

---

## National HCP Coalition Annual Meeting

October 5-6, 2021

Virtual Meeting

---

### Speaker Biographies

#### *Keynote Speaker*



**Lynn Scarlett\***

Chief External Affairs Officer, The Nature Conservancy

Lynn Scarlett is Chief External Affairs Officer at The Nature Conservancy. In this role, she influences climate and conservation policy in the United States and the 72 countries and territories in which TNC operates and with the Corporate Engagement team, she advances private-sector partnerships to support sustainability and enhance ambitious actions to address climate change.

Prior to her role at the Conservancy, Lynn served at the U.S. Department of the Interior from 2001-2009 in the George W. Bush Administration, where she was the Deputy Secretary/Chief Operating Officer of the Department, which manages 500 million acres of U.S. public lands, and served as Acting Secretary of the Interior in 2006.

While the U.S Department of the Interior's Deputy Secretary, Lynn initiated and chaired the Department's Cooperative Conservation Working Group and its first-ever Climate Change Task Force. She established the Interior Department's Ocean and Coastal activities office and chaired the federal Wildland Fire Leadership Council. She served on the Executive Committee of the President's Management Council and co-chaired the First Lady's Preserve America initiative.

Lynn is author or co-author of publications on climate change adaptation; ecosystem services; large landscape conservation; and science and decision making. She was a co-convening lead author of the 2014 (U.S.) National Climate Assessment.

She chaired the Science Advisory Board of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration from 2014-2019 and served on the U.S. National Academy of Sciences Sustainability Roundtable. She serves on the advisory board of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Dean's Advisory Council of the UC Santa Barbara Bren School of Environmental Science and Management.

### *Session Speakers and Facilitators*

**Trish Adams**

National Habitat Conservation Planning Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
NHCP Program Committee Member, HCP Improvement Committee Member

Trish Adams serves as the National Habitat Conservation Planning Coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in its Headquarters Office in Falls Church, Virginia. Prior to joining Headquarters, for 14 years she was located in the South Florida Ecological Services Office, Vero Beach, Florida. During her tenure, she served as the South Florida Habitat Conservation Planning Coordinator, Coastal Program Coordinator, and served as the lead Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and Endangered Species Act section 7 biologist for large-scale Federal coastal navigation, beach renourishment, and port expansion projects. She began her career with the Service in 1999. Prior to the joining the Service, Trish gained eight years of field experience in coastal resource management and fisheries research working for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas and the Florida Marine and Wildlife Research Institute, respectively. She holds a B.S. degree in Marine Science from Stockton University, New Jersey.

**Amanda Aurora, C.W.B.\***

Technical Director, ESA Services  
SWCA – Austin

Amanda Aurora is the Technical Director of Endangered Species Act services for SWCA providing strategic guidance on permitting and compliance for matters involving protected wildlife, plants, and habitats. Based in the SWCA Austin office but managing a national practice, Amanda has more than 20 years of consulting experience, with an emphasis on Endangered Species Act compliance and the intersections of the Endangered Species Act with other regulatory programs.

Amanda has a wealth of experience pertaining to endangered species issues, including research, permitting, consultations, and conservation planning. She excels at the application of science to the regulatory process. Amanda is skilled with programmatic and multi-species Habitat Conservation Plans, Candidate Conservation Agreements, and Conservation Banks. Her experience includes negotiating compliance solutions for critically imperiled species facing potential determinations of jeopardy or adverse modification of designated critical habitats. She has also led efforts to delisting species no longer requiring the protections of the ESA when such action has been supported by sound science and been involved in voluntary conservation planning to help preclude the need to list other species.

Title: Renewable Energy HCPs – Pruning the Scope of Analysis on Related Actions

Abstract: HCP proponents analyze their proposed actions for effects on listed species, estimate an amount take that is reasonably certain to occur from those actions, and describe the impacts of that take on the species. The USFWS has a separate obligation to consider the effects of its approval of an HCP and issuance of a take permit on listed species and the human environment. The scope of these

analyses may not be the same and serve different purposes. How far does an HCP proponent need to go when setting the scope of analysis for an HCP? We review how renewable energy HCPs, which often connect to other projects, have addressed these scope issues to-date and we provide insight on how to ensure that such analyses are neither unnecessarily broad nor inappropriately narrow.

**Lucas Bare\***

Senior Manager, ICF  
NHCP Program Committee Co-Chair

Lucas Bare is a senior manager in ICF's Conservation Planning and Implementation Practice with over 12 years of professional experience in environmental planning, natural resources management, and conservation biology. Lucas' expertise lies in advising clients on Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance and permitting options (Section 10 and Section 7), preparing Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and developing Eagle Conservation Plans under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). Lucas manages projects for clients across multiple sectors, including energy development, transmission, water, and local and federal land and resource management agencies. His technical expertise is in conservation biology and impact analysis for natural resources.

**Katie Barrows**

Director of Energy & Environmental Resources, Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Katie Barrows has been involved with development and preparation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) since its inception in the mid-1990s. In her former position as Director of Environmental Resources for the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) she was the lead staff on implementation of the CVMSHCP which received final permits in 2008. She handled the completion of the first major amendment to the CVMSHCP and will share her experiences in that process. Katie has recently retired from her position with CVCC/CVAG to spend more time enjoying the natural habitats of the region.

Abstract: The Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) covers 1.1 million acres in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. It focuses on protection of conservation areas established to ensure long term persistence of 27 covered species, 27 natural communities, and essential ecosystem processes. In 2007, when the CVMSHCP was going through the final approval process by local permittees, one city chose not to participate. As a result, additional conservation measures were added to the Plan to ensure protection of covered species and natural communities before final permits were approved in 2008. Later the city asked to rejoin the plan through the major amendment process; a major amendment, the first in the nation to be completed for an MSHCP, was ultimately completed in 2016. Hear about what was involved in completing the major amendment, lessons learned from that process and the conservation successes that have resulted from the major amendment.

**Paola Bernazzani\***

Principal, ICF  
NHPC HCP Improvement Committee Co-Chair

Paola Bernazzani is a conservation planner and principal at ICF with 20 years of experience in habitat conservation planning. She currently supports seven regional HCPs or ECPs nationally as a senior project manager and project director. Paola leads the conservation planning practice within the Eastern line of business for ICF and teaches a class on Endangered Species Act compliance through the UC Davis extension program.

**Scott Blankenship**

Science Director & Senior Geneticist, Genidaqs

Scott Blankenship has over 20 years of experience applying genetic data to population monitoring and fishery science, including extensive experience combining the newest tools of molecular biology and genetics theory with field observations of fish populations and their habitat. As Science Director at Cramer Fish Sciences – Genidaqs, Scott has focused his expertise of population genetics to relate population viability metrics to recovery goals for protected species. Scott is skilled at communicating in a practical manner how to pair eDNA approaches that determine where/when species occur with parentage & kinship genetic analysis to quantify important biological measures such as abundance, breeding success and recruitment success.

**Tricia Campbell\***

Reserve Management and Monitoring Manager, Regional Conservation Authority, Riverside, CA  
NHPC Director, Vice President

Tricia Campbell has been serving on the National Habitat Conservation Plan Coalition (NHPC) Board since December 2019 as Vice President and would love the opportunity to continue serving you. In addition to serving on the Board, she has been serving on the Government Relations Committee of the NHPC. She came to the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) in January 2019 and before that worked as a biological consultant for over 25 years. At the RCA, she oversees the monitoring and management programs for the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan as well as provides implementation oversight to the member agencies of the Plan and guidance for reserve acquisitions. She has worked with both the private and public sector on projects ranging from residential and commercial development to large Interstate widening programs. She earned a degree from California State University, Long Beach and has conducted avian research and environmental consulting in Southern California since 1990. From 1996 to 2004, she was the co-owner of a biological consulting firm in Temecula, California and from 2016 through 2018 was the Vice President and CFO of an environmental firm in Orange County, California.

**Christina Chaput**

Senior Planner, Thurston County  
NHPC Program Committee Member

Christina Chaput is a senior planner with Thurston County government’s Community Planning Division. She has been with the Department since 2014. Currently, Chris is leading the County’s development of the Habitat Conservation Plan, as well as other natural resources programs the County oversees.

**Daniel Chase**

Senior Fisheries Biologist, Resource Environmental Solutions

Dan Chase is a Resource Environmental Solutions Senior Fisheries Biologist for the Western Region. Dan has extensive experience with fish ecology, biology, and fresh water and estuarine aquatic habitat, and has been working for over 16 years with threatened and endangered fish and wildlife species throughout California and Southern Oregon. His experience includes state and federal permitting, mitigation and restoration design and implementation, and the development of environmental DNA sampling programs.

**Valerie Covey\***

Precinct Three Commissioner, Williamson County  
NHPC Director and Board President

Valerie Covey was elected to represent Williamson County Precinct Three on the Williamson County Commissioner’s Court in November 2006 and was reelected to her fourth full term in November 2020.

She serves the County by participating on various boards and committees, including: the Williamson County Conservation Foundation, the Williamson County Mental Health Task Force, the Williamson County Audit Committee, the Williamson County Investment Committee and the CAPCOG General Assembly. She is also the president of both the Williamson County Regional Animal Shelter Board and the National Habitat Conservation Foundation Coalition. In February 2020, Covey was reappointed by Governor Greg Abbott to the Governing Board of the Texas Indigent Defense Commission.

She attended the University of Texas at Austin, where she earned a degree in accounting and has been licensed as a certified public accountant for more than 35 years. She and her husband of 36 years, Mark Covey, have lived in Georgetown, TX since 1994, and are blessed with three sons and a daughter-in-law.

**Terah Donovan\***

Principal, Environmental Science Associates  
NHCPC Director, Board Secretary, and Program Committee Member

Terah Donovan is Principal Conservation Biologist at Environmental Science Associates. Terah manages an integrated natural resource management program for rare and endangered species and ecosystems in California. She balances at-risk species conservation and recovery with economic development, infrastructure construction, and operations and maintenance. Together with her clients, she ensures project outcomes that meet regulatory requirements and result in better ecological and financial outcomes. Her team integrates best available science, management and monitoring methods, and technology into their projects. She creates project opportunities for her colleagues that allow for professional engagement and growth. Terah has supported the planning of 13 HCPs and implementation of six. She serves as a Director and Secretary of the National HCP Coalition and Program Committee member. She is a Director of the San Diego Duke Alumni Club, focusing on environmental and diversity programming. She was Alumna-in-Residence at Duke University in 2017. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Science from Northwestern University and a Masters of Environmental Management in Conservation Science and Policy from Duke University. She is a returned Peace Corps Volunteer from Bolivia. In 2020, she learned to surf.

**Heather Dyer\***

Chief Executive Officer/General Manager, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
NHCPC Director and Program Committee Member

Heather Dyer is the Chief Executive Officer/General Manager at the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, the lead agency for the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan. Prior to becoming the CEO/GM in January 2020, Heather led the development of the HCP from its inception in 2014. Heather is currently spearheading a Headwaters Climate Resilience Action Plan to protect Valley District's long-term investments in the watershed, including the HCP, through a strategy to identify, mitigate, and adapt to the likely effects of climate change on frequency and magnitude of long-term drought, catastrophic wildfire, and shifts in the overall ecology. Heather has held biologist/ecologist positions with the USGS, USFWS, and USFS. Heather earned a Bachelor of Science in Resource Biology from University of Louisiana, a Master of Science in Marine Biology from Nicholls State University, and an Executive MBA from Claremont Graduate University.

**Laura Coley Eisenberg**

Senior Vice President, Open Space and Resource Management, Rancho Mission Viejo  
NHCPC Improvement Committee Member

Ms. Eisenberg has been with Rancho Mission Viejo since 2000. As Senior Vice President of Open Space and Resource Management, Ms. Eisenberg is responsible for local, State and federal agency entitlement and compliance for the company. In that capacity, over a ten-year period, she entitled the Ranch Plan Planned Community at the local level, the Southern Subregion Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Master Streambed Alteration Agreement/Habitat Conservation Plan

(NCCP/MCAA/HCP) and the Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the San Juan Creek Watershed and western San Mateo Watershed at the State and federal level. Both of these later efforts involved management of a diverse suite of expert consultants, a complex set of issues to resolve prior to approval and intense negotiations with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Fish and Game, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff with opposing views. Combined the NCCP/MCAA/HCP and SAMP will provide the perpetual protection and management of 32 covered species (7 listed species) and 10 associated habitat types in a 20,868 acre Habitat Reserve, while permitting development of over 5,800 acres for residential and commercial uses, associated infrastructure and ongoing ranch operations, including cattle grazing. Since 2010 Ms. Eisenberg has been implementing the NCCP/MCAA/HCP and SAMP.

Ms. Eisenberg received her Bachelor of Arts in Geography with an emphasis in Urban Planning from California State University, Fullerton.

**Abigail Fateman\***

Executive Director, East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy  
NHCP Director and Program Committee Chair

Abigail Fateman is the Executive Director of the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy, which implements the region's Habitat Conservation Plan/ Natural Community Conservation Plan. She was involved in the development of the Plan (starting in 2003) and after Plan adoption served as the Land and Habitat Manager before becoming the Executive Director. Ms. Fateman earned a M.S. from the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment, where her research focused on stream ecology and monitoring stream health in urbanized areas. Ms. Fateman has been involved in conservation efforts including land management, scientific research and policy development for over twenty years.

**Scott Fleury\***

Senior Conservation Biologist, ICF

Scott Fleury is a principal conservation biologist and leader of ICF's habitat conservation planning practice in southern California. His conservation planning work has spanned the last three decades and has focused on the development and implementation of large-scale regional HCPs and other endangered species conservation efforts throughout California and the western United States. Scott has been leading the Upper Santa Ana River HCP Program for ICF from the beginning and has worked closely with Valley District to develop a vision for the long-term implementation of the HCP under the CAMMP and with the customized tools created for HCP monitoring, management, and reporting that are a part of the CAMMP portal. Scott earned a Bachelor's in Biology from the University of California, San Diego, a Master's in Biogeography from San Diego State University, and a PhD in Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology from the University of Nevada, Reno.

**Michael Forstner, Ph.D.**

Regents' Professor, University Distinguished Professor, Department of Biology at Texas State University

Michael Forstner is a faculty member at Texas State University. In his position as Regent's Professor he holds the Alexander-Stone Chair in Genetics. His work with endangered vertebrates includes many charismatic megafauna, but recent work and ongoing success is with reptiles and amphibians. Research conducted by an energetic and remarkable cadre of graduate students and post-doctoral colleagues has resulted in generalizable approaches enhancing our understanding of these animals in the wild. His work with the Houston toads began nearly thirty years ago and with extensive collaborations, partnerships, and just as remarkable a group of private landowners, the species has shown signs of recovery. The IUCN recognized the groups' achievements in their highlight of the Houston toad in the "Reversing the Red" programme in 2021.

Title: Audio monitoring technologies enhance management data necessary for conservation stewardship

Michael R.J. Forstner<sup>1</sup>, Austin Bohannon<sup>1,2</sup>, Andrew MacLaren<sup>1</sup>, Abudulla Al Bashit<sup>1</sup>, Damian Valles Molina<sup>1</sup>, and Cari Croft<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas

<sup>2</sup>Lost Pines Habitat Conservation Plan, Bastrop County, Texas

Abstract: Conservation stewardship is an active process with many stakeholders, each contributing unique strengths to successful outcomes with endangered species. Small vertebrates can be much more difficult to effectively monitor than larger megafauna. Yet, quality, informative data and trend analyses are required for any active stewardship program to succeed. Endangered amphibians check all of the detection "problem" boxes; they are difficult to detect, tend to have limited periods of activity, and, by definition, are rare. The Houston toad was one of the first cohort of taxa placed on the Endangered Species list for the USA. Since description in the 1950s all of the populations have declined or become extirpated. While not useful for females or juveniles, audio surveys enable researchers and land stewards to monitor for amphibian chorusing. Audio monitoring of Houston toads has been crucial to understanding the species natural history. Across the last 15 years we have created a collaborative automated monitoring program using autonomous audio loggers and recognition software that has enhanced scientific understanding, revealed trends within the Lost Pines Habitat Conservation Program, and most importantly, engaged private landowners whose active stewardship of the species has enabled a dramatic recovery from near extirpation. This technology and the benefits from the data are very likely applicable to any vocalizing species.

**Gary Frazer**

Assistant Director, Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Gary Frazer is the Assistant Director for Ecological Services. He has held this position since August 2009. As Assistant Director, Gary is the senior career official responsible for policy development, budget, and oversight for the Fish and Wildlife Service's administration of the Endangered Species

Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, Coastal Barrier Resources Act, and other environmental protection authorities delivered through the Service's Ecological Services program and field stations.

**Joanna Gibson\***

Executive Director, Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Program

Joanna Gibson is the Executive Director of the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Program. Joanna joined San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District as the Program Manager for the HCP in late 2020. Prior to accepting this position Joanna worked for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife within the environmental review and permitting, and landscape conservation planning programs. Joanna has held biologist/ecologist positions with the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Center for Reptile and Amphibian Conservation and Management, and Audubon California. Joanna earned a Bachelor of Applied Science from Central Queensland University, and a Master of Science in Ecology at Purdue University, Fort Wayne.

**Mark Kramer\***

Director, Federal External Affairs for the California Chapter of The Nature Conservancy  
NHCP Government Relations Committee Member

Mark Kramer is the Director of Federal External Affairs for the California Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Prior to returning home to California at the turn of the millennium to work for TNC, he spent a decade working on natural resources policy in Washington DC, including in the Office of Management and Budget in the Executive Office of the President and for a Member of the House of Representatives. His portfolio includes a wide range of issues, but he has a special place in his heart for habitat conservation plans and the practitioners who make them happen.

**Clifton Ladd \***

Senior Biologist and Project Manager, Blanton & Associates, Inc.  
NHCP Program Committee Member

Clifton Ladd has worked in endangered species conservation planning and permitting, habitat management, conservation bank development, and National Environmental Policy Act compliance for over three decades. He managed the development or implementation of most of the county Habitat Conservation Plans in Texas, including the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP), Bastrop County Lost Pines HCP, Hays County HCP, and the Southern Edwards Plateau HCP (Bexar County and the City of San Antonio). He served as a member of the Edwards Aquifer HCP Biological Advisory Team (2001 to 2005), Barton Springs Salamander Recovery Team (Technical Team, 1997 to 2004), Golden-cheeked Warbler Recovery Team (1998 to 2009), and the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer HCP Management Advisory Committee (2013 to present). He is currently engaged in the HCP team for the Guadalupe River HCP. He is permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 45 listed Texas vertebrate and invertebrate species.

**Leo Lentsch\***

Senior Principal, Ecological Sciences, Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.  
NHCPC Program Committee Member

Leo Lentsch brings more than 35 years of ecological science experience to CEC. Leo specializes in natural resource management with a focus on imperiled species and ecosystems. He uses a variety of scientific methods to assess potential impacts from a variety of human activities and to identify actions to offset those impacts, including restoring critical ecosystem processes and functions. In this light, he has been a leader in promoting the use of quantitative tools that integrate economic, social, and natural resource values into ecosystem restoration.

With a unique set of skills and abilities derived from his experience as a private consultant, state employee, and federal employee, he has worked on complex, controversial, and often contentious environmental projects across the U.S. To address contentious issues, he developed many innovative and proactive approaches for resolving natural resource management conflicts.

He is a recognized expert on Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance and taught classes on the subject at the National Conservation Training Center and the University of California. He has expertise in National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) projects, resource conservation planning and management, ecological studies, habitat assessment, species status assessments, distribution studies, invasive species management, climate change, and endangered species recovery planning. To this end, he has served on multiple interagency and industry-based advisory teams tasked with offsetting environmental impacts across the U.S.

**Mark McCollough, Ph.D.**

Endangered Species Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mark McCollough has been an endangered species biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the last 19 years and works at the Maine Field Office in East Orland, Maine. Prior to that he was the leader for nongame and endangered programs for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Mark received forestry and wildlife degrees from Penn State and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in wildlife ecology from the University of Maine. His career has focused on regulation and recovery related to Federally listed species including the Furbish's lousewort, Canada lynx, eastern prairie fringed orchid, northern bog lemming, piping plovers, roseate terns, and others. He spent seven years working on the Maine trapping and Canada lynx HCP.

Title: An Incidental Take Plan for trapping and Canada lynx in Maine

Abstract: Developing a Habitat Conservation Plan can be contentious, especially when involving take of a Federally listed species (Canada lynx) by a state agency (recreational trapping) and there is litigation by opposing special interest groups (environmental and trapping groups). The Maine Incidental Take Plan for Maine's Trapping Program (HCP) was developed between 2007 and 2014. It started with a lawsuit by environmental groups against the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and

ended with a lawsuit against the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for issuing a section 10 permit.

Meeting the ESA standards of "minimizing and mitigating to the maximum extent practicable" was challenging and took years of difficult negotiations. In 2014, the Service authorized incidental capture of 195 lynx over a period of 15 years with no more than three mortalities and nine severe injuries. "Changed circumstances" in the HCP were triggered almost immediately after implementing the HCP when two lynx were killed in traps. This required significant changes to how killer type (conibear) and foothold traps are used in Maine. Incidental take is offset by mitigation that will create 6,200 acres of lynx habitat on State lands.

**Gregg McKenzie\***

Executive Director, Placer Conservation Authority  
Administrator, Placer County Conservation Program

Gregg McKenzie is the Administrator of the Placer County Conservation Program (PCCP) and Executive Director of the Placer Conservation Authority based in Placer County's Community Development Resource Agency. The PCCP is a multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan covering more than 200,000 acres in Western Placer County and the City of Lincoln. The PCCP integrates state and federal endangered species act permitting and wetlands and other waters of the U.S., State, and County under one comprehensive program.

Gregg has had a diverse career including positions as Principal Planner in the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer and Partner in Sierra View Landscape, Inc. DBA Restoration Resources, and Corporate Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs for the Del Webb and Pulte Home Corporations.

Gregg has served as an appointed public official as a City of Rocklin Planning Commissioner for the past thirteen years, a Placer County Fish and Game Commissioner, and in various volunteer roles including Treasurer of the Placer Land Trust. In his spare time Gregg is a twenty-four time Ironman Triathlon finisher and avid fly fisherman.

**Betsy Miller\***

Land Resources Manager & Assistant General Manager, San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District  
NHPC Director

Title: Explicit Integration of Climate Resiliency and HCP Management for Effective Conservation Outcomes

Abstract: Despite the funding and frameworks for long-term monitoring and management required by HCPs, conserved lands remain at risk from global climate change. In California, the Multiple Species Conservation Program utilized the National Wildlife Federation's *Climate-Smart Conservation: Putting Adaptation Principles Into Action* (2014) to develop an explicit framework of climate-related threats and stressors for Covered Species which was incorporated into updates of preserve-level Natural

Resource Management Plans. Inclusion and evaluation of potential climate impacts within existing, HCP-required documents provided for seamless threats and species' management under the approved MSCP budget.

**Carolyn Mostello**

Coastal Waterbird Biologist, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

Carolyn Mostello is a Coastal Waterbird Biologist with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. She coordinates statewide conservation efforts for rare and endangered seabirds and shorebirds, especially terns and Piping Plovers. She works closely with partners and landowners to effect beneficial management actions and is the Plan Administrator for the Massachusetts Piping Plover Habitat Conservation Plan.

Title: Massachusetts Statewide Piping Plover Habitat Conservation Plan - Adjusting to Success

Abstract: The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife developed a Habitat Conservation Plan

(Plan), finalized in 2016, to provide flexibility when managing recreational beaches for the federally threatened piping plover. To date, 10 permit-sites encompassing 15 beaches are managed under the Plan annually, exposing 20 – 25 pairs of nesting plovers to take. No Plan-related injury or mortality has been observed and the incorporation of required avoidance and minimization measures appears to be contributing to an increase in productivity of exposed pairs relative to unexposed pairs. Against a backdrop of a rapidly growing plover population in Massachusetts, there is a need to revisit the Plan to ensure that it provides the necessary management flexibility for beach operators trying to balance conservation with recreational activities that contribute to the economy. This is vital to maintaining public support for plover conservation.

**Kelly Niland**

Grants Administrator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Kelly Niland has administered Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund Grants for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) since 2010. Prior to joining the Service, Kelly spent nearly a decade with the Trust for Public Land's Federal Affairs program, working to secure federal funding for land conservation and influence conservation policy. She holds a master's degree in environmental science and policy from Johns Hopkins University.

**Rebecca Pfaller\***

Conservation Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
NHCPC Director and Program Committee Member

Rebecca Pfaller is a Conservation Biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. She has worked on HCPs and other non-traditional Section 6 projects throughout the

state of Florida for the past 13 years. She currently serves on the Executive Board of the National HCP Coalition as well as the Planning Committee.

**Dave Ramey**

Principal, Kadesh & Associates  
NHCPC Government Relations Committee Chair

Dave Ramey is a Principal at Kadesh & Associates. His career in public service has included over three decades of experience as a senior staffer in the House of Representatives. He served nearly twenty years as Chief of Staff to Representative Ken Calvert (R-CA), Chairman of the California Republican Delegation, where he administered the office's political, legislative, and communications functions. Prior to serving as Chief of Staff to Representative Calvert, Mr. Ramey served as his Legislative Director where he oversaw the office's legislative and budget affairs. From 1985 to 1993, Mr. Ramey served as Senior Advisor on Foreign Policy and Defense Issues for the House Republican Conference, Policy Committee, and Research Committee -- all under the Chairmanships of Congressman Jerry Lewis (R-CA). Prior to departing Congress, Mr. Ramey led the California Republican Administrative Personnel group and he currently serves as President of the bipartisan California State Society. Mr. Ramey graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1984 with a B.A. in International Relations and received his Masters of Arts with Highest Distinction from the Naval War College in National Security and Strategic Studies.

**Leigh Salomon**

Joint Law and Graduate Student,  
University of Miami School of Law and Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science

Leigh Salomon is a joint law and graduate student at the University of Miami School of Law and Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, where he studies environmental law and aquaculture. He received his B.A. in Politics from Brandeis University in May 2019, where he placed a heavy emphasis on environmental coursework, served in student government, and wrote for the student newspaper. He has previously interned for the American Sustainable Business Council, where he drafted materials advocating the Water Resources Development Act and sustainable business practices, and Miami Waterkeeper, where he compiled research linking thermal pollution in Biscayne Bay to the Turkey Point Nuclear Generating Station. Leigh now works as a Research Assistant for Dr. Jessica Owley while he completes his education, where he is co-developing a spreadsheet database of all major Habitat Conservation Plans for the National HCP Coalition.

**Gregg Schumer**

Director of Lab Services, Senior Molecular Biologist, Genidaqs

Gregg Schumer has over 20 years of experience conducting molecular biological and molecular ecology studies evaluating the distribution of cryptic aquatic and semi aquatic species. He is an

experienced team leader with a history of transferring relevant technology out of universities for use in solving complex environmental issues. Gregg has provided scientific leadership on a variety of projects for both State and Federal agencies to detect the presence of cryptic, evasive, rare, endangered, and invasive aquatic species by developing sampling methods for the detection and evaluation of eDNA.

Title: eDNA: Molecular detection of cryptic species and applications

Speakers: Gregg Schumer, Scott Blankenship, Daniel Chase

Abstract The ability to collect and identify a species through genetic material left in the environment is known as environmental DNA (eDNA). For species that are rare, hard to survey for, or difficult to identify (i.e. cryptic species) eDNA provides a unique non-intrusive tool to more accurately inform survey results. This talk will cover the practical aspects of eDNA; providing attendees with an understanding of eDNA from the field to the lab and will include applicable examples in the permitting and HCP space. This talk will feature speakers with in-depth knowledge of the use, development, and capabilities of eDNA.

**Wynter Skye Standish, B.S.**

Detection Dog Handler & Wildlife Research Scientist

Skye Standish is a Detection Dog Handler & Research Scientist primarily working on ecological research projects. She utilizes the incredible ability of dogs' noses to smell things undetected by humans along with the power of the canine/human relationship (and ball!) to find data that helps humans better understand their natural environment. Skye received her B.S. in Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology from the University of California, Davis in 2006. Since then, she has worked on multiple ecological research projects and as an environmental consultant. Her passion for birds, bats, and dogs won out and has driven her to work on wind farm projects for over 10 years. In 2020, she and her co-authors published a paper focusing on the abilities of dogs to detect greater numbers of bat mortalities on wind farms in the East Bay Area of California. Skye has been handling wildlife detection dogs since 2018 and lives in Santa Cruz, California.

Title: The Nosey Business of Conservation Biology: Tails from the Field

Abstract: Humans have a fantastic set of sensory organs - eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin. We use these to understand our natural world. We have developed mechanistic technologies, like binoculars, that can enhance our natural abilities and show us what a bird 50 m away looks like up close. But, what if you want to monitor federally threatened butterflies that are endemic to the habitat within the jurisdiction of your HCP? Or, what if you want to fully eradicate that invasive plant to help the natives thrive? What if we had the ability to go even further by teaming up with the 4-legged canine buddy right under our noses? From detecting scat that floats on the surface of the water to monitor the health of the southern resident Killer whale population in Puget Sound, Washington, to aiding the eradication of Argentine ants on Santa Cruz Island off the coast of California, dog teams help level up data collection in various ways. Through incredible tails from the field, we will touch on how dog teams generally work, their effectiveness, the variety of environments where they work and the multitudes of species or targets they can detect.

**Barbara Sugarman**

Utah Prairie Dog Management Biologist

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Southern Region Office, Cedar City

Barbara Sugarman was born and raised in San Diego, CA, and had a passion for nature and wildlife since early childhood. She obtained her B.S. in Forestry from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ in 2014. She worked seasonally as a wildlife technician after receiving her degree and then returned to academics and obtained her M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management from Sul Ross State University in Alpine, TX in 2021. She has focused her career on conservation, particularly with small mammals and mesocarnivores. Some of the species she has worked with include Utah prairie dogs, black-tailed prairie dogs, Gunnison's prairie dogs, giant kangaroo rats, San Joaquin antelope squirrels, San Joaquin kit fox, black-footed ferrets, and American pika. In her personal time she loves to ski, backpack, and hike with her dog, Champ, and her cat, Zuko, and travel internationally with her husband, Patrick.

Title: Range-Wide General Conservation Plan for the Utah Prairie Dog in Residential and Commercial Development Areas

Abstract: The Utah prairie dog (*Cynomys parvidens*) is one of three species of prairie dogs present in Utah and only occurs in the southwestern part of the state. Utah prairie dog populations declined from estimations in the early 1900's due to sylvatic plague and conflicts with agriculture, resulting in their listing as endangered in 1973 and reclassification as threatened in 1984. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service developed and approved *The Range-Wide General Conservation Plan for the Utah Prairie Dog in Residential and Commercial Development Areas* (GCP) in 2018 to manage Utah prairie dogs on private lands. The purpose of the GCP is to help alleviate human-wildlife conflicts by offering a means for development on private lands occupied by Utah prairie dogs, while mitigating and minimizing negative impacts to the species. The GCP outlines a specific survey process required for all non-federal development projects within specified clearance areas, which includes all areas previously mapped as occupied by Utah prairie dogs, plus an additional 0.35 mile buffer in more rural locations. The major development zone includes mostly urban areas with anticipated development. The minor development zone includes all areas outside of the major development zone and is more rural in nature and not anticipated to have significant development in the future. Surveys for Utah prairie dogs are required for all projects within the clearance area prior to the commencement of ground disturbance, and determine the number of prairie dogs currently present, as well as the acreage of mapped occupied habitat. If Utah prairie dogs are present on the property and overlap with the project development area, a Certificate of Inclusion must be obtained from the master permit holder, and a mitigation fee may be required if the project has permanent impacts to the species. Currently, both Iron and Garfield counties hold master permits. All projects in other affected counties must coordinate activities directly with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Mitigation fees are used to aid with conservation of Utah prairie dogs, specifically focused on acquiring properties that help protect the species. The GCP's streamlined process for development increased public cooperation without compromising the recovery of the species. When the GCP expires in 2028, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with partner agencies, will need to determine the best path forward by either renewing the GCP or creating a new management document.

**Drew Tatum**

Vice President of Operations and Policy, Innovative Federal Strategies  
NHCPC Government Relations Committee

Drew Tatum is the Vice President of Operations and Policy at Innovative Federal Strategies. He returns to the firm after working for the Clerk of the US House of Representatives. A native of Alabama, Drew has worked for three U.S. Senators from the state, including then-Senator Jeff Sessions, Senator Luther Strange, and Chairman Richard Shelby on the Senate Rules Committee. Drew interfaces with the firm’s clients on a daily basis, providing insight into the legislative process and walking industry and municipal leaders and staff through the intricacies of a successful legislative platform. Additionally, he oversees the day-to-day operations of the firm.

Drew graduated summa cum laude from Troy University in 2011 with his Bachelor’s Degree in Business Management with a concentration in Human Resource Management and minor in Leadership Studies.

**Karen Tyrell, Ph.D.**

Principal Ecologist, Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Dr. Karen Tyrell is a principal ecologist with Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. (WEST). Dr. Tyrell has 30 years of experience specializing in wildlife impact evaluation and regulatory permit compliance for the development of renewable and fossil fuel energy generation and transmission facilities throughout the U.S. Karen has been developing project-specific and programmatic conservation plans for these industries over the past 15 years.

Abstract: HCPs that cover incidental take at operating wind farms must deal with many of the science-based challenges inherent in all HCPs, such as a lack of empirical data regarding the distribution of species that are uncommon and difficult to observe, and the evaluation of impacts to species with poorly understood natural histories. Despite these limitations, as wind power development continues to grow, so too has the need to construct scientifically robust and defensible strategies in an expanding number of wind HCPs. This has led to an evolution of sorts in the scientific approach to defining each of the principal components of an HCP, starting with the permit area and designation of covered species, through methods for take prediction and monitoring and adaptive management, and finally to design of strategies for minimizing and mitigating the impacts of predicted take. This presentation will identify ESA compliance issues specific to the wind industry and review how together with the USFWS wind developers have sought to address the challenges presented by Section 10 permitting of operating land-based wind projects. Specifically, the presentation will address identification of covered species in light of unique wind project risks, methods and models for predicting take, impact minimization measures at operating wind projects and their effect on power production, compliance monitoring models and technologies, and approaches for designing meaningful adaptive management strategies.

**Susi von Oettingen**

Lead Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Susi von Oettingen is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's lead biologist for federally threatened piping plovers in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, focusing on recovery activities and section 7 consultation. She assisted the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife during the development of the 2016 piping plover habitat conservation plan. Susi is the national recovery coordinator for the federally endangered roseate tern and is responsible for recovery and consultation for listed bats, tiger beetles, and a few plants in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

**Wayne Walker**

Principal, Common Ground Capital

Title: Addressing the challenges of preserving biodiversity and enabling the responsible build out of renewable energy – A Case Study of the Lesser Prairie Chicken and associated HCP

Abstract: Over the past 20 years, there has been growing tension in the Southern Great Plains between preserving and restoring enough habitat to reverse population declines of the Lesser Prairie Chicken – a key indicator of grassland ecosystem health in this region - and the thirst for landscape scale deployment of low cost renewable energy to fight the climate crisis. The current administration has deemed both of the utmost importance via the 30x30 initiative and climate targets. Wayne Walker of Common Ground Capital has lived at the intersection of these two challenges for the past 20 plus years and has worked for an energy developer, a utility and now has a private company that specializes in species conservation solutions. His family also owns a ranch in West Texas which brings a further perspective on these challenges. This talk will include a background on how we got to the current perilous listing predicament for the Lesser Prairie Chicken and how his company's HCP and private landowner partners hope to thread a very challenging needle that will both help to play a large role in recovering the LPC and allow responsibly sited renewable energy projects to go forward with a legally defensible permit.

**Kristen Wallace\***

Biological Resources Intern, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

Kirsten Wallace is a fourth-year undergraduate Biology student at California State University San Bernardino, and holds an A.S. in Multiple Sciences from Crafton Hills College. While at Crafton Hills (2018-2020), Kirsten founded and led Ecology Club, a group which aimed to connect college students to the surrounding Southern California ecosystems through hiking, and trail and waterway clean ups. Since January 2020, she has been employed with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, as a Biological Resources Intern, where she assists with habitat management and tasks pertaining to the Santa Ana River HCP. Kirsten is pursuing environmental conservation and habitat management, and is currently working alongside fellow people in the field to co-develop and update the database of all major Habitat Conservation Plans for the National HCP Coalition.

**David Zippin, Ph.D.\***

Vice President and Practice Leader, ICF  
NHPC Director

David Zippin is a Vice President and Practice Leader at ICF, a global consulting firm, for Habitat Conservation Planning and Implementation. He oversees a national group of over 25 experts who prepare HCPs and related conservation plans and their NEPA documents and helps clients implement them. David has worked in this field for over 30 years managing, overseeing, and being on the technical teams for over 75 project and regional HCPs in 30 states and U.S. Territories. David has been teaching most of his career. He currently teaches custom courses for clients and for state and federal wildlife agencies and four public courses at the University of California, Davis, Extension Program, including ESA compliance, habitat conservation planning, and habitat conservation plan implementation. For the last 12 years, he has co-taught habitat conservation planning for endangered species at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. To date, over 500 professionals have benefited from David's courses. David received a B.A. in Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution from the University of California, San Diego, and a Ph.D. in Plant Ecology and Conservation Biology at the University of Texas at Austin.

Title: The HCP Amendment and Renewal Process—It's Easier than You Think!

Abstract: Habitat conservation plans with long permit terms of 25 to 50 years or more routinely require adjustments to ensure they can meet their permit requirements and achieve their biological goals and objectives. Much of this adjustment can be accomplished through adaptive management or administrative changes. But at times, major adjustments may be needed that rise to the level of a plan amendment. Also, when HCP operators approach the end of their permit, they need to be thinking about whether and how to extend the life of the HCP through a plan amendment or perhaps a simple permit renewal. In this talk, David will provide an overview of the HCP amendment process and what options are available to plan operators to change their plan or extend the life of the plan. He will also discuss how HCP operators can be proactive and assess their needs well in advance of permit expiration, using as a case study two HCPs in Texas and three HCPs in California.

\* National HCP Coalition Member or Annual Meeting Sponsor