will be covered under the program. We develop training materials and conduct a training workshop that must be attended by personnel who will be working with the program. The workshop will typically last 2-3 days.

- 11.1 Develop a Program Guide for conservation planners at the NRCS and RCD.
- 11.2 Develop additional training materials for the workshop as needed.

- 11.3 Conduct a training workshop for NRCS and RCD staff to instruct them in program administration, endangered species issues, and regulatory compliance.

Task Deliverables

- 11.1 Guide for Conservation Planners
11.2 Additional training materials
11.3 Workshop agenda and materials

Task 12. Draft and Final Project Report

- 12.1 Prepare a draft project report that includes the results of the tasks listed above.
12.2 Prepare a final project report that addresses, to the extent feasible, comments made by the RWQCB.

Task Deliverables:

- 12.1 Draft Project Report
12.2 Final Project Report

TABLE 2. TASK BUDGET FROM COMPONENT #2 – Renewal of Elkhorn Permits

TASK			
1	Project Administration	5,000	Months 1-18
2	Program Review	7,500	Months 1-4
3	Interagency Workshop	10,000	Months 4-6
4	Watershed Tours	8,000	Months 4-6
5	Interagency Follow-up Meetings	10,000	Months 6-12
6	Meetings with Individual Agencies	10,000	Months 3-18
7	Meetings with Community Groups	5,000	Months 12-24
8	Complete Applications, including CEQA	35,000	Months 9-16
9	Outreach	5,000	Depends on RCD
10	Shepherd Permits to Issuance	10,000	Months 8-18
11	NRCS and RCD Training	10,000	Month 18
12	Draft and Final Report	2000	Month 18
	SUSCON TOTAL	117,500	

Component 3: Operation of Santa Cruz Permit Coordination

The Santa Cruz County Permit Streamlining Program is almost complete, pending approval (biological opinion) from U.S. Fish and Wildlife. This project will go on-line in 2006 and we anticipate 10-15 projects going through the program annually. In this component, funds are directed through a sub-contract to the Santa Cruz RCD.

Under the conditions contained within the proposed streamlined permit, the Santa Cruz County RCD must carry out conservation planning (on the ground project implementation) to Natural Resources Conservation Service standards. In order to fulfill this condition, the RCD would train two staff members. The training is provided at no charge by the NRCS. The main cost center in the task is RCD staff time.

Task 1: The conditions of the permits require the RCD carries out conservation planning to the standards of NRCS. In order to fulfill this condition, the RCD would train two staff members. The training is provided at no charge by the NRCS. The main cost center in the task is RCD staff time.

40 hours NRCS on-line training for two people:	\$4400 staff time
40 hours NRCS classroom training (plus travel) for two people =	\$4400 for staff time
	\$800 for lodging
	\$150 for gas
	\$400 for food

150 hours field work follow up to complete 3 conservation plans (2 people) = \$16,500

TASK 1 Total: \$26,650

Task 2: Because of the anticipated number of projects, the complexity of species, and additional review required by some agencies on an annual basis, the RCD anticipates that ¼ FTE will be needed on an annual basis for four years to administer the project.

Annual administration of project (1/4 time FTE) 520 hr x 4 years. = \$114,000

Total Funds to be directed to Santa Cruz RCD for Component 3: \$140,650

Component 4: Evaluation of Methods to Provide Permit Coordination to All RCDs in the Central Coast

Sustainable Conservation has worked with NRCS offices and RCDs along the California coast to establish coordinated permit programs. While we strongly support the establishment of permit streamlining in all areas along the central coast, it is not yet known if San Benito, Santa Clara, and smaller coastal watersheds in Monterey County have the need, desire, or capacity to carry out a program. As such, at this time we are only requesting funding to conduct preliminary work for these areas.

Some pre-implementation planning work and program development guidance must be completed and these efforts could save a great deal of time and money in the long run. Where possible, the permit tools used in Elkhorn Slough, Santa Cruz County, Santa Barbara County, and San Luis Obispo County may be modified or extended to serve a greater geographic scope. This component requires answering numerous questions, for example:

- Is there need for permit streamlining and assistance agency capacity for this program in San Benito County and/or Santa Clara County?
- What is the best way to extend permit coverage to these areas?
- What existing regulatory agreements are already in place, or can be leveraged to reduce costs?
- What authority will the administering entity have over landowners? (i.e. how will agencies be assured of quality control?)
- Who will be the point of contact for each regulatory agency?
- What will the strategy be for CEQA compliance?
- How do the local regulations from the different counties affect the program?

The results of this analysis could suggest the need for different coordination strategies should be used to optimize efficiency through permitting. The process of collecting information during this initial assessment will also provide an opportunity to build support for the streamlining program among the regulatory agencies. The interview findings and planning meetings would be synthesized in a guidance document for the establishment of permit streamlining in these new areas. Carolyn Remick, Sustainable Conservation's program director, will carry out this work.

Tasks:

Interviews	Estimated Hours
1. Research on local regulations and protected species occurring in project area	50
2. Discussion and meetings with RCDs, NRCS, RWQCB	50
3. Planning and Preparation for Working Session with Key Regulators	36
4. Travel to Project Area and Carrying out Working Session with Key Regulators	30
5. Analysis, key findings, and recommendations for Permit Coordination	60

Total Hours: 226 @ \$80 = \$18,080
Travel: \$1,500

Total for Component 4: \$19,580

Budget Summary

Component	Work Performed by:	Amount
Component 1: Establishment of Permit Coordination in SLO & SB	Sustainable Conservation with 3 RCDs (Upper Salinas Las Tablas, Cachuma, Coastal San Luis)	\$565,717
Component 2: Renewal of Elkhorn Slough Permit Coordination	Sustainable Conservation	\$117,500
Component 3: Operation of Santa Cruz County Permit Coordination	Santa Cruz County RCD	\$140,650
Component 4: Evaluation of Methods to Provide Permit Coordination to All RCDs in the Central Coast	Sustainable Conservation	\$19, 580
	Total Request	\$843,447