

## IC Meeting Notes – August 27, 2014

**Welcome and Introductions:** Amy Hutzal, Chair of the Implementation Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:40 am with a round of introductions.

**Public Comment:** None

**Director's Report:** Judy reminded the IC that the group tentatively approved the Work Plan at the May meeting and she will add the final approval of the Work Plan, with changes, under Item 4, Action Items. Workplan changes from suggestions at the last meeting were made, and those changes are listed in the May meeting minutes.

She directed attention to Director's Report page 11 for an ACWA summary of provisions in the latest water bond. Amy Hutzal described the sections that might be of interest to the IC, particularly the watershed/ecosystem restoration section, which will give the State conservancies \$327 million.

- Arthur Feinstein asked about the repurposed moneys from earlier bonds. Amy noted they've been told that portion will only be 9M of new money, from unspent administrative funds.
- Judy noted that the money for storage is a continuous appropriation, meaning they don't have to go back to the legislature for further studies or any other uses. John Andrew noted that the potential projects could include surface or groundwater. Those funds are going through the California Water Commission rather than DWR and needs a positive cost benefit ratio. Judy noted that some think this could favor ground water storage.
- The bond is not passed yet (set for November ballot) but is polling well and has strong governor's support. Discussion will continue at the November IC meeting.
- Harry Seraydarian noted that some funding is set aside for planning and monitoring. Tom Mumley suggested that we should start preparing but the competitive process for funding distribution may not start for another two years and in all there is plenty of time.
- Amy noted there are requirements to set up competitive grant programs, with three public meetings across the state. The first funds wouldn't appear until July 2015.

SFEP is managing IRWM Round 2 and proposing to manage IRWM Round 3. Projects in each are listed in the Director's Report. ABAG/SFEP's role is management only in Round 3, whereas we have one project in Round 2 (the Oro Loma project in conjunction with the Oro Loma Sanitary District).

The Bay-Delta Science Conference is in October in Sacramento, attendance encouraged.

Planning for the 2015 State of the Estuary conference will begin late this year. The conference will be held in October 2015 in Oakland, again in partnership with the Regional Monitoring Program. Karen McDowell is the SFEP staff lead. Judy highlighted the detailed memo about the State of the Estuary Report from Letitia Grenier that is included in the Director's Report; there has been lots of progress in setting up teams and reviewing sections from 2011 report. The report will incorporate Delta data and link up with 2011 indicators. Conversations are in process and good partners on board.

The Chinook Book includes an advertising section for the Our Water Our World program and purchasing less toxic pesticides.

A special half-day conference on freshwater needs in the Bay and Delta will be held on September 24 in Antioch. "Better Together" is the theme, and it's sponsored through Friends of the Estuary.

**Actions Taken:** It was moved to approve May minutes and seconded by Arthur Feinstein. All approved. Arthur moved to approve the final work plan; Harry Seraydarian seconded. All approved.

**Reports on SFEP Activities:** Adrien Baudrimont gave a short presentation on the small and micro grants program completed earlier in 2014. Of \$50K total, small grants were awarded up to \$5K, and microgrants were up to \$1k. The goal was to target different types of audiences and projects. All was handled through the SFEP watershed program, built to address CCMP goals. Projects included signage, tours, and educational projects with schools, and they are highlighted on an SFEP web page: <http://www.sfestuary.org/our-projects/watershed-management/small-grants-release>.

- Amy noted Conservancy has done similar projects for slightly larger \$ and supports them.
- Tom noted he hopes there's a criterion for ongoing work in the watershed so that restoration work is able to be maintained. Adrien replied "yes" there's a sustainability criterion.
- Caitlin noted that the participants presented posters at the SoE conference last year (session organized by Adrien), and presenters were happy to be there and grateful to get the funding.

Caitlin gave a status update on the CCMP revision project. The process is coming together; the Steering Committee is established and meeting; Caitlin is working on getting subcommittees up and running now and turning to content development. The Steering Committee agreed on a critical aspect of structure of new document: goals will be aspirational, based on a 35-year vision to 2050. The objectives and actions will be updated every 5 years. Objectives will be specific statements that make progress towards achieving goals, will be measurable, specific, and practical. Actions will be tasks to reach objectives; they will include "owners" and be achievable within 5 years.

Caitlin described criteria for objectives and actions. Subcommittees are forming based on topic areas, starting with Water, Habitats, and Living Resources. She circulated a handout showing members of each subcommittee. Climate change is integrated into every one of the topic areas. We received additional funding to provide honoraria to climate change experts for participation. SFEP staffers will coordinate subcommittees, draft language, edit, provide straw proposals, etc., in order to use subcommittee members' time efficiently. Marc Holmes will be assisting. Caitlin is keeping a list of targeted reviewers who should review; she requested any additional input on these. Plans call for five meetings between September and May. The first of those meetings will be on goals, and the remaining meetings will focus on objectives/actions, owners, etc.

Overall schedule: development through fall 2014-early 2015, debut the draft at State of the Estuary Conference in 2015, incorporate feedback and input, finalize in 2016, approvals, release by May 2016, and public outreach afterwards.

- Amy asked what constitutes final. Judy noted that she and EPA are working on that question. Historically final has meant approval by the State of California and EPA, and that has taken time.
- Josh Collins noted that the timeline looks ambitious, especially given the State of the Estuary report. He likes the theory of both items dovetailing but is concerned about feasibility. Caitlin notes we are seeking other funding which would allow other more staff to be brought to bear.
- Josh asked if outreach would slow the process. Judy noted that the outreach will be iterative. Tom noted that if any actions are controversial, that could slow the process; if we include actions we have control over it would be smooth but there will be some that we don't have control over.
- Arthur said that it will be challenging to choose actions, and we all know that the number of actions will be limited. He said he will be disappointed if we take a very easy road-he hopes that we will set the high mark and includes some aggressiveness re what the bay needs.
- Josh noted that the Bay-Delta Science Plan looks at linkages for whole estuary. The CCMP is the only document to look at whole estuary.
- Caitlin described next steps: kickoff meetings, public and agency outreach, create a mailing list for updates, website, and a regular section in Estuary newsletter. The team will formalize the review process for draft documents and will solicit input along the way.
- Amy noted that many other Delta groups are needed, but Luisa Valiela noted that we should have conversations first on which should be included. Amy noted sensitivity is needed when San Francisco Bay folks come up with Delta plans, to avoid negative reception. Josh suggested asking Rainer Hoenicke, Campbell Ingram, and Carl Wilcox for feedback on approach, such as who should we talk to for sage advice. Please send suggestions to Judy re: representation.

Amy Hutzell discussed the decision not to move forward with the Bay Restoration Authority ballot initiative to raise local funding for wetland restoration this November. BRA has been working towards placing a regional measure on the ballot, doing polling, settled on a \$9 per parcel tax for the entire 9-county bay area, to go towards restoration or enhancement of SF Bay shoreline and associated flood protection and public access and restoration. More recent polling had picked back up and showed above 2/3 support, with positive messaging was in the 70s. There was an expenditure plan, a list of potentially eligible projects, and ballot access would cost \$5-7million. Hancock carried legislation to define those costs so they would be \$1.5-2 million for the full Bay Area, though that expires at the end of 2016. The project was close to identifying funding for ballot access costs through local agencies. The biggest issue at the end came down to campaign funding. The Bay Area Council and Silicon Valley Leadership Group had committed to finding some funding, but it was not in place by June when the decision needed to be made. The Restoration Authority board meets again in September to discuss, and partners are continuing to work on this. The Committee discussed the history of support for the measure and the difference between 501 C1 and C (3) actions. Amy noted that flood protection polls lowest, people don't appreciate risks and value of flood protection infrastructure. Polling results are on the BRA website, <http://sfbayrestore.org>.

### **Highlighting IC Partners Efforts: Jeremy Lowe, ESA PWA: “Why a horizontal levee?”**

Jeremy showed diagrams of how the horizontal levee pilot project at Oro Loma Sanitary District would look and discussed its ecological, flood risk management, and wastewater management benefits. This project provides a pilot, proof of concept to refine the design through experiment and further the regulatory dialogue. The project has a sloped area that will be built as an experiment. The slope will have pumps and valves, very manipulable, to play around with flows, soils, concentrations. It will be a treatment wetland, not claiming ecological benefits for that part. The project will look at vegetation types and water quality benefits. Treated water will flow back into facility (closed circuit system) and Buckman canal. OLSA self-funded the conceptual design. Final report done by 2018

- Josh Collins noted that there's remnant historical transitional zone nearby, and asked Jeremy to remind Peter Baye that there's a reference site next door, although it's not very large.
- Josh Bradt asked how they are doing the seepage. Jeremy said they want to use readily available materials: bay mud, sands, gravel, wood chips, sawdust, other organics. You need right matrix of water flow through, right conditions for plants to grow and denitrification. Flows will be treated wastewater effluent (100KGD) which will seep through roots of slope. This is to avoid denitrification treatment costs.

### **Brenda Goeden, BCDC: “The future of beneficial reuse”**

Brenda gave some background on the LTMS (Long-Term Management Strategy for Dredging)'s 12 year review project. The LTMS work comes under the CCMP's dredging and waterways section. It has several goals, one of which is to reduce in-bay disposal and maximize beneficial reuse with ocean disposal as a backup. The goals were established in the 1980s (Harry Seraydarian was involved). There were concerns about contamination and navigability because permitting for dredging took so long. In 2000, a management plan was published. The implementing agencies were EPA, BCDC, Water Board, and the Corps of Engineers. They planned a 12-year transition of reducing in bay disposal from 6.6MCY to 1.25MCY. There were step-downs every 3 years of allowable in-bay disposal total. There were several disposal sites in bay. There were about 100 dredging projects in the bay including 17 navigational channels, berths for ports and refineries, homeowner slips, etc. Dredge material had to meet sediment quality targets for in-bay disposal, and when the bay quota was met, sediment went to ocean disposal or other sites. There was a large peak in volume dredged during the Oakland Harbor deepening project. The region successfully met the in-bay disposal goals throughout the period. Now they are working to hold at 1.25MCY/year in the bay. Anything above needs to go somewhere else. The current plan calls for 40/40/20: 40% beneficial reuse, 40% out of bay disposal, and 20% in bay.

The 12 year review key findings: 20MCY beneficial reuse, 20MCY of in-bay disposal, 8 MCY at the Deep ocean disposal site. Findings: there is still capacity for ben. reuse. 128 reuse projects were identified, and many are still available, though with challenges. Dredging of navigational channels continued, though not always to their full depths depending on funding available. Costs matter: disposal in bay is cheapest, and beneficial reuse is most expensive. Now: they consider beneficial reuse more important than ever because of climate change and decreased sediment supply from delta. There is 37% less

sediment coming in from the Delta since 1998, and that trend is continuing. It's not getting any better; the erodible sediment bed has declined significantly, and sediment is trapped behind water control structures. We could see less sediment still coming in the future. Yet the need for sediment is increasing with sea level rise. Dredge material of 2-3MCY per year is available from maintenance. Other sources include flood control channels, etc. What makes a site a good candidate for reuse? A site that is very subsided, or a site with low levels of suspended sediment nearby, specific habitat qualities targeted (Hamilton - tidal marsh and also seasonal wetlands required even higher elevations at the back of the site), time horizon to vegetation. If you can get to marsh plain elevation quickly, your vegetation will establish more quickly. Hamilton, Sonoma Baylands, Montezuma Wetlands were big sites that used beneficially reused materials. Aramburu Island used a small amount from SF marina. Other sites to use dredge material: SBSP (Pond A8 – but very far from dredging sites – Eden Landing, Ravenswood), Skaggs Island, Cullinan Ranch taking 400KCY now, Bel Marin Keys could take 7-14MCY, smaller projects – shallower water means smaller volumes coming over longer periods of time. In something of a lull now for beneficial reuse, given the challenges to get mud to marsh. Funding is the key problem. We have done reuse, know how to move sediment, and funding is the challenge. To move a large mass, you need a lot of energy and specialized equipment. The dredge community says, 'we are spending \$15-20 million to dredge, we don't have extra money to move it to your site.' Governments and project proponents say, 'we don't have the funds to move materials.' There is a need to work together regionally – a pipeline or barge needed. New work projects can have mitigation required, can have opportunities to build in funding for beneficial reuse. Another way to incentivize beneficial reuse is to make ocean disposal more expensive. Dredgers will do what's cheapest. The Corps is the largest dredger, and the federal standard says have to go to least-cost, environmentally-acceptable alternative: the ocean qualifies.

Big picture: mudflats are a problem in placement, pumping for a longer distance equals more money, more equipment equals more money, and there is always the preference for least cost. Other sources of sediment: Bair used dredge material and also excess construction soil. Upsides: many goals plans call for additional sediment reuse. Lots of need: baylands habitat goals, tidal marsh recovery plans, species recovery plans. Options: create an aquatic transfer facility for quick offload of dredge material and store until needed. Co-locate offloading equipment: have a regionally available/shared offloader. Incentives: open work windows for salmon in exchange for beneficial reuse?

### **Concluding Business**

Review road map. Amy solicited items for the year. Tom says we're already taking on too much, so everyone note priorities. *November suggested additions:* Continue Water Bond discussions. *February additions:* Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals update –Letitia

### **Announcements**

National Estuaries Week is the week of September 20. Judy noted that pictures from Estuary Conference and the billboard ("freshwater and salt water, a love story") will be displayed at the Ferry Terminal in

San Francisco. National Estuaries Week will be highlighted for a month on SFEP website, please send any ideas for inclusion to Judy.

The Bay Institute/Aquarium of the Bay Gala is being held in October (Marc).

The next meeting is November 18, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned 12:28pm.

**Meeting Attendees:**

Jane Lavelle, SFPUC

Julie Pierce, City of Clayton

Josh Collins, SFEI

Marc Holmes, The Bay Institute

Melody Tovar, City of Sunnyvale

Austin Perez, Bay Planning Coalition

Tom Mumley, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board

Judy Kelly, San Francisco Estuary Partnership

Amy Hutzell, State Coastal Conservancy

Luisa Valiela, U.S. EPA

Erica Yelensky, U.S. EPA

Harry Seraydarian, North Bay Watershed Association

Arthur Feinstein, Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

Jessica Martini-Lamb, Sonoma County Water Agency

Mike Vasey, San Francisco National Estuarine Research Reserve