

## **Alameda Creek Fisheries Restoration Workgroup**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

**February 9, 2005**

#### **Alameda County Public Works Agency**

#### Attendees

Pete Alexander	EBRPD
Deirdre Appel	SFPUC
David Asbury	CEMAR
Gordon Becker	CEMAR
Derrell Bridgeman	ACA and No. Cal. Fed. of Fly Fishers
Eric Cartwright	ACWD
Laurel Collins	Watershed Sciences
Andy Gunther	CEMAR
David Houts	Zone 7
Jane Lavelle	SFPUC
Jeff Miller	ACA
Stuart Moock	PG&E
Thomas Niesar	ACWD
Steve Powers	CEMAR
Brian Sak	SFPUC
Monty Schmitt	NRDC
Carla Schultheis	ACFCWCD
Gary Stern	NOAA Fisheries
Jennifer Stoltz	SFPUC
Richard Wetzig	ACFCWCD

#### **Announcements**

Richard Wetzig distributed copies of the watershed map and brochure prepared by the Alameda Creek Management Program. Jeff Miller announced that salmonids were last seen in the flood control channel on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Pete Alexander described the attempted rescue on the 14<sup>th</sup>, where no fish were seen despite the release of attraction flows by ACWD from its middle inflatable dam.

#### **Updates**

*SFPUC and PAC activities.* Jane Lavelle said that the PUC had been reorganized and that Michael Carlin would be leading a new water division. Jane expressed her optimism that the reorganization would lead to greater efficiency in dealing with Alameda Creek fisheries issues, as a new Water Enterprise has been created that reports to Michael.

Jane told the Workgroup that current strategy is to rebuild Calaveras Dam at a site immediately downstream from the existing dam location without substantially increasing reservoir volume. She also announced a grazing workshop that would be conducted the afternoon of February 9<sup>th</sup>. Jane noted that the Sunol and Niles dams removal project was in environmental review, and that construction is now expected to occur in the summer of 2006. An application has been submitted to extend the deadline for expenditures required by the current funding source.

Jane described a meeting December 13<sup>th</sup> between the SFPUC, DFG, and NMFS where the hydrology and geomorphology of the Arroyo Hondo/Calaveras Reservoir confluence were discussed in relation to management of the reservoir fishery. Staff from DFG recommended monitoring critical fish passage reaches between Arroyo Hondo and the reservoir to avoid stranding. Participants also discussed screening requirements of adits within Calaveras Reservoir and oxygenation system implementation. Brian Sak reported that ACDD was not being operated this water year.

Gary Stern said that NMFS would ask the SFPUC to exclude cattle to allow for improvement of riparian vegetation along Arroyo Hondo. A meeting between ACA, NMFS, DFG, NRDC, and others to discuss Alameda Creek watershed fisheries issues was announced for the 16<sup>th</sup> of February.

Carla Schultheis described meeting with Pete Stark's staff on January 20<sup>th</sup> regarding funding flood control channel projects. The congressman's staff recommended sending a letter requesting federal assistance with the projects. A draft of this letter has been prepared and will be circulated to possible signatories for review. Carla will coordinate sign-on and delivery.

Gary said that 17 proposals were received for Bay Bridge mitigation funds representing about \$4 million. Eric Cartwright noted that the PAC also was investigating funding through Prop. 50, Chapter 8, including its requirement to have a regional integrated water management plan in place.

### **Agenda Items**

*Re-graded channel study.* Gordon Becker gave a presentation on the recently completed draft RCA study report. He noted that the technical advisory committee spent a substantial portion of its review meeting discussion the issue of future flow conditions. The final study report will emphasize that flow schedules should be developed prior to final design of the natural fishway. Gordon said that the project appeared feasible, although it would be substantially more expensive than the so-called "2001 concept" that included an engineered fishway and continued operation of the middle inflatable dam.

Laurel Collins inquired about sediment related effects of the fishway project. Gordon responded that depositional conditions would be created in velocity break portions of the fishway, and that periodic maintenance on the order of twice a year likely would be necessary to ensure proper performance. Laurel also pointed out the likelihood of maintenance needs at the fishway entrance where water velocity would be expected to decrease.

*Restoration water planning.* The Workgroup discussed the process of developing flows recommendations for migration, and for spawning and rearing habitat in the Alameda Creek watershed. Drivers for this process include possible listing of upper watershed trout in the ESU and the likely expectation from possible restoration project funders that flows provisions have been accounted for in planning, among others.

Eric Cartwright passed out a draft document, *Proposed Technical Studies to Develop Background Information for Alameda Creek Fishery Flows*. He requested input from Workgroup members on the outline. Gordon asked that he be included on the distribution list for comments so that a packet regarding flows related studies could be prepared prior to the next Workgroup meeting.

Andy Gunther noted that a successful process for establishing fish flows in the watershed likely would include all interested members of the Workgroup, and will require the delegation of authority by senior management to Workgroup participants for meaningful discussions. The group agreed that background information would need to be prepared prior to “gaming” flows. Gary said that CALFED gamed flows for purposes of discussion. Andy encouraged the water supply organizations to start the process of entering into a joint agreement so that flows could be considered watershed wide.

Jeff Miller requested that the PAC members commit to a schedule for determining flows related issues. He suggested that the process for establishing flows be conducted in a transparent manner with input from other interested parties. Monty Schmitt asked that he receive SFPUC materials related to fish flows planning. He and Jane Lavelle agreed to coordinate on the transfer of information. Monty expressed his desire that study planning be conducted deliberately and carefully in the interest of saving time and money.

Laurel Collins noted the usefulness of installing additional flow gauges in the creek. She is seeking a minimum three-year data set that will aid her analysis of flood control channel hydrology and sedimentation.

*Master Plan and stakeholder audit process.* Brenda Buxton wrote in to say that the stakeholder audit process was proceeding. A contact from DFG for this process was not forthcoming at the time of preparing the minutes.

*Webcam.* David Asbury gave a presentation showing the steps for designing, installing, and operating the Webcam. He noted that the system appears to be very effective for the needs of the Workgroup and that installation could occur by the end of February. Attendees were invited to view a demonstration David set up in Carla’s office.

*Next Workgroup meeting.* The next Workgroup meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. at ACFCWCD. Workgroup members are invited to contact Gordon with agenda items for the next meeting.