

MINUTES
Wildcat-San Pablo Creeks Watershed Council
Sep. 21, 2017
10am – 12pm

Attendance: Peter Mangarella, Becky Tuden, Joe Sullivan, Ann Riley, Anthony Falzone, Rich Walkling, Josh Bradt, Patrick Phelan, Juliana Gonzalez, Tim Jensen, Sarah Puckett, Amanda Booth, Maia Jaffe, Steven Cochrane, Jonathan Owens, Adele Ho, Lisa Anich, Sherry Stanley, Sarah Kolarik, Jeff Odefey, Helen Fitanides

1. Introductions – Tim Jensen began the meeting at 10:11am.

2. CUSP—Josh Bradt reported that they’re looking for staff members for their creek restoration project and streamside landowner assistance project. The parks bond is going before the governor next spring; it’s 4 billion dollars total, including 10 million for urban creek restoration. Please send support letters. Becky Tuden will send a sample support letter to Helen Fitanides for distribution.

SFEP—Josh reported that the final meeting of the North Richmond Visioning Project is happening tomorrow. The North Richmond Shoreline Festival is October 7. The State of the Estuary conference is October 10-11 in Oakland. The Riparian Summit is October 17-19 in Davis. The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority is releasing their 1st RFP for Measure AA funds.

Tim mentioned that SB 231 is on the governor’s desk. Amanda Booth said that she has a template for support letters, and will send to Helen for distribution.

3. Urban Tilth— No one from the group was present. Adele Ho said that the Urban Tilth watershed technicians have sponsored several community engagement events. Urban Tilth is also working on plans for rain gardens on Fred Jackson Way, which will be designed by Restoration Design Group. The stormwater plan for the North Richmond Farm will be submitted to the county, and funding was received through the North Richmond Watershed Connections grant.

Tim Jensen mentioned that on Aug 29 there was a media event hosted by Flood Control, Urban Tilth, and county transportation at the North Richmond Farm. It was the kickoff for the Wildcat-San Pablo Creeks levee project, including farm activities, rain garden, and county transportation planning. John Gioia MC’d, and local residents spoke about their experiences. Tim will send media links to Helen for distribution.

4. SPAWNERS—Helen reported that the El Sobrante Library’s new Plaza/Mini Park is now open. There was a ribbon cutting on September 9th, and SPAWNERS will be working at the plaza on 3rd Saturdays this fall to replant a section of our native plant

demonstration garden that was cleared during construction. They're excited to be working in this space again. SPAWNERS is also hosting a talk from Jonathan Price of EBMUD on animal tracking, on Tuesday October 3 from 7-9pm.

5. The Watershed Project—

Juliana Gonzalez reported that TWP is turning 20 and hosting an event on November 8th at the Brower Center. They are also holding an educational bike tour of the Richmond Greenway on October 14, 2-5pm. We'll be partnering with the State Coastal Conservancy to conduct outreach for their new oyster projects south of Pt. Pinole. TWP's Wild Oysters curriculum is funded for next year as well. Foundation funding also supports their Rains to Roots curriculum in schools. In North Richmond we continue to have the adopt-a-block program, where 12 residents are paid a stipend to clean safe routes to schools. They are also working in elementary schools for general watershed awareness and going to East Bay Regional Park District parks.

Partnering with SFEP, we have completed a community survey over multiple outreach events. The WCSP Council is also getting its own webpage, with funding from Flood Control; Riley mentioned that the Wildcat fish ladder project would fit well on the new website.

TWP will also be partnering with the City of Richmond to apply to the State Coastal Conservancy for funds to solve the flooding issue in. Patrick Phelan explained that this project would be multi-benefit and a priority for the city. The City of San Pablo may want to discuss being a partner, as will PG&E.

Riley made a motion to write a letter of support for this grant application. The motion was seconded by Tim Jensen.

Helen also reported that the newly expanded water quality monitoring program was awarded an additional \$5,000 from the Campbell Foundation, and the interns began work in August.

6. Citizens for a Greener El Sobrante— No one from the group was present.

7. City of San Pablo—Amanda Booth introduced her new Civic Spark Fellow, Sarah Kolarik. Amanda reported that they will be taking a trip to Fort Bragg to try to secure funds from the State Coastal Conservancy, which would complement other funds to complete the Wildcat Creek Trail and Restoration Project. They would need 3.5 million, and design starts in November.

Also, the San Pablo Library is now open! We should be able to move our meeting to that location in November.

The WIC building will be breaking ground in October; there will also be a new City Hall building at that site. Features will include bioretention and pathways to the trail.

The El Portal Greening Project is going out to RFP, including bioretention and planting between Church and Fordham.

The Rumrill Complete Streets project has 6 million of the needed 12 million; they are on the 2nd round for funding from California Natural Resources. The City is currently working to finish CEQA, and moving forward to design next year.

8. City of Richmond— Patrick reported that there was a Garrity Creek cleanup for Coastal Cleanup Day. They have funding to place trash capture devices at Marina Bay and Regatta, and at south 8th St. They also have a project at San Pablo at the Richmond/El Cerrito border. Two urban greening grants have moved to round two: Yellow Brick Road and the Wellness Trail (cycle track on marina way south).

The Trust for Public Land's decision support tool was created for Richmond; it is a GIS tool with many layers and pre-established analyses, touching on heat islands, water retention, coastal protection, health demographics, and transportation. It is now in beta, and they encourage sharing. It includes most unincorporated areas around Richmond. Juliana mentioned that they are taking comments and there will be a training in October.

9. County Watershed Program – John Steere was absent. Josh reported that John has been ill; he is now stabilized and home, but unsure of long term outcome.

10. Flood Control—Tim reported that the WCSP levee project is coming along, and Helen will set up a tour. The project will put North Richmond in compliance with FEMA. They received the last funds from the Board of Supervisors and Department of Water Resources, and they're also looking to FEMA.

11. Pinole fish passage project tour update— There is a tour scheduled for the Grizzly Peak Fly Fishers on 10/1 at 10am, starting at Pinole Creek behind Pinole Valley Lanes. The tour will be led by Ben Wallace and Bert Mulchaey, and all are welcome.

12. Wildcat Creek Fish Ladder Subcommittee report—

Peter Mangarella reported that on Aug. 30, they had a field trip to the site with California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Lisa Anich reported that they submitted a pre-proposal to NFWF's Bringing Back the Natives grant program, to fund CEQA. They are also looking for other funding opportunities for CEQA.

Becky Tuden asked why the ladder was placed as opposed to a low flow channel. Jonathan said that's just what they did at the time. Riley noted that it was due to infrastructure as well, and wanting to trigger deposition (a low-flow channel would plug up immediately).

Peter Mangarella said that there has been some confusion about the design (created by Northwest Hydraulics); he advocates getting the design so we can discuss. Unsure if it's a series of baffles, or a rocky channel.

Sarah mentioned that they would like to raise the money to move forward with a design separate from the Army Corps of Engineers, due to timeline and requirements about paying the Corps back.

Cleanup and woody debris management day in October—Riley said that in mid-July they did a survey of a cross section of Wildcat Creek, which has been done periodically since the 80s. It showed deposition of about 1.5 feet of sediment, which occurred from the formation of the secondary channel which moved water through the flood plain. Interestingly, the cross section still ends up the same width and depth, but it's just shifted. On Oct. 10-11 a crew will work with county maintenance to rearrange debris in order to protect the fish ladder; Urban Tilth watershed stewards are available that day. Volunteers are welcome! Please contact Riley at rileywaterways@gmail.com to RSVP.

13. Rheem Creek subcommittee report— Becky Tuden reported that the portion of Rheem Creek being looked at is near the outflow into Dotson Marsh. EBRPD purchased land inland of Dotson Marsh, for the purpose of restoration. The subcommittee looked into the 1135 process and has been working with the Army Corps of Engineers for the last 6 months, with EBRPD willing to be local sponsor. Design cost came to close to 800K, without including CEQA. It was just too high; they are now looking into funding it separately via the 408 method. The project is currently on hold, although it may do well with Measure AA funding as they will pay for planning. EBRPD would lead, partnering with Flood Control.

Amanda said that San Pablo is mapping and modeling all storm drains in San Pablo, including those going to Rheem Creek. The City is willing to share data when the project is complete. Also, they've been able to get only project concept and CEQA done on their own, and then larger grants will pay for the full design and planning.

14. Financial subcommittee—Anthony reported that there are several grant opportunities that we should discuss, including potential funding for projects on Rheem and Wildcat Creeks. The next call-in meeting of the financial subcommittee will be **Oct. 19th at 10am.**

15. New Items / Other Roundtable Reports—

Sarah mentioned the Contra Costa Clean Water Program's Stormwater Resource Plan workshop that is happening after this meeting. All the projects added to the master list over the last year have already been added to the plan. The plan covers Rheem, Garrity, Cerrito, Baxter Creeks, in addition to Wildcat and San Pablo Creeks.

Sherry Stanley with West County Wastewater District has have been working with SFEP to address sea level issues between San Pablo and Wildcat Creeks. They've approved funds to put in an environmental education center along the trail. Ideas for the space include classes, meeting rooms, bookstore, café, greywater, garden... and they are

asking for more ideas. They currently have 1,000 square feet set aside, but want to expand that to 2-3,000 square feet.

Tim recommends they have their engineer present their project for feedback at the next WCSP Council meeting.

Peter Mangarella said that they are having a dinner and fly-fishing class on Sept. 30, and on Oct. 22 will show "Return of the River" at the New Parkway, with pizza to follow at Drakes.

Josh asked for updates on a couple of projects:

- Moving the Wildcat Creek trail over the Richmond Parkway – Rich said that IRWMP awarded funds for Urban Tilth to do outreach and Restoration Design Group to design; due to the difficult repayment process, Urban Tilth backed out. Juliana asked if there is a plan to connect the community to the trails; Becky will follow up.
- A new casino parking lot is currently under construction. There will not be a bike path on the site but there will be an adjacent walking path, and bioretention facilities.

Jeff Odefey reported that American Rivers is coming to the close of a grant cycle and have some unspent funds; perhaps they could be spent to put the maps Sarah created onto the new WCSP Council website. Helen will follow up.

16. NEXT MEETING: Thursday Nov. 16, 10am-noon.