



Executive Committee Quarterly Meeting
Estuary Program offices, Morro Bay, CA

May 9, 2018
4:00 pm

Staff Report

1. Introductions and Updates
2. Public Comment
3. Agenda Revisions
4. **ACTION:** Consider Approval of February 14, 2018 Executive Committee (EC) minutes
5. **ACTION:** Recommend approval of Fiscal Year 2019 Workplan (see attached)

The principal funding source for the Estuary Program operations is the annual EPA grant. For Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19), current budget projections indicate level funding at \$600,000. We apply annually in the spring for the next fiscal year's funding. As part of the application, we are required to prepare a proposed workplan that addresses the programmatic needs of the Estuary Program while also complying with EPA guidelines for such funding. Staff has developed a workplan that largely continues our major ongoing tasks through the next fiscal year. New tasks include preparing for the State of the Bay report and events and continuing the successful Mutts for the Bay program.

Staff recommends that the EC approve the proposed Workplan.

6. **ACTION:** Recommendations on Community Project Applications (see attached)

There are three Community Project applications this round for our consideration: wildlife cameras submitted by Dr. John Perrine of Cal Poly; science curriculum kits submitted by the SLO County Library; and spill cleanup kit and supply purchases submitted by city of Morro Bay Harbor Department. The wildlife camera application was reviewed by a subset of committee members with experience in this area. The spill kit proposal was reviewed by Estuary Program staff since the project proposed a documented approach that the program has funded previously. As the applicant represents the local expertise on clean boating, opportunities for outside review were limited. The science curriculum kit application was reviewed by the Education & Outreach (E&O) Working Group.

In the first round of awards for FY18, an award of \$2,108 was made to Celebrate Los Osos for their invasive education project. This leaves a balance of \$7,892 to be awarded in this round or held over for future awards.

Project: Documenting Large and Medium-sized Mammals in the Morro Bay Watershed
Applicant: John D. Perrine, PhD

Request: \$4,400 over two years
Matching Funds: \$13,760
Total Budget: \$18,160

Summary: The project would collect data on large and medium-sized mammals in the Morro Bay watershed. The phases of the project are to conduct planning with consultation from MBNEP on where

to place the cameras; purchase ten cameras and accessories to be deployed in four pairs of two with two back-ups; collect and manage data for two years; and work with students to analyze data and prepare summary reports. The project offers “Learn By Doing” opportunities for ten to fifteen undergraduate students during the two-year project. The students will present their results at two general public events and two on-campus events. They will also write up their results for Estuary Program outreach materials, including our blog. All images, collected data, and analysis would be available to the Estuary Program for use in land management, grant applications, and outreach materials.

Recommendation: This application was reviewed by selected members of the E&O Working Group and Technical Working Group, based on their expertise with wildlife management. All reviewers supported the application and had questions about the placement of the cameras to yield the most useful data. As Dr. Perrine will consult with the Estuary Program and our committees regarding camera placement, we feel that this concern will be adequately addressed during the course of the project. The E&O Working Group felt the project was strong from an outreach perspective and supported it.

Staff supports full funding for this project, with funding split according to the year in which it will be used. Dr. Perrine is an expert in this area, and his proposed two-year timeframe and the number of cameras requested are crucial to robust data collection, which we feel will support project development and funding requests in the future. Staff recommends awarding \$3,700 of the \$4,400 request in FY18, which allows the purchase of all ten cameras and accessories, half the batteries, and reimbursement for half of the mileage. Staff proposes awarding the remainder of the request, or \$700, in FY19 (utilizing funding set aside for Community Projects) to fund the second half of the batteries and mileage, as well as the printing costs for posters to share project results. All of the expenses covered in FY19 will be incurred in FY19. There are three reasons splitting the costs by year is recommended. First, this approach allows the other projects in this round to receive more funding. Second, it is within the Community Projects guidelines. Finally, the second year of funding is relatively small and does not affect the program’s ability to provide substantial funding for other projects in FY19.

Project: Oil Spill Containment and Response (OSCAR)
Applicant: City of Morro Bay Harbor Department

Request: \$5,000
Matching Funds: \$1,258
Total Budget: \$6,258

Summary: The Harbor Department manages the long-term leases along the Embarcadero. As the marina leases come up for renewal, the city is requiring the leaseholders to obtain certification under the Clean Marina Program, which requires each marina area to have a spill kit on hand. While a few leases are about to be required to participate and a few more are up for renewal soon, these are only a portion of the waterfront facilities. The project proposes to purchase spill kits for each of the 27 locations where a boat could be docked (excluding the mooring fields). While this is not yet required at all locations, this provides clean-up materials at the locations where they are likely needed, allowing more timely and effective spill response. As Harbor Department staff delivers the spill kits, they will meet with each marina operator to provide materials and information on clean boating best management practices. They will survey users before and after their interaction to gauge the impact on behavior. The Harbor Department is also requesting funding to restock their emergency response spill booms and pads. These were last stocked in 2016 from the SPARES grant awarded by the Estuary Program.

Recommendation: Estuary Program staff reviewed the application and recommends funding at \$4,192, which is slightly less than the applicant’s proposed budget. Staff leaves it to the discretion of the Harbor Department staff as to whether they purchase fewer marina spill kits or fewer SPARES supplies than originally proposed. The proposed project is proactive in its clean boating practices by distributing kits bay wide before it is required. The project also contains an education effort and a method to assess the impacts of the project. It also helps meet the goals of CCMP action plans related to clean boating and

marina operations. The program has a longstanding and effective partnership with the city on clean boating efforts, allowing us to reach segments of the boating population that we would not otherwise be able to access. The project aligns with the California Clean Marina Program, an area in which Morro Bay is a leader in the state.

Project: Science Kits for Public Libraries

Applicant: County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries

Request: \$5,000

Matching Funds: \$4,000

Total Budget: \$9,000

Summary: As not all children have access to high quality science education, the Science Kits for Public Libraries program allows the Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo public libraries to purchase six to eight science kits and offer them as a lending service, just like a book. Each kit would contain books, movies, and a hands-on science activity. The activities and information would be on topics relevant to the Estuary Program and could include birds, water usage, estuary ecosystems, climate change, erosion, water science, and invasive/endangered species. The kits would be available to check out for free with the use of a library card. All activity consumables would be replaced by the owning library using award funds.

Recommendation: This project was reviewed by the E&O Working Group. They felt that the application lacked specificity in how the curriculum would be developed. They also felt like the materials would not be utilized and felt that science programming would reach a broader audience. Staff did not agree with this assessment, as the library already has a proven track record of use of similar science kits that the library has available for check-out. Science kits also allow us to reach audiences that we have difficulty reaching, including homeschoolers, people with disabilities, or those who rely primarily on public transportation. Staff values the expertise of the E&O Working Group and agrees that the approach needs more testing. Staff propose not awarding funding to the proposed project. Instead, staff will work with library staff and may commit minimal program funding to test the development of one or two kits. The approach will utilize pre- and post-surveys to assess the impact of the kits. In this way, we can further test out this approach while strengthening our program's relationship with the library, who could be a strong partner for future E&O efforts.

7. DISCUSSION: Presentation of Semi-annual Report (see attached)

Twice a year, the Estuary Program submits a semi-annual report to EPA, which provides the program status on the budget and the tasks laid out in our workplan. This report covers our work for the first half of FY18, which is from October 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018. The report summarizes the budget status and workplan task progress.

Due to internal family dynamics, the Kandarian Farms conservation easement may not go through and the property is currently up for sale. The Land Conservancy is still pursuing every possible option but they are not feeling hopeful. In the meantime, the Land Conservancy is looking to complete another conservation easement in the watershed. Once the trajectory of both projects is better known, Estuary Program staff may propose a Restoration Fund request that addresses the previous funding for Kandarian Farms.

8. DISCUSSION: Pennington Rainwater Catchment Summary Data

As part of a Wildlife Conservation Board Prop 1 grant, Central Coast Salmon Enhancement (CCSE) has been assessing the rainwater catchment tanks on Cal Poly's Escuela Ranch to determine the impact on surface flows. Some preliminary results are available:

- 2017: In a very wet year, the captured rainwater can meet only 18% of the ranch's overall water needs for the year. However, when looking at the impact of the tanks during the dry season, the water from the tanks met 69% of the water use in July, 67% in August, and 38% in September, which gives a total peak season water use reduction of 56%.
- 2016: In a moderate rainfall year, the captured rainwater met 46% of the ranch's needs during August, which was 21% of annual water needs.
- 2015: In a very dry year, the tanks were used intermittently throughout August to November and accounted for 10% of the overall water needs.

The analysis indicated that only about 50% of rainfall is captured by the tanks. A more typical capture efficiency is in the range of 75 to 80%. The Estuary Program intends to work with Cal Poly, the California Conservation Corps, and CCSE to make improvements to increase capture efficiency.

9. DISCUSSION: Implementation Committee Restructuring Ideas (see attached)

Please refer to the attached proposal for a detailed explanation of the proposed changes to the Implementation Committee and Management Conference structure. "Management Conference" refers to the Implementation Committee, Executive Committee, Bay Foundation Board, and all working groups. A survey was shared with Implementation Committee members by email. Results from the survey will inform our discussion during the meeting.

Depending on how the discussion proceeds at the Implementation and Executive Committee meetings, a final proposal for the Management Conference structure will be proposed at the August meeting. These changes will necessitate modest updates to the Implementation Committee and Executive Committee bylaws, which will also be prepared for the August meeting. If these items are approved in August, then the new Management Conference structure will be convened starting in FY19.

10. DISCUSSION: Performance Evaluation Letter Update (see attached)

The EC requested periodic updates on the status of the corrective actions listed in the Performance Evaluation letter completed in early 2016. Estuary Program staff have made progress multiple areas, as described in the attached document. Staff will provide an update at the November 2018 EC meeting.

11. DISCUSSION: Program Updates

Eelgrass Update: Staff has been busy with eelgrass efforts in the bay. Staff conducted two small-scale experimental transplant efforts in February and in March. We continue to monitor their success. The multi-spectral flight from December has been completed and will be available soon for distribution.

Morro Bay Science Explorations Series: The third in a series of three scientific talk events will be held on Thursday, June 14 at the SLO Botanical Gardens from 6 to 8 p.m. The topic will be fisheries, both marine and freshwater, in our area.

12. Adjourn to next meeting of August 15, 2018 at 4:00 pm at the Estuary Program offices.

Attachments:

- Minutes from February 14, 2018 EC meeting
- FY19 Workplan Draft
- FY18 Semi-annual Report Draft
- Proposed Plan for Implementation Committee Restructuring
- Community Project Application: Large and Medium-Sized Mammals in the Morro Bay Watershed
- Community Project Application: Oil Spill Containment and Response
- Community Project Application: Science Kits for Public Libraries
- Program Evaluation Status Spring 2018