

MINUTES
Wildcat-San Pablo Creeks Watershed Council
January 23, 2020
10am – 12pm

Attendance: Tim Jensen, Anthony Falzone, Peter Mangarella, Josh Bradt, Nathan Bickart, John Steere, Amanda Booth, Joe Neugebauer, Michele Mancuso, Helen Fitanides, Virginia Northrop, Alu Gi, Luis Rodriguez, Marlow Ray, Solwazi Allah, Jessie Alberto, Becky Haworth, Nick Thompson

1. Introductions –Tim Jensen began the meeting at 10:07am.

2. CUSP—Josh Bradt reported that they submitted their year one report to the county for the Streamside Management Program for Landowners. They completed 32 visits in 15 watersheds and did four soil bioengineering work projects in back yards in addition to several workshops. They will be requesting another year of funding from the county.

3. Urban Tilth— Nathan Bickart reported that they have been working on the bioswales and pollinator friendly plantings on the North Richmond Farm and riparian corridor. In the spring they will survey native plants that were planted by Wildcat Creek in the fall, and so far, they have 85% survivorship. As the weather dries out, they will resume their work on invasive species removal.

Alu Gi reported that their MLK Day event was a success with 142 volunteers. They worked on the bioswales along Fred Jackson Way and filled a 20-yard dumpster with trash and debris, including 10 couches and sofas. A separate group led by Luis Rodriguez and Solwazi Allah planted 15 trees at the farm.

4. SPAWNERS—Helen Fitanides reported that the El Sobrante Library is now open and will be the host of their Earth Day event (and 20th anniversary celebration) on April 18. They also have a talk coming up on Feb 4 at the same location; Emanuel Petersen will be speaking about the Streamside Management Program for Landowners.

5. The Watershed Project— Juliana Gonzalez reported that their MLK Day was successful with over 300 volunteers. For Earth Day, they will be on the Richmond Greenway on April 25. This spring they will work on phase 2 of the Hope Garden project, creating 5 more gardens in North Richmond. They will also be planting 35-50 more trees for the Watershed Connections project (they have planted 50 so far).

The results of the Rollingwood Water Needs Assessment were presented to Integrated Regional Water Management, and they will be presenting again on Feb 6. The next step is project development and stakeholder/partner outreach, which will then be presented to the community in the spring for their input on ranking and project design. They hope

that these projects will move forward to the implementation phase in the fall. Please contact juliana@thewatershedproject.org if you have projects you want to highlight.

Anthony Falzone recommended looking through the Financial Subcommittee's grant list for funding possibilities and recommended that the next call-in Financial Subcommittee meeting be longer to allow for more conversations.

February 19 from 10am-noon.

Juliana reported that a private property landowner next to the landfill is interested in donating their property to TWP or other entity. The property is located between the West County Water Treatment Plant and the landfill loop trail, and the mouth of San Pablo Creek.

Helen reported that the new Water Quality database for Contra Costa County is up and running, and can be found at <https://app.thewatershedproject.org/>.

6. Community Based Ecological Solutions in Rheem Watershed— Rich Walkling reported via email:

The topographic survey is complete.

RDG has begun to create the model for the reach.

We've begun to compare the typical as-built design of the "drainage ditch" with the current condition of Rheem Creek and there is a massive amount of sediment built up in the channel forcing flows out through properties into the street.

The creek flooded again last week (that's the second or third time this rainy season).

Floods are coming through the EBMUD property and two residential properties.

At higher flows (not seen last week) they also appear to back up just downstream of Fordham into the street.

More next meeting.

Juliana asked if anyone knows why the soil is subsiding in the back/northern section of the cemetery (City of Richmond property).

7. SFEP— Josh Bradt reported that the EPA San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund grant will likely be released in February. Projects will need a 1:1 non-federal match. They have been working on Green Infrastructure retrofits in Oakland and Berkeley as part of the green spine project. They have also been working with MTC on whether green infrastructure is an eligible expenditure under transportation funding. They have received a grant for Transforming Urban Waters that will be used to promote horizontal levees, and they have an upcoming meeting regarding the project.

8. North Richmond Horizontal Levee Working Group update— Josh reported that they had a nice walk around the Richmond Landfill Loop trail to look at the King Tides a couple of weeks ago, which Supervisor Gioia attended. Their next meeting is in early

February. They have submitted a grant application to the Restoration Authority to fund the planning work.

9. West County Wastewater District update— Joe Neugebauer stated that Josh covered his updates, and that they are waiting to hear back on the grant process.

10. City of San Pablo— Amanda Booth reported that the Wildcat Creek Restoration and Greenway Trail project went out to bid and council approved the lowest bidder on Tuesday (which was actually under the engineers estimate). Large trees are being removed prior to nesting season, and the majority of creek work will happen once the creek is dry in late spring. Most work will be finished up by the end of 2020.

The El Portal Greening project will go out to bid again, to see if they can get lower bids this time. The project would start in the spring.

Rumrill Complete Streets is finalizing design, and they will be asking for all funding from Caltrans. It will be going out to bid in late summer for a construction date in the fall.

City Hall is going up and they're expecting to move in the spring. They may be mid-move for the next WCSP Council meeting, so pay attention to meeting location in March.

Upcoming: The City of San Pablo approved their Direct Discharge Plan this week. They will be presenting to Council for program funding soon, taking a holistic approach and going to the root of the problem. An education and outreach campaign, as well as an enforcement program and maintenance, will be proposed. They have also been working with BNSF to keep the train corridor clean for last 6 months.

The City is waiting to hear from State Parks on the Prop 68 funding. The park may be on the north or the south half of the site. The north half is adjacent to Rheem; The City is working with developer to try to get parcel next to creek.

City staff found Urban Tilth gear and materials in a storage shed at Wanlass.

11. City of Richmond—Patrick Phelan reported via email that his colleague Tawfic is still working on the landslide rehab project on San Pablo Creek at Via Verde.

12. County Watershed Program— John Steere reported that they are working with The Watershed Project on the North Richmond needs assessment and outreach. They are going forward with outreach regarding the Green Infrastructure Plan and are planning for a spring start for the North Richmond watershed connections project, for which they have Coastal Conservancy funding.

13. Flood Control— Tim Jensen reported that it's been a relatively mild winter thus far and they haven't seen much flooding in this area. They opened bids for the Three Creeks project in the Marsh Creek Watershed and got 20% under budget. Construction will begin in May. They are considering doing field trips on the off months of the Contra Costa Watershed Forum this year, with one of the destinations being the Three Creeks project. He also noted that Cece Sellgren is retiring.

14. Wildcat Creek Fish Passage Subcommittee— Peter Mangarella reported that they have not heard back from the Department of Water Resources on the grant application that they submitted last summer. Results had been projected to be out in December. He will be doing a survey and documentation effort on the double box culvert under the I-80 (access via Food Maxx parking lot) so that they can put the culvert on the Department of Fish and Wildlife's fish passage database. They can then think about what the proper steps may be to address the issue.

15. Financial subcommittee – Anthony Falzone reported that they are in a holding pattern for a few grants, and they will be looking into Prop 1 grants at their next meeting.

The next meeting will be a special 2-hr call-in meeting so that they can discuss potential projects for the needs assessment led by The Watershed Project. It will be held on **Thursday Feb. 19 from 10am-noon.**

Link to project and grant list:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ImGyQss1gC5iZcsMmYSnoDvisD-ubKIXTlz7PcnJrTU/edit?usp=sharing>

16. New Items / Other Roundtable Reports—

Rich Walkling and Josh Bradt reported that EBRPD Director Whitney Dotson passed away a few weeks ago. The memorial service is tomorrow in Oakland at Mingleton Temple Church, 1222 Market Street, Oakland from 10am to 4pm.

Amanda reported that Class A firefighting foam got into Wildcat Creek recently. Fish and Wildlife did not see a fish kill but a thorough investigation was not made.

17. NEXT MEETING: Thursday March 26 from 10am-noon, location TBD.