

**COASTAL CACTUS WREN
WORKING GROUP
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

May 5, 2008

To identify, based on best available science, conservation actions to ensure the persistence of the coastal cactus wren throughout its range (Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties).

To document the historic and current distribution of coastal cactus wren in southern California, and update this information as new information becomes available.

- Use data to inform acquisitions in Riverside MSHCP
- Identify occupied habitat for focused conservation/management
- Identify areas of suitable habitat for which data is lacking, and conduct surveys of those locations to document presence/absence of coastal cactus wren

To identify and implement research actions that will best inform conservation of the species.

To develop and implement a standardized long-term monitoring program for the coastal cactus wren range-wide; develop and maintain a regional CACW monitoring database that is readily accessible via the web.

Ensure that conservation actions are integrated with established conservation plans that list the cactus wren as a target species.

ACTIONS

- 1. Map the Distribution of Coastal Cactus Wren:** Lead: USFWS with assistance of group members
 - a. Historic vs. Current Distribution
 - b. Prepare Overlays of Conserved Lands and Fire History
 - c. Data Sources:
 - Ventura: TBD
 - San Diego: MSCP Data, Camp Pendleton
 - Riverside: MSHCP
 - OC: Central Coastal Subregional Plan (1996)
Southern Subregional HCP (2006)
NROC Coastal Reserve (2006)
 - Chino Hills: Shell HCP
Dan Cooper
 - PV: PVPLC/A. Vona
 - LA: LANHM/Kimball Garrett and Mickey Long
 - d. Identify data gaps in distribution information
 - e. Identify means for surveying areas where data is lacking

2. **Establish a restoration sub-committee to identify and test methods for restoration of cactus scrub habitat.** Lead: Trish Smith
 - a. Review potential restoration methods and past efforts;
 - b. Identify methods to be tested; implement replicated cactus scrub restoration study;
 - c. Target restoration studies to link 1) existing occupied populations where dispersal is limited and 2) refugee with recovering cactus scrub in burn areas.
3. **Implement coordinated vegetation monitoring strategy for cactus scrub recovery within 2007 burn areas.** Lead: Trish Smith
4. **Convene Science Advisory Group to identify priority topics for research.** Lead: Jerre Stallcup/Trish Smith (Robb Hamilton, Will Miller)
 - Potential Advisors: Doug Bolger, Jon Atwood, Gary Langham, Barbara Kus, Scott Morrison
5. **Develop and implement range-wide coordinated monitoring program for the coastal cactus wren** (Lead: USFWS/DFG)
 - Promote standardized monitoring methods, where feasible, on existing long-term monitoring sites (PVP, OC, SD, Camp Pendleton)
 - Implement a volunteer-based cactus wren monitoring program for lands not surveyed through existing conservation plans (Investigator: Sandy Desimone)
 - Investigate Audubon Citizen Scientist Program
 - Evaluate potential monitoring methods
 - ID target monitoring areas
 - Ensure that all monitoring data includes relevant attribute data (date, location, source, etc.)
 - Develop mechanism for all CACW monitoring data to be posted and accessible on the world-wide-web, e.g., BIOS. (Lead: DFG)
6. **Summarize goals and requirements of NCCP/HCPs that list cactus wren as a covered or target species** (Will Miller)
7. **Identify existing remaining coastal cactus wren locations and develop measures to ensure their protection.** (TBD)

Miscellaneous Topics/Issues Discussed:

Research: Group agreed that a separate science advisory group be identified to prioritize research needs. Potential research topics identified included genetic studies, banding studies to study survivorship/productivity/dispersal, cactus resource mapping, effects of West Nile virus, relating regional MAPS data to CACW population trends.

Funding: Will Miller provided the group with an extensive list of potential funding sources for activities. Dave Mayer indicated that DFG NCCP Local Assistance Grant applications will be posted in June for 2008/2009 funding cycle.

Salvage/Restoration/Fuel Modification: It was suggested that land managers/agencies promote the use of cactus plantings within fuel modification zones that abut conserved lands. Rancho Mission Viejo has identified cactus plantings as a fuel modification treatment for future developments.

Coastal cactus wren: We should think in terms of treating the coastal cactus wren as a distinct population segment with the coastal population defined as presented in species account by Sjik and Solek in 2004.

Regional Conservation Plans: ID which conservation plans have CACW as a covered/target species. Identify those with active cactus wren monitoring programs. Work to integrate monitoring data into regional CACW monitoring database.