



**Executive Committee Quarterly Meeting
Estuary Program Offices**

**May 10, 2017
4:00 pm**

DRAFT Minutes

Attendees: Becka Kelly, *City of Morro Bay*; Marsall Ochylski, *Los Osos Community Services District*; Jennifer Epp, *Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board*; Bruce Gibson, *San Luis Obispo County*; Tim Duff (on the phone), *CA Coastal Conservancy*; Trudy O'Brien, *Morro Bay Commercial Fisherman's Organization*; Joel Neel, *Bay Foundation*; Holly Sletteland (on the phone), *Environmental Interest Seat*; Suzanne Marr, *USEPA*; Lexie Bell, *MBNEP Staff*; Ann Kitajima, *MBNEP Staff*.

1. Introductions and Updates

- Joel Neel: No updates from Bay Foundation.
- Lexie Bell: Was in D.C. last week. NEP funding was included in the budget that just passed. The programs are fairly certain that they will be receiving \$600,000 per program. Lexie met with Congressman Carbajal and the staff of Senators Feinstein and Harris. The meeting was a Tech Transfer meeting for the NEPs, so the Executive Directors from 27 out of the 28 programs discussed Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) updates, partnerships, funding ideas, State of the Bay, and other topics. Lexie had to miss the Estuary Caucus reception but heard that about 40 House members attended. There was also a briefing for the Estuary Caucus members.
- Suzanne Marr: EPA Region IX has received a portion of the NEP funding and expects to have more in mid-June. She hasn't heard anything negative as far as the future of the NEPs.
- Jennifer Epp: The next Board Meeting on May 11 to 12 will be discussing recycled water production and use, Santa Barbara desalination subsurface intake, the ag order, and an agreement in the Salinas Valley to provide drinking water due to nitrate contamination.
- Trudy O'Brien: There will be a new trawler in the bay in June called "Moriah Lee." The "South Bay" is gone. Congressman Carbajal spent three hours with the fishermen on his recent visit. The blessing of the fleet recently occurred. There was a Memorial Day Lost at Sea ceremony in Cayucos with a procession to the end of the pier. Fishermen are bringing in crab and rock cod, and the salmon season just opened.
- Becka Kelly: The decision has been made to have fireworks in Morro Bay on July 4. They will be launched from a barge south of the public boat launch ramp at Tidelands Park. The city is interested in seeing a debris clean-up event on July 5. The Estuary Program will send a summary of some potential ideas to the city. The Yaquina is currently dredging the harbor entrance, and the pipeline dredger is waiting until the Yaquina is done. Both operations cannot be going on at the same time. The Yaquina is scheduled to leave May 26. The pipeline dredging will likely go through the summer.
- Tim Duff: The Coastal Conservancy wrote a letter of support for the Estuary Program for its Fisheries Restoration Grant Program application. The letter commits \$300,000 of Coastal Conservancy funding for the project. They are also working with the Morro Coast Audubon Society on the Sweet Springs access and overlook project. The Coastal Conservancy is hoping to provide funds to the project.
- Bruce Gibson: About 10% of households are not yet hooked up to the Los Osos Wastewater Project. Treated water is currently being sent to the Broderson leach field. The project is waiting to be certified as a purveyor of recycled water. The Basin Management Committee is meeting next week. They will be considering a cost benefit analysis of using the upper aquifer with its nitrate

contamination. Using the water is, in a sense, an environmental remediation because it removes nitrate-laden water and replaces it with treated wastewater with lower nitrate levels. They will also be considering potential future development and its water needs. They are also working on the Los Osos Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). They expected to have a proposed HCP this summer.

- Ann Kitajima: The Estuary Program conducted a small-scale experimental eelgrass planting in March and continues to monitor its progress. We might be doing a second small effort this summer. We also had a consultant out on the bay last month collecting subtidal eelgrass data via sonar and drones. Please note that the date for the August meeting has been changed to August 23 due to vacation schedules.
- Marshall Ochylski: Bay sedimentation is readily apparent, particularly by 3rd Street and Baywood Pier in Los Osos. It seems the sedimentation impacts are occurring much closer to the shoreline. He feels there must be some way to address this. The Estuary Program has talked to EPA about dredging options, but work in the back bay would be difficult to permit and the nature of any removed sediment makes disposal costly. A Los Osos Community Services District (LOCSD) storm drain is likely a contributor to this issue, so it might be something to consider in the future.

2. Public Comment: None presented.

3. Agenda Revisions: None.

4. ACTION: Consider Approval of February 15, 2017 Executive Committee minutes

Vote: Jennifer Epp motion to approve, Joel Neel seconded. Unanimous in favor.

5. ACTION: Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Workplan Approval

We expect to have \$600k for the FY18 budget. We submitted our Workplan in advance of EC approval due to the threat of government shutdown on April 28. We can still change it if the EC would like to do so. The Bay Foundation president and the EC chairperson agreed to this early submittal of the grant application, which includes the Workplan. The budgets and tasks in the Workplan are similar to last year. A new task was added to update the CCMP. It involves reviewing the plan and assessing if it requires an update. Jennifer Epp mentioned a potential project idea for the future, which is to address trash along the waterfront. Marshall mentioned dog waste bag dispenser stations as a potential expansion area for the LOCSD.

Vote: Becka Kelly motion to approve, Jennifer Epp seconded. Unanimous in favor.

6. ACTION: Recommendations on Community Grant Applications

Staff outlined that the EC had up to \$10,000 to award in this round of grants, or the funding could be held over for a future round.

Snowy Plover Nesting Area Signs: This application from California State Parks is for the purchase of snowy plover nesting area signs, to be deployed each nesting season.

Vote: Joel Neel moved to approve up to \$5,000 for signs with operational requirements included in the contract. These include monitoring signs for wear, so that they can be removed prior to the point when they become plastic waste. They would also be inspected when they were brought in at the end of the season to remove them from service if they were excessively worn. Bruce Gibson seconded. Unanimous in favor.

Promoting Sea Otter Stewardship in Scuba Divers in Morro Harbor: This application came from Sea Otter Savvy, California State Parks, and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. It involves the development and installation of two signs near the mouth of the bay to inform divers on how to interact with otters without causing disturbances to wildlife. The Education & Outreach Working Group, Implementation Committee (IC), and EC all agreed that they would rather see more direct outreach to the diving community, since they didn't see waterfront signs as an effective approach.

Vote: Joel Neel made a motion to table the vote to allow the applicant to work with Estuary Program staff to submit a revised grant application for possible funding in August. Becka Kelley seconded. Unanimous in favor.

San Luis Obispo Mountain Lion Research Project and Expanding Visibility for Coastal San Luis RCD

Vote: Joel Neel made a motion to deny funding to these grants. Bruce Gibson seconded. Unanimous in favor.

7. ACTON: Executive Committee Bylaw Approval

Jennifer and Marshall updated the bylaws per the discussion at the last EC meeting. These changes included a date for officer elections, two-year terms with a limit of three-consecutive terms for officers, and elections taking place during the first meeting of the calendar year (typically the February meeting) in even years. Language was also added regarding e-voting. The vote must be unanimous and everyone must vote. The vote must be ratified at the next meeting. There is always the option to call a special meeting, with people calling in.

Vote: Bruce Gibon motioned to approve. Becka Kelly seconded. Unanimous in favor.

8. DISCUSSION: Presentation of EPA Semi-Annual Reports

Staff described the highlights from the semi-annual reports. The FY2016 rollover grant was 97% spent as of the end of March, with 100% of the match requirement met. The FY17 grant was 17% spent, with 20% of the match met. Major projects highlighted in the report include the eelgrass restoration and monitoring efforts, Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve, and the documentary film *Of Marshes & Morros*, which won an award recently in the SLO Film Festival.

9. DISCUSSION: Performance Evaluation Letter Update

As requested by the EC, Estuary Program staff provided an update on the status of tasks to be addressed, as called out in the Performance Evaluation letter from EPA's most recent review of the program. Another update is planned for the November EC meeting.

10. Adjourned at 5:25 pm to next meeting of August 23, 2017 at 4:00 pm at the Estuary Program offices.

Attachments sent with Staff Report:

1. February 2017 EC meeting minutes
2. Workplan FY2018 Draft
3. Community Grant applications (4)
4. Semi-annual reports (2)