



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

November 14, 2018
4:00 pm

Minutes

Attendees: Marshall Ochylski, *Los Osos Community Services District*; Jennifer Epp, *Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board*; Tim Duff (on the phone), *CA Coastal Conservancy*; Ethan Bell, *Stillwater Sciences*; Crow White, *Cal Poly*; Becka Kelly, *City of Morro Bay*; Matt Makowetski, *City of Morro Bay*; Jeremiah O'Brien, *Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization*; Suzanne Marr, *EPA*; Joel Neel, *Bay Foundation*; Ann Kitajima, *MBNEP Staff*.

1. Introductions and Updates

- Matt: No updates.
- Ethan: The Chorro Creek pikeminnow eDNA work is completed. Based on the data, Stillwater estimates that over 10,000 juvenile steelhead could be consumed each year by the pikeminnow population in Chorro Creek. Data from this year shows that in areas where did pikeminnow suppression occurred last year, we saw a decrease in pikeminnow and increase in steelhead this year. Feel that removal efforts are successful, but need to continue them. We have five-year permits to do the work, so just need to identify funding.
- Ann: The Estuary Program will be hosting its annual Boat Parade Party on Saturday, December 1 from 5:30 to 7:30. You should be receiving an invite shortly. The upcoming EC meeting dates for next year are February 13, May 8, August 14 and November 13. All meetings are from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Estuary Program offices.
- Marshall: No updates.
- Tim: The Coastal Conservancy (CC) is holding a tour in Morro Bay on December 5 and a board meeting in Morro Bay on December 6. The public is invited to come on the tour, which meets at 1:30 at the Chevron Marine Terminal. Please RSVP to Tim at least a week in advance. The board meeting will be at the Inn at Morro Bay starting at 9 a.m., and again the public is welcome to attend. CCER will be on the agenda, as well as the Toro Creek acquisition and East Sweet Springs.
- Crow: Sea Grant is in the process of hiring a new director for the California program. Thus, until that position has been filled, they have decided to delay filling our local Sea Grant opening that was formerly filled by Dr. Jennifer O'Leary. The timing on the hiring could prove challenging because typically for academic positions, you need to do your hiring in the fall. If we are delayed past this time frame, then the position might get pushed back by an entire year. Cal Poly is hiring a spatial vertebrate ecologist who studies everything from small mammals to mountain lions and bears.
- Becka: The Harbor Department has been making progress on the Community Project award for spill kits. Forty-two kits have been distributed to dock managers on all waterfront lease sites. They provided education on the use of the materials. Now they are waiting before they return to assess how the materials were being used.
- Jeremiah: There is a high amount of feed from here to Pt. Sur. They are seeing a lot of whales, marine mammals, birds, etc. There are squid by White Rocks (above Ragged Point) and a lot of white sea bass. Off Cambria, huge amount of blue fin tuna. Off Morro Bay, bonito and a lot of game fishing. So right now the fishing is excellent.
- Jennifer: At the Water Board meeting last week, there was an administrative consent to terminate various waste discharge requirements and enforcement orders related to the now ceased Los Osos septic system discharges. Bruce Gibson was able to attend to answer questions and provide an update on the Los Osos Water Reclamation Facility.
- Suzanne: On December 10, the state will be holding a Central Coast Regional Climate Symposium at the Central Coast Water Board offices in SLO. The purpose is to share the results of the state's Fourth Climate

Change Assessment. The assessment includes a [report on the Central Coast region](#). The Estuary Program is planning on attending.

2. Public Comment – None presented.
3. Agenda Revisions – Staff asked to reorder the agenda to address the Action items up front to ensure that a quorum was present.
4. **ACTION:** Consider Approval of August 15, 2018 Executive Committee meeting minutes.

Vote: Marshall motioned to approve, Matt seconded. Unanimous in favor.

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

Staff presented an overview of each project, the feedback from reviewers, and staff recommendations on the awards.

For the *Labyrinthula* project submitted by Drs. Favoreto and McConnico, the discussion centered around the genomic sequencing and how it seemed unlikely that substantive progress could be made in this area, given the budget and timeframe, as it is a major undertaking. The same comments came from multiple reviewers. The group did not want to micromanage the project, but they felt that focusing on the quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR) effort rather than the genomic sequencing work would be a good approach. The Bay Foundation recommended funding the full amount of \$4,998 with the \$433 permit fee (which is no longer needed as they will utilize the Estuary Program permit) and the funding for the genomic sequencing instead being put towards the qPCR effort.

Vote: Marshall moved to follow the Bay Foundation recommendation. Matt seconded. All in favor.

For the Outfitting Exploration project, the discussion centered around the usefulness of these units in the bay. While a 25m tether sounds long, in actuality it gets used up pretty quickly when the tide pulls the unit, etc. Crow mentioned a professor, Lynn Slovaski of Computer Science Engineering, who has worked with ROVs. She might be able to assist us with a protocol on its use and perhaps provide training. Possibly a student could become involved. Marshall expressed some concern about liability if we are the ones managing the unit.

Vote: Jeremiah moved to following the staff recommendation for a \$450 award to purchase the controller as well as shipping and handling. Ethan seconded. All in favor. Crow abstained.

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

Staff presented a summary of the budget from the report.

7. **DISCUSSION:** Technical Advisory Committee Update (see attached revised bylaws)

Staff provided an update on development of the Technical Advisory Committees. Potential members are being contacted and meetings will be planned for early next year.

8. **DISCUSSION:** Performance Evaluation Letter Update (see attached)

Staff provided some highlights of progress on the Performance Evaluation (PE) letter tasks. Staff noted that the updates were helpful in tracking progress on the items called out in the letter. Suzanne recommending including these periodic updates for the EC in the package we put together for EPA for the next PE review in 2020.

9. DISCUSSION: Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve Update

Staff described progress on the funding, contracting, permitting, and other tasks related to implementation on the Ecological Reserve. Suzanne said to be sure that the ESA and Precision Engineering contracts contain all of the federally-required language.

10. DISCUSSION: Program Highlights

Staff provided updates on the Pennington Creek Fish Ladder project, our outreach to the Coastal Conservancy at their upcoming meeting, and the recently released data summary reports produced by the program. In discussing eelgrass mapping methods, Crow recommended reaching out to Cal Poly's recent hire who specializes in remote sensing landscape analysis. Although his work is primarily terrestrial, he might have some advice for our future mapping efforts.

11. Adjourn at 5:19 to next meeting of February 13, 2019 at 4:00 pm at the Estuary Program offices.

Attachments:

- Minutes from August 15, 2018 EC meeting
- FY18 Semi-annual Report Draft
- Community Project Application: Role of *Labyrinthula* spp. in eelgrass wasting disease in Morro Bay
- Community Project Application: Outfitting Exploration
- Revised EC bylaws
- Program Evaluation Status Fall 2018