



**Implementation Committee Quarterly Meeting
Estuary Program Offices, Morro Bay, CA**

**May 4, 2017
12:00 pm**

DRAFT Minutes

Attendees: Vince Cicero, *CA State Parks*; Becka Kelly, *City of Morro Bay*; Michaela Koenig, *Caltrans*; Peter Waldburger, *Camp SLO*; Meredith Hardy, *CCC*; Tom Edell, *Bay Foundation*; Ron Rasmussen, *SWAP*; John Sayers, *CA State Parks*; Doug Tait, *Morro Coast Audubon Society*; Mark Barnett, *NRCS*; Lexie Bell, *MBNEP Staff*; Rachel Pass, *MBNEP Staff*; Carolyn Doehring, *MBNEP Staff*; Sara Markham, *MBNEP Staff*; Ann Kitajima, *MBNEP Staff*.

1. Introductions and Updates

- Becka Kelly: The Yaquina dredger has arrived for work on the harbor entrance. The pipeline dredge equipment is still here but that project is on hold since they can't work at the same time as the Yaquina. There have been many reports of tar balls on the beach. The city is being told by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) that these are the result of natural seepage from Ragged Point and the northern Santa Barbara coastline. There has been a recent push from waterfront businesses and the tourism board to bring back the Fourth of July fireworks. The Harbor Department would be working on permitting. The cost is \$20,000 and would come from the tourism bureau and local businesses. Talks are underway with CDFW and State Parks regarding wildlife disturbance issues. The fireworks might be launched from the South T-pier, a barge near Tidelands Park, or on the Strand near Morro Creek.
- Ron Rasmussen: Things are going well at the Elfin Forest. The weeds are under control. No sand or mud are running off the area into the bay during rains. There has been a great turnout of visitors with many people enjoying the boardwalk.
- Lexie Bell: Lexie just returned from a Tech Transfer meeting in Washington, D.C. with the other NEPs. She also met with our representatives in Congress and/or their staff. The NEPs talked a lot about the program's impacts on the economy and jobs, CCAMP updates, regional partnerships, and State of the Bay reports. The fall Tech Transfer meeting will take place Boston.
- Tom Edell: No updates from the Bay Foundation.
- Michaela Koenig-Robbins: No updates from Caltrans.
- Sara Markham: DogFest is coming up on May 20. We are working to update the stickers on the dog waste bag dispensers, and we are also seeking sponsors for the dispensers.
- Meredith Hardy: The Vets Program Corps members and WSP are doing redd surveys on Chorro Creek. They only found one redd. They will also be doing snorkel surveys later this year, with the purpose of supporting future pikeminnow removal efforts.
- Ann Kitajima: The Estuary Program completed a small experimental eelgrass planting effort in March, and monitoring continues to track its success. A bay-wide subtidal eelgrass map is currently being created which incorporates sidescan sonar and drone surveys. The map will also include survey data collected as part of the dredging project.
- Carolyn Doehring: A pikeminnow removal effort on Chorro Reservoir took place this spring. Only one female adult pikeminnow was found, along with a quite a few bass. The earlier removal efforts ten years ago were a mark and recapture effort. The bass may be controlling the juvenile pikeminnow population. We are seeking funding for pikeminnow removal in Chorro Creek mainstem. We should coordinate with CSLO to see what is planned on their property. The 100%

designs for CCER were completed and a grant application was submitted to CDFW to fund implementation. Environmental Science Associates (ESA) is the project designer.

- Mark Barnett: No updates for the Morro Bay watershed.
- John Sayers: There are a lot of weeds to remove. Received funding from WCB for non-native limonium management. State Parks was having trouble managing the funding given their infrastructure, so the work was given to the Land Conservancy of SLO County to manage. They will survey the estuary and ensure that it doesn't spread. State Parks met with a USDA research on biocontrol agents for cape ivy. A gall-forming fly will be used as a cape ivy biocontrol in Avila in the near future.
- Doug Tait: MCAS is planning on opening a new ADA boardwalk in the Sweet Springs Nature Preserve in October. They are also working on other potential property protection efforts in the area.
- Rachel Pass: State of the Bay month just ended. Over 500 people attended events. The DogFest event is coming, as well as an estuary poetry reading on May 19 at Coalesce Books. Please pick up a copy of the State of the Bay report.
- Vince Cicero: The dredge pipe on the beach broke off and washed up. It can't be moved until October when plover season ends. There was quite a bit of damage from the February storms. Two hundred trees were affected. The campground was closed for two weeks. A controlled burn was done last week. They didn't burn as much as they wanted due to the windy conditions. An Ocean Protection Council grant application may be submitted to address runoff from the State Park Marina parking lot. The Estuary Program would likely be the applicant if the project moves ahead. The treatments would likely be bioswales, which have minimal maintenance requirements. Coastkeeper is coordinating the project effort. A rockslide occurred off Morro Rock, so the road to the rock is closed right now. They are waiting for the slide to settle before reopening the road.
- Pete Waldburger: CSLO is doing well. The Road Erosion Prevention Project sites did well this past winter, and minimal maintenance is needed. There was a large land slip in Dairy Creek that blocked the road that requires repair. It's a project that was implemented about ten years ago with rock weirs and armor. CSLO is working on fire breaks. They are planning on spraying another 100 acres for thistle. Some steelhead-related funding came to CSLO but Pete didn't know the status and recommended asking Paige.

2. **Public Comment:** None presented.

3. **Agenda Revisions:** None.

4. **ACTION: Consider Approval of February 2, 2017 IC minutes**

Vote: Michaela Koenig-Robbins motioned to approve, Vince Cicero seconded. All in favor.

5. **ACTION: Approval of FY2018 Workplan and EPA Grant Application**

Congress has agreed on a budget, and the NEPs are anticipating level funding of \$600,000 starting October 1. We submitted the grant application in late April because EPA Region IX staff thought that we would be in a better position if a government shutdown occurred. But if we want changes to the plan, we can still amend the Workplan. The plan is similar to last year's, with the addition of a new task to start assessing the CCMP to plan an update to be completed by 2020.

Vote: Motion for approval by Tom Edell. Seconded by Vince Cicero. Unanimous in favor.

6. ACTION: Recommendations on Community Grant Applications

Western Snowy Plover Signs: The group had a discussion about the number of signs needed, placement of the signs to avoid loss, and other logistical issues. California State Parks staff estimated that it was three days of labor to get the signs installed on the Sandspit each year. A higher grade material was proposed for the signs by the E&O Working Group, and the Bay Foundation agreed.

Vote: Tom Edell moved to fund up to \$5,000 for the signs. Meredith Hardy seconded. All approved. Vince Cicero and John Sayers abstained from voting.

Sea Otter Savvy Stewardship in SCUBA Divers: The group agreed on the value of outreach to divers, including those outside of the watershed that might visit our watershed. The group concurred with the E&O Working Group conclusion that signs were not the best way to reach the target audience. They agreed with the Bay Foundation motion to table the vote until the August meetings to give the applicant time to work with Estuary Program staff to develop a different approach for the project.

Vote: Pete Waldburger made a motion to table the application so that it could be presented at the August meeting for a vote. John Sayers seconded. All approved.

SLO Mountain Lion Research Project: The group discussed the merits of the data and whether it supported CCMP actions. The E&O Working Group and the Bay Foundation did not recommend funding the project. The applicant did not make a strong argument for the project's connection to the watershed.

Vote: Mark Barnett made a motion to fund the application in full but it did not receive a second. Tom Edell moved to deny funding for the project. Pete Waldburger seconded. All voted to approve the second motion except Mark Barnett and Michaela Koenig-Robbins, with John Sayers abstaining because he originally directed the researchers to the grant program.

Expanding Visibility for CSLRCD: While the group supported the valuable work of the CSLRCD, they were in agreement that the group's work extends far beyond the watershed and that the majority of the program's website would not directly address either CCMP actions or our watershed. There was also some discussion as to whether the amount of funding requested was actually enough to overhaul a website.

Vote: Pete Waldburger made a motion to deny funding for the application and reserve \$5,000 for the Sea Otter Savvy project. Tom Edell seconded. All voted in favor of the motion, with Mark Barnett abstaining.

The group discussed the upcoming changes to the Community Grant application process to improve communication and efficiency. They were in agreement and liked the Bay Foundation's suggestion that staff notify the board and committees of any applications that were rejected by staff because they did not meet the grant program requirements.

7. DISCUSSION: Presentation of EPA Semi-Annual Reports

Because we were concluding spending on the FY16 grant (a rollover grant) and spending the FY17 grant, two semi-annual reports were required for the time period of October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017. The main difference between the two reports was the budget. As of March 31, 97% of the five-year grant budget had been spent, and 100% of the match requirement had been met. For the FY17 grant, 17% of the budget had been spent, and 20% of the match had been earned.

8. **DISCUSSION:** IC membership and chairperson

Lexie described the responsibilities of the IC chairperson and encouraged members to think about whether they'd be interested in taking on the position. Ideally we would have a chairperson and a vice-chairperson as an alternate. Additionally, we are interested in expanding the IC membership, so if anyone knows of individuals or organizations that we might want to consider, please pass that along to staff.

9. **Adjourned** at 1:50 pm to next meeting of August 10, 2017 at 12:00 pm at the Estuary Program offices.

Attachments sent with Staff Report:

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