



**Implementation Committee Quarterly Meeting
Estuary Program Offices**

**Aug 9, 2018
12:00 pm**

DRAFT Minutes

Attendees: Becka Kelly, *City of Morro*; John Sayers, *California State Parks*; Vince Cicero, *California State Parks*; Dave Bowlus, *SWAP*; Kyle Walsh, *Land Conservancy of SLO County*; Michaela Robbins, *Caltrans*; Rosalie Valvo, *Morro Coast Audubon Society*; Tom Edell, *Bay Foundation*; Carolyn Geraghty, *MBNEP Staff*; Lexie Bell, *MBNEP Staff*; Rachel Pass, *MBNEP Staff*; Ann Kitajima, *MBNEP Staff*.

1. Introductions and Updates

- Becka: Fish carcass issues - business and sports boats along bay fillet fish and dump large loads of carcasses on water. This practice affects WQ and can be dangerous for wildlife, and it has been a problem for many years but has recently resurfaced. Last week the city sent a letter to all boats and businesses that might be involved asking them to change their practices. It's a lot of fish waste, so it's challenging. If anyone knows who does composting, could be a good option for the waste. Morro Bay municipal code says they can't dump dead animals in the bay. The dumpster at the fish cleaning station at Tidelands gets used but can't handle the volume of waste generated by commercial operations. In the past, a tallow company and other businesses used to come around and pick it up. On the pipe outfall removal project, the contractors arrive on Aug 20th and will be diving 24/7 for a week, staging off City Beach.
- Rosalie: Morro Coast Audubon Society (MCAS) is updating the Fourth Street Overlook, now that the Sweet Springs work is complete. The plan is to rebuild the structure. They are working with the Coastal Commission, conducting snail surveys, etc. They have the approvals they need to do the work, and the project will take a few years to complete. A pelagic trip is scheduled for Sept 22nd. Members of the public are welcome and details are available on the MCAS website.
- Dave: Representing Small Wilderness Area Preservation (SWAP). There was a program with California State Parks (CSP), the Estuary Program, and others at the museum last week on climate effects on trees. They are in the process of conducting biological surveys at Elfin Forest to get an idea of changes since 2004 when last surveyed. One report of fish carcasses dumped in Elfin Forest. Holes dug in pickleweed last month. Can't figure out how - no pig tracks around. Someone harvesting picklewood? A dozen big holes dug, outside of Baywood Peninsula.
- Carolyn: Still tracking pigs on estuary. They have been coming back in last few weeks. We held a Conservation Planning TAC meeting to talk about future implementation projects and create a project list for the watershed. We will be soliciting additional thoughts from the group. We participated in an eelgrass symposium with Cal Poly in June and invited the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and other partners to present research and monitoring results. Preliminary eDNA data is available and shows that pikeminnow are predated on steelhead. The final report should be complete in October. 20% of adult pikeminnow sampled had steelhead in their gut, so pikeminnow could have a significant impact on steelhead if you take entire population into account. Waiting for eDNA results for testing of creek water for presence of steelhead, pikeminnow, and California red-legged frogs.
- Michaela: The South Bay Boulevard Bridge Project got approval for archeology surveys, so those will start soon. The Central Coast Wildlife Society set their annual symposium date for November 9, and they are looking for abstracts for talks and posters. The event will be at the SLO Vets hall.

- Vince: Cara O'Brien is asking for letters of support for a Sea Grant project about beach resiliency and dune systems. It is a southern and central California study on where the highest beach biological diversity is, where recreational values are, economics, biodiversity, the best location for protection measures for sea level rise projects, etc. Vince will share the proposal with us.
- Rachel: The Estuary Program received a grant from the Community Foundation to create an updated exhibit on tides, weather, and climate change. We are about to install a new wildlife viewing station panel and new binoculars in the Nature Center. Coastal Cleanup Day is coming on Sept 15 from 9 to noon. ECOSLO is the county-wide organizer. The NEP is hosting two sites - sand spit (North-Central part) and Centennial Parkway. We have a mini remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV) from the MPA Collaborative. One is set aside for E&O projects, and one if for research. We are determining a checkout process. Active Marine Protected Area (MPA) Collaborative members are eligible to use the units, which will be housed at the NEP. The unit is tethered on a cable. The MPA Collaborative wrote a grant to get longer cables for all the programs.
- Tom: New Bay Foundation member, Sally Krenn, was with PG&E's land section. A few reddish egrets out on bay.
- Kyle: The Kandarian easement should close in Sept. They are waiting for Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) funds to come through. They are also moving forward with the Buckingham Ranch easement. It should close in September. It's a 540-acre parcel.
- John: The California Coastal Commission is having a hearing in southern California on whether or not to support sea walls and public access. The outcome could impact our area. John put out more cameras on CSP property for pigs, and they are seeing pigs move back down to the estuary. They are seeing more activity under Chorro bridge so put cameras out. Flows in Chorro went down significantly last week under bridge.
- Lexie: Thanks for coming to last IC meeting, but we'll still be seeing lots of you at upcoming TAC meetings. Vince mentioned the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) grant that the NEP applied for in partnership with CSP and the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The project involves improvements to the State Park Marina parking lot to address stormwater runoff. This includes re-grading the parking lot so that stormwater goes to a central drain, is pumped across street to leachfield where there is room for biofiltration, and is treated and infiltrated into the ground. CSP has been a motivated partner. We were awarded the grant at the July OPC meeting. We are currently working to provide all grant documents they need in order to get contract in place. You may have seen noticing of pending permit posted on CSP property. We applied for a California Coastal Commission waiver for the project since there are no impacts other than to existing parking lot. CSP is working on a Water Board permit for the project. A press release will be out soon. It's a nice demonstration site since it's so visible. The project allows CSP to add one Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking space and two electric vehicle (EV) charging station spaces as part of project on the two-acre lot. Vince said thanks to NEP for all of their work in getting the application submitted and this project moving forward. CSP might do some of the work themselves such as earth work. We'll be one of the first partnership agreements with CSP to do a project where a partner implements a project on CSP property. Mike Stoker, the EPA Regional Administrator (RA) from Region 9, came to visit Morro Bay last week. He reports directly to the EPA Administrator in DC and is a politically appointed position. This is the first time an RA visited Morro Bay. We did a tour on the water with the Harbor Dept, saw the Morro Bay Oyster Company depuration facility, met with local government officials, met with Cal Poly at the rainwater harvesting tanks at Escuela Ranch, and went up Black Hill with the Watershed Stewards Project and the California Conservation Corps. We are also fostering a better info exchange with Elkhorn Slough. We'll be having a staff information exchange webinar at end of month to develop partnerships. A few staff are attending the annual NEP meeting when all 28 NEPs meet to talk about projects, exchange ideas, etc. It will be held in San Francisco this year. You might see public meeting announcements for the County Storm Water Resource Plan. It is an opportunity to learn more about stormwater issues in the community.

- Ann: Construction on the Drought Response Outreach Program for Schools (DROPS) project is underway, which includes the construction of bioswales and wetlands to manage stormwater runoff at the Rancho El Chorro Outdoor School campus. There is also a Trout Unlimited project on Pennington Creek to replace a fish passage structure and improve a water diversion. Construction will last through September. Both projects should be completed this fall.

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

3. **Agenda Revisions:** None.

4. **ACTION:** Consider Approval of May 3, 2018 IC minutes

Vote: John moved to approve, Michaela seconded. Unanimous in favor.

5. **ACTION:** Restructuring of Implementation Committee

We presented a plan in May, informed by a survey we conducted in April. For this meeting, we distributed the same handout sent in May. The plan is for a full TAC meeting at least once each year. The entire group can convene for additional meetings if sufficient need arises for input from majority of members. The groups provide technical input to staff and the Executive Committee (EC). The technical areas for the Workgroups reflect the focus areas of Estuary Program work. We will not be constrained by a certain number of seats. The TAC Workgroups are based on technical focus areas and intended to meet more frequently. We can always add/remove groups as new projects and issues come up. We will continue to have the education & outreach (E&O) committee meet to inform the EC on E&O projects. In the survey and at the May IC meeting, we asked for feedback on groups and individuals to include. The proposed Workgroup technical areas are Monitoring, Sedimentation, Watershed Habitat Restoration, Freshwater Flow, Land Management, Bay Habitats and Waterfront, and Eelgrass.

The Community Project applications that we receive will be reviewed by the appropriate Workgroups. Our next step is to invite members, beyond those who are already active here.

We could also set up an email group or listserv to share information among the group. This could be used to report back on projects to keep people informed. Tom said he felt that informal in-person conversation sharing is more productive than online.

Vote: Kyle motioned to approve. Vince seconded. All in favor.

6. **ACTION:** Revision of IC Bylaws

The IC bylaws have been updated to rename them as the bylaws of the TAC. Minor updates were made to reflect the current role of the group. We plan to have a TAC representative on the EC.

Vote: Vince moved to accept revised bylaws. Kyle seconded. All in favor.

7. **DISCUSSION:** Technical Advisory Committee Membership

Staff invite IC members to sign up for the Workgroups that are of interest and to suggest individuals or organizations that you think might be good to invite to the group. We will send a follow-up email to solicit working group membership.

Meeting locations could vary depending on members. Meeting times will be variable and arranged with members using Doodle polls.

8. DISCUSSION: Kandarian Farms Easement

An update was provided by Kyle in the Introduction and Updates. See above.

9. DISCUSSION: Program Updates

Staff presented updates on eelgrass efforts, an upcoming bay bathymetry survey, and the stormwater management project at State Park Marina.

10. Adjourned.

Attachments sent with Staff Report:

- Minutes from May 3, 2018 meeting
- Proposed Plan for Implementation Committee Restructuring
- Updated IC Bylaws