

FOCUS



PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

NOMINATION GUIDELINES AND NOMINATION FORM

Released: June 22, 2007

FOCUS, short for Focusing Our Vision, is a multi-agency, regional planning initiative spearheaded by the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in coordination with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission.



Association of Bay Area Governments



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CONSERVATION
AND
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

FOCUS PROGRAM: Priority Conservation Area Designation Nomination Guidelines

Program Information

FOCUS is a multi-agency, regional planning initiative spearheaded by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in coordination with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and Bay Conservation and Development Commission. It builds upon regionally adopted smart growth policies and related programs and is one of several Regional Blueprint Planning efforts across the State. The goal is to create a specific and shared concept of where growth can be accommodated (priority development areas) and what areas need protection (priority conservation areas) in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Having a regional strategy to target investments and assistance in these areas will make our communities stronger and advance protection of our natural areas and working lands. By working together, local and regional partners can collectively move forward to address growth and conservation needs for future generations.

As part of the FOCUS Program, nominations are now being accepted for regionally designating priority conservation areas in the San Francisco Bay Area that contain lands important for protection via purchase fee title or easement within the next few years. Priority conservation areas are areas of regional significance that have broad community support and an urgent need for protection. These areas will contain important agricultural, natural resource, watershed, historical, scenic, cultural, recreational, and/or ecological values and ecosystem functions. Knowing the region's near-term conservation priorities for targeting protection efforts will promote collaboration and investment in these areas that are critical to the region's quality of life and ecological diversity.

The identification of the region's conservation priorities is an ongoing process and involves many regional and local partners. The FOCUS Program has been working closely with the Bay Area Open Space Council and Greenbelt Alliance who are leading a complementary, collaborative process called Green Vision. Green Vision is bringing land use planning and land conservation professionals together to craft a long term vision for protection of important conservation areas throughout the Bay Area by acquisition *and* policy. Green Vision and the FOCUS Program will continue to coordinate efforts as appropriate and facilitate collaborative partnerships that support smart growth and smart conservation.

Purpose of Designating Priority Conservation Areas

The purpose of designating priority conservation areas through the FOCUS Program is to accelerate protection and restoration of key natural lands in the San Francisco Bay Area through purchases or easements. Conservation will be promoted through regional designation by:

- Coordinating conservation efforts within a regional framework of near-term priorities
- Providing a strong platform on which to leverage public and private resources
- Building upon prior and existing land protection efforts and investments
- Providing opportunities for forging new partnerships

Eligible Areas

Nominated areas must display a high level of regional significance, consensus, and urgency (see Nomination Form for criteria details). Nominated areas should not already be protected and be areas that will benefit from targeted purchases and easements in the near-term. Areas

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should be identified within the regional context of the conservation values and functions provided without delineating specific parcels. Identifying an *area* will help ensure that on the ground conservation efforts are supported and not hindered through this designation process.

Eligible Applicants

Local governments (cities, counties, towns), tribes, water/utility districts, resource conservation districts, park and/or open space districts, land trusts and other land/resource protection nonprofit organizations in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area are invited to nominate areas for consideration as near-term, regional conservation priorities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate and partner with other entities on the nomination of areas.

Timeline

The deadline for submitting nominations is August 17, 2007. Nominations will be discussed at public meetings coordinated by the State Coastal Conservancy's San Francisco Bay Area Program in September 2007 and reviewed by a regional panel in early October 2007. Recommendations will be presented to ABAG's Executive Board for regional adoption in November 2007.

How to apply

Download and complete a nomination form for each area:

<http://www.bayareavision.org/focus/nominationprocess.html>

E-mail the application form and supporting documents to FOCUS@abag.ca.gov by Friday, August 17, 2007.

Contact Information

Please contact Jackie Guzman, ABAG Regional Planner, at JackieG@abag.ca.gov or 510.464.7994 with questions about the nomination form.

FOCUS PROGRAM: Priority Conservation Area Designation Nomination Form

Enter information in the spaces provided. E-mail this completed nomination form and attachments requested as part of this form to FOCUS@abag.ca.gov by **August 17, 2007**. If e-mailing is not possible, a hard copy of materials can be mailed to Jackie Guzman, Association of Bay Area Governments, P.O. Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050.

PART 1: AREA INFORMATION

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Area Name | |
| Area Location (city, town, county) | |
| Total Acreage | |

Attach a map showing the proposed area boundaries and location. Include other relevant information, such as topography or an aerial photograph, to show the context for protection of this area.

PART 2: NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

| | |
|--|--|
| Lead Nominating Agency/Organization | |
| Contact Person | |
| Address | |
| Phone Number(s) | |
| E-mail address | |
| Partnering Agency(ies)/Organization(s) | |

PART 3: AREA CRITERIA

Provide a description of how the area meets each of the following criteria by addressing the points for each. Limit responses for each criterion to one page, which can be typed within this document or provided as separate attachments.

A. *Level of Consensus*

- Describe the level of community support and/or political will for protection of this area, mentioning any existing plans that identify this area. Some examples of plans include an organization/agency's strategic plan, general plan, habitat conservation plan, etc.
- Describe how this area might promote collaboration between multiple organizations and/or jurisdictions.
- Describe any work underway to protect this area and who is involved.

B. *Regional Significance*

- Describe how this area promotes regionally significant conservation values. Some examples of regionally significant conservation values that an area may provide include landscape/habitat linkages between large patches, unique landscapes/features, large important farmland areas, landscapes with significant water protection and enhancement opportunities, large patches of critical habitat, connections for people (ex. trails) and wildlife (ex. corridors) on a regional scale, buffers for waterways and/or other natural areas, separation of urbanized areas through open space networks, adds to regional parks/other large protected areas. The area may also provide a service that benefits public safety and/or the economic vitality of the region, such as agricultural land or tourism.

C. *Urgency*

- Describe the existing or potential threats to the ecological integrity of this area or to the efforts to protect this area.
- Describe any existing or potential opportunities for the protection or restoration of this area and how ready the process is to proceed.
- Describe the need for protection of this area if this description does not duplicate the answer in Part 3B.

For questions regarding the nomination form, please contact Jackie Guzman, ABAG Regional Planner, at JackieG@abag.ca.gov or 510.464.7994.