

# BAWN ANNUAL MEETING NOTES

Bay Area MetroCenter  
375 Beale Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Friday May 3, 2019  
9:00 – 2:30

**9:00 – 9:15**      **Sign in, Refreshments, Welcome**

**9:15 – 9:30**      **Self-Introductions** In attendance: Anna Dirkse, UC-Cooperative Extension, Marin; Chris Brokate, Clean River Alliance; Anna Marie Schmidt, Friends of Sausal Creek; Laura Castellini, Nature in the City; Emma Godwin, Watershed Steward, SFBWQCB; Jonah Landur-Yamagata, Urban Tilth; Alu Gi, Urban Tilth; Steve Holmes, South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition; Brendan Lum; Friends of Five Creeks; Caitlin Sweeney, SF Estuary Partnership; Deb Kramer, Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful; Junko Bryant, Grassroots Ecology; Mike Montgomery, SFBWQCB; Darcie Luce, SF Estuary Partnership; Mitch Avalon, Alhambra Watershed Council; Zama Duamini, Downtown Streets Team; Marlow Rag, Urban Tilth; Luis Rodriguez, Urban Tilth; Erica Nunez, Urban Tilth; Susan Schwartz, Friends of Five Creeks; Sheryl Drinkwater, Friends of Five Creeks; Josh Bradt, SF Estuary Partnership; Richard McMurtry, Santa Clara Creeks Coalition (by phone)

**9:30 – 10:15**      **Partnerships/Collaborations**

**Mike Montgomery, Executive Officer of SF Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board**, introduced himself to the group as still getting his feet wet in areas of flood protection with multi-objective opportunities. He mentioned the importance of protecting watersheds and the regulatory drivers of restoration. He envisions partnership opportunities with the Water Board in the realm of training and education to avoid fish kills, not just for first responders but for anyone interested. He also indicated that the Water Board was looking to streamline permitting to lower the burden for restoration activities. He fielded a few questions from attendees and stayed for a few more presentations before heading to another commitment.

**Laura Castellini, Nature in the City**, provided an overview of its mission is to educate, inspire, and connect San Franciscans about & with the surprisingly diverse urban ecology persisting in the City, including the Green Hairstreak Butterfly Corridor. Nature in the City organizes habitat restoration projects in partnership with local communities; provides tours and volunteer opportunities; and operates the Backyard Nursery Network, made up of residents growing native plants in backyards all over San Francisco. To further encourage exploration of local habitats, Nature in the City has produced a large, colorful folding map. [Add PPT presentation link](#)

**Susan Schwartz, Friends of Five Creeks**, led a conversation on the challenges of watershed stewardship groups developing on-going partnerships and volunteerism. Ideas and input from participants include:

- Need to develop a better way to match volunteers with organizations
- Central database/matrix for matching
- Use of social media platforms such as NextDoor to promote opportunities/needs
- Portal for sharing local successes to broader community
- Acknowledgement of volunteer service to keep folks coming back
- County or watershed forums are good opportunities
- Paid partnership with municipalities to undertake stormwater permit compliance activities. *Will Water Board continue to provide credit for creek clean ups in next permit?*

### 10:15 – 11:30 Restoration/Stewardship

**Junko Bryant, Grassroots Ecology**, introduced Grassroots Ecology, formerly Acterra, whose mission is to engage and educate the public to restore local ecosystems throughout Silicon Valley through partnerships, community engagement, and volunteer service. Junko reviewed recent and on-gong habitat restoration activities at the McClellan Ranch Reserve and at a site on Redwood Creek. They also have a grant to conduct rain garden and rain barrel system workshops. [Add PPT Presentation](#)

**Anna Dirske/Sarah Phillips, Marin Knotweed Action Team**, presented on their efforts to eradicate the invasive Japanese Knotweed (aka Mexican bamboo, crimson beauty, Japanese fleece flower, Kontiki bamboo) from Marin County, specifically the Lagunitas & San Geronimo Creek watersheds. This species is an allelopath that crowds out native plants and is destabilizing to creekbank soils. It is extremely difficult to get rid of because it spreads very quickly through rhizomes. The most effective control is through herbicide as mowing, tarping, hand digging, pulling, and burning do not work. Their message to the community is to report plants by photo to the Acton Team for confirmation and professional eradication.

[Add PPT Presentation](#)

**Richard McMurtry, Santa Clara Creeks Coalition**, presented by telephone on actions needed to restore trout/salmon populations, including:

- "Water rights" for fish
- Environmental water storage to sustain fisheries during drought
- Academic study/monitoring of deep-water pools
- Grant writing for improving stream carrying capacity for salmonids and advocacy
- Establish science for/develop instream flow objectives (\$180M to study 100 rivers, statewide) with Public Trust Resource Protection Act license fee funds
- Give DFW enforcement capacity/funds to mandate the elimination of 90% of the 4,000+ listed fish passage barriers, excluding major dams
- Regulatory enforcement against temperature exceedances & predation

- Strengthen complaint systems, use of citizen suits to enforce Porter-Cologne

## 11:30 – 12:30 **Announcements Round Table/Networking & Lunch**

### 12:30 – 2 **Community & Environment: Creekside Encampments**

**Steve Holmes, South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition**, presented on the impacts of trash in creeks, findings from the 201 creek clean ups they've conducted, and strategies for minimizing trash associated with homeless encampments (100' setback from creek). The presentation shows examples of the various objects (batteries, plastics, scooters) pulled from the creek corridor, some of the resulting art pieces, and returning beaver footage! [Add PPT Presentation](#)

**Chris Brokate, Clean River Alliance**, presented on his group's efforts to prevent and remove trash from the Russian River. After realizing how much was generated from homeless encampments, Chris began engaging individuals directly and giving them trash bags for staging their refuse. He also went to local homeless service centers to teach basic camping etiquette. Approach has been successful, with folks requesting more bags and schedules for staging/pick up. Roughly 120,000 lbs. of trash collected & staged for pick up by homeless individuals last year. This work relies on community volunteerism, waived/reduced dumpster fees, and personal relationship building. [Add PPT Presentation](#)

**Zama Dlamini, Oakland Downtown Streets Team**, provided statics about the Bay Area's homelessness population in general terms (3<sup>rd</sup> largest in the country, 80% being county residents 1 year prior to becoming homeless). Program provides basic needs stipend (food, storage, transportation), case management, and employment services to homeless people while they work on beautification projects in the community. The Downtown Streets Team operates programs in San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, Hayward, Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, San Raphael, and Novato. [Add PPT Presentation](#)

### 2-2:20

#### **Policy & Funding**

**Mitch Avalon, Alhambra Creek Watershed Council**, discussed the challenges of securing adequate stormwater management funding need for green infrastructure, resiliency to climate change, water quality protection, and flood reduction. One promising solution is integrating stormwater management with transportation planning activities. Benefits would flow both ways if realized. He also provided a brief review of this year's annual Watershed Day at the Capitol. [Add PPT Presentation](#)