



AECOM

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

September 12, 2019

NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE MONTEREY COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Transportation Agency for Monterey County

Description of Proposed Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), on behalf of a steering committee including representatives from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and The Nature Conservancy is preparing a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) for Monterey County. The RCIS area extends to the jurisdictional boundaries of Monterey County (see Figure 1 for a draft map of the RCIS area) and is being developed with input from the public and stakeholders including community-based organizations, federal, state, and local agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

A new California State law passed in 2016, AB 2087, establishing a conservation planning tool called a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) to promote the conservation of species, habitats, and other natural resources.

TAMC is developing the RCIS to promote regional habitat conservation and advance mitigation planning through the development of Mitigation Credit Agreements (see below). TAMC has already developed funding sources for habitat conservation and mitigation planning for some of its activities, including \$5 million from Measure X, a sales tax that passed in November 2016. Funding for the development of the RCIS was provided by Caltrans through a SB-1 Adaptation Planning Grant, to assess the vulnerability and improve resiliency of species and habitats to climate change stressors, including wildfire, landslides, and drought.

What is the Monterey County RCIS?

The Monterey County RCIS:

- Provides a voluntary, non-binding, non-regulatory conservation assessment.
- Provides a regional conservation strategy of conservation elements, including, but not limited to, focal species and sensitive habitats through strategic, scientifically grounded actions and investments.
- Establishes conservation and enhancement goals, objectives, and priorities.
- Describes and promotes methods of conservation investment that will contribute to species and habitat conservation, including, but not limited to:
 - Land acquisition and protection
 - Habitat preservation, enhancement, creation, and restoration
 - Creek and river restoration
 - Corridor and linkage enhancement
 - Development of Mitigation Credit Agreements (see below).
- Is an assessment sponsored by TAMC through a planning process that includes public input, collaboration with partner organizations and agencies, and with the assistance of a consultant team.
- Must be approved by CDFW.
- Is scheduled to be available for public review in spring 2020.

Mitigation Credit Agreements

Mitigation Credit Agreements (MCAs) are developed under an approved RCIS; approved by CDFW; and:

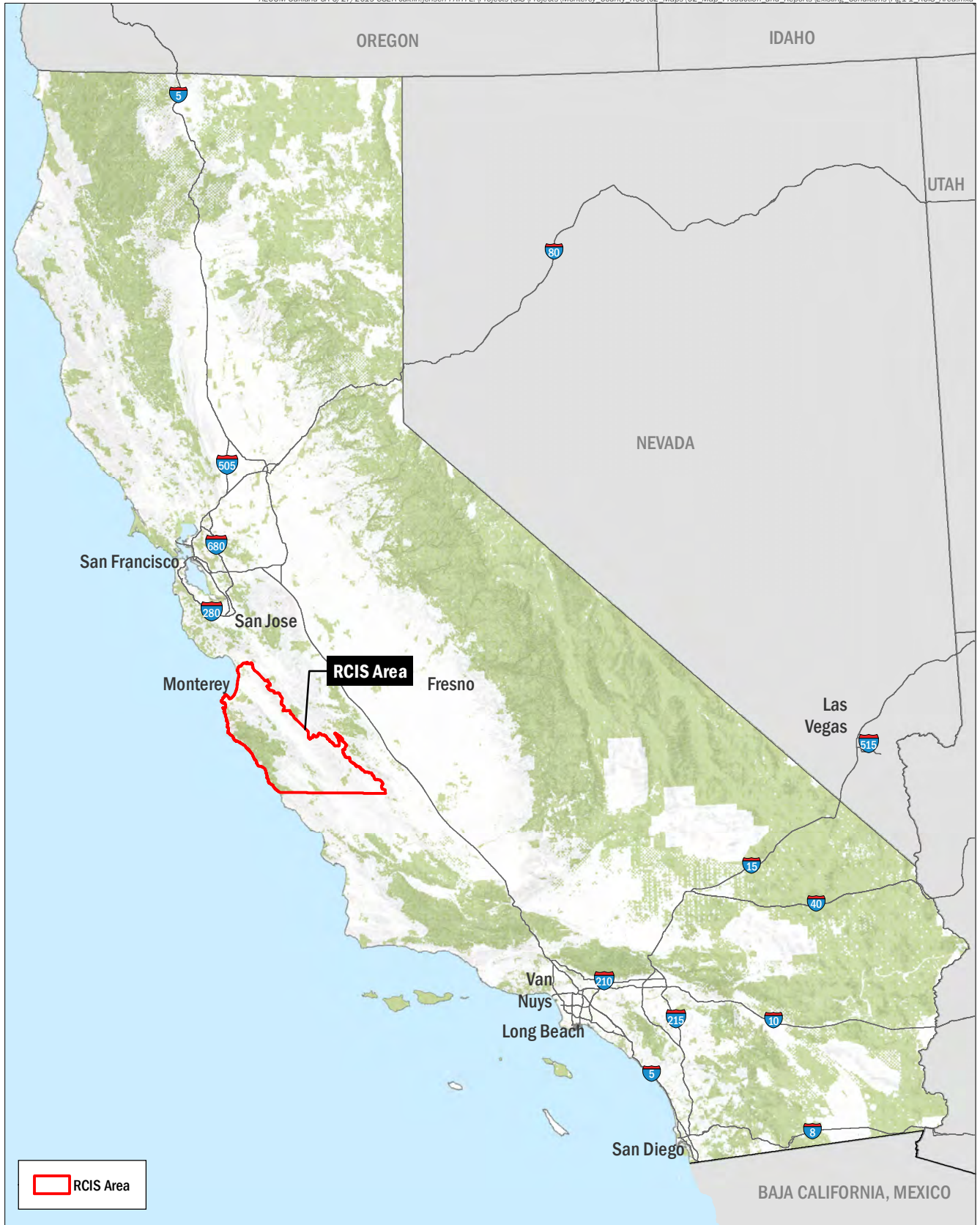
- Create mitigation credits by implementing conservation actions identified in the RCIS.
- Must be within the boundary of an approved RCIS.

- May be used as compensatory mitigation for impacts under:
 - California Environmental Quality Act
 - California Endangered Species Act
 - Lake and Streambed Alteration Program.
- Anyone can enter into an MCA with CDFW, with their own resources for their own projects.

Once finalized, the RCIS may facilitate advance mitigation planning where environmental mitigation for impacts can be conducted in advance, which can result in conservation projects that have greater benefit, while also expediting delivery of infrastructure projects.

Additional information about the RCIS program can be found at:<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/planning/regional-conservation>

Please contact RegionalConservationInvestmentStrategy@tamcmonterey.org for more information about the Monterey County RCIS.



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Monterey County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

FIGURE 1
Monterey County RCIS Area