

**MINUTES**  
**Wildcat-San Pablo Creeks Watershed Council**  
**May 24, 2018**  
**10am – 12pm**

**Attendance:** Tim Jensen, Matt Greer, Martha Berthelsen, Paula White, Michelle Cordis, Anthony Falzone, Rich Walkling, Rachel Lorenz, Sarah Puckett, Amanda Booth, Chris Lim, Sofia Morales-Lem, Ann Riley, Jonathan Owens, Nathan Bickart, Juliana Gonzalez, John Steere

**1. Introductions** –Tim Jensen began the meeting at 10:12am.

**2. CUSP**—Ann Riley reported that Watershed Day at the Capitol was a success, and they visited all the assembly and state members. The water bond has been certified by the secretary of state for the November ballot. Prop 68 will be voted on this June. The Watershed Project, Urban Tilth, and the Contra Coast Resource Conservation District have all endorsed it.

Tim added that SB231 was a discussion point during Watershed Day at the Capitol as well.

**3. Urban Tilth**—Nathan Bickart reported that they have been doing erosion control in upper Wildcat canyon and may be working in Alvarado Park in the fall. They've also been working on planting trees as mitigation for the levee project. They have also been in touch with Restoration Design Group and the cities of Albany and El Cerrito to start work on the section of Cerrito Creek near El Cerrito Plaza. Lastly, their summer youth program will be starting soon; please refer potential candidates to Nathan.

**4. SPAWNERS**—Martha Berthelsen reported that the Earth Day event was a success, with partnerships from the El Sobrante Chamber of Commerce and the Elk's Lodge. About 50 volunteers pitched in to clean up the downtown area, weed street tree wells, and weed at the El Sobrante Library.

SPAWNERS has a new Steering Committee member, a retired teacher who has used her connections at Valley View Elementary School to start an educational program to bring students to SPAWNERS restoration site on Wilkie Creek.

The nature walk series started this month, with a hike at Point San Pablo led by Lech Naumovich; in June they visit Skyline Gardens with Glen Schneider.

**5. The Watershed Project**—Juliana Gonzalez reported that the County Supervisor honored the Block Ambassador program at the Earth Day event. This program employs community members in North Richmond to clean up the streets. They will have programs in Richmond this summer to take students to local parks.

They have received a grant from Cal Fire to pilot an urban forestry project in the same area. They have also received funding from Environmental Justice Coalition for Water

(through the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, and in partnership with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership) to conduct water needs assessments in North Richmond and Rollingwood. This information will act as a roadmap for future grants. They have also been approached to receive mitigation funds for work in the Rheem Creek Watershed, possibly in Wanlass Park. Collaboration will be necessary to develop a project. They would like to start a Council Subcommittee to develop plans for the mitigation funds. Please contact Helen at [helen@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:helen@thewatershedproject.org) to join the subcommittee.

Amanda Booth mentioned that since the City of San Pablo already completed a project in Wanlass Park, work can still be done but a lot of approvals may be necessary. The City would need to look into this.

**6.SFEP**—Juliana described the collaborative meeting process of the Resilient by Design team. The final presentations were made this week, with the Home Team (working in Richmond) recommending taking on a horizontal levee project and also addressing local employment. Next steps will be to continue the discussion with the North Richmond Green Team and the Community Advisory Board, as well as through outreach to the community, and write grants to support the project.

John Steere brought up the Watershed Connections project that was funded in North Richmond, and how it will be working on some of the same issues.

A video with more information on the Home Team’s project and process can be found here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHw80\\_4fIBg&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHw80_4fIBg&feature=youtu.be)

Juliana mentioned that one of the potential projects discussed during the RbD process was the East Bay Regional Park District overpass project. Riley said that the Council had a subcommittee about a decade ago for the overpass project and potential funding, but the project was dropped. Tim said that back then it was decided that if EBRPD would build the bridge, the City of Richmond would maintain it.

Nathan said that Urban Tilth has been given some funding to work on improvements to the Wildcat Creek Trail project. Juliana said that EBRPD will be the lead on that.

### **7.City of San Pablo—**

They have completed the 60% submittal for the Wildcat Creek Trail project.They’ll have their second public meeting on June 26 in the Wildcat Creek Meeting Room of the San Pablo Library; the meeting starts at 6pm and snacks will be provided. The permitting process is starting, and they’ve set meetings with the adjacent property owners. Nearby Salesian school is also interested restoring their side of the creek. As a private organization they would not be able to apply for grants, so they would need partners to apply for grants.

Properties adjacent to the Wildcat Creek Trail project are the City Hall (the 50% design will be submitted next week); the WIC building (which will be completed in August) and Lot 4 (which is going to the planning commission later this year).

The Rumrill Complete Streets project just got another 3.2 million from SB1 and is fully funded. They are also talking to CalTrans about an additional 2 million to expand the bioretention swales to treat 8 acres. Their 60% design is due in July, and they'll be holding their first public meeting in July as well.

The El Portal project is a planned bioretention and bike lane between Church and Fordham on El Portal.

San Pablo Ave near Hilltop is currently under construction and will be so for the next 200 or so days. Bike lanes will go all the way up to the Rumrill project.

The city has been working with Earth Team at the Wanlass Park demonstration forest; they've finished planting for this year and have one more planting year to go. After a 2-year establishment period, the demonstration forest will open to the public.

Over the next 12 months or so, the city will be finishing both the stormwater resource plan and the green infrastructure plan that will stem from that.

The Partnerships to Assisted Transitions for Homelessness (PATH) program identified 62 camps in creeks within the City of San Pablo. They are still in the 90-day data collection period but are planning to investigate program development and funding sources in the coming months. They are also looking at models to follow in building their program. They will ideally build a holistic program that also does outreach on illegal dumping and work with programs that assist the homeless (like the Downtown Streets model).

Juliana mentioned that local dumping fees are very high compared to other areas. Amanda said that unfortunately the city's contract goes until 2022, but they are working on development of a Direct Discharge Plan.

Michelle Cordis said that the county met with the county supervisor to address the illegal dumping issue, to try to bring cases to court.

**8. El Portal Greening Project update** and **9. Plaza San Pablo**—We'll be visiting these projects on our field trip today.

**10. City of Richmond**—John said that they are working on their Direct Discharge Plan and doing outreach and engaging the homeless in trash pickup (informally). They have not had a lot of cooperation so far, and it is difficult when the homeless can jump jurisdictions so easily.

**11. County Watershed Program**—Tim Jensen reported that in addition to visiting legislators during Watershed Day at the Capitol, they invited them to make site visits to our projects in Contra Costa County.

**12. Flood Control and 13. Wildcat Creek Fish Ladder Subcommittee**—Peter Mangarella reported to Helen that they have developed a draft Maintenance and Monitoring plan which was reviewed by the Flood Control District. Paper copies of the plan were distributed to Council members, and Helen will send an electronic copy soon. Please address any comments to Peter Mangarella at [pmangarella44@gmail.com](mailto:pmangarella44@gmail.com).

**14. Financial subcommittee**—Anthony reported that the subcommittee met on 4/25 to discuss upcoming grants.

Sarah Puckett reported that there is an upcoming grant opportunity from National Geographic. They plan to apply for funding to use technology like iNaturalist to monitor existing plants and animals in the county, as well as find an in-field data collection tool to monitor water quality.

Riley suggested that they check the San Francisco Estuary Institute for water quality data.

Sarah also reported that The Watershed Project, the City of Richmond, and American Rivers will be applying for a Coastal Conservancy Climate Change grant for the flooding problems afflicting the Rollingwood neighborhood.

Riley made a motion for the Council to provide a letter of support for American Rivers' application to the Coastal Conservancy for planning and implementation of a project addressing flooding in the Rollingwood area. Amanda seconded the motion. The motion passed. Sarah will draft a letter of support for the Council to support this project.

The next call-in meeting of the Financial Subcommittee will be June 28<sup>th</sup> at 10am.

**15. Council Website update:** Helen Fitanides gave a demonstration of the Council website, which is now live at [www.wcspcouncil.org](http://www.wcspcouncil.org).

**16. New Items / Other Roundtable Reports—**

Juliana brought a copy of the Resilient by Design document with all the details from the final presentations. Helen will add the report to the Resources page of the Council website.

Chris Lim said that the Contra Costa County Resource Conservation District is having a fundraiser at the John Muir Orchard on June 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. Dinner will be catered from Mill Valley Roadhouse, and they will screen Rivers of the Lost Coast. Tickets are \$25; more information and tickets here: <http://www.ccrd.org/>

Martha is teaching an Intro to Creek Restoration class at Merritt College in the fall from October 12 to December 14, Fridays 9am-3:30pm. She hopes folks will register early, as the college cancels classes fairly early if they don't have enough registration.

**17. NEXT MEETING: September 27 from 10am-12pm at the San Pablo Library.**