

San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Regional Creeks Sub-Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, November 30, 2005, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

California State Coastal Conservancy

4th Floor Conference Room

1330 Broadway, Oakland, CA, 94612

1. Welcome and Introductions

In Attendance: Betsy Bikle, Mill Valley Streamkeepers; BC Capps, Bay Area Open Space Council; Vikki Chansé, University of California, Berkeley; Ann Chrisney, Riparian Habitat Joint Venture; Manny da Costa, County of Alameda, Public Works Agency, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District; Jessica Hamburger, Contra Costa County Resource Conservation District; Russell Hilkené, Salmon Protection and Watershed Network; Beth Huning, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture; Rachel Kamman, Friends of Gallinas Creek; Juliet Lamont, Live Oak Codornices Creek; Ben Livsey, Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region; Kae Ono, County of Contra Costa, Community Development Department; Barbara Patterson, Friends of Cordilleras Creek; Carole Schemmerling, Urban Creeks Council; Igor Skaredoff, Friends of Alhambra Creek

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. A general round of introductions followed.

2. Progress Report on Working Group Topics

a) Impediments to Riparian Restoration due to Infrastructure Barriers

BC Capps provided an overview on the work so far and presented the latest version of the factsheet on Infrastructure Barriers to meeting participants. Rod Chisholm with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has offered to coordinate a meeting between committee members and the Corps to discuss the issues. Beth Huning pointed out the NOAA's Open Rivers Initiative may be a great funding opportunity for these types of projects. Additional information is available at:

- http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/projects_programs/crp/partners_funding/allforprojects3.html

To fully implement this project, a creek crossing inventory would need to be completed for all Bay Area streams, but this seems to be cost-prohibitive. Betsy Bikle discussed the need to develop a culvert insert to broaden water depth during low flow conditions. Rachel Kamman recommended that design and flume testing could be undertaken in conjunction with U.C. Berkeley. Several additions were suggested for inclusion in the factsheet and BC will make these changes.

b) Riparian Buffers and Creek Setback Efforts

BC also presented the draft factsheet on Riparian Buffers to participants. Of specific interest is the growing body of materials relating the economic benefits of watershed restoration work. Juliet Lamont used many of these points in her recent presentations to the City of Berkeley Creeks Task Force:

- <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/planning/landuse/Creeks/2005/EPackets/20050919/Lamont_CTF_Pres_9-19-05.pdf>
- <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/planning/landuse/Creeks/2005/EPackets/20051003/Lamont_CTF_Crk_Writeup.pdf>

Suggestions were made to include information on potential incentives for property owners, and on responses to private property issues. Kao Ono commented that the inclusion of county clean water program representatives would be beneficial in tying our efforts into local government programs. Barbara Patterson volunteered to undertake a survey of cities and counties throughout the Bay Area to determine which jurisdictions have a creek/stormwater/watershed in effect.

3. Presentation on Gallinas Creek Watershed Restoration Efforts in Marin County

Rachel Kamman gave a presentation on the activities of the Friends of Gallinas Creek. The group is currently partnering with the County of Marin and the Bay Institute to restore this watershed in Marin County. Unfortunately, support from the City of San Rafael has been difficult to attain. The Friends have already completed a flow study and are hoping to undertake a traffic study next in hope of restoring the stretch of creek along the Freitas Promenade. They are currently trying to assemble community support and are considering moving toward watershed-wide efforts to garner additional support.

Meeting participants had many suggestions for Rachel on how to accomplish this, including:

- Enlisting the direct support of at least one City of San Rafael Councilmember as an advocate for their work, and
- Building closer ties with other environmental organizations, such as the Sierra Club's Marin Chapter, the Marin Audubon Society, and PRBO Conservation Science.

A copy of Rachel's presentation is available in PDF format and will be distributed to committee members with the meeting minutes.

4. Regional Watershed Updates

- a) Alameda County Watershed Forum: The second meeting of the Alameda County Watershed Forum will take place at the Oakland Museum on the afternoon of December 6. Approximately 25 people attended the initial gathering in Fremont and an even larger crowd is expected for this meeting.

- b) San Pablo Bay Watershed Forum: A sub-regional networking meeting was organized by the Sonoma Ecology Center and the Napa County Resource Conservation District on Nov. 29. About 15 people attended the discussion on how watershed groups within the North Bay could work together cooperatively.
- c) Third Biennial NPS Pollution Conference: This conference was held in Sacramento on Nov. 7-9. One major topic of discussion was the need to document monitoring sites with GPS point data, while not creating privacy concerns with private property owners.
- d) City Rivers Conference: Golden Gate University hosted this conference on Nov. 18. GGU published a volume of their Law Review journal with in depth discussion on the topics. Copies of this journal are available for \$15 from GGU and written materials and presentation outlines from the symposium are available at:
 - http://www.ggu.edu/school_of_law/academic_law_programs/llm_jd_programs/llm_envir_omental_law/fall_2005_environmental_law_symposium
- e) Regional Water Board Stream and Wetland Protection Policy: Ben Livsey reported on the work he is undertaking for the Regional Water Quality Control Board to draft a stream and wetland protection policy that would adopted as a Basin Plan amendment by the Regional Board. This work is gathering scientific resources to develop policy alternatives and is expected to create two new beneficial uses for inclusion in the Basin Plan.
- f) Regional Water Board NPDES Municipal Regional Permit (MRP) Development: The Regional Water Quality Control Board is also developing a regional NPDES permit for municipalities around the Bay Area. More details are available from the Regional Board directly.
- g) San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Updates: Beth Huning provided information on a number of current issues from the JV, including public outreach efforts on avian bird flu, an upcoming presentation to the Management Board on the State Wildlife Plan in January, and the recent training held in Contra Costa county for the JV's project tracking database.

5. Announcements and Project Updates

- a) Ann Chrisney spoke about the statewide riparian mapping process and hopes to be finished with the framework by June 2006. The Riparian Habitat Joint Venture is considering hiring additional staff to help with marketing, fundraising, and outreach.
- b) Manny da Costa reported that the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District is developing a Zone 2 Master Plan for the San Lorenzo creek watershed.
- c) Jessica Hamburger provided an update on the Mount Diablo Creek Planning Process that is expected to be finished in 2007. The group is also trying to protect the Concord Naval Weapons Station from full-scale development.

- d) Carole Schemmerling: Urban Creeks Council is completing a project in Contra Costa, working with the City of El Cerrito on creek maintenance issues, and has completed the project on Peralta Creek in Oakland.
- e) Betsy Bikle: The Mill Valley Stream Keepers have recently installed information signs on the creek, is working with the Bay Institute's STRAW program on removing invasive species; and has completed a grant to the San Francisco Estuary Project for benthic macro-invertebrate monitoring and v-star sedimentation studies.
- f) Kae Ono: The Contra Costa Watershed Forum will be hosting an Awards Program at their next meeting in January. Mini-symposiums throughout the county will be held in March 2006 for local outreach.
- g) Barbara Patterson: Redwood City has just passed a creek ordinance in November and San Carlos is creating a creek task force and commission and may adopt an ordinance that would require property owners to fix existing non-conforming uses before selling property The Friends of Cordilleras Creek has applied to the Rose Foundation for three stakeholder workshops focused on outreach to residents engineering topics.

6. Adjourn

The next Regional Creeks Sub-Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 28, 2006. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by BC Capps.