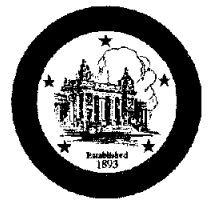


**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM: Supervisor Bob Buster

SUBMITTAL DATE: Nov. 21, 2007

SUBJECT: Merging RCHCA with RCA

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

Approve combining the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency with the Regional Conservation Agency and request that staff present a process and timetable to accomplish this within 60 days.

BACKGROUND: Conservation of protected and threatened animal and plant species is best done on an ecosystem basis, which is the foundation for the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan in the western county.

Continuing the RCHCA as a separate, single-species agency for the Stephen's Kangaroo Rat, with its own HCP, impact fee, staff, and governing board no longer makes sense.

Reserve acquisition, funding and management policies and practices can now best be done if these agencies are combined or joined. Whatever legal, permit or other obstacles that stand in the way of a merger are clearly subordinate.

The RCHCA was formed in 1990 to conserve the endangered Stephen's Kangaroo Rat, the first species listed in the western county in 1988. The agency has achieved its primary purpose of acquiring sufficient permanent K-Rat reserves and is now managing those lands. The County and the eight cities of Riverside, Corona, Moreno Valley, Perris, Murrieta, Temecula, Hemet, and Lake Elsinore are members.

The RCA was formed in 2004 to conserve 146 species in the western county. The RCA governing board includes all 14 western cities and the County of Riverside. The agency has already acquired 40,000 acres of suitable habitat of the 153,000 needed for permanent reserves.



BOB BUSTER
1st District Supervisor