

**Alameda Creek Fisheries Work Group
Flows Subcommittee**

May 1, 2007 12:00 PM – 3:30 PM
Zone 7 Water Agency
Administration & Engineering Bldg
100 North Canyons Pkwy
Livermore, CA 94551-9486

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Eric Cartwright, ACWD
Thomas Niesar, ACWD
Stuart Moock, representing PG&E
Matt Katen, Zone 7
Dave Houts, Zone 7
Scott McBain, McBain & Trush
Mike Garguilo, Zone 7
Tim Ramirez, SFPUC
Manny da Costa, ACFCWCD
Rohin Saleh, ACFCWCD
Chuck Hanson, Hanson Environmental
Andy Gunther, CEMAR
Bill Trush, McBain & Trush
Monty Schmitt, NRDC
Jill Duerig, Zone 7
Lester McKee, San Francisco Estuary Institute

1. Announcements, review agenda

There were no announcements or changes to the agenda.

2. Program Manager's Report

Dr. Gunther reported the project was on the revised schedule, as evidenced by the distribution of the draft study plan.

3. Update on BART Weir

NOAA met with the Flood Control District and ACWD to review plans for a vertical slot fishway to span the BART weir and middle inflatable dam. NOAA provided some

suggestions, but in general supported the preliminary designs for the structure and requested a follow-up meeting during the summer.

Gary Stern also noted in the meeting that there may be some funding remaining (\$1.3M) in the Bay Bridge mitigation account. It is not clear at this point how these funds would be distributed.

4. Update on short-term data gathering

Members of the subcommittee reported that the short-term data gathering items discussed at the April meeting have been implemented. In particular, ACFCWCD and the SFPUC has collaborated to install temperature monitors at key locations in the creek as recommended by McBain & Trush. Synoptic turbidity and streamflow measurements have yet to be initiated.

Manny da Costa also noted that USGS did attend a meeting at Alameda County regarding sediment studies in the watershed, and that the attendees at the meeting agreed to work toward consolidating ongoing work.

It was also noted that the adult steelhead that was tagged prior to release in Niles Canyon is still being tracked. The fish moved above the USGS weir to the Stonybrook Creek confluence, then moved back downstream, over the upper inflatable dam, and was last tracked in the impoundment behind the middle dam.

5. Review of Draft Study Plan (McBain/Trush)

Scott McBain and Bill Trush reviewed some of the main points of the draft study plan, and a lengthy discussion ensued. Among the issues discussed were:

- Steelhead have a flexible life history that can be quite diverse with regards to how long and where they rear in a watershed, and recognition of this fact must be part of any restoration strategy;
- Chinook salmon are likely to come into the watershed when migratory barriers are removed, and there is likely to be habitat where successful spawning could occur.
- At present the high turbidity in Alameda Creek will likely affect the growth and survival of steelhead, especially in Niles Canyon and the Flood Control Channel.
- Smolt survival to returning adult goes up significantly with smolt size when leaving fresh water, and the lower parts of the watershed (including a restored wetland at the mouth of the creek) could be important to increasing the size of a steelhead return.
- Barriers in the lower part of the creek will need to be passable at a wide range of flows to allow fish to get into the watershed, negotiate upper watershed barriers, and arrive at spawning/rearing sites when conditions are suitable;

- It will be essential to coordinate the flows study plan with development of the Alameda Creek Habitat Conservation Plan currently being prepared by Jones and Stokes for the SFPUC. In addition, there are other projects underway (such as ACFCWD sediment studies) that need be coordinated with the flows study plan.
- Dr. Lester McKee of SFEI noted that there is a major barrier just below the confluence of Alameda and San Antonio Creeks, where gravel operations have completely obliterated the Creek channel for about 300 m. Lester will be providing photos of the barrier shortly, which does not appear in the draft study plan or other previous barrier assessments.

In order to complete the study plan, the following schedule of activities was agreed to:

May 1-May 15: Subcommittee members finalize comments on the draft plan and submit comments to Andy. Andy requested that Subcommittee members provide suggestions for how to address comments they have provided, including (to the maximum extent possible) taking into account known interests of other Subcommittee members.

May 16-28: Andy compiles comments, prepares draft list of non-conflicting comments, summarizes conflicting comments/ for June 5 discussion.

May 29: Andy distributes comments along with a proposed Subcommittee report for the Work Group and an agenda for a conference call. The call will be held at the time of the next scheduled Subcommittee meeting, June 5 at 1 PM.

June 7: The Subcommittee agreed to hold the afternoon of June 7th, after the Work Group meeting, to continue discussions of the draft study plan (if necessary) to finalize instructions to McBain & Trush for completing the next draft.

June 8-20: McBain & Trush prepare the Final Study Plan for consideration of the Work Group

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 to begin the Zone 7. watershed tour