

Suggestions for Renewed Measure M Restoration Criteria

These restoration criteria were prepared for discussion with members of the Environmental Oversight Committee. The criteria are separated into four distinct categories.

BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following criteria are listed in order of priority from the viewpoint of the permitting/resource agencies for the mitigation of habitat impacts by Renewed Measure M freeway projects. Each criterion includes a brief definition to clarify any potential misunderstandings. At a future date, and after more research and input, it is expected these criteria will include a weighting system for ranking potential restoration projects.

- **Restores Impacted Habitats**

An inventory of the property shows it includes the same vegetative communities as those habitats lost to freeway projects, including habitats such as: coastal sage scrub, riparian woodlands, grasslands, etc. and possibly includes ties to historical land coverage.

- **Benefits Targeted Species**

The potential restoration site includes a net benefit (both immediate and long term) in the ecological value for target species through increased breeding/foraging habitat and increases connectivity between areas of suitable habitat.

- **Restores Sensitive Habitats**

The property's habitat restoration includes the state and sub-species rankings under CNDDB (California Natural Diversity Database).

- **Considers the Threat of Habitat Degradation and Urgency**

The threat of increasing the amount and coverage of non-native species determines restoration urgency, and there may be unique opportunities for restoration, such as burn areas.

- **Evaluates Adequacy of Protection and Management**

The existing level of protection, anticipated public use inside and adjacent to the restoration site should be considered.

- **Enhances Natural Lands Contiguity**

Restoration of this site will limit edge effect, supplement existing open space and improve the quantity and quality of core habitat.

OTHER CRITERIA

This list includes the secondary tier of evaluation criteria after the biological criteria are considered. It is expected that these criteria would require a simpler evaluation (such as yes, no, maybe) and the answers may merely play an informational role.

- **Aligns with Resource Agency Priorities**

Proposed restoration meets resource agencies' particular requirements (e.g., the restoration satisfies the agencies' (ACOE, RWCB, and DFG) definition of habitat creation for the purposes of no-net loss policies for wetlands).

- **Includes Support from Local Government**

This acquisition is supported by local cities, appropriate JPA's, the county or other governmental entities.

- **Includes Support from the Community**

This restoration is supported by the public, environmental and community organizations.

- **Utilizes Partnership & Leveraging Opportunities**

Working on this restoration project would be enhanced by existing conservation efforts, partnerships and/or includes existing funding.

CO-BENEFITS

The following criteria would assist in the event the above criteria are roughly equal. These may take on a simpler evaluation (such as yes, no, or maybe) and the answers may merely play an informational role.

- Watershed Protection
- Proximity to Underserved Area
- Scenic/Viewshed/Enhanced recreation experience
- Economic Benefits (supports local businesses)
- Public Access

RESTORATION CONSTRAINTS

In addition to streamlining OCTA's regulatory process, the intent of the comprehensive environmental mitigation program is to provide the greatest possible biological benefit for the region with the available funding. Consequently, the cost of potential restoration activities will be an important factor in selecting restoration sites. The following criteria are potential constraints to restoration, but detailed information regarding some of these constraints may not be available until later in the evaluation process.

- **Includes Access to Site**
The restoration site is accessible for restoration work, maintenance and management.
- **Determines Hazardous Conditions**
Through a Phase I – Environmental Assessment, determine the property's historical use and any potential or known hazardous materials on-site.
- **Availability and Delivery of Water**
The water used for the restoration is available, does not increase environmental impacts when delivered to the site and works with local water agencies to ensure groundwater sources are not impacted by water withdrawal.