

Alameda Creek Fisheries Restoration Workgroup

Minutes of Meeting

September 30, 2005

East Bay Regional Parks District

Attendees

Pete Alexander	EBRPD
Mike Anderson	EBRPD
Deirdra Appel	SFPUC
Gordon Becker	CEMAR
Brenda Buxton	Coastal Conservancy
Michael Carlin	SFPUC
Eric Cartwright	ACWD
Laurel Collins	Watershed Sciences
Andy Gunther	CEMAR
Bob Hale	ACFCWCD
David Houts	Zone 7
Laura Kidd	ACFCWCD
Jane Lavelle	SFPUC
Jeff Miller	ACA
Josh Milstein	SF City Attorney's Office
Stuart Moock	PG&E
Dale Myers	Zone 7 Water Agency
Ivana Noel	Alameda County RCD
Paul Piraino	ACWD
Brian Sak	SFPUC
Monty Schmitt	NRDC
Carla Schultheis	ACFCWCD
Mary Selkirk	Center for Collaborative Policy
Diana Sokolove	City of San Francisco
Gary Stern	NMFS

Announcements

Michael Carlin announced that Tim Ramirez would start his job in early October. Tim will be the SFPUC's natural resources manager.

Gordon Becker said that Caltrans staff phoned to indicate that the agency would consider constructing a "free span" at the site of Highway 84's crossing of Stonybrook Creek. A Caltrans representative may address the Workgroup at its next meeting. Gordon told the group that the

final conceptual design and feasibility report for a natural fishway at the BART weir would be completed in October. It will be available on CEMAR's Web site. Gordon also mentioned that a protocol had been developed for conducting fish rescues at the BART weir during the 2005-2006 migration season.

Diana Sokolove announced preparation of a draft EIR for the Sunol/Niles dam removals project. The draft will be the subject of public meetings in San Francisco on November 10 and in Fremont on November 9.

Agenda items

Revised flows studies scope. Eric Cartwright distributed a draft of the flows studies memorandum that included mostly minor revisions. The memorandum will be the basis of a bid package for consultants bidding on the flows studies project. Eric, Gordon, and a few other contributors will finalize changes to the flows studies memorandum.

The group next considered the flow chart titled "Proposed Approach for Addressing Alameda Creek Fishery Flow Needs." Discussion focused on whether tasks "above the line" could be kept as strictly data collection and analysis projects. Group consensus appeared to be that, to the extent feasible, brainstorming and other scenario planning activities should be accomplished after the preparation of flows related investigations. Monty Schmitt summarized the views of several Workgroup members that it was important to establish the questions that stakeholders want answered *before* finalizing the flows studies scope of work. He later noted that data collection tasks needed to match the questions being asked in the flows studies.

Mike Anderson posed the question, "Are there missing tools [in the flows studies scope]" to the Workgroup. In response, Eric, Josh Milstein, and Gary Stern reiterated the importance of temperature modeling to restoration planning in the watershed. The group then considered where to place evaluation tools in the flow diagram. Paul Piraino noted the desirability of having a new box in the diagram for consultant-suggested tools. Gary followed that developing evaluation tools should be included with developing evaluation criteria in the flow chart.

Laurel Collins reminded the group that examining geomorphic processes had not been specifically mentioned in the flows studies. Mary Selkirk then suggested adding expertise in geomorphology to the list of selection criteria for consultants potentially undertaking the flows studies. Monty seconded the importance of this discipline by noting that most restoration planning efforts include sediment transport models.

The group discussed other issues related to fine tuning the flows studies scope. Michael posited that it was not necessary to delay issuance of a request for qualifications until the scope was in final form, and the group agreed that releasing the request as soon as possible was preferred. Andy Gunther and Gordon at CEMAR will develop a draft RFQ and distribute it to the Workgroup.

Phased Master Plan development. Mary distributed a "straw man" approach to developing a Master Plan for Alameda Creek fisheries restoration. She told the group that the document was

intended to guide Workgroup and PAC efforts through the next six to nine months, including developing a request for proposals, hiring consultants, and beginning flows studies work.

Paul said that the “visioning” task in the proposed approach represented a dynamic process as the watershed studies would produce information suggesting different possible restoration end points. He queried the group about the role of the resource agencies in this task, to which Gary responded that DFG and NMFS staff would meet prior to determining the manner of their participation.

Michael stated his belief that smaller groups would be more effective in setting goals than the full Workgroup. Dale Myers agreed, adding that he would like to meet in self-selected contexts of fewer individuals prior to entering into the larger task of producing a consensus vision of restoring Alameda Creek fisheries.

Jeff Miller said that it was important that master plan development include provisions for stakeholder involvement in managing consultants, changing work scopes, and other, similar activities. Gary added that he hoped to see biologists included in producing potential visions of restoration.

Eric suggested a change to the Master Plan straw man of adding a phase 1 task to develop phase 2. Jeff proposed introducing a timeline into the Master Plan approach. Paul indicated that documenting the manner in which phase 1 was developed would be useful in gaining funding and other types of outreach.

Shared interests. Mary said that the previous PAC meeting resulted in a request to build a shared vision for the watershed. To guide discussion, she handed out a flier on the findings of the assessment report in terms of “Core shared interests” that included a group of seven baseline issues that were most likely to reflect common ground for all watershed stakeholders. She then asked the group to look at other elements that characterize a shared vision of watershed restoration.

Laurel and Pete Alexander cited their interest in including the goal of restored ecological functioning of the creek and its associated riparian areas. Examples of stream corridor functions included moving water and sediment while maintaining aquatic habitat, and filtering upland runoff. Andy mentioned the importance of maintaining economic and social values of the watershed through pursuing a balanced restoration strategy.

Michael re-stated a point from a previous meeting that the restoration process include: sound science, a multi-species approach, provisions for water supply reliability and water quality, and recreational opportunities. Brian Sak said that upland land uses should be considered to create a holistic restoration design. Other attributes of the restoration program (and their authors) included: cost sharing provisions (Dale); community ownership and involvement (Ivana Noel, Jeff); coupled monitoring and adaptive management (Gary); maximizing the amount of habitat provided (Brenda Buxton); educational and research components (Laurel); and contribution to other South Bay steelhead restoration efforts (Gordon). Monty pointed out that the program could serve as a model for resource allocation in a highly managed watershed.

Bob Hale said that a program goal should be to deliver water safely to the S.F. Estuary at low cost, and that program elements should achieve legal consistency regarding resource management issues. Finally, Laurel stated her belief that the restoration program should incorporate a goal of keeping a portion of the watershed in a relatively pristine state. At the end of this discussion, Mary told the group that she would produce a vision “straw man” to be used in smaller groups trying to fashion specific restoration plan goals.

Consultant selection criteria. The group next turned to topics concerning retaining a consultant. Andy expressed his interest in issuing an RFQ, in part to solicit ideas from potential consultants about how to conduct the restoration planning. Dale asked the group to look at their expectations for communications with the consultants.

Josh suggested that the program might be led best by the parks or flood districts, or by the Coastal Conservancy, as water supply agencies could be perceived as having conflicts of interest. Brenda responded that the Conservancy’s staffing limitations would limit the agency’s effectiveness in this role. Paul then offered to manage a consulting contract through ACWD.

Andy set forth the option available to the Workgroup of hiring a team capable of managing the program. Michael added that the master plan process could include both a fiscal manager, such as ACWD, and a program manager. Dale stated that a cost estimate for the plan would be needed prior to issuing an RFP.

Mary inquired about funding the program. Brenda responded that the Conservancy could contribute up to \$350,000 if a dollar/dollar match was provided. She noted that monies paid to consultants could be counted as contributions toward this match. The group agreed that funding could be expected from ACFCWCD, SFPUC, ACWD, PG&E, and Zone 7, although the issue of proportionality remained to be addressed. Mary asked the group to appoint a coordinator for future funding discussions, and Dale said that preliminary cost estimates for planning tasks should be developed simultaneously. Dale stressed the importance of costing the communications element of the program. Andy responded that a program management task should be added to the work scope. Diane Ross-Leech requested that a mechanism be developed by which agencies such as PG&E are able to “park” dedicated funds before the end of the fiscal year.

Next steps. Mary stated her understanding that the Workgroup would approve the format of an RFQ via e-mail for the sake of efficiency. The joint PAC-Workgroup agreed to meet again in early January. The next Workgroup meeting was set for October 26 at 1:30 at the offices of ACFCWCD. Among other topics, the Sunol and Niles dam removals project and the proposed Calaveras dam replacement project will be considered.

Core shared interests : Alameda Creek Fisheries Restoration Work Group and Policy Advisory Committee

(from Assessment Final Report, May 3, 2005, Center for Collaborative Policy)

1. Restore or rehabilitate habitat for steelhead and other species in Alameda Creek
2. Complete fish passage structures, both upstream and downstream
3. Provide adequate screening at diversion structures
4. Maintain a stable water supply for customers
5. Understand and agree on flows, temperature and depths necessary for steelhead fishery
6. Maintain flood protection

Work Group Member Organizations: All Shared Issues or Interests

(from Figure 1, Assessment Final Report, May 3 2005, Center for Collaborative Policy)

	<u>Issues or Interests</u>													
	Fish Passage	Spawning & Rearing Habitat	Agreement on Water Flows	Maintaining Stable Water Supply	Maintaining Water Flows & Temperature	Flood Control	Regulatory Assurance	Stable Funding	Good Science	Fair Allocation	Protecting Infrastructure	Protecting Ratepayers	Erosion Control	Water Quality
ACA	*	*	*			*		*					*	*
ACFCD	*	*	*	*		*		*				*	*	
ACWD	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*			
CEMAR	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*					
DFG	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					*	
EBRPD	*	*	*	*	*	*		*						*
NOAA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*						
PG&E	*					*		*		*	*	*		
SFPUC	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*
ZONE 7		*		*		*		*	*	*		*	*	

Strawman Phase 1: Alameda Creek Steelhead Restoration Master Plan Development

(Center for Collaborative Policy, September 30, 2005)

“Phase 1” Activities / Outcomes

Suggested Timeframe: October 2005 – March 2006

Joint Work Group and PAC

Task: Approve Flows Study Scope

- Agree on scope for flows study and criteria for selecting a consultant for the Work Group
- Approve RFQ/RFP, identify funding, lead agency and treasurer

Task: Agree on Vision and Goals

- Develop and seek consensus agreement on vision of a restored and/or revitalized watershed
- Agree on diversity of species to be addressed in the Master Plan
- Seek consensus on goals and objectives for the Master Plan

Other potential joint WG/PAC Phase 1 activities:

- Discuss, clarify and agree on how to integrate Master Plan with the SFPUC HCP
- Confirm joint winter capture/transport/release activities, memorialize in writing
- Other?

Assumption: 4-6 facilitated meetings through March 2006

Work Group

Task: Initiate Flow Studies

- Write, seek PAC approval of RFQ/RFP, then circulate
- Jointly hire consultant to initiate flow studies
- Undertake flows study and analyses

PAC

Task: Integrate Regulatory Agencies into Flows Dialogue

- Meet with NOAA Fisheries & DFG to discuss potential “rules of engagement” for upcoming dialogues on flow
- Define, develop and seek agreement on “regulatory early consultation” on flows standards in the watershed; explore opportunities and constraints for regulatory assurances
- Determine feasibility of supporting ongoing regulatory agency participation and identify agency contributions if feasible; if not feasible, develop alternate plan for regulatory involvement

Task: Discuss and Agree on Preferred Institutional relationship for Master Plan Development

- Does PAC want to enter into a letter or Memorandum of Understanding? If yes, who should be a signatory? Who would be the fiscal agent? When should it be executed?

Phase 2 of the Master Plan development will include completion of the Flows studies and all those “below the dotted line” activities identified in the ACWD flowchart presented at the June 10, 2005 joint meeting, and elements described in depth in the Restoration Action Plan developed by CEMAR on behalf of the Work Group.