

**Alameda Creek Fisheries Restoration Workgroup
Minutes of Meeting
August 18, 2000
9:30 am
Alameda County Public Works Agency
951 Turner Court
Hayward, CA**

Attendees

Laura Kilgour	ACFCWCD
Emmanuel da Costa	ACFCWCD
Carla Schultheis	ACFCWCD
Richard Wetzig	ACFCWCD
Eric Cartwright	ACWD
Bill DeJager	USACE
Chris Gray	Supervisor Haggerty's Office
Jeff Miller	ACA
Stuart Moock	PG&E
Tom Taylor	Trihey & Assoc.
Chet Lelio	Alameda County Fish and Game Commission
Ron Harben	Alameda County RCD
Pete Alexander	EBRPD
Andy Gunther	AMS
Paul Salop	AMS

Agenda Item No.

1. Announcements

Manny da Costa announced that a local contact had informed him of sightings of salmonid fingerlings in Arroyo Mocho in the Pleasanton area and two steelhead in Stonybrook Creek. Andy Gunther requested that this information be documented for inclusion in the list of sightings prepared for the Workgroup, which is currently found as Appendix 1 of the assessment report.

Jeff Miller informed the group that he had been in contact with CALTRANS regarding passage issues at the lowermost culvert in Stonybrook Creek. Jeff was informed that this culvert had been placed on the bottom of the "hot list" of Caltrans restoration projects. Jeff also expressed his interest in forming a "Friends of..." organization for Stonybrook Creek and has talked to landowners within the watershed about this issue. Andy recommended contacting the Aquatic Outreach Institute for assistance in getting the organization started. Manny added that Mike Love, hired to perform surveys of Stonybrook Creek and to recommend fish passage options, is scheduled to begin work on the project in September.

2. Update on NMFS Staffing

Paul Salop informed the Workgroup of Jonathan Ambrose's reassignment within NMFS, removing him from the San Francisco Bay Region. He then read an email from Jonathan that contained the following information:

- It is unlikely that NMFS will name a replacement for Jonathan before early 2001.
- The NMFS team lead for the Bay Area and interim contact for the project is Gary Stern (707-575-6060).
- Any questions regarding passage issues specifically should be forwarded to Jon Mann (707-575-6054).
- Jonathan encouraged the Workgroup to pursue an HCP “in order to minimize incidental take of steelhead resulting from operations and structures within the watershed.”

3. Update on 1135 Proposal

Eric Cartwright gave an update to the Workgroup on the following subjects:

§1135 Application. The due date for the application letter is September 31st. The Water District and Flood Control District have developed a draft application letter and are in the process of revising. Eric and Laura will distribute to the Workgroup via email prior to submission to the Corps.

Eric added that Bill DeJager had raised the possibility that §1135 funding levels could be allocated at a lower level than previous years. Bill added that it is too early to know for sure, but that there is a possibility that the Corps may not be as willing to fund new projects this year. He emphasized, however, the importance of submitting an application for this deadline to get the project into the pipeline. He added that this may in fact be the only new project in the Bay area submitted to the District this year. When asked, Bill responded that if a money shortage does occur, it is unlikely that new disbursements from the Corps could be made prior to the following year’s funding cycle (application deadline of September 2001).

Laura Kilgour inquired if the Workgroup thought it was a good idea to cc other organizations on the application letter to the Corps. Several members felt that this was a good idea. Any specific ideas for who should be included should be forwarded to Laura. Chris Gray asked if it would be beneficial to gather letters of support from organizations in support of the application. Bill responded that he felt letters of support would indeed be helpful and should be directed to the Division Engineer for the San Francisco Corps office. Jeff added that the offices of Representatives Pete Stark, Ellen Tauscher, and George Miller have also expressed support for the project and he would be willing to ask them for a letter.

Conceptual Designs for §1135 Structures. CH2MHill met with the ACWD, ACFCWCD, NMFS, and USACE to review options for diversion screens and fish passage facilities within the lower Alameda Creek channel. CH2MHill has begun developing conceptual designs and cost estimates in support of the §1135 application. These products do not, however, have to be submitted at the same time as the application letter. Bill suggested that as long as the products were supplied to the Corps within two months of the submission deadline that it would not delay the Corps’ process.

4. Report on Grants Subcommittee Meeting

Andy gave the Workgroup a report on the 8/17 Grant Subcommittee meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm a list of funding needs in association with the overall watershed restoration project and to begin to identify a list of funding opportunities appropriate for those needs. Andy informed the Workgroup that since the July meeting, we had submitted two grant applications, a public involvement project for the CDF&G California Coastal Salmon Recovery

Program and a proposal to the Watershed Assistance Grants Program (EPA money being managed by the River Action Network in Portland, OR).

Marty Gingras of CDF&G attended the 8/17 meeting and offered invaluable background into various CDF&G funding programs and what types of projects they are most likely to fund. In preparation for probable development of a future SB271 proposal, Andy had asked Marty the appropriate monetary level to request. Marty suggested \$100k as a ballpark figure. He also indicated that the Workgroup had a leg up on other projects because of the Assessment that had been completed earlier (without CDF&G funding); he suggested that CDF&G was much more willing to fund implementation projects than assessment and planning projects. He also suggested that if the recently-submitted public involvement proposal is successful, it would increase the chances that CDF&G would fund a follow-on implementation project in the same watershed.

Richard Wetzig brought up the potential need for a large sum of money for restoration of the creek mouth, in order to improve habitat for juvenile steelhead, particularly with respect to providing predation refuge. Richard told the Workgroup that the largest need would be for land acquisition. Bill responded that the outer levees in the area would probably need to be rebuilt to bring them up to Corps standards, which could prove a very costly endeavor. Laura and Carla indicated that the ACFCWCD is currently investigating how changes at the creek mouth might be made to partially alleviate the sedimentation problem in the lower creek, and fish habitat is being considered as these discussions move forward.

Bill also informed the group that he had spoken with Trish Mulvey, who indicated that Cargill, currently in negotiations to sell some part of their lands at the Bay margins, may maintain their salt-making rights on some of those lands. This action would limit the level of restoration that would be possible in the lowermost section of the creek. If Cargill goes ahead with the sale and relinquishes salt-making rights, then a larger restoration may be possible. Chris added that his office is in contact with Cargill on other projects suggest that the Workgroup develop a wish list for Cargill that could potentially be used in ongoing negotiations. Carla offered to bring up the issue of restoration of the creek mouth with the Lower Watershed Group at its next meeting.

Jeff Miller had previously forwarded a list of funding mechanisms for which the Workgroup could eventually develop proposals. AMS will now develop a matrix to match up specific projects with specific funding mechanisms for which proposals could then be developed.

5. Update on Proposed SFPUC / ACWD Monitoring Efforts

Tom Taylor indicated that he had not yet received any comments back on the Statement of Work presented by Josh Milstein at the July Workgroup meeting. Pete Alexander, Jeff, and Andy each informed Tom that they had written up comments and would forward them to him. Additionally, Paul indicated that Pat Coulston also had comments and would forward them at a later time. Andy asked if Tom would be able to revise the workplan to incorporate some of the findings of previous studies in the watershed and to answer questions the watershed assessment had posed. Tom responded that the authors were aware of and had attempted to incorporate the previous work, but that the purpose behind the effort was to answer questions specific to ACWD and SFPUC operations. Eric concurred with Tom and added that the studies would help answer some of the operational questions that the water supply agencies would be facing with a restored watershed. **Tom requested that any additional comments be forwarded to him (ttaylor@entrix.com) by Friday August 25th.**

6. RCD Contacts with Landowners in the Arroyo Mocho Area

Andy opened the discussion with his analysis that the watershed assessment had indicated that the Arroyo Mocho canyon area offers potential as prime spawning and rearing habitat. However, to-date there has been no way to examine the creek as access is across private lands. As part of the assessment, access to the creek had been limited to an access road maintained by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and distant views from public roadways. Andy mentioned that the Workgroup had suggested using the RCD as one method of contacting the various landowners. The ACFCWCD invited Ron Harben, the new Executive Officer of the RCD, to address the Work group.

Ron provided background on the evolution of the RCD and the various roles it now plays. He emphasized the importance of contacting the landowners and gaining their support before attempting any type of restoration. This can be done through a variety of means, including the media, direct mailings, and various organizations present in the watershed. He cautioned that the effort may proceed slowly, but that it was important to achieve this “buy-in” of the landowners. Ron added that it is probable that some of the landowners will remember having fish in their streams and will be enthusiastic about restoration efforts.

Andy seconded the notion of a gradual process, that the Workgroup should be careful in working to gain the acceptance of the landowners. Tom brought up the possibility of contacting NMFS to gain a “no surprises” clause for landowners, which might increase the likelihood of gaining their involvement.

Pete asked if Ron had a list of landowners for the area. Ron responded that he did not, but that the Assessor’s Office should have this information. Manny informed the Workgroup that he had obtained a list of landowners in several sub-basins of San Lorenzo Creek, contacted them about gaining access to the streams on their property, and had received an approximately 95% acceptance rate in his responses.

Eric informed the Workgroup that the next meeting of the Upper Watershed Group will be addressing agricultural issues in the watershed. The meeting of that group is scheduled for September 6th at Zone 7 headquarters. He offered to bring up the issue of Arroyo Mocho at that time and suggested that the various watershed efforts to contact private landowners should be coordinated to prevent duplication of effort.

7. Agreements / Action Items

- 1) Eric Cartwright and Laura Kilgour will complete a draft version of the §1135 application letter and will distribute via email for the Workgroup’s review.
- 2) Laura Kilgour will attempt to arrange speakers for the sedimentation issues in the creek for the proposed October 18th meeting. Depending on speaker availability, the meeting date may be revised.
- 3) Carla Schultheis will bring up the issue of the creek mouth restoration at the next meeting of the Lower Watershed Group.
- 4) Eric Cartwright will bring up the issue of landowner involvement in restoration activities at the next meeting of the Upper Watershed Group.
- 5) Andy Gunther and Laura Kilgour will contact Tim Koopman to discuss options for contacting landowners in the Arroyo Mocho area.

8. Items for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Workgroup was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 18th at 9:30 am at the ACPWA Turner Court offices. Possible agenda items include (1) an update on the §1135 project; (2) a discussion of sedimentation issues in the creek; (3) contacts with landowners in Arroyo Mocho, and (4) the funding needs / funding opportunities matrix.